

2015

Economic Development Strategic Action Plan



Granite City, Illinois

August 2015

Through a holistic approach emphasizing the stewardship and growth of existing potential within our community, Granite City will become known as an innovative and prosperous city that continually works to improve the quality of life and access to economic opportunity for its residents and businesses, resulting in housing growth, property value appreciation, continued industrial strength and a well-trained workforce that is capable of excelling in a global economy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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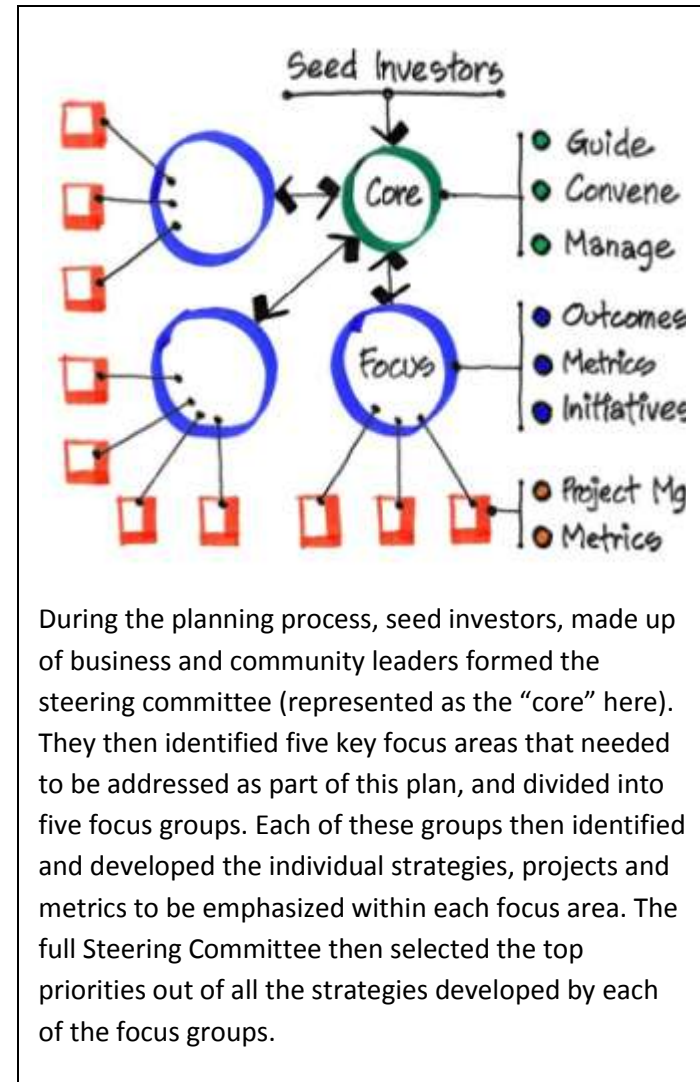
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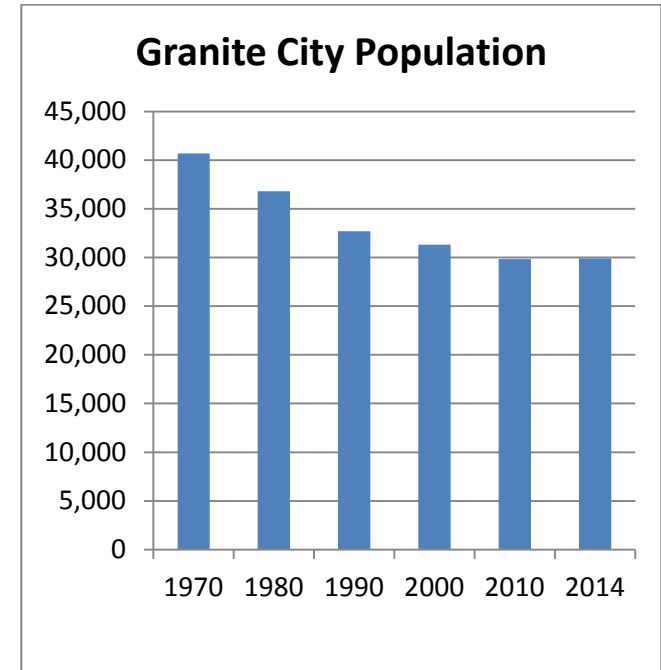
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The economic vitality of Granite City stands at a critical juncture. Rooted in a long history of traditional manufacturing, the City must navigate its way through the on-going global economic shift to a knowledge-based economy. Failing to make this transition means losing the ability to contend in an intensely competitive international marketplace. To succeed, Granite City must rediscover the spirit of innovation that fueled its growth nearly 120 years ago from a quiet farming area to an industrial powerhouse. As with all innovative processes, Granite City's efforts will not be without pain and difficulty. However, with strong leadership and the tenacity to stretch its limits, Granite City has the potential to write a new chapter of growth and prosperity that can last for generations to come.

As the City seeks to adapt during this period of transition, there is a set of key indicators that should be kept front of mind. These are the most important metrics that the City must ultimately seek to improve. They provided the guiding force behind everything recommended in this plan, and should be considered as part of any future strategic initiative undertaken by the City.

Key Metrics for Granite City to Improve:

- ❖ Economic Condition of the City
 - Growth in Employment
 - Growth in Annual Payroll
 - Growth in # of Business Establishments
- ❖ Resident Economic Well-Being
 - Growth in Per Capita Income
 - Growth in Median Household Income
 - Reduced Poverty Rate
 - Declining Unemployment Rate
 - Increased Labor-force Participation Rate



Source: US Census American Community Survey, 2014

There has been a roughly 25% reduction in the City's population since 1970. Some of this is due to shrinking household sizes (e.g. smaller families) but much of it is due to out-migration to other communities. (See the Demographic and Economic Assessment for more detail).

The Challenge

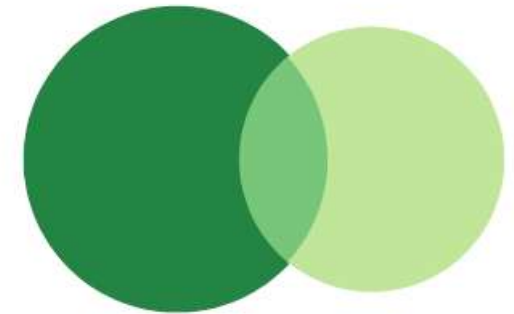
“In the 21st Century, the primary drivers behind economic growth have been transformed. Where agricultural and mineral extraction drove 19th century economic growth, and mass-production manufacturing drove the 20th Century, it is the application of knowledge that is driving growth in the 21st Century. Therefore, the most important input for growth in the 21st Century is talented people.”¹ This economic shift is now commonly referred to as the *Knowledge Economy*, and the resulting demand for talent has put high-skilled labor in the driver’s seat when it comes to community growth. As such, the dynamics of this new economy have created a need for a more holistic approach to economic development.

Previously, cities like Granite City engineered economic growth predominantly by providing access to high quality infrastructure, tax incentives, cheap land, and through marketing efforts geared to recruiting new industrial companies. When those efforts were successful and new companies opened for business, the City could depend on an influx of workers migrating to the area in search of work. Thus, growing employment, payroll and number of establishments would yield higher per capita and household incomes, lower unemployment/higher labor-force participation, and lower poverty rates throughout the City, which would also drive increasing retail sales and, ultimately, tax revenue generation.

Today, however, companies seek first to locate and expand in places where they can find the talent that they need to succeed. Consequentially, talented workers are seeing increasing income growth and hence, are increasingly able to live where they want. This has also played out with more traditional manufacturing workers in Granite City. Despite the employment base growing in the City over the past ten years, the resulting wealth is not being fully realized by Granite City household incomes.² One of the primary reasons for this is that 78% of all workers whose job is located in the City reside in a different community.³ (However, the fact that over 70% of residents work outside the city indicates that workers who commute to St. Louis could be a viable target for residential marketing campaigns (see Strategy 2A.1 for more details).

At the same time, low and unskilled workers face stiff global competition, driving their wages ever downward. Due to these deteriorated wages, in order for Granite City to improve the metrics grouped under “Resident Economic Well-Being” it must expand beyond just providing a business- friendly environment by also focusing on developing, retaining and attracting talented

Inflow/Outflow Primary Jobs 2012



	11,503 – Employed in Granite City, Live Outside
	7,597 – Live in City, Employed Outside
	3,189 – Employed and live in the City

	Count	Share
Employed in Granite City	14,692	100%
Employed in Granite City but Living Outside	11,503	78.3%
Employed and Living in Granite City	3,189	21.7%
Living in Granite City	10,786	100%
Living in Granite City but Employed Outside	7,597	70.4%
Living and Employed in Granite City	3,189	29.6%

Source: US Census On the Map 2012 Data.
(2012 is latest available data).

residents into the City by creating a place-friendly environment.

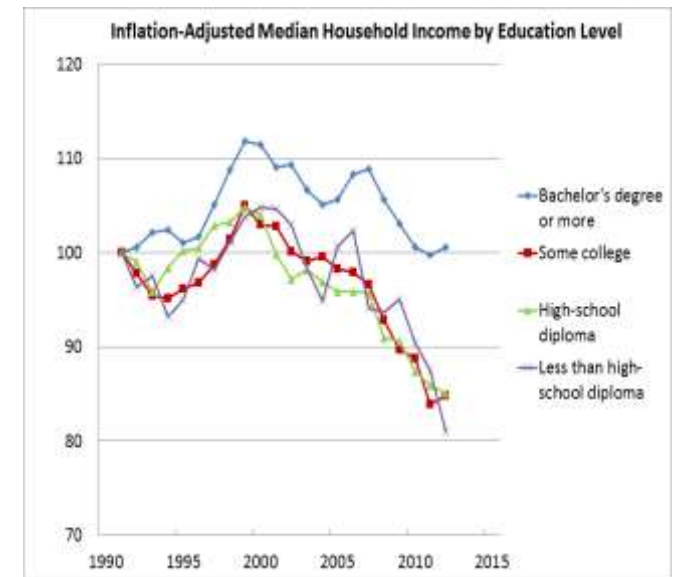
As a recent report, “Retooling for Growth,” stresses, “Ensuring that homegrown talent stays in the area and does not leave will depend upon having a suitable quality of life to keep them here. A few basic requirements in this category are good schools and a safe, nurturing community. Other areas necessary include walkable environments, ample recreational activities available, quality arts, entertainment and shopping choices, and an appealing aesthetic environment, among others.”⁴

Looking at a number of key demographic and economic indicators, however, reveals that Granite City is struggling in its efforts to attract and keep talent. These indicators, including population figures and housing prices, among others, signify that demand for the local market has been declining over the past three decades, as shown by declining population numbers and housing prices that are not on par with the surrounding area. Further, educational attainment data show that the percentage of the general population of the City attaining at least a 4-year degree is significantly lagging behind the U.S., Illinois and St. Louis Metro area.

Other related, substantial development challenges facing the City include the following:

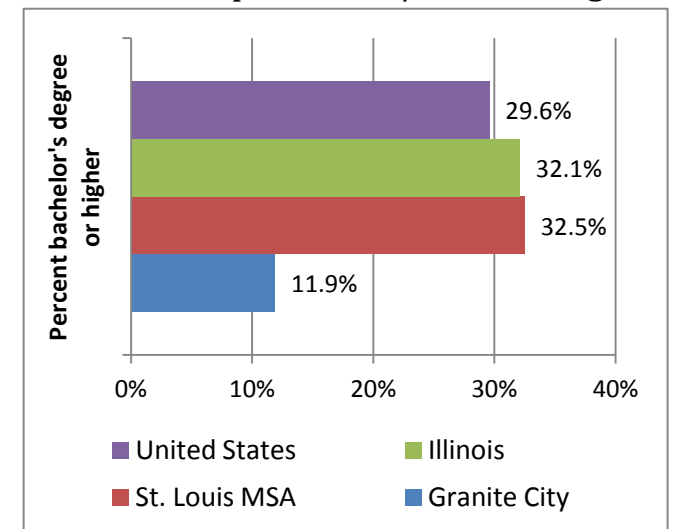
- Abandoned properties that mar the health, aesthetics, and economies of neighborhoods
- Over 12% of homes in the City are vacant (see p. 136-7)
- Aging and deteriorating infrastructure
- Insufficient entrepreneurial support capacity
- Over 25% of Granite City families have negative equity in their home. (see p. 135)
- Retail sales growth has lagged behind inflation dating back to 1994. (see p. 128)
- Median Household Income growth is lagging behind inflation and the rest of the region.
- Renter-occupied median household income decreased from 2000 to 2013. (see p. 117)
- The rate of poverty has increased from 11.3% in 2000 to 19.0% in 2013. (see p. 118)

College Wage Premium Increasing Because Non-College Wages Plummeting



Source: US Census Bureau 2012 Annual Data – United States

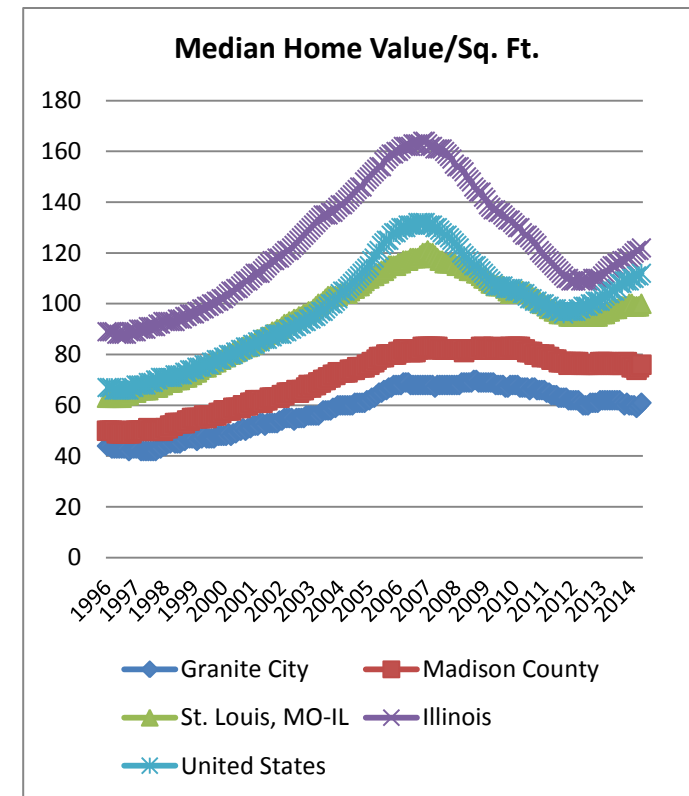
Percent of Population w/ 4-Year Degrees



Source: US Census Bureau 2012 Annual Data – United States

Challenges Summary:

- Structural shifts in the economy have created large income gaps between high skilled and low/unskilled workers.⁵
 - More highly educated/higher income individuals have more choice in where they want to live than in the past.
 - **The evidence indicates that, on average, people who have the means to choose where they want to live are not choosing to live in Granite City.**
 - As an example, 78% of private sector workers in Granite City are driving here from neighboring communities. (see p. 121)
 - Median home values/square foot that are nearly 25% below the Madison County average is yet another indicator that housing demand is soft in the City. (see p. 131-33)
 - Continual decrease in the overall population of the City since 1970 demonstrates that more residents continue to migrate out than those that are migrating in. (see p. 111)
 - Significant drop in 35-44 year olds living in the City suggests that young couples migrate outward when transitioning from first to second home. (see p. 112)
 - The City's resulting relatively low educational attainment rates are therefore impacting median household incomes, which directly impact retail sales, home values and more.
 - Lower disposable income drastically increases the challenge of recruiting new retail and generating new sales tax revenues. (see p. 128-30)
 - Low educational attainment rates combined with structural changes in the economy form the foundational cause of increased poverty rates in the City. (see p. 115-20)



Source: Zillow.com

Granite City home values are significantly lower than the County, region, State and Nation, and the gap between the City and these areas is growing over time. This is an indicator that demand for housing in the city is weakening relative to these other markets over time.

The Response

An economic development vision for Granite City grounded on the city’s potential to develop into a premier destination for new investment and talent in the St. Louis metropolitan area is fully attainable, but only if that vision becomes part of the political fabric of the community. (Note: talent is defined as marketable skills that command higher compensation from employers – such as technical trade skills, and higher education levels).

The steering committee evaluated a wide range of demographic and economic variables (see Demographic and Economic Assessment) and conducted a SWOT analysis (p. 138) to inform the creation of ten guiding principles for development of the strategic action plan. These are shown to the right on this and the next page. The following Vision Statement for Granite City emerged from these Guiding Principles:

Through a holistic approach emphasizing the stewardship and growth of existing potential within our community, Granite City will become known as an innovative and prosperous city that continually works to improve the quality of life and access to economic opportunity for its residents and businesses, resulting in housing growth, property value appreciation, continued industrial strength and a well-trained workforce that is capable of excelling in a global economy.

Realizing this vision will require a long-term strategic approach that consists of developing new and collaborative partnerships, embracing new policy tools, recrafting social networks, and thinking about the practice of economic development in bold new ways.⁶ The emphasis of these efforts should be placed on making the most of the city’s particular physical, economic, and human assets (land, businesses, people and knowledge). One key to doing this is by building on the strength of the city’s anchor institutions.⁷ These include the community college, hospital, Port District, parks and recreation amenities, art and cultural centers and other large employers.

This plan focuses upon three key strategic elements to creating successful 21st century economies in older industrial areas: business creation and growth, human capital development, and improving the quality of place. In addition, “achieving universal digital competence and participation is critical to all three of these areas, as economic access, exchange, innovation, and value creation increasingly occur through digital technologies.”⁸ The foregoing investment strategies aim to build and sustain the existing base of the economy by opening up land in the

Guiding Principles

1. Prioritize the retention of businesses and residents, and invest in helping existing businesses expand and grow.
2. Challenge the existing negative perception of Granite City by telling our story in a way that promotes our strengths, establishes a positive identity and instills a sense of pride in the community.
3. Concentrate on enhancing the quality of life in the community by emphasizing areas such as aesthetics, community events, resident connectedness, community pride, community amenities and safety.
4. Utilize market-oriented housing solutions when investing in neighborhood revitalization.
5. Emphasize the existing potential within our residents, businesses, governments, social entities, and places. Start with community assets and build out from there.

city, strengthening and beautifying neighborhoods, and making business more competitive while also meeting the long-term needs of the knowledge economy by enhancing the talent pool and strengthening local research capabilities. Effective implementation of this economic development strategy, therefore, requires an emphasis on both business development and product development.

“Business development covers activities designed to influence the decisions of corporate leaders, entrepreneurs, developers and even government leaders to select a particular market for investment. Product development includes activities designed to increase the attractiveness of a place (neighborhood, city, community, region) for investment. Assets such as a well-functioning transportation system, effective public education, a tolerable tax climate, access to skilled workers, and affordable housing all contribute to the attraction of a location.”⁹

Based on all of this, then, the following five goals will support the proposed vision and provide a strong framework for strategies and actions:

GOALS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

1. Produce average annual growth in payroll and employment (jobs offered in the city) that exceeds both the state and metropolitan growth rates through business retention, development and recruitment strategies, targeting businesses that align with identified local and/or regional industrial clusters (see side bar on p. 18).
2. Advance the City’s Quality of Place.
 - a. Increase residential property values at a rate faster than the county and the metropolitan area averages over continuous five year rolling periods.
 - b. Within five years, achieve a 15% increase in respondents who are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” in a newly created Community Satisfaction Survey to be conducted every two years.
 - c. Grow the number of 15 to 45 year olds living in the community by 10% by 2025.
 - d. Increase foot traffic and retail sales in the downtown and Nameoki Road commercial districts by 10% more than the rate of inflation by 2025.
3. Increase the percentage of the city’s population with an Associate’s/technical degree or higher, aligned with career opportunities available, to match the St. Louis metropolitan region by 2030.
4. Foster a culture of innovation and a vibrant entrepreneurial community within the City.
 - a. Grow the number of business establishments in the city by 20% (150 businesses) and incubate at least five new businesses in the manufactured goods, specialty foods or professional services industries and grow them to 20 employees or more by 2025.
5. Within five years, achieve a 25% increase in local/regional respondents who rate Granite City as a good place to live, work and play as either “good” or “very good” in an annual Perception Survey.

Guiding Principles

6. Develop and utilize strong, collaborative partnerships across multiple spheres, including education, business, workforce, and community development both within the City and across the region with the goal of enhancing economic prosperity.
7. Take a proactive role in regional economic development. Research shows that the health of a city is very strongly tied to the economic health of the metropolitan region in which it is located. Therefore, it is essential for the City to connect with and help advance regional efforts to grow the metropolitan area.
8. Leverage our education assets to build economic opportunities.
9. Diversify the tax base to help insulate Granite City from economic shocks by focusing on areas that complement existing industry clusters but are not necessarily dependent upon them for success.
10. Celebrate innovation by making creative, outside the box thinking the norm in Granite City.

Strategies

This plan proposes a total of 24 different strategies aimed at addressing the five goals listed above. Each of these strategies targets businesses or residents (or both), and does so by either a) building/developing new businesses (or resident skills); b) attracting new businesses or residents to the community from outside; or c) retaining the businesses and/or residents that are already present within the community. As a general rule, retention strategies and building strategies are given higher priority than attraction strategies, primarily because they are more sustainable over time, and because they tend to be more efficient means of producing desired results than attraction strategies, overall.

Raising the B.A.R. - 24 Strategies in the EDSAP		Business			Residents		
Strategy		Build	Attract	Retain	Build	Attract	Retain
1A	Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses.	X		X			
1B	Pursue new investment from suppliers and vendors of companies in the region and from those local companies seeking to consolidate facilities.		X				
1C	Pursue a targeted, cluster-based industry strategy	X	X	X			
1D	Increase the availability of commercial and industrial land along Route 3 suited for new development.		X	X			
1E	Establish a City-managed community revolving loan fund.	X	X	X			
1F	Develop a local “rapid response” strategy and designate a team for dealing with potential lay-offs or plant closures.			X			
2A	Engage in housing efforts aimed at improving demand for residential property.					X	X
2B	Create vibrant commercial/mixed use districts that are strongly interconnected with surrounding neighborhoods.		X	X		X	X
2C	Enhance the design, function and use of public spaces and primary corridors.					X	X
2D	Address pressing issues pertaining to environmental sustainability.					X	X
3A	Bring the business, workforce training, and education communities closer together.			X	X	X	X
3B	Promote a vibrant manufacturing labor force for the 21st Century.		X	X	X	X	X
3C	Engage college students, young professionals and new residents.				X	X	X
3D	Invest in early childhood education.				X		

Raising the B.A.R. - 24 Strategies in the EDSAP		Business			Residents		
Strategy		Build	Attract	Retain	Build	Attract	Retain
3E	Reach out to former residents, recent graduates and immigrants.					X	
3F	Develop creative solutions for retaining dislocated workers and professionals.						X
3G	Partner with financial institutions and social service groups to enhance financial education among those in poverty.				X		
4A	Promote entrepreneurship and small business development.	X	X	X			
4B	Support the CEO Program and the creation of further youth entrepreneurship education in Granite City public schools.	X		X	X		X
4C	Support innovation among existing businesses.	X		X			
4D	Provide support to main street and sole proprietor business types.	X		X			
5A	Elevate the image of Granite City both locally and regionally.		X			X	X
5B	Encourage civic engagement, transparency and neighborhood leadership to develop community and individual pride within both youth and adults.				X		X
5C	Synchronize the existing assets and organizations working in the community to collaborate towards common goals.	X		X	X		X

Priority Strategies

In order for Granite City to attain its economic development goals, it is imperative that the City balance its efforts between developing brain power, encouraging innovation and in creating an attractive place with a compelling narrative that will cause brain power and innovation to stay over the long-term. The following six strategies, drawn from the entire EDSAP, are the highest priorities for achieving that balance.

1. **Place greater emphasis on entrepreneurship and small business development (Strategy 4A).** Support new business formation and innovation through increased access to capital, improved technology transfer, enhanced small business networks, and education and training programs aimed at entrepreneurs and small-business owners.
2. **Engage in housing efforts aimed at improving demand for residential property (Strategy 2A).** Utilize marketing, selective demolition and repair of housing to revitalize neighborhoods and improve residential property values.
3. **Bring the business, workforce training, and education communities closer together (Strategy 3A).** Facilitate greater partnerships and communication on issues of employer needs and corresponding training programs.
4. **Create vibrant commercial/mixed use districts that are strongly interconnected with surrounding neighborhoods (Strategy 2B).** Undertake one or more physical projects that transform the urban landscape and create opportunities for new development and growth.
5. **Elevate the image of Granite City both locally and regionally (Strategy 5A).** To raise its image, the City and its partners cannot rely only on regional organizations to market the community. The City must take a more active role in defining itself internally and to the region. This involves crafting and promoting a powerful, positive narrative to engender a favorable perception of the community throughout the metro area, and greater utilization of non-traditional outreach and marketing tools, such as Web-based social networks to spread this message.

Strategy Matrix for Economic Growth



The city's strategic response to the its challenges was built on the framework created by the Purdue University Center for Regional Development called the Strategy Matrix for Economic Growth. This structure is based on the theory that developing Brain Power and Innovation are the keys to economic growth in the Knowledge Economy, and that Quality of Life (a.k.a. Quality of Place) and Narrative (e.g. marketing, promoting the community as a great place to live) is essential to attracting and keeping Brain Power and Innovation.

For more info see: <https://www.pcrd.purdue.edu/>

6. **Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses (Strategy 1A).** Over seventy five percent of new employment growth comes from existing businesses in any given area. With the level of competitiveness in economic development, it is crucial to do everything possible to grow and retain the City's existing base of businesses.

These six strategies address some important short-term and long-term economic development needs of Granite City. However, they alone don't meet all of the City's needs and challenges. The plan also recommends strategies to address other critical issues. These include engaging young professionals and new residents, creating a more vibrant downtown and commercial area along Nameoki Road, and promoting a vibrant manufacturing labor force for the 21st Century.

Final Thoughts

The purpose of this plan is to provide the City and its partners with specific guidance regarding the commitment of resources for enhancing the economic vitality of Granite City. Based on its scope and complexity, in order for the City to successfully implement this plan, it will require further staffing resources. At a minimum, the City needs an additional community development professional to assist with housing, neighborhood redevelopment and marketing activities.

A point must also be made about the plan's orientation. The City's traditional role in economic development has been primarily in industrial and retail recruitment activities. However, many of the recommendations in this plan deal with what are considered "non-traditional" economic development activities. Yet, the overall economic vitality of the City is impacted by its ability to positively influence issues such as talent attraction and image enhancement. Since the City's resources and expertise in these areas are limited, it must rely on partner organizations throughout the city, county and region to carry out many of these functions.

Finally, the EDSAP Steering Committee and City staff have put in a great deal of effort into this plan. However, it is just the beginning. The next step is to align area resources in support of these strategies and to begin implementation. This will require a team effort to place Granite City as a top priority. To this effort, we recommend the creation of the Granite City Development Network (see p. 108-110). This importance of the network is to bring together government, business, community groups (including churches, etc.), non-profits, labor and residents to work together, building synergies to more effectively address the city's challenges. Alone, City government cannot overcome the obstacles that faces this community, but together, Granite City has the assets to achieve sustained economic vitality. All that is needed is the commitment.

Focus Areas

The five goals identified above correspond with the following five focus areas, which help define the structure of the EDSAP going forward:

- 1. Business Growth and Development**
- 2. Housing, Neighborhood and Community Improvement**
- 3. Education and Workforce**
- 4. Entrepreneurship and Innovation**
- 5. City Pride**

FOCUS AREA #1: BUSINESS GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Support and expand the existing business base through retention strategies and selective recruiting of businesses that align with area industrial strengths.

While the Great Recession of 2008-09 is nearly seven full years behind us, the economic repercussions are still being felt throughout the nation. The economy has undergone a structural shift. Sustainability and measured growth have become the norm, and that looks unlikely to change for the foreseeable future.

As a consequence, the City must focus its economic development efforts to the realities of current conditions, while positioning the community to capitalize on new opportunities. Most importantly, it must do what it can to support the city's existing businesses and workers. It must also explore opportunities to attract new investment and jobs from companies already operating locally or in the broader region. The City has seen great success in its business retention efforts over the past eight years, but there is still much more to be done.

Business Growth and Development - Progress to Date:

Over the past eight years, the City has spent considerable time and effort investing in its existing businesses through the Business Expansion and Retention Program. Through this program, the city has achieved the following:

1. 786 new full-time, permanent jobs created in Granite City since the start of the Great Recession
2. 4,761 full-time, permanent jobs retained via expansion projects by existing companies since 2007.
3. \$936 million in non-operational (e.g. expansion projects) investments by Granite City companies since 2007.
4. 34 companies have invested over \$1 million each into expansion projects since 2007.
5. Manufacturing jobs have recovered to pre-recession levels.

A Bird in the Hand

"The expansion and retention of existing businesses should be at the heart of any economic development strategy. Existing businesses form the backbone of a thriving economy. They typically represent the best opportunity for increasing the employment and tax base of a community and the greatest economic threat if they close or relocate. But local firms are often overlooked in a community's enthusiasm to recruit new, headline-generating businesses.

Given the fiercely competitive environment for business attraction and the myriad of issues facing most communities with regard to the recruitment of new business, business retention should be a baseline activity for economic development organizations. In other words, all other initiatives, including business recruitment, should be considered in light of their ability to complement and support the existing business network."

- TIP Strategies

Strategy 1A: Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses.¹⁰ Like any successful business, economic development organizations must attend to their existing customers first: local businesses.¹¹ Experts estimate that “over 75% of all new jobs will come from the expansion of existing firms.” Critical retention and expansion activities center on relationships and research. One method is to identify the top economic-driver firms and interview multiple individuals at these firms – from the human resources director to the chief financial officer to the environmental engineer – to understand their needs, challenges, and frustrations with the local scene and dreams of business expansion. Follow-up must be obsessively persistent to ensure rapid answers to questions and elimination of as many obstacles to success as possible.¹²

Actions:

1A.1: Enhance and continue the business retention and expansion (BRE) program.¹³ Having a clear understanding of the business already in Granite City and the issues important to their success is critical to on-going economic development efforts. Local business managers and executives are often the best advocate for bringing new growth to local facilities, so winning them over is of utmost importance.

The City, in partnership with the County, State and others, already administers a comprehensive business retention program focused on personal visits, surveys and special events. These efforts should be continued and strengthened where necessary.

- *Inventory.* Maintain inventory of existing businesses and available properties and make property information readily available to existing companies. The City through Ameren and Location One, has already established a database of industrial and commercial locations and key contacts for facilities in the City. However, additional effort is needed to ensure that the database remains up to date and accurate. At present, the City does not have the man-hours available to adequately maintain this essential resource, so consideration should be given to allocate additional personnel within the City to manage this task. Publicly available business records such as tax records, utility hookups, and ownership transfers are good sources for data to use when updating this database.



- Survey. The City, along with its BRE partners, conducts confidential business surveys to gauge economic conditions in the City and to provide benchmarking information for area employers. In addition to the topics denoted in the right column, experts recommend a regular non-confidential survey to identify local companies at risk of leaving the community or ceasing operations, as well as those companies planning to expand. Such information will allow the City to quickly target retention and expansion efforts locally.
- Visitation. The City should meet its goal of making 25 business visits per year with leading employers. The purpose of the visits should be to gauge the ability and needs of local businesses to operate, profit and possibly expand in Granite City.¹⁴
- Manufacturing Roundtable¹⁵. The City, in conjunction with partners like the Chamber of Commerce, Port District and County, should organize a regular roundtable of business executives representing small and medium sized manufacturers in the City.¹⁶ Several local business owners expressed a need to address common challenges, such as the image of manufacturing in the community, but stated that it was difficult for companies to emerge out of their silos to address common issues. Roundtable participants would meet in peer groups of 10 to 15 executives of non-competing companies. The goal is to engage in candid, solution-seeking discussions focused on executive-level manufacturing issues.

1A.2: Continue raising awareness of economic development issues.

- Economic Summit. The City should establish an annual City Economic Summit to keep leaders and citizens informed of economic opportunities and challenges in the City and region. The summit should include information regarding economic trends and business climate issues (e.g. taxation, initiatives, and business announcements).
- Meet semi-annually with existing leadership organizations, key individuals and other decision makers to provide opportunities for private discussions and input on Granite City's business climate issues.

Taking the Business Pulse

The following is a list of topics that are important to local businesses, which are generally covered during the City's business retention visits:

- Executive Economic Outlook
- Business Needs and Program Assessment
- Fringe Benefits
- Wage and Salary
- Worker Shortage/Skills Gap
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Union Representation and Labor Relations
- Revenue and Cost Trends
- Health and Retirement Benefits
- Community Strengths and Weaknesses
- Pending Legislation Concerns
- New Technology
- Utility Services

- Establish a long-term planning process for updating progress on specific goals and priority projects. Consider coordinating process with annual economic summit.

Strategy 1B: Pursue new investment from suppliers and vendors of companies in the region and from those local companies seeking to consolidate facilities. The City should look for business expansion opportunities among current companies seeking to merge operations into an existing facility, and from the suppliers, vendors and competitors of existing businesses within the region.

Actions:

1B.1: Visit with existing businesses in Granite that operate facilities outside of the city.

- Determine whether consolidation is a possibility and offer to assist in relocating outside operations to the City.
- Identify suppliers and customers of existing businesses, particularly those who are connected to multiple local businesses, and coordinate with existing business partners to reach out to these companies to find opportunities for expansion to the City.

1B.2: Gather constructive testimonials from local large business leaders about their experience working in and with Granite City and condense them into a 1-2 page summary. For more in-depth information, write case studies of individual businesses expansion success stories (e.g. U.S. Steel, Kraft, and Prairie Farms)

- Include testimonials in marketing materials and in submittals for site selection Requests for Information.

1B.3: Provide a competitive and business-friendly environment by procuring access to adequate incentive programs and by streamlining the permitting process.

- Continue work to renew the SW Madison County Enterprise Zone and to extend the Industrial Jobs Recovery Act TIF along Route 3.
- Review the M-4 PUD permitting process for industrial projects on Route 3. Guidelines for M-4 zoning approval need to be objective and clear, to reduce uncertainty for companies/developers interested in building along Route 3.

Major Investments by Industry (2007-14)

INDUSTRY	INVEST. (\$ MIL.)	JOBS CREATED	JOBS RETAINED
Primary Metal Mfg.	\$640.1	141	2,401
Food Processing	\$70.0	205	525
Chemicals Mfg.	\$66.3	17	46
Retail/Restaurant	\$55.7	230	262
Healthcare/Social Services	\$48.1	14	1,070
Utilities	\$26.7	0	0
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	\$7.6	114	151
Paper Product Mfg.	\$7.0	10	151
Electrical Equipment Repair	\$3.0	35	20
Transportation and Logistics	\$2.0	5	30
Engineering Services	\$1.3	15	100
Finance/Banking	\$1.0	0	5
Auto Repair	\$0.5	0	0
Non-Profit	\$0.2	0	0
Other	\$6.5	N/A	N/A
Total	\$936.5	786	4,761

Between 2007 and 2014, these sectors (representing 50 companies (34 of which invested at least \$1 million)) invested \$936 million dollars in Granite City. For every million dollars invested, six jobs were created or

1B.4: Monitor St. Louis area news outlets for reports of consolidation.

- Economic and Business Research: Identify economic trends, which companies are expanding and contracting in terms of employment and facilities, where satellite facilities are, and how their supply chains are structured.

Strategy 1C: **Pursue a targeted, cluster-based industry strategy.** The primary purpose of traditional economic development marketing is to generate interest from companies with expansion or relocation plans. Due to resource constraints, the City's existing marketing outreach is very limited. However, as resources permit, the City should enhance its business recruitment efforts and focus on companies that complement existing industry clusters in the City and region. "By fostering clusters – geographically proximate groups of firms, research centers and associated institutions that focus on a particular industry sector or product, cities can direct resources to high-opportunity economic targets."^{17, 18}

"Often, new industry clusters and research concentrations can emerge from older specializations: Akron, Ohio, for example, has developed a specialization in polymers stemming from its historic role as a rubber and tire manufacturing center."¹⁹

Actions:

1C.1: Concentrate efforts and resources to help America's Central Port District build upon their new opportunity with barge-to-rail intermodal freight capabilities. The Maritime Administration predicts the U.S. will need to move an additional 14 billion tons of cargo by 2050 to accommodate population growth. This means the country will need to almost double its freight movement capacity within 35 years. The potential for growth is an enormous opportunity for river towns like Granite City to diversify its economy in a way that simultaneously bolsters the existing industrial base within the community.

1C.2: Build awareness among decision-makers in target industries.

- Develop and maintain a database of companies in each target industry.
- Initiate a direct mail program to companies in each target sector to emphasize advantages of STL region and GC in particular.
- Coordinate with the Regional Chamber, Leadership Council, Port District and County to initiate a postcard (physical or digital) campaign highlighting

Granite City Industry Clusters

- Metals-Based Manufacturing
- Transportation and Logistics
- Food and Beverage Processing
- Healthcare

(Source: GC Econ. Dev. Dept.)

SW Illinois Industry Clusters

- Healthcare
- Energy
- Heavy Industry
- Light Industry
- Logistics and Transportation

(Source: Leadership Council)

St. Louis Metro Industry Clusters

- Financial and Information Services
- Health Science and Services
- Bioscience
- Multimodal Logistics and Manufacturing

(Source: St. Louis Regional Chamber)

the area's strengths and listing a highly visible Web address that directs prospects to an appropriate website – Ensure that Granite City is appropriately represented in these regional marketing efforts.

- Partner with Regional Chamber, etc. to follow the direct mail campaigns with telephone calls to 1) identify companies with expansion plans, and 2) assess their interest in the region and Granite City, specifically, as a location for consolidation or expansion.
- Seek to join partners from metro St. Louis in attending relevant trade call trips to regions where target industry concentration is highest. These trips can be conducted separately or in conjunction with the trade shows or other events.
- Compile and maintain resource information for each target industry sector. This would include identifying associations for each industry sector as well as following industry trends by monitoring trade publications or purchasing industry data and reports from private sources.

1C.3: Build awareness among corporate site selectors.

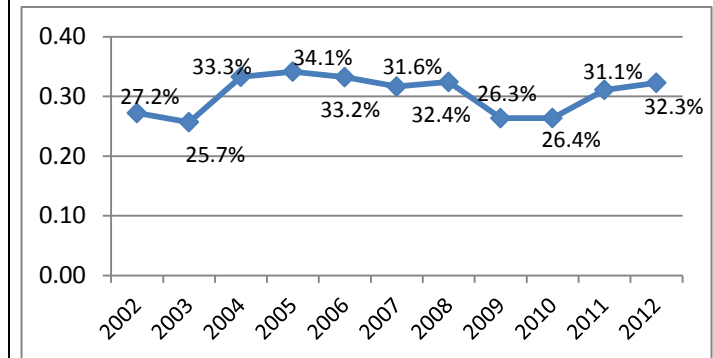
- Coordinate with Regional Chamber to access a database of developers, brokers and site consultants in the Midwest.
- Continue to maintain and update information typically of interest to commercial and industrial developers on the Location One and City websites.
- Work with the Regional Chamber to coordinate calls to site consultants and site visits with consultants in major metropolitan areas throughout the Midwest.
- Offer assistance to aggressively market developers' and land owners properties and buildings to future tenants.

Strategy 1D: Increase the availability of commercial and industrial land along Route 3 suited for new development. One of Granite City's strongest assets is its inventory of undeveloped sites able to accommodate large and medium-sized industrial plants that are located in close proximity to rail, river and interstates.

All told, there are six primary sites that are ideal for future industrial development and most sit along Route 3, including a 1,300+ acre site owned by Ameren Illinois,

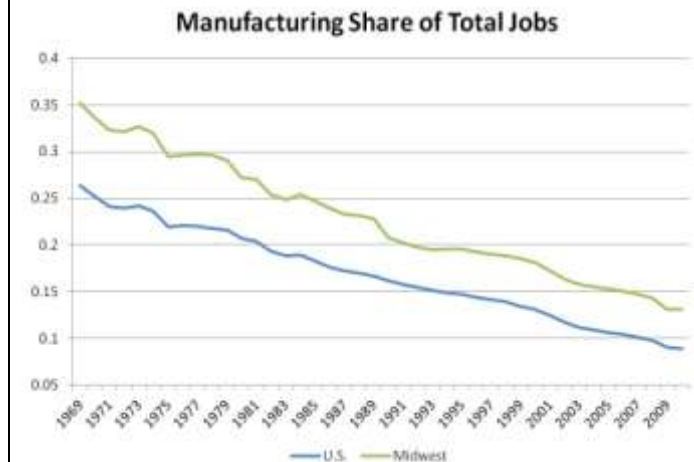
Comparison: Manufacturing % of Jobs

Granite City Mfg. Share of Total Jobs



Source: U.S. Census On the Map (2012 most recent data).

U.S. and Midwest Mfg. Share of Total Jobs



Source: Chicago Federal Reserve

http://midwest.chicagofedblogs.org/archives/2012/02/industrial_citi.html

and several sites within America's Central Port District with access to rail and river. However, the majority of these sites lack complete infrastructure, including access roads onto the site from adjacent highways, and utility infrastructure. To help take advantage of the City's land assets, the City should evaluate options for purchasing or partnering to develop these sites. In this scenario, it may be feasible to develop a small business park. Additionally, the City should proactively market these sites. Part of that effort could include a site inventory of documents and all other known information about each site.

Actions:

1D.1: Interest has recently surfaced from a large-scale industrial park developer who has taken an interest in one of the City's prime sites along Route 3 and Chain of Rocks road. The City should make every effort to reel this company in by offering to help with marketing, incentives and permitting from start to finish on the development of the property.

- Maintain regular contact with the developer and their brokers to identify potential tenants and to market the site to those tenants.
- Work to ensure the extension of the Route 3 Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and renewal of the Enterprise Zone (see Strategy 1B.3).

1D.2: The City should explore options to partner with entities like major rail companies (Norfolk Southern, UP and BNSF) and the Port District to plan and prepare existing land sites for future development.

1D.3: Invest in durable public goods (infrastructure).²⁰ Stronger, more durable forms of economic development involve a shift from firm-specific subsidies toward the provision of public goods with more widely dispersed benefits.²¹

- Develop a long-term capital improvement and financing plan. While interest rates are still low, the City could consider a capital bond issuance to fund improvements.

1D.4: Develop a Request for Information (RFI) site submittal template for each major site and industrial building that is available in the City. The template should include information on transportation, site specifics (size, price, topography, etc.), incentives available, and testimony from local business leaders, among other items.

Lewis and Clark Industrial Mega-Site

The L and C site covers approximately 1,300 acres and sits north of I-270 and east of Route 3.

The site is owned by Ameren Illinois and has access to multiple major railroad carriers.

In 2010, Ameren, in conjunction with Norfolk Southern created a master plan for the site. While the plan is a solid initial step, admitted flaws exist with the preliminary proposal. Namely, it doesn't properly account for some of the topographic and drainage/wetland challenges that characterize the site.

In addition, there is currently inadequate water, sewer, electric or road infrastructure on site.

To address this, the City must identify and coordinate with key partners to revise the existing plan, and to procure a means for providing the infrastructure to make the site "shovel ready."

Key partners in the effort are:

1. Ameren Illinois
2. America's Central Port
3. County and State Government
4. Norfolk Southern RR
5. KCS Railroad

The site should compete well for projects that require significant water usage. One such example to consider would be a nuclear power plant.

Strategy 1E: Establish a City-managed community revolving loan fund. Small business finance is a vitally important tool for enhancing both business retention and expansion and new small business development efforts.²² The City has the ability to use TIF, Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds in order to create a revolving loan fund. In addition, the National Development Council (NDC) has a program called the “Grow America Fund” with which they will match a local fund of \$500k with an additional \$1.5M to make a \$2 million loan pool. A loan fund of this amount should enable the City to make a significant impact on the growth and retention of small to mid-size businesses in the City. However, making the most of this fund will require discipline in limiting the number and type of businesses helped. Therefore, this plan recommends establishing the following goals as criteria in prioritizing funding allocation:

- Align loans and related incentives to the target industries identified in this plan,
- Give priority to those businesses that meet specific wage and skill standards (detailed below),
- Provide additional support based on geographic location and specified sites,
- Meet criteria for sustainability and alternative energy use.

Actions:

1E.1: Establish a \$500,000 funding pool utilizing CDBG and UDAG sources.

1E.2: Enter into a contract with the National Development Council to leverage funding pool up to \$2 million.

1E.3: Design a loan scoring system emphasizing innovative businesses in targeted industries as well as infill or redevelopment projects.

- Specific loan evaluation criteria should be established placing greater emphasis on funding business involved in manufacturing, logistics, specialty foods, life sciences, clean technology or professional services.
- The scoring criteria should consider the location of a project within the City. Desirable infill or redevelopment projects should receive a higher score.
- Additional scoring criteria to consider include:
 - Permanent job creation/retention
 - Quality of jobs (salary, skill level, stability, etc.)
 - Economic impact (value generated by new income and jobs)

Grow America Fund

The NDC Grow America Fund (GAF), in cooperation with our Community Partners, provides financing to growing small businesses throughout the country. GAF operates as a community development lender to support the creation of jobs and the expansion of eligible small businesses in underserved areas, particularly minority and women-owned businesses. The financing provided is partially guaranteed by the U.S. Small Business Administration under GAF’s Small Business Lending Company license, and GAF has Preferred Lender status nationwide. GAF lending differs from conventional lending by providing:

1. **Longer Terms** Using repayment schedules up to 25 years that give the borrower smaller monthly loan payments to reserve cash flow for other business needs.
2. **Larger Loans** Providing loan amounts ranging from \$150,000 to \$3.4 million
3. **Lower Down Payments** Preserves the business’s equity and maximizes growth potential
4. **Lower Interest Rates** that fund growth. Favorable rates result in cash savings that allows your business to continue to provide and add jobs in the community
5. **Better Structure** Matching the term of the loan to the life of the assets being financed, ensuring debt service does not exceed available cash flow

www.growamericafund.org

- Ratio of City investment to other private investment
- Additional tax base generated
- Level of research and development
- Positive neighborhood impact
- Businesses that address sustainability and alternative energy use
- Consistency with land use plans

Strategy 1F: Develop a local “rapid response” strategy and designate a team for confronting potential lay-offs or plant closures. The recently averted scare from US Steel, which threatened to idle the entire Granite City Works, has demonstrated the importance for the City to be prepared in the event that a major layoff should happen sometime in the future. The City, in partnership with the County, should therefore develop a “rapid response” strategy for dealing with potential layoffs or plant closures. Under the Federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) of 1989, companies with 100 or more employees must notify local governments and state workforce organizations about plant closing or mass layoffs at least 60 days in advance of the event. However, at this point, it is frequently too late to do anything. The City should work with its economic development partners to identify “at-risk” companies and develop an aggressive intervention strategy.

Actions:

- 1F.1:** Identify assistance programs for at-risk companies. Such programs include the manufacturing modernization services offered through the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program (IMEC in Illinois).
- 1F.2:** Partner with Southwestern Illinois College, the Madison-Bond Workforce Development Board, and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to design flexible, demand-driven education and training programs for dislocated workers.
- 1F.3:** Establish a Community Adjustment Committee. The committee would develop a community response plan for assisting dislocated workers and their families. The plan would coordinate community resources for helping families deal with issues associated with income loss (e.g. psychological stress, housing, utility bills, food assistance, creditors, insurance).
- 1F.4:** Cultivate relationships with site selectors, developers, and real estate brokers to ensure prompt reuse of a closed facility by a new tenant.

FOCUS AREA #2: HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

Goal: Advance the City's Quality of Place by providing strong neighborhoods and a healthy housing market and by building up vibrant commercial/mixed-use districts that are interconnected with surrounding residential areas.

Having a high quality of place is an essential component of economic development. No amount of business development (marketing) will allow a city to succeed if it does not first have a great place to live, work and play. Retaining and recruiting both businesses and residents, therefore, absolutely requires first investing in the community's quality of place.

Quality of place includes not only the basics, (a safe and clean environment and quality schools), but a wide assortment of other factors as well, such as natural, recreational and lifestyle amenities.²³ According to Project for Public Spaces, there are four key attributes that make up quality of place. Those are:

1. Uses and Activities
2. Comfort and Image
3. Access and Linkages; and
4. Sociability

The chart to the right provides a further breakdown of the intangibles and measurements that are associated with each of these attributes. The strategies listed out in this section of the plan address each of these four key attributes.

"Successful economies of the future will likely have vibrant, recognizable downtowns, relatively low crime, a clean appearance, well-maintained park systems, diverse recreational opportunities, and cultural amenities."²⁴ Granite City must continue to address many of these basics, such as crime and air quality, but that alone is not sufficient. The City must also focus resources toward making older neighborhoods more attractive for new private sector investment, so those neighborhoods can compete successfully with locations on the sprawling fringes of the metro area. "Since everything from traffic patterns to school quality is influenced by housing stock and cost, the issue of housing supply must be faced by cities as a part of their product development."²⁵



- Project for Public Spaces

According to Project for Public Spaces, there are four key attributes that make up quality of place. Those are:

1. Uses and Activities
2. Comfort and Image
3. Access and Linkages; and
4. Sociability

The areas in green are the intangibles that characterize a successful place, while the areas around the outside, in blue, provide various measurements that can be used to gauge the health of a public space.

In addition, the City must create distinctive places by leveraging historic and cultural amenities, eliminating blight, designing beautiful public spaces and boosting community livability.²⁶ To boost community livability the City must focus on improving recreational amenities, refining environmental quality, promoting diversity, adding greenery (planting trees, improving vacant lots) and enhancing the walkability of the community.²⁷ “Walkability, here, means much more than just providing citizens with ‘the ability to walk’. There are several characteristics that result in optimal walkability. By and large, successful walkable developments incorporate three key principles.²⁸” They are:

1. Physical Access: Infrastructure suitable for walking (e.g. safe, unobstructed sidewalks)
2. Places: Destinations such as dining, shopping and parks that are accessible via walking
3. Proximity: A mix of destinations within a half mile of residences.

Finally, the City must develop infrastructure strategies to manage legacy costs, leverage the value of older systems, and invest in future improvements.²⁹

Housing, Neighborhood and Community Improvement – Progress to Date:

From a community development/quality of place standpoint, the City has bestowed a monumental effort to reinvigorate the downtown area into a walkable, livable neighborhood. In the past eight years, the City has:

1. Built a new 3-screen movie theater
2. Helped bring in over a dozen new restaurants and small shops
3. Constructed a new streetscape as part of the downtown urban revitalization plan

The investment of energy and resources into the downtown area is showing signs of fruition, but now is not the time to decelerate. The momentum downtown is just now starting to reach a more rapid pace. A number of exciting new developments are being proposed. With further effort and creativity, the downtown area can once again become a community gem.



Strategy 2A: Engage in housing efforts aimed at improving demand for residential property.

Utilize marketing, selective demolition and repair of housing to revitalize neighborhoods and improve residential property values. Over the past eight years, the City has pursued some of these actions with regard to infill, code enforcement and demolition in order to improve overall housing conditions.

Actions:

- 2A.1:** Develop a strategic housing plan to direct all housing related efforts of the City. The focus of the housing plan should be to build demand for housing in the City with the ultimate goal of increasing residential property values in the City. Secondly, the plan should look at trying to reach this same goal by reducing supply. Thirdly, the plan should seek to reduce concentrations of poverty by supporting mixed-income housing.
- The housing plan should be data-driven. Building on neighborhood maps created in 2015 that divide the City into 57 sub-neighborhoods, (based on housing characteristics such as housing stock age, size and type), the City should use data, such as median annual home sale price/sq. ft, Days on Market, number of homes in foreclosure and pre-foreclosure, etc. to evaluate the relative economic health of each neighborhood. The goal is to classify neighborhoods based on the amount of assistance each neighborhood needs in order to attract new investment from private sources, such as purchases and rehabs by new home owners and investors. Each neighborhood should ideally be given a score on a set scale of 1-5, where a 1 represents extraordinary city effort needed to attract new investment and 5 signifies minimal effort needed to attract new investment. Being able to accurately assess each neighborhood will require first developing and populating a database with relevant statistical data on each neighborhood in the City.
 - A residential marketing plan will need to be developed within the housing plan. The plan should identify the message, audience and the marketing channels (e.g. social media, website, advertisements) that will be used. The primary audience for the City's marketing efforts will vary based on the neighborhoods being marketed.

Housing Plan Data Variables:

1. Delinquent Sewer Bill Accounts
2. Razed Properties
3. Vacant Properties
4. Rental Properties
5. Residential Building Permits
6. IL-AM Water Inactive Accounts
7. Neighborhood Ratings Survey Results
8. Median Days on Market
9. Median Annual Sale Price/Sq. Ft.
10. Median Annual Total Sale Price
11. No. of Homes in Foreclosure
12. No. of Homes in Pre-Foreclosure
13. Home Ownership Rate
14. Poverty Level
15. Crime

- Marketing for neighborhoods that are scored at a 2 or a 3 should be focused primarily toward Real Estate Rehabbers and Investors.
- Marketing for neighborhoods that are considered 3, 4 or 5 should be geared toward home owners. See side bar for suggested audiences. One audience with potential is commuters who work in Missouri (due to the city's central location). Data (see p. 113) indicates that the city already has a significant number of residents who work in St. Louis and elsewhere in the region.
- Marketing will not be an emphasis for tier 1 neighborhoods.
- Prioritize neighborhoods and identify and develop resources and tools needed for each neighborhood type. To maximize effectiveness, the City should start by identifying neighborhoods with the greatest marginal return on investment and concentrate resources on these strategically important neighborhoods.
- Generally, the strategy for each neighborhood type should be as follows:

Strategy By Neighborhood Type:

- 5: Marketing and home owner services
- 4: Marketing, fix derelict houses and home owner services
- 3: Marketing, fix derelict, infill, and home owner services
- 2: Demo & Infill, marketing, repair derelict and housing svcs
- 1: Demo and Land Bank

- The crux of the plan will be to define which tools and resources (including incentives) will be needed and how to use them to accomplish the objectives of fixing derelict homes, building infill, demolishing and land banking properties and providing housing and home owner services (note: the recommendations from section 2B.6, 2B.13 and 2B.16 can also all be applied to the housing strategy).
- Later in 2015, Madison County Planning and Development will be developing a housing strategic plan of their own. By collaborating with them, it is possible many of these tools, resources and incentives can be identified and developed in concert with the County, which should significantly reduce the cost to the City to generate a housing plan.

The Art of Living Marketing Ideas:

Whatever channels the City uses to convey its message to its resident audience (e.g. Zillow.com), it is going to need to develop a “hook” that will entice people to click on City ads and to pursue further information about living in Granite City.

One possible hook that has been suggested is the strength of the growing arts community in the city.

Photo Book

Another idea suggested is to create a stock of standard, high-quality photos of the City (e.g. pictures of parks, restaurants, etc.) that can be used in marketing materials and shared with realtors, who can include them in property listings.

For this, the City should hire a professional photographer to take photos of the city and create a database of pictures.

Promotional Video

The city could hire an outside firm to produce a video that would promote the benefits of living in Granite City. The video should emphasize the City's central location, parks and recreational amenities, arts and culture and housing options.

Target Audience

- a. Granite City Workers
- b. Commuters (workers in downtown STL)
- c. New College Graduates
- d. Home School Families
- e. Renters that Want to Own
- f. Former Residents

2A.2: Maximize utilization of existing Community Reinvestment Act programs offered by local banks and housing programs available through Madison County Community Development, such as the New Homebuyer Program.

- There is a financial advantage for young families to buy a house in CRA qualified neighborhoods. Namely, they can get reduced mortgage rates and other perks that make buying a house easier. By working with banks to publicize these programs and raise awareness with residents, the City can wield this as a tool to help encourage increased home ownership in certain neighborhoods.
- The Madison County New Homebuyer Program provides a grant of up to \$20,000 in rehab/repair assistance plus an additional \$5,000 in down payment assistance to homebuyers who meet certain income criteria for homes purchased that have been sitting vacant. Only a limited number of grants are available per year and they are available on a County-wide basis. However, by promoting both the program and eligible houses in Granite City in partnership with local realtors, the City can work to reduce the number of vacant houses in the City and increase home ownership at the same time.

2A.3: Welcome new home owners into the City. Working with realtors, bankers, neighborhood groups and others, the City should ensure that every person who buys a new home in the City receives a warm welcome.

- New Homebuyer Welcome Packet. The City should develop a welcome packet, including information about community events and amenities, important phone numbers, community organizations, and even a checklist for how to start a new business in Granite City. Other ideas would be to include a list of coupons to local businesses, possibly in connection with the Buy Local Program (see Strategy 2D.1). Another possibility is that the City could provide a coupon for a free movie ticket, or free items at the concession stand at the movie theater. Welcome packets should be distributed through the Building and Zoning Department to every home buyer, regardless of if they are moving from within the City or from another community.

Community Reinvestment Act

The Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), enacted by Congress in 1977 (12 U.S.C. 2901) and implemented by Regulations 12 CFR parts 25, 228, 345, and 195, is intended to encourage depository institutions to help meet the credit needs of the communities in which they operate.

Most banks have CRA Programs that provide benefits to low-mod income neighborhoods, such as reduced rates on mortgages, reduced mortgage insurance requirements and reduced down payment requirements, among others.

Forming partnerships with area banks could allow for the City to jointly promote the availability of these programs to help encourage new home owners to move into lower income neighborhoods, or to help renters to become first-time home owners.

<https://www.ffiec.gov/cra/>

2A.4: Collaborate with housing investors and landlords to balance code enforcement with investor and landlord incentive programs. In the recent past, the City has taken several measures to increase code enforcement, including the passage of the Crime Free Multi-Housing law, which mandates that landlords evict tenants who have three criminal violations within a certain period of time.

While enforcement is essential, if enforcement of building and occupational codes is too strict, it can have the unintended effect of chasing good landlords and other investors away, thereby reducing demand for property and causing property values to fall.

Because finding and keeping the right balance may not be easy, the City should develop an advisory board made up of both landlords and rehabbers to provide feedback to the City on policy related to providing enforcement and also on developing incentives that can be used to entice good landlord behavior. One necessary partner that should be included on this board is the Granite City Housing Authority. This advisory board should also be closely connected with the GC Development Network (see p. 108)

Some ideas that have been suggested, but would need to be refined further (possibly as part of the strategic housing plan) are as follows:

1. Provide a landlord education program (going beyond what is currently taught in the mandatory Crime Free Housing class).
2. Develop an objective evaluation system for rating landlords and rehabbers based on annual performance. (The City of Memphis, TN has a good model that can be at least partially replicated).
3. Create incentives for investors and landlords who attain high scores on the above mentioned evaluation system. Possible incentives might include reduced occupancy/business license fees.
4. Investigate legal possibility of raising business license fees for landlords who do not have a physical presence in Granite City to dissuade absentee landlordism.

Neighborhoods in Bloom: Richmond, VA

Richmond's Neighborhoods in Bloom program directs local, federal, and non-profit funds to distressed neighborhoods that are most likely to leverage private investment.

Richmond applied its targeted investment approach starting in the late 1990s. The city invested about 80 percent of its federal housing funds in six-to 12-block sections of six neighborhoods. Richmond also directed many of its own capital improvement resources to these areas, and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) aligned many of its investments with the city's strategy.

Richmond also used data on neighborhood condition criteria and revitalization potential to inform its selections. The neighborhood condition criteria included vacancy rates, crime, poverty level, homeownership rate, and housing quality. Revitalization criteria included the strength of civic organizations in the neighborhood, the existence of redevelopment plans, and market trends.

After selecting the neighborhoods, Richmond worked with nonprofit partners to buy vacant houses and lots, rehabilitate old houses, build new houses, provide down payment assistance and counseling to homebuyers, and help owners with maintenance. The city also stepped up code enforcement and increased police patrols in the areas. Five years after the program started, the Federal Reserve Bank Study found evidence that it had a positive effect on home prices in the targeted neighborhoods. Housing prices grew 10 percent faster in the target neighborhoods than city wide, indicating higher market demand. The program was also cost effective. The study's authors noted that the increase in property tax revenue from the neighborhood would pay for the program's investments within 20 years.

- 2A.5:** Create a fast-track abandoned parcel and property recovery program. “A vacant lot is a contagious place. Signs of its disorder – graffiti, car parts, trash ditched in the overgrown weeds – have a way of spreading. This is how it happens: First, the one lot drags down neighboring property values, discouraging people who live there from investing in their own homes, deterring banks that could lend them money, and unnerving buyers who might move in. Then the behavior that blight provokes multiplies, too: People who see litter, for instance, are more likely to litter themselves.³⁰ Finally, blighted lots become good places to stash weapons and sell drugs, and the crime that follows depresses the block even more until what’s the point of picking up the trash when you can just move out, too? And so these places multiply.”³¹
- If the City is to take control of its blight problems in residential neighborhoods, it must start by being even more active in taking control of vacant lots and abandoned homes. This can either be done by the City, itself, or through a separately formed Land Bank organization that the City can create (see Strategy 2B.16 for more details). For those properties that the City cannot acquire, strong code enforcement should be utilized.
 - Facilitate the on-going collection of parcel-based information on vacant and abandoned properties – including information on their location, zoning, tax status, market value, and ownership.³²
 - Additionally, the City should find (or develop) a partner like the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society (see sidebar on next page). This group could work with the City to provide light landscaping and maintenance for vacant lots around the City. And, it would ultimately end up costing the City less than what is currently being paid to Street Department workers to mow lots every week. An alternate strategy is to pay neighbors to maintain vacant lots adjacent to their homes at least once or twice per month.
 - Similar to the suggestion above, the City should actively work to expand the number of active groups that are maintaining community gardens on vacant lots in the City.

Fighting Blight

Surveying Blighted Areas – Detroit, MI

Detroit deployed more than 150 residents, survey software in hand, to document the most extensive census of vacant land that has ever been conducted in a U.S. city. Now the land bank in Detroit is trying to strategically auction abandoned homes worth salvaging, as the city prioritizes neighborhoods with the best chance of recovery.

Vacant Lots for \$1 – Chicago, IL

Chicago has been offering up empty lots for a single dollar to nearby residents and organizations who will care for them (and pay their property taxes).

Lot Landscaping – Philadelphia, PA

Philadelphia has proven that even a little light landscaping on vacant lots — at the cost of maybe \$1,000 a parcel — can significantly curb gun crime, boost property values and even aid residents’ health.

Transforming Vacant Homes

Other cities have discovered that a few minor improvements — replacing plywood over windows with Plexiglas, requiring owners to at least install new doors — can transform the look of an empty home.

Source: Washington Post

- For lots and fixable houses acquired, the City should seek to put property up for auction thereby enticing new investment into the neighborhood. The Homestead Program in Duquoin, IL is one model the City might follow. (See Strategy 2A.11 for an incentive that could also be offered to buyers).
- Finally, recognizing that certain neighborhoods exist that are simply unlikely to ever come back (particularly those that are closest to industrial uses) the City should seriously consider creating a Green Buffer Zone by, over time, slowly acquiring vacant parcels/houses, demolishing existing structures, cleaning the lots, and then returning those lots to nature. This must be done in concentrated areas, and should only be considered in those neighborhoods that are unable to attract new private investment, starting first with residential properties that are closest to heavy industry. To increase annual demolitions, the City should consider creating an in-house demolition team as part of the Street Department

2A.6: Establish a Land Bank Program. Having a Land Bank program is an essential tool for revitalizing residential areas. It is also essential if the City hopes to establish green conservation areas/buffer zones as suggested above. For more information on establishing a Land Bank, see Strategy 2B.16.

2A.7: Help residents avoid foreclosure. One of the largest contributors to blight in Granite City is the length of the foreclosure process in Illinois. Houses that goes into foreclosure will sit empty an average of over 800 days before going back on the market.³³ Many houses sit for longer. The best way to address this problem is to try and prevent foreclosure from happening from the outset.

The good news is: Programs already exist through agencies such as Justine Petersen to help residents on the verge of foreclosure renegotiate new terms with their banking institutions, providing credit counseling and much more.

Since people on the verge of losing their house tend to first call a realtor, first, the City should take an immediate step of organizing an education class for realtors to teach them about the available programs, so they

Pennsylvania Horticulture Society (PHS)

PHS has been running programs in Philadelphia since the 1970s, originally around community gardening. By the 1990s, the organization realized the city's vacant land was spreading so fast, it couldn't create enough gardens to keep up.

The city at the time was dealing with blight the way many cities still do today — by responding to the neighbors who complained the loudest, cleaning a lot, encircling it with an eight-foot chain-link fence, then heading across town to the next complaint. That ad-hoc response turns out to be a terrible way to contain a problem that operates like a contagion. And so PHS proposed that the city work strategically to clean lots and leave them as informal parks instead, regardless of who owns them.

PHS proposed building a modest fence rather than an imposing one — something just big enough to deter dumping without signaling to neighbors that they are unwelcome, too. At the cost of about a dollar a square foot, the group wanted to remove trash, [truck in topsoil, plant grass seed, plant new trees and install a three-foot post-and-rail wooden fence](#).

Since the early 2000s, PHS has had a contract with the city to operate this program, cleaning new lots and managing existing ones. Today, it regularly maintains about 6,500 greened vacant lots, April through October. Another 2,100 lots receive care once a month from paid neighbors. Since the start of the program, about 700 lots have gone on to be redeveloped.

can then refer those in need of help to organizations such as Justine Petersen. The City should also use its means of communication (See Strategy 5A) to increase awareness of pre-foreclosure programs available.

- 2A.8:** Develop partnerships to enhance access to liquidity for housing developers. “The most important feature of capital investment in [distressed neighborhoods] is the existence of predictable liquidity for housing development. *Liquidity* refers to the ability of investments to be converted into salable assets that others will buy. Liquidity in a housing market requires the availability of capital for developers who acquire land and buildings and rehabilitate them for sale or rent, and the ability of home owners to access mortgage markets and other investments for upgrading. The absence of liquidity at either end of the development cycle limits the potential of the market by limiting both supply and demand, ultimately constraining the growth in housing values.

The other side of the liquidity equation has to do with developer liquidity provided to households, businesses, contractors, nonprofit organizations, and entrepreneurs who use capital to buy, build, and rehabilitate property. In older cities, this kind of capital, particularly at the acquisition stage, has been the hardest capital to obtain; yet it is the availability of this financing to property owners and developers that drives market change.”³⁴

- Identify local, regional and national development finance organizations, such as IFF, The Reinvestment Fund, Community Reinvestment Fund, Justine Petersen, National Development Council, etc. and reach out to them to establish a strong relationship with each entity.
- Match housing investors up with the appropriate development finance partner to ensure provision of liquidity for housing development in distressed neighborhoods.

- 2A.9:** Explore employer-assisted housing. Employer-assisted housing includes financial assistance or education offered by an employer to help its workers purchase homes. Housing finance company Fannie Mae describes

Best Practice: St. Joe’s Carpenter Society

In East Camden, NJ, a non-profit church-based organization called St. Joe’s Carpenter Society (SJCS) obtained seed money from The Reinvestment Fund, (similar to the Grow America Fund). Over a 10-year period, SJCS used that capital to acquire, rehab and sell 650 units of housing, most of which were sold to home buyers who received a mixture of prime and subprime mortgages. Their earliest units had sales prices of \$20,000. Their 650th unit sold several years ago for \$120,000. The community saw an average increase in value of 40 percent during the 1990s, when almost all other Camden neighborhoods saw price declines.

One of the key issues that determined this value change, according to St. Joe’s Carpenter Society’s executive director at the time, was the predictability of development capital. Curbside activity of houses being rehabilitated led to a belief among residents that if they invested in their homes they could obtain the value back, plus a potential increase in equity over time. That belief then led to a general impression that the area was improving.

Building a quality and quantity of demand was a significant part of St. Joe’s strategy. As part of their community development program, they recruited and trained potential home buyers by establishing a Homeowner Academy. This program provided potential home buyers with credit counseling and household budgeting assistance. Only individuals who completed the program could buy a St. Joe’s home, creating a hurdle that measured participants’ willingness to commit, sacrifice, and own. In this way St. Joe’s was creating both a pipeline of housing units and a pipeline of housing buyers. They were making a market in the most basic sense.

employer-assisted housing as “an employee benefit that helps an employer achieve business goals while helping their employees with housing needs.”³⁵

Employer-assisted housing supports an employer’s interest in providing decent and affordable housing for its employees to attract and retain a skilled workforce.^{36, 37} Employer-assisted housing programs can have the added benefit of stimulating weak-market areas by bringing new residents and new investment. It can also help balance the number of jobs and homes in a community.³⁸

- The city can establish its own employer-assisted housing program as a model for other employers in the area. The program could involve direct financial assistance to homebuyers or renters, or homebuyer counseling. With its newfound expertise, the city can work with employers to establish their own programs, with a special emphasis on older neighborhoods and infill locations. Employers can often deduct the expense from their federal taxes. Additionally, employers may also be able to receive a state tax credit for their investment in employer-assisted housing.³⁹

2A.10: Concentrate code enforcement on priority neighborhoods. Without negating the recommendations in Strategy 2A.4, the city should concentrate enforcement activities on those priority neighborhoods identified in the housing plan. This will help in improving people’s perception of these neighborhoods. Consistent code enforcement can improve a neighborhood’s look and feel, improve safety, and boost the confidence of community members and potential investors.

- The city can improve its code enforcement efforts by working with neighborhood associations or neighborhood watch groups in priority neighborhoods to identify properties that need help. Some property owners might be neglecting maintenance and violating codes due to economic hardships. For these owners, the City should seek to find/provide assistance (through the County, etc.) to make repairs. The city can also take legal action, such as

assessing a tax lien for cleanup, or applying fines when property owners fail to fix code violations. This approach will likely work best in neighborhoods with a few problem spots. Code enforcement is less likely to work in neighborhoods with extensive abandonment and disinvestment.⁴⁰ In these neighborhoods, the city should focus on strategies such as those described in 2A.5 and 2A6 (assembling vacant properties into larger parcels to make available for redevelopment).

2A.11: Enact a property tax abatement program for redevelopment neighborhoods (outside of TIF Districts and Enterprise Zones). Local governments in Illinois can use property tax abatement to waive property taxes on improvements such as a new or remodeled house for a fixed period of time.

Without a tax abatement policy, a property owner could receive a substantially higher tax bill after improving his or her property. Higher taxes resulting from property improvements are an economic disincentive to investment. The city can attract investment in priority redevelopment neighborhoods by reducing or eliminating property taxes on new investment. With a lower future tax obligation, the owner or developer can more easily afford to take on debt to make improvements or repurpose a property. (Residences in certified historic districts are eligible for the State Tax Assessment Freeze – see side bar on page 40 for more info).

- According to Illinois State Law⁴¹, “any district that extends a property tax can abate (or decrease) any portion of its taxes for certain properties. Implementation of abatements requires municipalities and counties to solicit the participation of underlying districts, such as school districts and townships, if they wish to abate a substantial portion of the property taxes.”⁴²
- Home Rule communities such as Granite City, are legally able to apply property tax abatement to any of the following⁴³:
 - New single-family residential buildings located in “an area of urban decay”



Civic Park in downtown Granite City

- Affordable senior housing
 - Low-income housing
 - Previously vacant properties
 - Any commercial or industrial firm's property.
- To implement a tax abatement program, the city will need to establish rules for project eligibility, design, geographic coverage of the program, and transferring the abatement from one owner to another. Geographic coverage is an especially important consideration when looking to attract development to priority redevelopment areas.

Strategy 2B: Create vibrant commercial/mixed use districts that are strongly interconnected with surrounding neighborhoods. The nation, region and city's changing demographics and market preferences is driving demand for more diverse housing options in vibrant, walkable neighborhoods where residents do not need to drive everywhere.⁴⁴ The 2013 National Association of Realtors Community Preference Survey found that 60 percent of respondents prefer a neighborhood with a mix of homes and businesses within walking distance, instead of communities that require driving between home, work, and recreation.⁴⁵

In response to these changing trends, the City should emphasize developing more compact, mixed-use development. Studies demonstrate that policies allowing more compact, mixed-use development could raise property values and generate more property tax revenue per acre than standard suburban-style development, which is less compact. Vibrant, urban commercial districts, like downtown, influence every economic development issue facing the City, from talent attraction and retention to quality of place to economic diversification. For Granite City, there are two primary areas which, for a variety of reasons, make the most sense to concentrate on in an effort to grab on to the trend towards urbanization and walkable neighborhoods. Those two areas are downtown and Nameoki Road, particularly the Crossroads Plaza shopping center, from the north edge of the Nameoki Commons Shopping Center to the railroad tracks and the Pontoon Road overpass.

These two areas are ideal for redevelopment as mixed/use-commercial districts for the following reasons:



Gardens at Wilson Park

1. Both areas have unique strengths that can be built upon. In other words, the City does not have to start from scratch.
 - a. Nameoki Road has the highest traffic counts in the City. It is also centrally located and is sandwiched on the east and west by relatively strong residential neighborhoods. Traffic counts give this area the greatest propensity for redevelopment, while the central location makes it ideal for redesign to connect to neighborhoods by bike and walking trails.
 - b. Downtown has seen the most reinvestment in the City over the past five years with a new 3-screen movie theater and several new restaurants and small stores. It also has the largest concentration of historic buildings, which are of immense value as they make the city unique and give it character.
2. Both areas, despite their strengths, are significantly underutilized.
 - a. The Crossroads plaza area on Nameoki Road has the strongest demand for national-brand retailers of anywhere in the city, and yet the rent rates are far below what they should be for this area of town, largely due to old age of structures that lack aesthetic appeal and inefficient layouts with over-sized parking fields that provide virtually no access to stores by any other means than by motor vehicle transportation.
 - b. Downtown - while many buildings have been renovated and are being renovated in the downtown area, there are still several significant structures, particularly the old YMCA building, which are still in disrepair. Just as importantly, there are large, gaping holes left in the downtown area where historic buildings have been demolished. These holes are a source of blight and they severely deteriorate the walkability of what should be the most walkable area of the city.
3. Because of the above, both areas contain some of the city's best potential for becoming engines for economic growth within the City.
 - a. Nameoki Road is ideally suited to remaining the hub of retail shopping in the community. However, there is much room for improvement in

"A healthy and vibrant downtown boosts the economic health and quality of life in a community. Specifically, it creates jobs, incubates small businesses, reduces sprawl, protects property values, and increases the community's options for goods and services. A healthy downtown is a symbol of community pride and history."

- *The Pew Partnership for Civic Change*

this area. With that said, it is important to set realistic expectations for the types of retail that can be attracted to Nameoki Road. Because of its location, and the city's location in relationship to regional shopping areas such as Fairview Heights and Edwardsville, the City should not expect that Nameoki will become a draw for regional retailers and restaurants.⁴⁶

- b. Downtown is prime for smaller, mom and pop restaurants and shops, service-businesses who provide support for larger companies and arts and entertainment-related companies. It is also ideally situated for new urban mixed-use housing, but a housing market study should be done to determine the strength of demand for this type of housing. With new housing, a new downtown grocery store should also be contemplated.

In order for Granite City to realize the economic potential in each of these places, and to gain the ancillary benefits that these areas can provide to the city's housing market and neighborhoods, it will need to implement the following strategies to enable redevelopment and infill development in each of these areas.

These strategies are especially important as a means of offsetting weak market demand for real estate, which has resulted in low prices and rents. As a result, infill development is not financially feasible without public incentives or investments in infrastructure improvements.

Enticing developers might require the public sector to help fill near-term financing gaps, assemble parcels, clean up a contaminated site, improve nearby amenities such as parks and streetscapes, or otherwise make infill more attractive. Demand for space by people and businesses who want to rent or buy space is also crucial. The city and other committed partners can help increase demand in several ways, such as improving public perception, helping to recruit anchor businesses, and creating location-based incentives for prospective investors and buyers.⁴⁷

To make infill development more feasible, the City needs to create a strong foundation that establishes priorities, policies, and partnerships, and changes public perceptions. Applying a combination of these strategies can increase both the supply of and demand for infill development.

Community vs. Regional vs. Lifestyle Retail Centers

Community centers

The backbone of the shopping industry, community centers are typically 250,000-350,000 square feet in size, and pull from a 4 to 6 mile trade area with a 50,000 or greater population.

The centers often include discount department stores, home improvement stores, sporting goods, apparel, booksellers, restaurants, and supermarkets.

Regional centers

The largest shopping center type, regional centers focus on apparel and goods typically sold in department stores. The regional center generally exceeds 900,000 square feet, but can go up to 2 million square feet. The centers have an average trade area of 10 to 12 miles in suburban densities.

The lead department stores determine when and where the regional centers open.

Lifestyle centers

The lifestyle center was created in an effort to offer upscale fashion and home furnishing centers without department stores.

With a 4- to 6-mile trade area, lifestyle centers can squeeze between regional centers or into tight niche markets that are underserved by retail. Most retailers seek access to at least 75,000 households earning a minimum of \$75,000 per year. However, the lifestyle center format has been proven to work for moderately priced retailers that have a broader consumer base. Developers have recently found that the lifestyle format when combined with residential, office, and community uses can increase traffic and improve overall performance. These new mixed-use centers are often referred to as "town centers."

www.bettercities.net

Actions:

2B.1: Establish a redevelopment plan for identified priority infill development areas. Concentrating investment in priority areas is more likely to produce the highest return on investment – either financially or in terms of visibility and catalyzing private investment – than spreading limited resources thinly across the community. Focusing on a small area yields a cumulative effect that could send positive messages to the public and investors. To identify priority infill development areas, a community needs a vision for where and how it would like to grow and the change it would like to see. To implement that vision, the community needs a redevelopment plan.

- For the downtown area, the City already has the Conceptual Master Plan that was created in 2007 as part of the McCormack Baron project that was proposed at that time. Therefore, it is recommended that the City start with that plan and then seek to amend it based on any changes in the vision for the area that have occurred since that plan was created.
- Similarly, earlier in 2015, a conceptual master plan was developed for a portion of the Nameoki Road shopping area. Utilizing public and developer input, the City should amend this plan, if needed, to align with the community's vision for Nameoki Road.
 - The redevelopment of the Crossroads Plaza shopping center (plus adjacent properties) has the potential to make the largest positive impact of any individual project within this plan, if it is done well, because the site sits along the busiest corridor in the City, and it is currently underutilized. The property also appears worn and dated. Improving it, therefore, could greatly uplift the city's image. However, just building it back up as a traditional shopping center will not capture the full potential of the site. Instead, by making it a fully walkable, even mixed-use center that could potentially even include housing, with plentiful green space and even public amenities (e.g. a new community center and or library complex), this center's redevelopment could have massive influence in propelling the entire community forward.

2B.2: Expedite development review. Development review is an important tool for ensuring development proposals are consistent with a local government’s policies and codes. A local government could use expedited development review to shorten the period in which it promises to take action on qualified proposals.⁴⁸

- Reducing the time for the city’s review process can help developers save money because the project takes less time to complete.
- To use this strategy, the city must decide what kind of projects it would like to encourage and where it wants them (see Strategy 2B.1). Then, it can develop criteria to determine which projects qualify for expedited review. Criteria might include the amount of new housing or retail, density, or floor area ratios. The city should market this incentive to prospective developers.

2B.3: Ease parking requirements in infill locations. As is the case with Granite City, communities often set minimum parking requirements based on assumptions for areas with spread-out, automobile-oriented development patterns. These standards can require more parking than is needed in more developed areas such as a downtown, where people can park once and visit multiple destinations or can arrive on foot, by bike, or on public transit. Reducing parking requirements for infill development reduces the cost to developers by alleviating the need to build new parking and freeing up developable land for homes, offices and other uses that generate a higher economic return.⁴⁹

- First, the city should assess its existing supply of parking in infill areas, as well as current and projected demand. If the city finds a surplus of parking, it could be in a good position to reduce parking requirements for new development. However, in some places, residents and businesses expect dedicated parking even in downtown areas. Lenders might also require a certain amount of parking. In these instances the local government might be able to satisfy market or lender demands through other strategies,^{50, 51} such as:

Common Market Challenges to Infill Development

Market Dilemma: Sometimes, a private developer simply cannot generate adequate returns on its investment to justify the risks and challenges. Unless an incentive is available, the market for infill could struggle to reach a “tipping point” where incentives are no longer needed.

Risk Gap: Developers that are willing to take on the additional risk and invest in an infill project could find it difficult to secure financing. Lending institutions are risk averse and might shun infill projects because they are perceived as higher risk than similar projects in more affluent areas.

Greenfield-Infill Relationship: A regional market can absorb only so much growth. The growth might happen in Greenfield areas, infill areas, or most likely, some combination of the two. Development in Greenfield locations can absorb market demand that could have gone to infill areas, such as downtowns or established neighborhoods. Therefore, market demand for infill development can be influenced by a region’s balance of Greenfield and infill development.

Infrastructure Condition: Developers are wary of building in areas where they might need to make expensive infrastructure improvements. As the cost of replacing infrastructure increases building costs, developers might not be able to get high enough rents or sale prices to recoup their investment.

EPA - Attracting Infill Development: 30 Strategies

- Shared parking between adjacent or nearby properties with different peak demand times. For example, an office building might share garage parking with an apartment building because office workers generally park during the day and residents at night.
- A district approach where permit holders can park in any public space.

2B.4: Adopt Flexible Codes.^{52, 53, 54} “Flexible codes” refers to building, zoning, and other development regulations that give developers more discretion to build a project that respond to current and changing economic conditions while still meeting local standards for safety and design. Some types of flexible codes include mixed-use zones, historic preservation and adaptive reuse districts, form-based codes,⁵⁵ or expedited zoning review procedures for reuse of existing buildings.⁵⁶

- Codes that specify only exterior form and allow a broad range of uses can allow developers to respond to market demand for different uses. If demand increases for one use in the future, flexible zoning and building codes allow owners to change a building’s use with minimal permitting burdens. Flexible codes are useful in distressed markets where demand for infill is fairly weak and rigid requirements might scare off potential developers. Adding this flexibility to local codes allows developers to be more responsive to near-term market demand. For example, a flexible code can allow buildings to be designed to be used for commercial purposes when the commercial market is strong and then be converted to housing when that market strengthens.
- Rather than trying to control every element of design, a local government can stipulate a few major objectives or design features it wants infill development to achieve and let the developer design a project that meets the objectives. This flexibility can be applied

community wide or to a specific area through an overlay zoning district. These efforts often take substantial time, money, and political will. The city should consider these changes while updating its comprehensive plan or community vision. The city could consider forming an advisory committee and seeking zoning code expertise as first steps. The city should also utilize the Commercial Design Handbook that was written in 2013-14 as a guide to developers in designing new commercial structures.

2B.5: Provide clear rules for renovating historic buildings. Developers want certainty; they want the local government to clearly communicate what is permissible under the code.⁵⁷ Encouraging infill in areas with many historic buildings might warrant specific rules for adaptive reuse⁵⁸ and perhaps even a separate code or process for historic structures that identifies the currently acceptable life-safety standards while supporting creative and economically viable rehabilitation and renovation.⁵⁹

- Developers and investors can be discouraged by real or perceived additional costs and complications of renovating historic buildings often located in infill areas. The city can make these projects more attractive by providing clear guidance and identifying some common reuse strategies and design features through design guidelines or demonstration projects.
- First the city can identify its priority historic buildings for reuse in an infill area and establish clear rules for development through an overlay zoning district with regulations that preserve the district's historic character. This step provides clarity for developers. For current tenants of historic properties, the city can establish design guidelines that show how to respect historic features while accommodating business needs such as outdoor seating, signage awnings, and landscaping. Design guidelines can be applied in a district or building by building. Strategy 2B.6 discusses adaptive reuse

Historic District Certification

In Illinois, local governments can obtain certification with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, which can provide a number of benefits to property owners within a certified historic district.

Certification requires the city adopting and ordinance that includes a statement of purpose, provide for the establishment of a review commission, outline a process for designating local landmarks and/or historic districts, and include a process for reviewing actions affecting designated places.

When preservation ordinances are certified by the State Historic Preservation Office, local governments may participate in state and federal incentive programs. Properties located in certified historic districts can qualify for the 20 percent [income tax credit](#). Certification also extends the [Property Tax Assessment Freeze](#) benefit to local landmark and residences within local historic districts.

<http://www.illinois.gov/iHPA/preserve/pages/community.aspx>

ordinances, which also make it easier to renovate older office or industrial space.

It should be noted that the City does not currently have the staff expertise in-house to accomplish this action. Therefore, the City will need to either seek to add a planner with historic renovation experience, or will need to hire a planning firm who can provide this service.

- Redevelop the former YMCA building. At the top of the priority list for preserving historic buildings should be the old YMCA. As of this writing, there are two proposals being considered for the building, one for a hotel and the other for artist lofts. Whether it is for one of these or another project to be determined, the City should do whatever possible, within reason, to save this building and put it back into productive use.

2B.6: Adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance. An adaptive reuse ordinance makes it easier to convert older, economically obsolete buildings to new uses, such as housing, by providing tailored zoning and code requirements that recognize the differences between reuse and new development. The city can apply an adaptive reuse ordinance in specific zones with concentrations of historic underused buildings, such as downtown.⁶⁰

- Developers often encounter challenges in converting a historic building to a new use. They might find it difficult or impossible to earn an acceptable return on investment if they must apply standards for new construction to a historic building. For example, in Los Angeles, prior to the city's adoption of its Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, developers had to provide two or more parking spaces for each housing unit, which made it nearly impossible to convert a vacant downtown building into housing.⁶¹ An adaptive reuse ordinance applies specifically to older and historic buildings to make development economically feasible. By making it less costly to reuse an existing building, communities can increase jobs, housing options, and retail activity in existing and distressed neighborhoods.



- As a first step, the city can identify parking, density, design, and/or fire and safety standards that developers might have difficulty meeting when redeveloping an historic building and assess which of these standards might be relaxed for infill development. An adaptive reuse ordinance could, in certain zones, eliminate density restriction, reduce the minimum housing unit size, waive parking requirements, and allow expedited development review.⁶²

2B.7: Offer density bonuses in infill locations. Density bonuses allow developers to build at a higher density than is allowed under the existing zoning code. This is typically allowed in exchange for a community benefit, such as a park or affordable housing.

A density bonus allows a developer to spread the cost of land and other predevelopment costs among more units or square feet. By adding square feet and/or housing units, the developer might be able to increase the return on investment from the project. Density bonuses are also important incentives for developers to provide community benefits, such as park space or other infrastructure that are often needed in infill areas. Therefore, density bonuses can bring both the benefits of more people living in the priority infill area and much needed community facilities and infrastructure to support existing residents and new development.⁶³

- Density bonuses can be governed through the zoning code or applied during development review and approval.

2B.8: Seek State and regional partners. When financial gaps exist for redevelopment projects that the City does not have the financial resources to fill, partnerships with state and regional government agencies can help close those gaps.

- State and regional partners often have resources that local governments can use to plan or prepare areas for infill. For example, the region's metropolitan planning organization, East-West Gateway, can fund studies and infrastructure that set the stage for infill, and the Illinois Housing Development Agency (IHDA) might provide technical assistance or tax credits that help attract new development. These

partners might also help build the market for infill by putting offices in priority infill areas.⁶⁴

- The City should monitor state and regional funding programs while also developing relationships with key staff of agencies that can help the community get infill development. City elected officials can also forge relationships with state staff and elected officials. These relationships help state government staff understand the local government's goals and vision.

2B.9: Identify and engage key anchor institutions. Anchor institutions are businesses or nonprofit organizations that have a vested interest in the community because of real estate holdings, capital investment, history or mission. Anchor institutions can often make real estate investments that

serve their programmatic needs while contributing to economic development.⁶⁵

- Start by identifying anchor institutions that might have a stake in priority infill areas and determining where their interests overlap with those of the local government in areas such as housing rehabilitation, streetscape improvements, or public safety. The city could invite the anchor institutions to participate in existing programs or create a new program to work together on community improvement projects.

2B.10: Engage philanthropic organizations. Local, regional, state and national philanthropic organizations can support the city's community development efforts. Organizations that support environmental protection, affordable housing, social equity, distressed communities, and economic development will have a natural interest in infill development.⁶⁶

The city will need financial and technical assistance to achieve its economic and development goals. Philanthropic organizations can fill this void through grants, loans, advocacy, training, or even direct investment in projects..



- The city should identify local and national organizations that might have funding programs relevant to the community's development goals.⁶⁷ Some of these organizations who have worked with the City in the past include Justine Petersen, Fort Gondo, and IFF.
- In addition to tracking and applying for funding opportunities, the city can build relationships with philanthropic organizations to engage them as long-term partners in solving complex community development challenges.

2B.11: Strengthen code enforcement in key commercial areas. The same principles that apply to code enforcement in neighborhoods (see Strategy 2A.10) go for key commercial districts, as well. The city should therefore, place more emphasis on code enforcement in the Nameoki Road shopping district as well as in the downtown commercial area.

2B.12: Create pedestrian and bike transportation routes to connect major destinations (e.g. downtown, Crossroads Plaza) to neighborhoods throughout the community.

- Building off the community survey completed in fall 2014, the City should develop a Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan for the community.
- Once the plan is completed, the City will be able to pursue grant funds to finance the construction of the plan. The primary funding sources are:
 - Metro East Parks and Recreation District (MEPRD) Grants
 - US Steel Environmental Trust
 - Safe Routes to School Grants
 - Illinois Transportation Alternatives Program (ITAP) Grants
 - East-West Gateway Transportation Funds

2B.13: Build complete streets. During the second half of the 20th Century, most streets in American cities were designed with the primary consideration of moving vehicles. Now, many cities are adopting the concept of "complete

streets,” which are safe and comfortable for all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers.⁶⁸

Complete streets are especially important in priority infill areas. These areas are more likely to attract the interest of potential residents and businesses – and therefore developers – if they are welcoming to all modes of transportation and offer people easy access to daily destinations without needing a car. Complete streets can also improve the public perception of an area by adding more activity and eyes on the streets, which improves public safety. Also, by creating more travel options, complete streets can reduce parking demand and the cost to build parking in new development.

- Several design elements help transform an automobile-oriented corridor into a complete street, including wider sidewalks, street trees, a buffer between moving traffic and the sidewalk (e.g. a parking lane), protected bicycle lanes, and buildings that face the street.
 - Some particularly wide roads might be well suited for a “road diet,” which reduces the number of lanes or narrows existing lanes. The narrower street naturally encourages drivers to slow down; shortens the distance pedestrians must cross, which is particularly important for people with mobility problems; can create room for bike lanes; and can reduce the amount of impervious surface, which can reduce stormwater runoff.⁶⁹
- The city can take an important early step by identifying future complete streets in its transportation or comprehensive plans. Once the community knows where it would like to make these improvements, it can work with East-West Gateway or Illinois Department of Transportation to design the improvements and program funds for construction. (ITAP Grants are a potential funding source). This process can take several years.⁷⁰
- The city should also consider adopting a Complete Streets ordinance, which is a declaration of intention to design future



street improvements with all users in mind (pedestrians, cyclists, transit and drivers).

- 2B.14:** Hold public events and festival in priority commercial redevelopment districts. Public events and festivals can bring foot traffic and customers to priority redevelopment areas.⁷¹

Regular, neighborhood-centered events such as farmer’s markets, bike rodeos where bike safety is taught to children, craft and food fairs, and church festivals can connect neighbors and build a district’s identity.⁷² This can also include housing tours for those residential areas that immediately adjoin the downtown area. These events can help to change perceptions and support local businesses.

- 2B.15:** Enact a property tax abatement program for redevelopment areas (outside of TIF Districts and Enterprise Zones). As described in Strategy 2A.11, Home Rule local governments in Illinois can use property tax abatement to waive property taxes on improvements on any commercial or industrial property outside of a TIF District or Enterprise Zone. For commercial properties that are located just outside the Downtown TIF District, or in select areas along Nameoki Road, the City should consider making use of this ability when it is necessary to tip the scales in the City’s favor to get a new development in a priority redevelopment area.

- 2B.16:** Implement a land banking program. Local governments use land banks to acquire, stabilize, and redevelop abandoned or vacant properties.⁷³ Through land banks, the city can remove encumbrances such as tax liens or environmental contamination and prepare the property for a new productive use. Land banks effectively “hold” vacant or underused properties for future reuse and redevelopment.⁷⁴

Land banks can take possession of properties that have problems such as tax liens, unpaid property taxes or fines related to property maintenance, clear them of these problems that make it difficult for a developer to purchase them, and then sell them for redevelopment.

- The city first needs to collect data on all of its properties, such as data on tax delinquency and code violations. The city can use these data to identify specific areas where a land bank could operate.
- Before establishing a land bank, the city will need to determine how it will be managed. Some land banks are managed by city or county governments, while others are run as an autonomous entity.⁷⁵
- Once the city establishes the land bank, it will need to set criteria for acquiring properties. The city or land bank administrator must also establish policies for how it will stabilize and sell properties.⁷⁶

2B.17: Attract private equity. “Private equity” refers to funds that are invested in a project by the developer and its partners, or through tax credits and grants. Nearly all projects will require private equity, which is why it is critical to strategically identify the potential investors/developers whose past experience and interest lines up with the vision.

Setting in place the action steps listed above will greatly increase the attractiveness of investing in the community by reducing the potential risk to the developer and by helping to ensure adequate return on their investment through incentives. At this point, a revolving loan fund also comes in particularly handy because the city can use it to provide “mezzanine debt,” which fills the gap between a traditional loan and the private equity. Should there be a default, mezzanine debt is subordinate to the traditional loan but is paid back before the private equity investors.⁷⁷

- Develop a list of potential developers/investors whose past work lines up with the community’s vision for the target area for redevelopment.
- Systematically call on and share information with them about the redevelopment area. Listen to their feedback to identify and address any hurdles that exist to bringing them on board as an investor in the project.

Land Banking: Flint, MI

Flint, Michigan is a good example of a city that has used a land bank to transform vacant and abandoned properties. Genesee County runs a land bank that owns nearly 9,000 properties in the Flint area, including more than 4,400 homes and more than 4,000 vacant residential properties. The county forecloses on properties that are more than three years delinquent in property taxes and transfers them to the land bank. The land bank sells and rents properties and manages vacant lots by mowing and picking up trash or leasing them to neighbors for gardening or leisure.

Read more about the Genesee County Land Bank at:

www.thelandbank.org/whatwedo.asp.

2B.18: Encourage community development corporations (CDCs). CDCs are nonprofit organizations that manage or invest in projects consistent with community goals, such as job creation, revitalization, and affordable housing. CDCs operate in and are often organized and managed by neighborhood residents, institutions and churches, small business owners, and other groups with an interest in community development.⁷⁸

CDCs often work in distressed communities on a wide range of services and projects, including infill real estate development, to spur revitalization. They help fill a gap in the market by investing in projects that traditional lenders and developers are not interested in. CDCs can also invest alongside the private sector by providing gap financing between a traditional loan and private equity.

CDCs are often started by residents or a nonprofit organization, such as a church, that want to improve their community. They are established as 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and often capitalized through public or private grants. Many CDCs support infill development by investing their funds in small to moderate projects in their neighborhood. If necessary, the city could collaborate with local CDCs to ensure that their work aligns with community-wide development goals.

CDCs often rely on a patchwork of diverse funding sources to carry out their missions, including federal funds, earned income, foundations and state government funding. Three common federal funding sources that CDCs use to support infill development are Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and the HOME Investments Partnership Program.⁷⁹

2B.19: Encourage crowdfunding for projects and businesses in priority redevelopment areas. Crowdfunding is a new technique that involves raising money, typically over the internet, from a “crowd” of people that each has a small stake in the project. The federal Jumpstart Our Business Start-ups (JOBS) Act, signed into law in 2012, requires the U.S. Securities and

Exchange Commission (SEC) to develop rules to govern crowdfunding. The SEC proposed rules in 2013, and adopted them in March of 2015.

The JOBS Act is meant to make it easier for small businesses and developers to raise money through crowdfunding. The SEC rules allow private organizations to raise equity investments from any individual investor. Before the JOBS Act, organizations could raise equity investments only from wealthy, accredited investors. The new law allows developers to raise funds from residents in the community where a project is proposed.

Crowdfunding could be an especially powerful tool for raising equity for infill projects that investment funds and institutions that are disconnected from the community view as too risky. For example, an infill project in downtown Granite City might not meet conventional lenders' requirements for return on investment, but local residents might think the project is important enough for the community to invest small amounts of their own money.

Crowdfunding is an evolving tool, and it is not clear yet how a local government might use it. A developer or nonprofit, such as a CDC, would be more likely to use crowdfunding. Crowdfunding can also support entrepreneurs who take a risk by opening a new business in a distressed area. The funds can help them update retail spaces and purchase equipment. Because crowdfunding is on the cutting edge, precautions should be taken to safeguard against fraud and other risks.

A similar concept to pursuing financing through crowdfunding is to find a way to attract foreign direct investment using the "Green Card through Investment" program offered by the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services department. This program allows foreign residents to get a green card if they invest at least \$500,000 in targeted high unemployment areas or \$1 million in non-targeted areas.⁸⁰ The investment must create or preserve 10 full time jobs in the U.S. This could be another source of financing for those projects with stubborn gaps that are difficult to fill.

Creative Finance through Community Ownership, San Diego, CA

The Village at Market Creek is an infill retail project in a distressed neighborhood of San Diego. The Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation, a foundation, bought the site – previously known as the "Four Corners of Death" because of the prevalence of crime – for \$4 million in 1998. From the beginning, the Jacobs Center involved the neighborhood's residents in planning and designing a new shopping center. However, the Jacobs Center also wanted to let the residents share in the project's financial rewards. The center designed a new tool call the "Community Development Initial Public Offering (IPO)" to share ownership with the residents.

Development investors are typically institutions or wealthy individuals. But the Village at Market Creek IPO targeted residents of the area, who had a median income of about \$35,000 per year in 2007. The IPO opened in July 2006 to people who lived, worked, or volunteered in the community. Ultimately, it attracted 415 investors who contributed between \$200 and \$10,000 for ownership shares sold at \$10 each. The neighborhood investors are first in line to collect profits each year. The investors received a 10 percent return in 2008 and 2009.

The California Department of Corporations oversaw the IPO. The department only allowed residents to invest up to 10 percent of their income or 10 percent of their net worth, up to \$10,000.

www.jacobscenter.org/economicdevelopment_cdipo.htm.

2B.20: Utilize TIF and Business Districts. The City must be prepared to authorize use of TIF and Business Districts in high priority redevelopment areas. Unfortunately with redevelopment areas, some form of incentive is needed, because the costs of remediation or redevelopment are just too high. Thus the city can help secure sufficient financing to stimulate redevelopment, which would not happen if things were left to market forces alone.

The Downtown area already has an existing TIF District, which was established in 1987. However, that TIF District will expire in 2022. Since an extension of the existing TIF has already been enacted, the City's only option upon expiration will be to consider creating a new TIF that will reset the baseline for calculating tax increments to the tax levels at the time the new TIF is adopted in 2023. In the meantime, the City should continue using the Downtown TIF Grant program to help business owners fix up their buildings. Consideration should be given, however, to allowing larger funding amounts to be given to larger rehab projects at some point in time.

The Crossroads Plaza area on Nameoki Road does not currently have a TIF District in place. The City should not create a TIF District here until a developer is seriously interested in taking on the project. However, the City should decide well in advance whether or not it will approve the creation of a TIF in this area, as that could be a significant marketing tool to use to attract a developer to the project.

2B.21: Establish a capital reserve fund. The city can use capital reserve funds to save money for future capital projects. This practice can reduce the city's debt burden by using cash for a portion of the cost. A capital reserve fund has a defined purpose, making it different from a rainy day fund, which is used to cover unforeseen emergencies or budget shortfalls.

State law governs municipal finance, so the rules for establishing this type of fund are dictated by the State. Generally, the city will need to establish the fund and designate specific purposes or projects on which to spend the savings. Once established, the city can make regular transfers to the reserve fund.

Equitable Development and Meaningful Community Engagement

Policies that encourage redevelopment and infill in existing neighborhoods can bring environmental and economic benefits to a region, but they can also disrupt life for existing residents and businesses. It is important for the City to listen to and consider the concerns of people living in priority infill areas as they develop policies and programs to attract new development and investment into these areas. This means giving careful consideration to strategies that can help longtime residents and businesses stay in these neighborhoods, actively participate in planning for infill, and ultimately benefit from new growth.

Involving residents and stakeholders in decisions about infill and development can help ensure that reinvestment is informed and improved by a variety of perspectives, and that it brings the amenities that residents need and desire, and increases the likelihood that new development will bring fair access to new opportunities. Meaningful public engagement and involvement can also build long lasting support for infill from a broad range of constituents. For developers, this can lead to more predictable development processes and reduce costly delays caused by community opposition.

EPA – Attracting Infill Development: 30 Strategies

The city can also consider partnering with utility companies to make capital improvements that will make an area more attractive to investment. Utility companies have a vested interest in community development. The infrastructure that delivers their service might be underutilized.⁸¹

2B.22: Generate revenue through naming rights and advertising.⁸² The city can use naming rights and advertising to generate revenue from assets it owns, such as parks, arenas, public transit vehicles, land, and buildings. This strategy can support infill development by helping offset the cost of new parks or other public facilities and services.

The city can sell naming rights, or sponsorships, for a wide variety of services and facilities. They could also sell pavers or other recognition for smaller capital improvements, such as a new downtown streetscape.

In addition the city can sell advertising space on billboards, in public facilities, or elsewhere. The revenue can help cover the cost of a service, or it can benefit a particular area. For example, revenue from billboards in or near the downtown could be dedicated to infrastructure improvements linked to the community's redevelopment plan. While people might object to using a public facility to promote private interests or simply to a billboard's appearance, this strategy can generate substantial revenue to benefit a community.⁸³

- Before selling naming rights, the city should set policies about what it is willing to sell and reasonable rates.⁸⁴
- Another important step is to identify existing or planned assets that are appropriate for a naming rights deal or selling advertising.

2B.23: Utilize the arts to foster a unique character and a greater sense of place. Arts and culture strategies help to reveal and enhance the underlying identity — the unique meaning, value, and character — of the physical and social form of a community. This identity is reflected through the community's character or sense of place.⁸⁵



- Support the growth of the Granite City Arts and Design District (G-CADD). G-CADD is a section of downtown Granite in the 1800-1900 blocks of State Street. It is an endeavor being led by Fort Gondo, Inc. a non-profit developer and arts group who was instrumental in the revitalization of Cherokee Street in St. Louis, MO. Currently, Fort Gondo is working to open up over a half dozen new artist galleries, including two or three outdoor public art venues. They have also recently acquired the former Jesus' Place building and are renovating it, possibly to include artist studios, and potentially a makerspace (See Strategy 4A.6).
- Support Alfresco Productions. Alfresco Productions has had a tremendously positive impact on bringing the arts to downtown Granite City, particularly in the realm of the performing arts. Their most important contribution to the city has been the Alfresco Arts Center, which conducts plays and hosts musical performances throughout the year.
- Launch the Sculptural Arts Program w/ Amsted Rail. The City has a truly unique opportunity to partner with Amsted Rail, Alfresco Productions, and others, to launch a sculptural arts program. This program will hopefully enable world-class steel sculpture artists to have access to an industrial scale steel foundry for use in making steel sculptures. Participation in the program will require artists to create and donate a unique piece of art to the community. Those art pieces can then be used to build a sculpture park or to pepper town with unique sculptures, which will help further develop the city's unique character.
- Promote the Six Mile Sculpture Works Iron Pour. The iron pour is an event held every other year in downtown Granite City that attracts artists from all over North America and around the world. The city should allocate marketing dollars to help promote and sponsor the iron pour in the years when it is held in an effort to draw a larger number of participants and spectators from around the region.



Strategy 2C: Enhance the design, function and use of public spaces and primary corridors.

Creating great public spaces is about more than simply creating a place that is aesthetically pleasing, but physical beauty is an essential element of a great place. For example, “a three-year study by the Knight Foundation found a link between community satisfaction/positive perceptions of the community with its aesthetics, including physical beauty and green space. Many studies have found a correlation between civic pride and the visual qualities of community, e.g. what makes a community unique among its neighbors and special to its residents. These perceptions of the community have spill-over effects of increased economic potential, such as stable or increased property values, new jobs and increased tourism.”⁸⁶

Other elements that great places share include these four key qualities:

1. It is **accessible** and well-connected to other important places in the area.
2. The space is **comfortable** and projects a good **image**.
3. People are drawn to participate in **activities** there.
4. It is a **sociable** place where people like to gather, visiting it again and again.⁸⁷

As the gateways into the community, the primary corridors are also very important contributors to the perception of the city, both to residents and outsiders, alike. Here, the emphasis should be on cleanliness, physical attractiveness and green space.

Actions:

2C.1: Focus on redeveloping dilapidated structures and providing a facelift to older but viable properties along Nameoki Road, Route 3 and other prime corridors.

- Redevelop the northeast corner of Nameoki and Johnson Roads (the Bamboo Bistro corner)
- Encourage owners of Bellemore Village shopping center to reface the center, add landscaping and new lighting.



- Make a prioritized list of other problem areas needing addressed. Utilize both public input to make the list and public assistance to solve the problems.
- Prioritize code enforcement along main corridors.

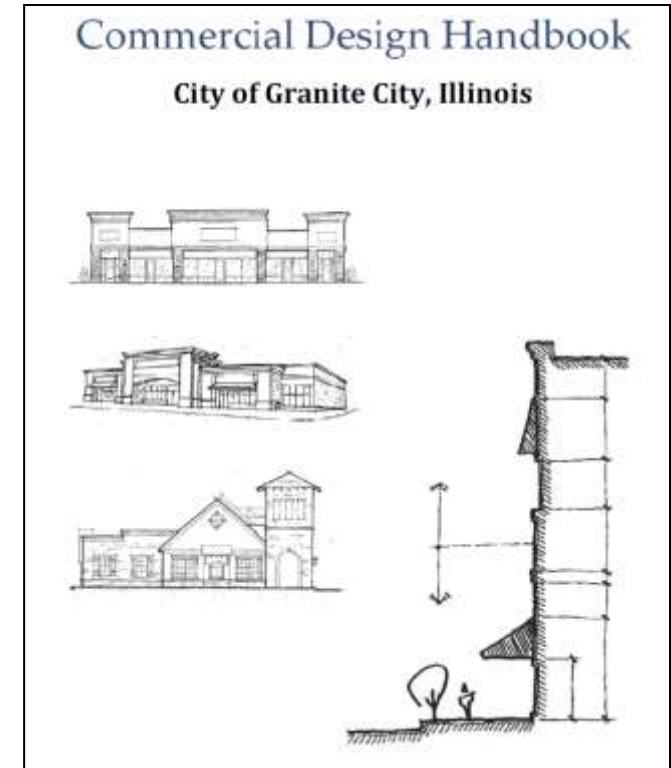
2C.2: Actively utilize the Commercial Design Handbook and tie the receipt of incentives its adherence. Encourage developers and businesses to consider the guidelines specified in the handbook during every plan review and Plan Commission meeting.

2C.3: Adopt new landscaping standards. On a relative scale to other communities, Granite City's current landscaping requirements are bare minimum. Using other cities as an example, the city should bolster its landscape standards in an effort to increase the amount of green space along its primary corridors and elsewhere in town. Additional landscaping standards should be considered in conjunction with revising parking requirements, as space that is currently being required for parking could be transferred to green space. (See Strategy 2B.3)

2C.4: Start a tree planting campaign for primary corridors and public spaces. Trees add beauty to their surroundings by adding color to an area, softening harsh lines of buildings, screening unsightly views, and contributing to the character of their environment.⁸⁸ Trees planted along asphalt streets also help lengthen the longevity of the asphalt and lower costs.⁸⁹

2C.5: Expand "Adopt-an-Area" programs. Work with IDOT to ensure that key entrances to the city and corridors are being maintained by companies and other groups who "adopt" a street or intersection. Even certain areas such as the exit for I-270 from Highway 203, which is not technically in the City, should be addressed, because it is a primary entryway into the City.

2C.6: Implement Low Impact Development (LID) Practices. "LID emphasizes the use of natural vegetation to control stormwater. Examples include rain gardens, bioswales, and street trees that intercept stormwater and help it infiltrate rather than run-off. LID adds value and beauty to both public and private



spaces while providing water quality benefits and saving money by reducing the need for stormwater conveyance and infrastructure.”^{90, 91}

- 2C.7:** Integrate public art in public spaces and along corridors. “In towns of all sizes, public art is a source of pride and plays a major role in sense of place. The success of public art relies on the level of community engagement and the location and design of the space it occupies.”⁹² The city should look at its permitting processes and ease restrictions on public art to facilitate the process.
- 2C.8:** Attempt a pilot project. Temporary projects can become a catalyst for change in the community with less risk than a permanent project. In Memphis, collaboration between a non-profit and businesses/residents started an initiative to improve the aesthetics of the declining Broad Avenue. They did a three-day experiment where volunteers installed temporary bike lanes, pedestrian improvements, pop-up shops, and programming. This initiative stimulated long-term investment, including façade improvements, block parties, and fewer store vacancies. Suddenly, adjacent neighborhoods began to follow suit with permanent improvements.⁹³
- 2C.9:** Concentrate city resources, including both major (street repair) and minor (crosswalk and traffic light painting) onto major thoroughfares in the City.
- 2C.10:** Utilize the Power of 10+ to transform the community’s public spaces. The Power of 10+ is a concept developed by Project for Public Spaces. The idea behind this concept is that places thrive when users have a range of reasons (10+) to be there. These might include a place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet. Ideally, some of these activities will be unique to that particular place, reflecting the culture and history of the surrounding community. Local residents who use this space most regularly will be the best source of ideas for which uses will work best.

Further, when cities contain at least 10 of these destinations or districts, their public perception begins to shift amongst both locals and tourists, and

Creating Great Places/Destinations – Power of 10

- A city needs **10+** major places/destinations
- Each **Neighborhood** needs **10+** places/destinations.
- Each **place/destination** must have **10+** things to do.
- **Triangulation** or layering of uses to create synergy
- Connect **places** to create a **district**.
- A **district** needs **100 -1000** things to do.

Project for Public Spaces

urban centers can become better equipped for generating resilience and innovation.

Outside of a few obvious choices, such as Wilson Park, Downtown, and perhaps the Crossroads Plaza center on Nameoki Road, selecting the ten areas that the City should develop as premier public places is something that must be determined with input from citizens, directly.

As with other efforts recommended in this plan, implementation of this initiative should be done in a focused manner, meaning that the City should focus on maximizing area #1 before moving on to area #2, etc. Maximizing each area requires developing a minimum of 10 things to do or experience in each place. The key is not necessarily creating a large amount of new infrastructure, but leveraging existing resources such as parks, waterfront spaces, and performance venues that can be utilized in nontraditional ways.⁹⁴

Introducing the Power of 10+ idea to the community should encourage citizens to quickly become more motivated to turn their places around. The Power of 10+ offers an easy framework that encourages residents and stakeholders to revitalize urban life, and it shows big things can be accomplished by starting at the smallest scale. The concept also gives people incremental and tangible goals, and it helps them to visualize, and collectively work towards, a truly great end result.⁹⁵

Strategy 2D: Address pressing issues pertaining to environmental sustainability. Environmental sustainability is an essential component of a good quality of place and a good quality of life. It is important not only because people choose to live in places that are clean (as opposed to polluted), but also because younger generations have generally adopted environmental sustainability as a cultural value, and they choose to live and work in places that share their values.⁹⁶

The city along with the business community has accomplished a great deal in this realm already in the past five years. Three times in the past seven years, the City was named as a Most Progressive City by Ameren for the multiple projects conducted that saved a combined 25 million+ kWh of electricity each year. Also, the



City, through its aggregation program has chosen 100% renewable energy to be supplied to all local residents who are included within the program.

Actions:

2D.1: Develop a Sustainability Action Plan. Working through the city’s Cool Cities committee, the city should create and adopt a sustainability action plan that seeks to address critical issues of sustainability in the following areas:

1. Transportation
2. Buildings and Lighting
3. Environmental Management
4. Land Use
5. Community Engagement and Education

The sustainability plan should set out clear goals, items to be measured, and the strategies and actions necessary to reach goals set.

2D.2: Work to reduce air pollution and particulate matter in Granite City’s air, and then aggressively promote progress in this regard to the public. Informal surveys conducted with workers who live outside of the community and former residents have shown that “air pollution” and “dirty air” are among the most common reasons cited for why these people choose to live outside of Granite City. Therefore, it is imperative that the City do everything possible (without harming local industry) to address this issue.

The following are some ideas that the City should pursue in this regard:

- Coordinate with the Thriving Earth Exchange (TEX) to identify solutions to curbing air pollution in the city.
 - Earlier in 2015, Granite City was selected as one of four cities in the U.S. (including Oakland, Washington D.C. and Des Moines, IA), to take part in a brand new effort to pair up municipalities with environmental scientists to design and execute ground breaking solutions for addressing each cities most pressing environmental challenge.

Sustainability Plan Focus Areas

1. Transportation
 - a. Complete Green Streets
 - b. Mobility Options
 - c. Efficient City Fleets
 - d. Demand-Side Travel Planning
2. Buildings and Lighting
 - a. Efficient Existing City-Owned Buildings
 - b. Efficient Existing Private Buildings
 - c. New Green Buildings
 - d. Efficient Outdoor Lighting and Signals
 - e. Building Reuse
 - f. Renewables
 - g. Green Business Development
 - h. Business Synergies
3. Environmental Management
 - a. Stormwater
 - b. Water Quality and Conservation
 - c. Air Quality
 - d. Waste Reduction and Recycling
4. Land Use
 - a. Green Space
 - b. Smart Growth
 - c. Buffer Zone
5. Community Engagement and Education
 - a. Local Food
 - b. Health, Nutrition and Fitness
 - c. Blue Green Alliance
 - d. Regional Sustainability
 - e. Smart Growth and Environmental Awareness

- Improving air quality in a way that does not impinge on the economic viability of existing industry was the problem that TEX decided to take up when Granite City was selected for their program.
- Implement continuous air quality monitoring. In partnership with the University of Illinois, TEX, EPA or another entity, the city should ensure that the air quality in the city is being continuously monitored for the purpose of both measuring changes in air pollution to determining the effectiveness of strategies implemented and also to have quantifiable statistics that the city can use to promote the improvement in air quality in the city over time.
 - EPA already does some monitoring, currently, but additional locations of monitors and full access to information readouts from those monitors is necessary for the city to achieve its purposes.
- Conduct a greenhouse gas inventory every five years. Connected to air quality monitoring, the City should conduct a greenhouse gas inventory through the Cool Cities committee and in partnership with the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). This inventory should measure the amount of greenhouse gas being produced by city operations, and also includes some measurements of household and business carbon footprints. Using this information, the city can set greenhouse gas goals and seek to achieve these goals on rolling 5-10 and 20 year periods.
- Experiment with Air Purifying Billboard technology. In the past 18 months, new technology has been developed by a University in Lima, Peru, which claims to clean the air of particulate matter within a 5 block radius, doing the work of 1,200 trees. This technology comes in the form of a billboard. The City should pursue grants and other means to fund bringing this technology to the city, placing the billboards along Highway 203 by the blast furnaces.

Air Purifying Billboard – UTEC (Lima, Peru)



FOCUS AREA #3: EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

Goal: Develop, retain and attract a highly educated resident population, whose skills align with the needs of businesses.

Globalization and the nature of competition in the knowledge economy have made investing in people-based assets a critical economic development concern.⁹⁷ To succeed in a global economy, cities and regions must provide necessary support to create a strong innovation environment. Talented people are the engine of innovation. As a result, education has become the fundamental driver of wealth creation.⁹⁸ Therefore, for cities to prosper in the knowledge economy, they must provide a high quantity of talented workers.

Granite City faces workforce challenges on multiple fronts: An aging population, highly mobile youths, and a crop of existing workers who lost their jobs in one industry and are either under or over-skilled for new jobs that have been created – while employers note an inability to find suitably skilled workers.⁹⁹ “There are three basic strategies to address these issues and to grow the talent force within a city: development, retention and attraction.¹⁰⁰ Of these strategies, development and retention are more sustainable and more likely to be successful in older industrial areas. Attracting talented people to a city can be successful, but it is usually best accomplished by concentrated efforts within a particular industry cluster or by focusing on groups, such as former residents, whose members will be more likely to return.”¹⁰¹

However, “the first and most important economic development goal for any city should be to develop and grow its workforce from within. This begins with ensuring that young people receive a quality education.¹⁰² However, the full depth of school reform is beyond the scope of what a City can do on its own. So instead, cities must focus on specific strategies that are attainable and that make the most concentrated impact. These strategies include: increased investment in early childhood education and making secondary education more relevant to today’s economy.”¹⁰³

Though this may be new territory for the City, in the end, because workforce pressures are so important to economic growth, whatever is required must be attempted.”¹⁰⁴

Redefining Talent

The concept of talent means more than a skilled workforce. It means recruiting talented people as well as cultivating the talent pool represented by groups as diverse as students, retirees, and entrepreneurs. It also means ensuring that the employees and companies that have been responsible for a community’s growth continue to see a reason to remain in the area.

National demographic trends, most notably the aging of the baby boomers, suggest that demand for workers may soon outstrip supply. As a result, competition for labor is expected to increase among companies as well as communities. Focusing on the development, attraction and retention of talent should, therefore, be an important part of any economic development strategy.

Strategy 3A: Bring the business, workforce training, and education communities closer together. The only way that an issue as big as Education and Workforce can be addressed is by establishing effective communication and interaction between Granite City businesses and educators.¹⁰⁵ Make sure to include organizations that train, organize, and network by occupation: professional associations, unions, colleges, technical schools and community-based organizations. Employers, training providers, and educational institutions often are forced to be reactive to issues of mutual concern. Facilitating greater communication and coordination between the private sector and the education sector will help Granite City meet its most important long-term goals.

Actions:

3A.1: Establish a Granite City Business and Education Task Force. This group should be part of or closely connected with the Granite City Development Network (see p. 108). The primary purpose of the task force should be to initiate an ongoing mechanism for business, education and workforce training leaders to discuss mutual challenges and generate ideas and solutions. More specifically, the task force should engage the private sector in local educational issues, identify new opportunities for business/school partnerships, provide a forum to match training needs with programs, and provide resources for improving student performance and educational attainment.

- The task force should be composed of representatives of area educational institutions (K-12 and post-secondary), businesses (small, medium and large), economic development and regional workforce development partners.¹⁰⁶
- In order to minimize duplication of efforts, serious consideration should be given to building off of existing committees to create this task force. Three existing efforts that should be considered are the Chamber's Leadership Committee (represents larger companies), the Manufacturing Day committee, and the Workforce Development Board
- A well-known and respected business or education leader should be identified by the core team to chair the task force.
- Once the panel is assembled, schedule in advance an agenda for meetings, the scope of work to be undertaken, specific tasks, and expected deliverables

Primary Problems Addressed:

1. Low Educational Attainment
2. Talent Flight
3. Lack of coordination between workforce development efforts

- The task force may consider forming subcommittees to study and report on specific issues.

3A.2: Enhance scholarship and mentoring programs.

- Each year, the GC Scholarship Foundation awards \$20,000 in scholarships to GC High School graduates pursuing higher education. Utilizing creative fundraising mechanisms, such as a community-wide pharmacy discount card tied to generating scholarship funds and through partnerships with local businesses, efforts should be made to expand the number of scholarships awarded each year, putting an emphasis on students who want to get technical degrees in manufacturing or other skilled trades.¹⁰⁷
- Building off of existing school-based mentor programs offered through Granite City School District, the Business and Education Task Force should work with the school district to expand the number of partner organizations and volunteers in the program to better help elementary students work on academic and social skills.

3A.3: Align economic development and area education programs – K-12, vocational, adult and post-secondary.¹⁰⁸ The Business and Education Task Force should work with regional higher education institutions and the GC School District to align vocational education and professional certification programs with City and regional industry cluster development efforts.^{109, 110, 111}

- Enhance and expand partnerships between the school district and local higher education institutions in developing vocational training programs in targeted industries.^{112, 113}
 - Encourage curriculum that allows students to earn high school credit, college credits, and industry certification at the same time.
- Promote computer programming training at all grade levels. Several new programs such as Code Red and free online resources are now available that can be utilized towards reaching this end.

“No city can hope to remake itself without strategies for raising resident’s skill and education levels.”

- *Retooling for Growth*

Strategy 3B: Promote a vibrant manufacturing labor force for the 21st Century. Granite City still has a strong manufacturing base. “Manufacturers want and are in desperate need of self-directed and engaged workers who can collaborate with others and who have math, engineering, computer-based analytical skills and are able to innovate.”¹¹⁴ However, locally and nationwide, there is a lack of people with these skill-sets; in part because few people from younger generations seem to have an interest in manufacturing.¹¹⁵ This strategy, therefore, implies a two-pronged approach of promoting manufacturing as a viable career option while also helping to provide workers with the skill sets needed to obtain these positions.

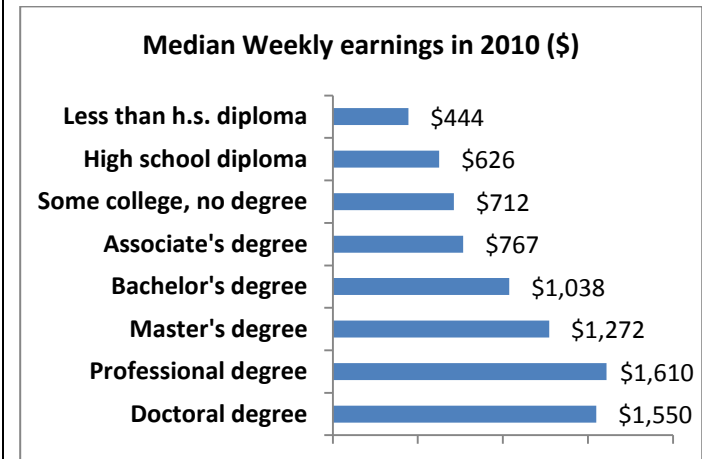
Actions:

3B.1: Partner with the Madison-Bond Workforce Development Board (WDB) to promote manufacturing and skilled trades as a viable career option for young workers.

- Utilize materials produced by the WDB marketing campaign (e.g. brochures, videos, etc.) to reach kids, parents and school counselors with the message about the importance and viability of choosing a career in manufacturing.
- Coordinate with local businesses, the school district and community college to arrange for field trips to the SWIC Industrial Training Center (ITC), and to have manufacturers come and present to 5th-8th graders about manufacturing and the benefits of making things for a living.
 - Partner with SWIC and local schools to set up demonstrations of manufacturing tools in action, including hands-on interactive presentations to help students discover manufacturing.
 - Consider producing a time-lapse video showing something being built (from parts to finished product) – One example might be the SWIC dune buggy. Use this video in presentations to students.
- Use career assessment and aptitude tests to better identify younger students who have a propensity for a career in manufacturing.
- Establish a manufacturing career fair for high school and jr. high students.

3B.2: Expand internship/apprenticeship programs to aid in the transfer of vocational students to entry-level positions among existing industrial employers and/or targeted industries.

Impact of Education on Earnings



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

- Use the Work-Ready Certification program to identify and assess quality candidates for apprenticeship programs and connect them with participating employers and schools for work-study apprenticeships.¹¹⁶

3B.3: Give residents the skills and connections they need to compete. Collaborate with the community college's Adult Basic Education Program, workforce development groups and businesses to move large numbers of underprepared youths and adults to and through some type of postsecondary credential (professional certification).

- Part of this process should include helping new and hard-to-employ workers to get the basic skills needed to survive in the workplace. By collaborating with SWIC, the City should help funnel residents needing this service into the college's ABE program, which provides this type of training.
- Connect local businesses to SWIC's ABE program to help build career connections for newly trained workers.
- Encourage local firms to develop training cooperatives to help reduce the cost of customized training.

3B.4: Form a workforce training subcommittee of the recommended Business and Education Task Force.

- The subcommittee should examine how local businesses and training providers can better coordinate and communicate needs versus capacity.
- Evaluate existing skilled trade incumbent worker training programs and address any gaps that may exist.
- Promote and support the Chamber of Commerce's Blue Collar Leadership Training Program.

Strategy 3C: Engage college students, young professionals and new residents. The keys to retaining college students and young professionals are to enroll, engage and employ them. Enroll has to do with helping local students go to college that otherwise could not. Engaging students is all about getting students to engage in events in the community and with participating in local organizations and when addressing local issues. Employ is all about providing a sufficient number of internships and job opportunities that recent grads can find a job that they want



without having to move somewhere else to find it. A big part of employ is simply building awareness about the opportunities that exist within the community.

Actions:

3C.1: Hold events in GC that would appeal to local college students and young professionals and promote them to these audiences.

3C.2: Utilize scholarships to provide students w/ opportunity for higher education (See Strategy 3A.2).

3C.3: Partner with local colleges to pair up student interns with local businesses.

3C.4: Develop a new generation of leaders. Existing leadership development programs developed by the local Chamber of Commerce has laid the foundation for new leadership development in the City. The City and Chamber should build upon this foundation to elevate the issue of generational leadership to a higher plane.

- Establish a Young Professionals Organization (YPO) that has a clear charter, goals and funding.
 - Organizers of this YPO should establish a Next Generation Task Force comprised by professionals and volunteers in their 20s and 30s. The purpose of the task force is twofold: (1) understand the primary barriers to this generation's civic engagement; and (2) design innovative methods of outreach and engagement.
 - *Needs Assessment.* The task force should conduct a needs assessment that identifies the issues and barriers to civic engagement by young adults in Granite City. The needs assessment should include a survey and focus groups to identify the primary issues and barriers to civic engagement.
 - *Social mapping.* A young adult social network mapping initiative should also be a goal of the survey and focus groups. The idea is to map relationships between people, groups and places in order to identify common interest, relationship and locations for interaction. Once the nodes are identified, specific strategies for engaging young adults can be designed.

Developing New Generations of Leaders

This is a challenge faced by communities across the nation. Many traditional social and volunteer organizations (e.g. Lions, Rotary, Elks) are no longer popular among the X, Y, and millennial generations. Younger people often choose more informal social networks linked by common interests. Technology now allows people to network and engage in civic issues via the Internet. Moreover, younger families coping with the time demands of two-income households and longer commutes tend to have less time for community leadership and volunteer activities.

Strategy 3D: Invest in early childhood education. Children’s success in school and life is significantly determined before they ever enter kindergarten.¹¹⁷ The keys to affecting early childhood success are: parent support and education; comprehensive early learning centers that serve the entire community and licensed child care.¹¹⁸ While City resources are unlikely to ever be sufficiently available to implement a successful early education program, by working with the school district, businesses and non-profits, both locally and nationwide, the City can help lead efforts to find creative solutions to address the early childhood needs in the community.¹¹⁹

Actions:

3D.1: Create a subcommittee of the Business and Education Task Force whose primary emphasis is on improving early childhood education throughout the community.

- The subcommittee’s first priority should be identifying the essential players necessary to assessing the early education programs already available in the community, and to identify the gaps that still need to be filled.
- Once those gaps are identified, a process of brainstorming potential solutions along with researching potential sources of funding should be conducted, resulting in a plan of action for addressing the most important needs in the community.

3D.2: Utilizing resources, such as Coordinated Youth and Human Services, the library, local churches and other entities, work to enhance the network of support for and to provide educational resources to parents of young children.

3D.3: Conduct an assessment of the availability and quality of available licensed childcare in the community compared to the need. Work to fill any gap between need and supply by working with local partners to help incubate new childcare, and by working with existing childcare providers to become licensed.

3D.4: Promote early reading programs. Coordinate adult volunteers to read to kids, grades 3 and under, at schools and libraries.



Strategy 3E: Reach out to former residents, recent graduates and immigrants. A successful talent attraction strategy must include reaching out to individuals and former residents with existing ties to Granite City, and others for whom the City has the highest probability of success in recruiting to the community. First, the portion of the target audience with existing ties already has a familiarity with Granite City, requiring less education about the community. Second, individuals with strong ties to Granite City, especially young professionals with families, may already desire to relocate if given a clear opportunity. Third, these individuals would presumably be easier to reach through existing social networks and, therefore, less expensive to reach.

Actions:

3E.1: Establish a marketing campaign urging former residents to “Come Home to Granite City.”

- Work with alumni organizations for area colleges and high schools; career placement offices at the various schools; and key allies to assist in the development of a database of former students to whom marketing materials should be sent.
- Develop marketing materials and a quarterly newsletter to inform former residents of opportunities and current events in Granite City (e.g. job postings, business expansions, investment opportunities, planning initiatives).
 - Consideration should be given to creating an electronic form of the newsletter for easier and less expensive transmittal.
 - Consideration should be given to distributing the newsletter to job placement counselors at area institutions of higher education as means for informing existing and former residents of local opportunities.

3E.2: Consider focusing on select populations of foreign immigrants who have recently come to the U.S. A primary target would be foreign students attending local colleges and universities.¹²⁰

Best Practice: *Return to Roots*

Return to Roots is a campaign aimed at the estimated 15,000 alumni who have graduated from Southwest Virginia’s high schools in the last 20 years and may have moved away from the region.

Return to Roots is an information portal highlighting the exciting job opportunities that exist today in Virginia’s Great Southwest Region.

www.returntoroots.org

Strategy 3F: Develop creative solutions for retaining dislocated workers and professionals.

The overriding goal for keeping dislocated workers in the region is to find them a new job. For highly skilled or technical professionals, encouraging and supporting the formation of new business start-ups can help to retain critical talent in the area. Area partners can also explore options for helping workers to find auxiliary income that allows them to remain in the area until new employment opportunities arise.

Actions:

3F.1: Establish an area Talent Team focused on retaining highly skilled professionals in the community.

3F.2: Directly connect companies that are reducing their workforce with firms that are adding employees.

3F.3: Work with all partners to rapidly move people into employment by holding targeted career fairs, conducting employer specific recruitment, and screening and hosting networking events.

3F.4: Encourage area educational institutions to temporarily hire skilled professionals and tradesmen as instructors and trainers.

3F.5: Foster and support the development of new companies. (see Focus Area #4, Strategy A).

Strategy 3G: Partner with financial institutions and social service organizations to enhance financial education and promote savings among those in poverty. One of the most crucial steps to helping those in poverty to escape and build their place in the workforce is to help them learn to save and build wealth.

Actions:

3G.1: Work with financial partners like GCS Credit Union to promote financial counseling and training programs.

3G.2: Collaborate with financial partners to develop a Savings Promotion program, where participants who regularly contribute to savings can be eligible to win a lottery prize (e.g. \$5,000 grand prize).

3G.3: Consider other programs that might be implemented to promote financial education among community residents.¹²¹

FOCUS AREA #4: ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION

Goal: Foster a culture of innovation and a vibrant entrepreneurial community within the City.

“Entrepreneurs play a vital role in economic development as key contributors to technological innovation and new job growth. Further, entrepreneurs help build communities in ways such as providing jobs, conducting business locally, creating and participating in entrepreneurial networks, investing in community projects, and giving to local charities. Realizing both the economic and social impact of entrepreneurship, many states and local communities have implemented aggressive strategies aimed at cultivating and nurturing entrepreneurs.”¹²²

Developing effective policies that will foster entrepreneurship, however, first requires understanding the different ‘types’ of small businesses that exist, as they each require different methods of support. According to Harvard Business Review, there are four primary small business types. They are 1. Non-Employee Sole Proprietorships; 2. Main Street businesses (those serving consumers and other local businesses); 3. Suppliers to larger businesses; and 4. High-Growth, innovation-driven businesses.¹²³

High-growth start-ups make up only 3% of all small businesses, yet they produce 20% of job growth.¹²⁴ While that makes it tempting to concentrate efforts on this business segment, it would be a mistake to focus exclusively on these businesses, as all four types are important. With that said, however, community resources are limited, so it is critical that efforts are organized in a manner that will provide the greatest return possible on the community’s investment. Determining the best local level strategies for entrepreneurship and innovation first requires knowing our strengths. While developing a number of high-growth start-ups in tech, life sciences and other high-growth industries would be a preferred strategy in an ideal world, there is a very low probability of success in pursuing these types of companies unless there is already a strong eco-system of similar companies already in the community. Case in point, studies show that the biggest driver of new tech firms is the presence of old tech firms within a community.¹²⁵

This doesn’t mean that Granite City should ignore high-growth firms. However, it should seek to identify the opportunities for growth that stem from existing strengths within its economic eco-



system. In general, these companies are likely going to be found in the consumer product manufactured goods, specialty foods or professional services spaces, although the City certainly shouldn't overlook other opportunities that may present themselves outside of these three broad areas.

Outside of identifying and supporting these types of high-growth companies, the area where Granite City most likely has the highest propensity for entrepreneurial success is with supplier-type small businesses. In fact, the City already has a solid history of developing these types of companies, such as Gateway Packaging, a supplier of packaging products for Ralston Purina and Sara Lee Bakery, and machine and tool shops like Arnette Pattern and Ehrhardt Tool and Machine. Focusing resources, such as low-interest loans and other incentives, on these types of businesses should be a priority for the City as part of its entrepreneurial development efforts.

Finally, the City should also aim to provide support to main street and sole proprietor business types as well. Due the large number of these types of businesses, however, strategies that focus on individual business support are unlikely to have a big impact while consuming large amounts of time and energy. (The exception to this would be for those companies who are planning new construction projects that will improve the physical landscape of the community). Instead, the City should focus its efforts on things like streamlining the permitting process for small businesses, reducing regulatory red-tape and main street revitalization efforts such as in the downtown area. However, the most important resource the City can work to provide for these types of businesses is a community that is supportive of small business. "The Community (those who aren't entrepreneurs themselves) is the single most powerful force in fostering entrepreneurship, and yet it is the single most overlooked asset. The community ultimately decides whether entrepreneurship flourishes or not, simply by how the masses interact with their community's entrepreneurs."¹²⁶ The City can help develop this resource by developing a Buy Local Campaign, and by encouraging the formation of small business networks, such as the recently formed, Business Foundry, who provide encouragement and mentorship opportunities for entrepreneurs in the community.¹²⁷

Strategy 4A: Promote entrepreneurship and small business development. The City and its economic development partners should place greater emphasis on fostering small business development and growth-oriented entrepreneurship. Fostering entrepreneurship is important for multiple reasons. In general, small businesses are

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

"Older industrial regions must create an economy where entrepreneurship at multiple levels can thrive – from the small neighborhood micro-business to the rapidly growing firms. To accomplish this goal metropolitan areas need access to capital, transparent and efficient government processes, and a local culture that recognizes and rewards the value of risk-taking activity.

The development of a favorable entrepreneurial culture is in part intangible and subjective. The leadership of these metropolitan areas – public and private – needs to celebrate, reward and incentivize entrepreneurial behavior as a key pathway to economic growth."

- *Retooling For Growth*

responsible for a significant portion of jobs created. Local businesses that have matured in a community often have much stronger ties to the area and require less effort to retain. Entrepreneurial enterprises add to those elements: they contribute to economic vitality through their creativity and innovation. In other words, they create a center of gravity for talent and capital. To “foster” entrepreneurship, it has to be woven into the very fabric of the community’s culture and then supported by the entire community to be successful.¹²⁸

The unique quality of entrepreneurial ventures rests on the following understanding:

- *Export Oriented:* Unlike many small businesses, entrepreneurial companies seek markets beyond the immediate region.
- *Capital Intensive:* since these companies are on a growth trajectory, they require substantial operating and expansion investment.
- *Technology Driven:* even non-technology companies require a technology infrastructure (broadband, e-commerce transaction capability, highly skilled workforce).
- *Professional Service Dependent:* since most entrepreneurs have some form of intellectual property (including patents, specialized equipment or processes), they need easy access to legal, financial, and marketing services.

While small business development centers are beneficial to the typical locally-oriented start-up, they are not designed to assist the specialized needs of entrepreneurs. The facilities, networks, and support they need fall into a different category. As a consequence, this recommendation speaks to the assistance the City should provide in building an entrepreneurial cluster within the community.

Actions:

4A.1: Assess the existing entrepreneurial programs and services available to Granite City entrepreneurs. Work with representatives of SIU-Edwardsville Small Business Development Center (SBDC), The Business Foundry, People in

Business, Justine Petersen and the Chamber of Commerce to formally assess the needs of area entrepreneurs and identify and address gaps in services and support that are not being provided.¹²⁹

4A.2: Work with partners to enhance services for entrepreneurs to augment the City's entrepreneurial assets.

- Encourage the SIU-Edwardsville SBDC or other organization to offer entrepreneurship training courses such as FastTrac or NxLevel that provide intensive training for potential entrepreneurs.
- Encourage the development of a mentor network to match new entrepreneurs with experienced entrepreneurs.
- Create a clearinghouse of information on services available in the community. Include a description of services and contact information for:
 - Business services: accounting, legal, human resources, information technology, business transfer planning, production, marketing, market research.
 - Financing services: microlenders, local banks, national banks, factors, angel investor networks and business plan competitions.
- Support the establishment of a formal angel investor network to aid entrepreneurs in raising seed capital by providing opportunities for entrepreneurs to present business plans and financing needs to an audience of local investors.
- Create a one-page "Starting a New Business Checklist." Keep the list simple and provide a point of contact for additional information. Incorporate this checklist in the new resident welcome packets (See strategy 2A).

4A.3: Establish and information clearinghouse to aid entrepreneurs in gaining competitive information, market research and assistance.

Entrepreneurship Training Curricula

Founded by the Kauffman Foundation of Kansas City, Missouri, FastTrac is a boot camp for entrepreneurs. According to the foundation's materials, 70 percent of companies that go through the program succeed beyond three years – the oft-touted threshold by which the majority of small businesses fail. The program can be brought to any town provided there is an organization willing to become certified to teach the program. <http://www.fasttrac.org/>

Another popular program is NxLevel, a curriculum developed by the University of Colorado at Denver. NxLevel includes 7 different curriculum tailored for different types of entrepreneurs. Since 1994, over 300,000 students have participated in NxLevel trainings. A third-party evaluation of the program shows that over 90 percent of start-ups that participated in the program were still in business after 3 years. The program is taught by certified trainers in over 600 communities in 48 states. <http://www.nxlevel.org/>

- Partner with the Library District to create a section on the City Web site (using a separate URL to direct people to the start page) devoted to entrepreneurship. To access certain areas of this site, entrepreneurs would register with the City. This will allow the City to keep track of who is using their services and monitor any potential abuse.
 - *Competitive Information.* Consider making available select commercial database services such as Lexis/Nexis, Dun and Bradstreet, InfoUSA, and Claritas to registered small businesses. The City/Library could consider charging a nominal fee for this service.
 - *Small Business Resources.* Update and expand the list of resources in Southwestern Illinois currently on the City's website. This list should include technical assistance providers, financial institutions (traditional and non-traditional), and a calendar of events. In addition, "how-to" guides should be created to guide to make this entrepreneurs in starting a business, securing financing, applying for necessary permits, and complying with regulatory requirements. Also, reorganize the website information easier to access. It is currently buried deep within the site. A separate website that is widely promoted may be a better solution.
 - *Communication Vehicle.* Use this website to allow for quick and efficient sharing of information of news and announcements with the small business community, and for the businesses to share information with one another.
- Create a banner that reads, "Thinking about starting a business... go to www._____.com." Then move this banner around town every few weeks so that it gets maximum visibility.

4A.4: Celebrate and support entrepreneurship in the City. The City and its partners should engage in a public relations campaign profiling area entrepreneurs ("success stories") – current and past – and informing residents of entrepreneurial activity and initiatives. This will help foster an entrepreneurial spirit and a community that values entrepreneurship.

- In line with the City’s message strategy theme, *Where Art and Industry Meet*, the City should include this effort in *The Art of Innovation* segment of its rebranding campaign.

4A.5: Establish a small-batch manufacturing accelerator in Granite City.

- Through a partnership with St. Louis Makes, the City has an unprecedented opportunity to partner with a regional team to develop a manufacturing accelerator in the City. The goal of the accelerator is to bridge the gap for product companies, providing access to 80% of the resources necessary for scaled growth during the early stages of the new product development process. Through onsite design and engineering services, flexible production and assembly space and a network with regional manufacturing partners, the manufacturing accelerator provides manufacturing start-ups with more control of their product outcomes than would otherwise be achievable in a traditional product-to-market path.
- The opportunity to develop a resource such as this will enable the City to grow its own manufacturers to a degree that has never before been possible. This is a game changer, and should be a top priority for the City.

4A.6: Explore establishing a makerspace in Granite City.

- With the recent purchase of the former “Jesus’ Place” building at 1900 State by Fort Gondo Inc., a non-profit redeveloper who emphasizes the arts, the City has another incredible opportunity to turn a severely underutilized building into an economic engine for promoting entrepreneurship and the arts.
- At present, the final use of the building is unknown. However, serious consideration is being given to creating a maker’s space. “Makerspaces are community centers with tools. Makerspaces combine manufacturing equipment, community, and education for the purposes of enabling community members to design, prototype and create manufactured works that wouldn’t be possible to create with the resources available to individuals working alone. These spaces can take the form of loosely-organized individuals sharing space and tools, for-profit companies, non-

Community Culture

“The community’s culture and actions will become a major attractor or detractor for individuals seeking to become entrepreneurs in a city or region. Understanding the community’s mindsets will help economic and community development and chamber of commerce leaders utilize this asset to foster entrepreneurship.

Fostering entrepreneurship is not a gem to be found in the earth but rather a complex set of networks, interactions, and relationships that need to work in a harmonious manner to achieve the desired results.

More specifically the entrepreneurial masses must be excited to rapidly start and grow businesses, the community needs to be empowered to shift their culture to embrace risk and support innovation, the business community must pivot to be supportive and collaborative in a new manner, and community governments and leaders must be willing to adopt supportive policies. Entrepreneurial hubs require all audiences to be engaged and building simultaneously.”

- Seth Meinen

profit corporations, organizations affiliated with or hosted within schools, universities or libraries, and more. All are united in the purpose of providing access to equipment, community, and education, and all are unique in exactly how they are arranged to fit the purposes of the community they serve.”¹³⁰ The City should be an active partner with Fort Gondo to develop a makerspace, if that is the direction that they choose to pursue.

4A.7: Support The Business Foundry’s efforts to establish a Coworking Center.

- The idea behind Coworking Centers is that independent professionals and those with workplace flexibility work better together than they do alone. Coworking spaces are about community-building and sustainability. Participants agree to uphold the values of collaboration, openness, community, accessibility and sustainability, as well as interact and share with one another. Coworking represents something far more than simply that of people working in the same place. It represents a fundamentally new way of thinking about how we work and share with one another.
- A Coworking Center can be a valuable tool in helping to build a strong community of entrepreneurs within the City. As such, the City should support the efforts of the Business Foundry, or any other group who seeks to establish this type of resource within the City.

4A.8: Provide access to financial resources for entrepreneurs.¹³¹

- Utilize a Revolving Loan Fund to support key start-ups and small business expansions. (See Strategy 1E for more details).
- Establish and sponsor a biennial business plan contest.
 - Every other year, the City should set aside \$10,000 to fund a business plan contest. The funds could be used to award cash prizes to winning entries, as well as matching grants for business plan implementation. One example to follow in the region is the Metro East Start-Up Challenge.

Metro East Start-Up Challenge

The Challenge is a \$25,000 cash prize business plan competition to identify, encourage, and reward excellence in entrepreneurship in the St. Louis Metro East region.

The purpose of the challenge is to:

1. Increase the Metro East region’s interest in and excitement for business start-ups through a competitive process;
2. Identify "growth oriented" start-ups with plans to operate in the nine-county St. Louis Metro East region;
3. Generate a greater awareness of network services/resources for entrepreneurs and small business owners; and
4. To advance the academic mission of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville by strengthening relationships with private enterprise and expanding opportunities for both students and faculty.

<http://www.siu.edu/metroeaststartup/>

- The City should invite area companies, especially professional service firms, to sponsor and participate as judges.
- Encourage local lenders to offer small business financing to aid area startups and strengthen the banks' Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) ratings.

Strategy 4B: Support the CEO Program and the creation of further youth entrepreneurship education in Granite City public schools. Beginning in 2014/15, the CEO Board, formed in partnership between the City, School District and local businesses, launched the inaugural year of the Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) Class at Granite City High School. The CEO Program is a two-hour, two semester long class for Seniors at GCHS. Students visit with 50-60 businesses over the course of the school year, write business plans, operate a class business and launch their own individual businesses over the course of the school year. The program focuses on exposing students the opportunity that exists for them within the community. A survey conducted at the beginning and end of the 2014/15 school year revealed that, prior to the class, only 1 out of 12 students planned to live and raise their family in Granite City after high school. At the end of the year, 11 out of 12 students said that they planned to continue calling Granite City, 'home' after finishing college.

Actions:

4B.1: Continue to support the CEO Board in recruiting businesses to sponsor the program and act as mentors for the students, and in recruiting students for future year classes.

4B.2: Work with the Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship, the School District and the CEO Board to identify ways to expand the benefits of the CEO Class to a broader range of students within the high school.

4B.3: Find ways to implement an entrepreneurship program at lower grade levels, specifically, 5-6th grade and 7-8th grade.

Strategy 4C: Encourage innovation among existing businesses. The St. Louis area is home to a number of companies and institutions that support and foster innovation. Granite City can support innovative businesses and individuals in the City by referring them

The CEO program:

- Is funded by business investors
- Is open to high school juniors and seniors
- Selects students through a rigorous application process
- Serves students from public and private high schools
- Meets for 90 minutes each day
- Provides 2 high school credits
- Utilizes area businesses as classrooms
- Visits dozens of area businesses each year
- Hosts 50-60 guest speakers each year
- Emphasizes 21st century Learning skills
- Provides the opportunity for each student to start their own business
- Provides a mentor from the business community for each CEO student
- Hosts an annual trade show to showcase student businesses

to the appropriate innovation resource providers in the region. “One of the most critical elements in a knowledge-based economy is the strength of its RandD and the ability to transfer technology to the market.”¹³²

Actions:

4C.1: Work closely with Southwestern Illinois College, SIU-Edwardsville, T-Rex, The St. Louis Regional Chamber, Small Business Development Center, and other partners to establish a regional “know-how” network of business service providers. A know-how network would offer enhanced business and technical assistance services to area entrepreneurs and small businesses.

- “Support must include programs for opening new markets, establishing business and supplier networks, and providing access to management resources, start-up capital, technical assistance, research facilities, and physical space.”¹³³

4C.2: Assist companies in identifying other sources of technical assistance, such as the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC).

4C.3: Encourage companies to secure local, state and federal government contracts relative to innovation.

4C.4: Encourage companies to pursue federal grants to support innovation, such as the Small business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program.

4C.5: Sponsor a local design competition. The competition should engage area entrepreneurs, students, engineers, or industrial designers in the development of new products, solutions, or ideas. Invite local companies to participate in the competition through financial support, judging assistance, or submission of specific problems for contestants to solve.

4C.6: Work with existing providers to develop an ultra high-speed fiber internet infrastructure within the community.

- “In today’s world, access to broadband infrastructure is necessary to attract economic development and connect people to the economic mainstream. Computer literacy is becoming essential not just to qualifying

SBIR Program

SBA’s Office of Technology administers the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program. Through these two competitive programs, SBA ensures that the nation’s small, high-tech, innovative businesses are a significant part of the federal government’s research and development efforts. Eleven federal departments participate in the SBIR Program; five departments participate in the STTR Program awarding \$2 billion to small high-tech businesses. www.sba.gov/sbir

for a job, but even finding job openings, as employment listings and recruitment increasingly gravitate to the internet.”¹³⁴

Strategy 4D: Provide support to main street and sole proprietor business types. Boost the entire small business ecosystem by providing a more friendly business environment.

Actions:

4D.1: Establish a Buy Local Program. Utilize coupon books and other promotional materials to encourage residents to shop Granite City, first.

- Dedicate a portion of the City’s website to the Buy Local Program.
 - Include a business directory on the website. There are existing services available that the City can use that will manage this list for the City, and it is funded through ads placed by local businesses on the page.

4D.2: Support the Business Foundry and other small business networks.

4D.3: Streamline the permitting process to make starting a business as smooth of a process as possible.

FOCUS AREA #5: CITY PRIDE

Goal: Craft and promote a powerful, positive narrative to engender a favorable perception of the community throughout the St. Louis metro area.

Granite City should take a more active role in defining itself to both residents and those in the St. Louis region and beyond. Developing and broadcasting a positive narrative for the City for the purpose of growing a healthy image of the community in the minds of current and prospective residents is of absolute necessity if Granite City hopes to retain and attract talented workers and innovative companies into the community.

Unfortunately, there are some significant hurdles that the City will need to overcome in the way of current negative perceptions of the community that are commonly given as answers when people around town and the region are asked what they think or know about Granite City. Some of those perceptions include issues about pollution and general lack of cleanliness, crime, school quality, and overall appearance of the town. However, there are also a number of positives from which the City has to build. One of these includes a perception that Granite City is being associated with the arts more and more often. Other positives include the friendliness of residents and growing awareness outside the city of the ongoing revitalization of downtown.

When the attractiveness of a place is considered, things like the optimism, outlook and receptiveness to growth of its leaders and residents are often overlooked and have been for too long. As the City looks to bolster its image, among the most important activities that must be achieved is the clear articulation of a vision for the future of the community, and celebrating the actions and individuals that move the community closer to that vision.^{135, 136} Such intangibles can have a major impact on the decisions of both residents and businesses to locate within the community. A visibly positive, engaged and committed group of business and civic leaders is critical to establishing and maintaining that mind-set.¹³⁷

Succeeding in this effort will require that the City and its partners (private and public) commit additional resources to raising the image of Granite City.



Strategy 5A: Elevate the image of Granite City both locally and regionally. One of the most important audiences of any marketing effort should be the people and businesses already in the city. They are the ones who have already made an investment in the area and they represent Granite City on a daily basis. Making sure that existing residents and local business leaders have a positive image of their community is critical to the success of any external campaign, as these are the people who can best tell the Granite City story to the outside world.

Actions:

5A.1: Establish a City Message Strategy. A message strategy is the foundation for future marketing efforts. The message strategy should consist of a positioning statement and three to four support points. The positioning statement addresses a pressing problem. “A message strategy makes it easier to deliver the same message in all your marketing communications. Consistent execution of the same message is a critical factor in successful marketing.”¹³⁸

- The City’s message strategy should evoke an impression within people that the City is progressive, forward-thinking and an enjoyable place to live and do business. At the same time, it is important to be true to the City’s roots. A City can say whatever it wants about itself, but if people don’t believe it, then it doesn’t do any good. At its heart, Granite City is an industrial town, and that is not going to change, nor should it be the goal of the City to abandon its industrial roots. Unfortunately, however, the common perception of industry in America is often more negative than it is positive when it comes to factors concerning quality of life. For example, the phrase “dirty steel town” is not uncommon to hear when people reference Granite City.
- The City should seek to promote its heritage, therefore, as part of its message strategy. At the same time, the City’s message needs to convey that there is something more to Granite City, something that people should want to see and experience. It can do this by focusing on the positive aspects of manufacturing and then associate them with the City. One of these positive aspects is innovation. Granite City has a long history

Message Strategy

All planned brand messages should:

- 1) Create brand awareness
- 2) Change or reinforce customers’ attitudes
- 3) Stimulate some kind of response or action
- 4) Stimulate the interactivity that helps build brand relationships.

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of innovation, both within its business sector and within the community itself. Associated with innovation is the concept of creativity and art. As the image of the city, specifically the downtown area, has grown as a place for art, this has created an opportunity for the community to take control of that imagery and adhere it to its brand.

- The branding that has been used previously for the downtown area, therefore, which is “Where Art and Industry Meet” should be considered as a prime candidate for a theme to be used and expanded to the entire community. This theme speaks to both the City’s foundation and its future, and tells people that the City is focused on progress and growth. Ways in which this theme can be expanded include the following:
 - The Art of Living: Focuses on the quality of life and the amenities and benefits of living in Granite City.
 - The Art of Business: Emphasizes the strength of the business community and the quality of the city as a place to do business.
 - The Art of Education: Addresses education and learning, which are a key factor in the decision-making for young families when they choose where to live.
 - The Art of Innovation: Spotlights the pioneering nature of the City’s past and the exciting, motivating aspects of the City’s future, centered on creative expression of ideas.

5A.2: Develop and implement an internal marketing effort. This is designed to promote a positive image of Granite City among residents and build awareness regarding current economic and community development initiatives. This effort should promote a positive image of Granite City not only to local residents, but those living throughout the wider Metro East and St. Louis Regional areas. The campaign should be coordinated with local governmental agencies (School, Park and Library Districts), the county, the chambers, the Business Foundry, Southwestern Illinois College and other partners.



Some cost effective initiatives that can be utilized to market Granite City internally include:

- Develop a single city-wide “calendar of events.” The calendar can be established in a new stand-alone site or within a social networking site such as Facebook, but should link from and to the City website. This would allow various community organizations and individuals to manually update their events on the calendar and link to it on their own websites. As a stand-alone website, consideration should also be given to creating a space to share ways that citizens can get involved in community improvement efforts and projects.
- The City and its partners should work with the local media, including both print and broadcast media, to promote positive stories about the community and to publish the calendar of events. Something as simple as highlighting local business achievements or including human interest stories can help create a positive image of the community for local residents. “Highly reliable, timely, creatively analyzed data, powerful testimonials and clear writing can be developed and delivered with sweat equity rather than checks.”¹³⁹ To this end, the City should seek to find free-lance reporters, who write for local papers, and develop a relationship with them whereby they would write and submit stories to local papers in partnership with the City.
- Although it requires a larger monetary investment, the City should consider the development of a Community App that can be downloaded onto smart phones and tablets, allowing residents to quickly and conveniently access community information. Most importantly, this is an effective way to “push” information out to those who download the app in a quick manner.
- Develop a regular Community Progress Report. This can be done annually, semi-annually or quarterly. The format could be a newsletter or e-newsletter. The focus should be on community and local business achievements including status updates on the initiatives recommended in this plan.



- Coordinate with local businesses, such as grocery stores, restaurants, doctor's offices etc. to ensure that community information such as events is posted on bulletin boards or kiosks in their lobbies.

5A.3: Influence the image of Granite City portrayed on the Web.

- Assume ownership of Granite City's entry on Wikipedia. Regularly update the information and data with references.
- Establish a new Facebook page for Granite City. Join other City-related Facebook groups to influence content.
- Create a Twitter account to update and inform regional residents and followers of new announcements, upcoming events and salient issues.
- Update the City's website. The current website has a good deal of useful information within it. However, users report that the site is too difficult to navigate. Therefore, the City should hire a firm to restructure the website to be simple, concise, fresh, friendly, clean and easy to navigate. The City's website will serve as the clearinghouse for information, using different URL's to point to different sections of the site. When the site is redesigned, it should be done with this end goal in mind.
- Create a blog section of the City website to provide content and connect to other sites.
- Coordinate social media strategies with other organizations in the city and county such as the chamber, library, etc. to utilize other social media apps such as Next Door, and Instagram, etc. to reach our target audience.
- Successfully implementing these initiatives will require having one person who has the primary responsibility of managing these efforts. This will need to be someone other than the Economic Development Director. Whether the city somehow restructures the duties of existing personnel, hires someone new, or a combination therein, someone needs to be dedicated to traditional and social media monitoring and managing the City's image and marketing efforts. This person could possibly also manage the City's website and handle the duties associated with updating Channel 993.

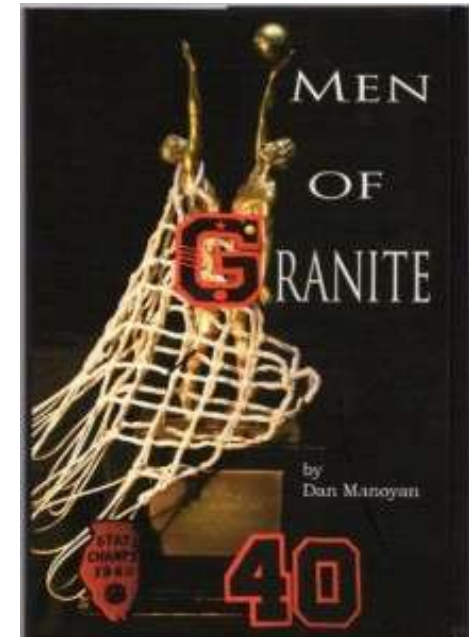


5A.4: Employ word-of-mouth marketing techniques. Word-of-mouth marketing allows information about Granite City to be disseminated without the City's direct involvement. This type of marketing leverages existing social and IT networks. It can extend the reach of the City at a very low cost. Internal marketing efforts will assist in building positive information exchanges around economic development initiatives in Granite City. Efforts should include giving community leaders, business owners, managers, residents and city staff the information and tools to communicate with the internal and external community in order to generate this type of information exchange.

- For Granite City, viral marketing offers low-cost marketing strategies for targeting the greater St. Louis market and beyond. City partners should create entertaining or informative messages that are designed to be passed along in an exponential fashion, especially electronically or by email. Short, creative videos posted on YouTube is one example.
- A one-page "cheat sheet" for an internal audience and one for an external audience should be created and distributed. These sheets should outline the primary message that the City would like to have conveyed, important talking points, and three to five concise sales points.

5A.5: Granite City has a unique opportunity that not many communities have, and that is the upcoming *Men of Granite* movie that is being filmed. The City should look to capitalize on the success of this movie in any way possible. At minimum, consideration should be given to creating some type of memorial or exhibit at Lincoln Place Community Center where visitors can come to learn more about the young men who were portrayed in the movie.

5A.6: Explore options for regional guerrilla marketing. Guerilla marketing is another technique by which an organization reaches its customers through non-traditional, free or low cost, promotional activities. Rather than money, the primary inputs of a guerilla marketing campaign are time,



energy and imagination. It requires marketing organizations to think of unconventional ways to reach its target audience. While time-intensive, this marketing technique can be a very effective means of establishing a personal relationship with customers that promotes a strong brand loyalty.

Strategy 5B: Encourage civic engagement, transparency and neighborhood leadership to develop community and individual pride within both youth and adults. Studies have shown that people are much more likely to think highly of their community if they feel like they have a connection with their neighbors and if they believe that they have a sense of ownership over their neighborhoods, that is, a sense of responsibility for the place where they live. However, in an era where civic clubs are finding it more and more difficult to attract new members, the City will need to work to find creative solutions for raising up neighborhood leaders and for engaging the public and enticing them to join efforts to make their community a better place to live.

Actions:

5B.1: Enhance/transform the Neighborhood Watch program to become a proactive neighborhood improvement and crime prevention task force. Currently, most Neighborhood Watch groups in the City are inactive, and generally only become active in response to an issue, such as a break-in, that arises in their neighborhood, and then fades back into inactivity over a matter of months. The City should encourage Neighborhood Watch leaders to engage in proactive measures to improve neighborhoods, as these measures can not only act as a deterrent to crime, but they draw the neighborhood closer together at the same time.

- Put out a call for neighborhood leaders. Provide them with a list of suggested best practices and ideas that they can implement in their neighborhoods. These ideas might include:
 - Neighborhood Clean-up Days (picking up trash and other debris)
 - Neighborhood Green-up Days (tree and flower planting in neighborhood green spaces)



- Neighbor Needs List: List of running projects to help those neighbors with household improvements, who are unable to do the work themselves (e.g. seniors, disabled)
- Neighborhood Block Parties
- Neighbor-to-neighbor communication network using tools like the Next Door app.
- New Neighbor Welcome Committee
- Provide neighborhood leaders with a tool box of resources that the City can make available specifically for neighborhood groups. Listen to leaders to find out what tools they need most. Some ideas to get started include:
 - Trash/dump trucks for clean-up days
 - Make trees and plants available for planting
 - Paint fund for painting in the neighborhood
 - List of important phone numbers

- 5B.2** Organize a semi-annual, community-wide Paint and Plant the Town events to encourage widespread community involvement. The Paint and Plant the town event can build upon Neighborhood Watch clean-up/green-up days, as it could be a date when multiple groups coordinate their efforts on the same day. Establishing a volunteer Leadership Team will be essential to accomplishing this task.
- It is important to brand the event/day by promoting it throughout the community. Provide t-shirts, funded by corporate sponsorships with the name and a logo on the front that all volunteers throughout the community can wear on event days. As the event grows over time, this can help to build a sense of community pride as it becomes something that residents can rally around to make their neighborhoods a better place to live.
 - Suggested dates for holding these events would be around Earth Day in the Spring, and sometime in early October (such as the weekend before Homecoming Week starts). If possible, the event should also be coordinated with the annual event day for Rebuilding Together.



- In addition to projects coordinated by neighborhood leaders, the City should coordinate one or two larger projects that anyone can participate in on the day of the event. This could include tree plantings in one of the parks, picking up trash along Nameoki Road, or any number of other ideas that are on a larger scale.
 - Make sure to set up a 'home base' for volunteers to meet up at the start of the day to pick up supplies, water and t-shirts and to get directions from team leaders.
 - After the projects are completed, the City should host an after-party with refreshments and games to celebrate the work completed and to promote further relationship building between members of the community. Funding for the after party can largely be raised through donations from local businesses.
- Encourage youth involvement in community-wide volunteer efforts by partnering with groups like the PTAs for each school, church youth groups, Girls on the Run, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Club Sports Teams, etc.

Strategy 5C: Synchronize the existing assets and organizations working in the community to collaborate towards common goals. There are a number of valuable community organizations already in town, such as the Rotary Club, the Ministerial Alliance, Elks and many others who are each doing various activities to help make Granite City a better place to live. However, by finding where these efforts overlap and coordinating them together, the City can build synergy that can allow bigger efforts to be accomplished.

Actions:

- 5C.1:** Develop a task force made up of representatives of the major organizations working throughout town that will lead on-going efforts in bringing together existing community assets to accomplish big-picture goals.
- Start by mapping out the various organizations in town and the initiatives and programs they are doing. Then work to enhance communication between the groups.



IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX & PROJECTS SUMMARY

The following guide outlines potential partners and allies as well as a recommended time horizon for implementation.

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
CGC - City of Granite City; County - Madison County; ACP - America's Central Port; SWIC - Southwestern Illinois College; SIUE - Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville; IMEC - Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center; SBDC - Small Business Development Center; CCSWMC - Chamber of Commerce SW Madison County; STLRC - St. Louis Regional Chamber; GCSD - Granite City School District; Park - Granite City Park District; SMRLD - Six Mile Regional Library District; BF - Granite City Business Foundry; WDB - Madison-Bond Workforce Development Board; LC - Leadership Council; DCEO - IL Dept of Commerce and Economic Opportunity; STLM - St. Louis Makes; Ameren - Ameren Illinois; RR - Rail Road Companies; JP - Justine Petersen; HA - Housing Authority; Real - Realtors; MCT - Madison County Transit; Alf - Alfresco Productions; FG - Fort Gondo; 6MSW - Six Mile Sculpture Works; CCC - Cool Cities Committee; CYHS - Coordinated Youth and Human Services; UIX - Univ. of IL Extension; FD - Freight District							
GOAL #1: MAINTAIN AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH IN PAYROLL AND EMPLOYMENT (JOBS OFFERED IN THE CITY) THAT EXCEEDS BOTH THE STATE AND METROPOLITAN GROWTH RATES THROUGH BUSINESS RETENTION, DEVELOPMENT AND RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES, TRAGETING BUSINESSES THAT ALIGN WITH IDENTIFIED LOCAL AND/OR REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL CLUSTERS.							
1A Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses.							
1A.1	Enhance and continue the business retention and expansion (BRE) program.	CGC, County, ACP, Ameren, CCSWMC, WDB, DCEO					X
Project 1A.1a : Site Inventory		Maintain inventory of existing businesses and available properties and make property information readily available to existing companies.					
Project 1A.1b: BRE Visits and Surveys		Make at least 25 business visits per year with leading employers and interview primary managers.					
Project 1A.1c: Manufacturing Roundtable		Organize a regular roundtable of business executives representing small and medium sized manufacturers in the City. The goal is to engage in candid, solution-seeking discussions focused on executive-level manufacturing issues.					
1A.2	Continue raising awareness of economic development issues.	CGC					X
Project 1A.2: Economic Summit		Establish an annual City Economic Summit to keep leaders and citizens informed of economic opportunities and challenges in the City and region. The summit should include information regarding economic trends and business climate issues.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
1B	Pursue new investment from suppliers and vendors of companies in the region and from those local companies seeking to consolidate facilities.						
1B.1	Visit with existing businesses in Granite that operate facilities outside of the area.	CGC, County, ACP, Ameren, CCSWMC, WDB, DCEO					X
Project 1B.1: Map Supplier Chain		Identify and map out suppliers and customers of existing businesses, particularly those who are connected to multiple local businesses,					
1B.2	Gather testimonials from business leaders for use in marketing materials.	CGC, CCSWMC	X				
Project 1B.2a: Testimonial Marketing Piece		Summarize business leader testimonials into 1-2 page document for inclusion in marketing materials and site selection RFP's.					
Project 1B.2b: BRE Case Study		Write case studies of large companies who either located or expanded in Granite City for use as longer marketing pieces when recruiting businesses.					
1B.3	Enhance the business environment.	CGC, County	X				
Project 1B.3a: Extend Route 3 TIF District		Petition the IL State Legislature to extend the IJRA TIF Act and extend the life of the Route 3 TIF District for an additional 12 years.					
Project 1B.3b: Renew Enterprise Zone		Work w/ Madison County to procure a new Enterprise Zone in Granite City.					
Project 1B.3c: Review M4 PUD Process		Poll businesses and land owners of property along Rt. 3 to identify and remediate any unintentional barriers to growth that might be created by the existing M4 PUD zoning approval process.					
1B.4	Monitor St. Louis area news outlets for reports of consolidation.	CGC, ACP					X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
1C	Pursue a targeted, cluster-based industry strategy						
1C.1	Leverage barge-to-rail freight opportunities.	CGC, ACP, FD, County, DCEO					X
1C.2	Build awareness among decision-makers in target industries.	CGC, ACP, County, STLRC, LC					X
Project 1C.2a: Target Industry Database		Develop and maintain a database of companies and resource information for each target industry sector. The latter includes identifying associations for each industry sector.					
Project 1C.2b: Direct Mail Campaign		Initiate a direct mail program to companies within each target industry sector.					
1C.3	Build awareness among corporate site selectors.	CGC, ACP, County, STLRC, LC					X
Project 1C.3a: Maintain Location One		Continue to maintain and update information typically of interest to commercial and industrial developers on the Location One and City websites.					
Project 1C.3b: Site Inventory and Marketing		Develop an inventory of site data for top six industrial sites in the City. Inventory should include data on price, acreage, topography, infrastructure, environmental conditions, etc. Use this info in marketing efforts to promote the sites to end users and developers.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
1D Increase the availability of commercial and industrial land along Route 3 suited for new development.							
1D.1	Develop Intersection at Route 3 and Chain of Rocks Road.	CGC, County, DCEO, Ameren			X		
Project 1D.1a: Project Sasquatch		Interest has recently surfaced from a large-scale industrial park developer who has taken an interest in one of the City's prime sites along Route 3 and Chain of Rocks road. The City should make every effort to reel this company in by offering to help with marketing, incentives and permitting from start to finish on the development of the property.					
Project 1D.1b: Hotel Project		Search for a developer/franchisee to develop a quality 80+ room hotel near Route 3 and I-270.					
1D.2	Form strategic alliances to plan and prepare existing land sites for future development.	CGC, ACP, County, DCEO, TRR			X		
Project 1D.2: Lewis and Clark Mega Site		Work with partners to revise site master plan and to then procure funding to provide infrastructure to make site "shovel ready."					
1D.3	Invest in durable public goods (infrastructure).	CGC, County, ACP, Ameren				X	
Project 1D.3: Funding for Access Roads		Procure funding solutions to provide for access roadways to site off of Route 3.					
1D.4	Develop site submittal template for site Requests For Information.	CGC, County, ACP, Ameren	X				
Project 1D.4: Develop RFI Template		Develop a template for each major site and industrial facility in the City for use in RFI responses.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
1E Establish a City-managed community revolving loan fund.							
1E.1	Establish a \$500,000 funding pool utilizing CDBG and UDAG sources.	CGC		X			
1E.2	Enter into a contract with the National Development Council to leverage funding pool up to \$2 million.	CGC		X			
1E.3	Design a loan scoring system emphasizing innovative businesses in targeted industries as well as infill or redevelopment projects.	CGC, County		X			
1F Develop a local “rapid response” strategy and designate a team for dealing with potential lay-offs or plant closures.							
1F.1	Identify assistance programs for at-risk companies.	CGC, County, IMEC, WDB, DCEO	X				
1F.2	Design flexible, demand-driven education and training programs for dislocated workers.	CGC, SWIC, WDB, DCEO		X			
1F.3	Encourage the establishment of a Community Adjustment Committee.	CGC, County, WDB		X			
Project 1F.3: Community Response Plan		The plan would coordinate community resources for helping families deal with issues associated with income loss (e.g. psychological stress, housing, utility bills, food assistance, creditors, insurance).					
1F.4	Cultivate relationships with site selectors, developers, and real estate brokers to ensure prompt reuse of a closed facility by a new tenant.	CGC, County, ACP					X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
GOAL #2: ADVANCE THE CITY'S QUALITY OF PLACE							
2A Engage in housing efforts aimed at improving demand for residential property.							
2A.1	Develop a strategic housing plan.		CGC, County	X			
	Project 2A.1a: Neighborhood Database	Building on neighborhood maps created in 2015 that divide the City into approximately 54 neighborhoods, based on similarity of housing stock age, size and type, the City should use data, such as median annual home sale price/sq. ft, Days on Market, number of homes in foreclosure and pre-foreclosure, etc. to evaluate the relative economic health of each neighborhood.					
	Project 2A.1b: Residential Marketing Plan	Develop a residential marketing plan that identifies the message, target audience and the marketing channels (e.g. social media, website, advertisements) that will be used.					
	Project 2A.1c: Prioritize Neighborhoods and Identify Tools	Prioritize neighborhoods and identify and develop resources and tools needed for each neighborhood type.					
2A.2	Utilize existing CRA programs and government housing incentives.		CGC, County				X
	Project 2A.2a: CRA Advantage	Work with local banks to better promote available Community Reinvestment Act programs to existing and potential residents in an effort to encourage increased home ownership in certain neighborhoods.					
	Project 2A.2b: New Homebuyer Program	Promote the County New Homebuyer Program and eligible vacant houses in Granite City in partnership with local realtors, to reduce the number of vacant houses in the City and increase home ownership.					
2A.3	Welcome new home owners into the community.		CGC				X
	Project 2A.3: Home Owner Welcome Packet	Develop a welcome packet, including information about community events and amenities, important phone numbers, community organizations, and distribute it through the Building and Zoning Department to every home buyer when they obtain their occupancy permit.					
2A.4	Collaborate with housing investors and landlords.		CGC, HA				X
	Project 2A.4: Investor/Landlord Advisory Board	Develop an advisory board made up of both landlords and rehabbers to provide feedback to the City on policy related to providing enforcement and also on developing carrots that can be used to entice good landlord behavior. (Advisory board could also include realtors, bankers and the Housing Authority).					
2A.5	Create fast-track abandoned property recovery program.		CGC, County				X
	Project 2A.5a: Vacant Property Data Collection	Facilitate the on-going collection of parcel-based information on vacant and abandoned properties – including information on their location, zoning, tax status, market value, and ownership.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
Project 2A.5b: Blight Control	Be more active in taking control of vacant lots and abandoned homes by aggressively pursuing acquisition or foreclosure of vacant lots.						
Project 2A.5c: Horticulture Partnership	The City should find (or develop) a partner like the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society. This group could work with the City to provide light landscaping and maintenance for vacant lots around the City.						
Project 2A.5d: Homestead Program	For lots and fixable houses acquired, the City should seek to put property up for auction to try and entice new investment into the neighborhood.						
Project 2A.5e: Green Buffer Zone	For neighborhoods unlikely to ever come back the City should create a Green Buffer Zone by acquiring vacant parcels/houses, demolishing existing structures, cleaning the lots, and then returning those lots to nature. This must be done in concentrated areas, and should only be considered in those neighborhoods that are unable to attract new private investment.						
Project 2A.5f: In-house Demolition Team	To increase annual demolitions, the City should consider creating an in-house demolition team as part of the Street Department.						
2A.6	Establish a land bank program (See Strategy 2B.16).	CGC, County		X			
2A.7	Help residents avoid foreclosure.	CGC, JP, Real					X
	Project 2A.7a: Realtor Education Class	Organize an education class for realtors to teach them about avail foreclosure prevention programs.					
	Project 2A.7b: Foreclosure Prevention Awareness Campaign	The City should use its means of communication to increase awareness of pre-foreclosure programs available, targeted to residents.					
2A.8	Develop partnerships to enhance access to liquidity for housing developers.	CGC, County					X
	Project 2A.8: Engage Development Finance Partners	Identify local, regional and national development finance organizations, such as IFF, The Reinvestment Fund, Community Reinvestment Fund, Justine Petersen, National Development Council, etc. and reach out to them to establish a strong relationship with each entity and then match housing investors up with the appropriate development finance partner to ensure provision of liquidity for housing development in distressed neighborhoods.					
2A.9	Explore employer-assisted housing.	CGC, County					X
	Project 2A.9: Employer-Assisted Housing Help	Work with the County and other housing partners to educate and assist larger local employers with creating an employer-assisted housing benefit for their workers.					
2A.10	Concentrate code enforcement on priority neighborhoods.	CGC					X
	Project 2A.10: Ally with Neighborhood Groups	Partner with neighborhood associations or neighborhood watch groups in priority neighborhoods to identify properties that need help.					
2A.11	Enact a property tax abatement program for priority redevelopment neighborhoods.	CGC, GCSD, Park, SMRLD		X			
	Project 2A.11: Tax Abatement Implementation	To implement a tax abatement program, the city will need to establish rules for project eligibility, design, geographic coverage of the program, and ownership transfer for the abatement.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
2B Create vibrant commercial/mixed use districts that are strongly interconnected with surrounding neighborhoods.							
2B.1	Establish a redevelopment plan for identified priority infill development areas.	CGC	X				
Project 2B.1a: Review Downtown Plan		Review the 2007 Downtown Master Plan and update to align with the current vision of the community					
Project 2B.1b: Nameoki Road Master Plan		Utilizing public and developer input, the City should amend the draft plan, if needed, to align with the community's vision for Nameoki Road.					
2B.2	Expedite development review	CGC	X				
Project 2B.2: Develop Expedite Review Criteria		Develop criteria to determine which projects qualify for expedited review. Criteria might include the amount of new housing or retail, density, or floor area ratios. The city should market this incentive to prospective developers.					
2B.3	Ease parking requirements in infill locations.	CGC	X				
2B.4	Adopt flexible codes.	CGC		X			
2B.5	Provide clear rules for renovating historic buildings.	CGC		X			
Project 2B.5a: Zoning Overlay District		Identify priority historic buildings for reuse and establish clear rules for development through an overlay zoning district with regulations that preserve the district's historic character. For current tenants of historic properties, the city can establish design guidelines that show how to respect historic features while accommodating business needs.					
Project 2B.5b: Former YMCA Building		Court developers to ensure the redevelopment of the former YMCA building.					
2B.6	Adopt an adaptive reuse ordinance.	CGC		X			
Project 2B.6: Adaptive Reuse Review		The City will need to identify all parking, design and/or fire and safety hazards that make historic building redevelopment too difficult, and assess which of these standards can be relaxed. The City may need to engage a planning professional in order to complete this process and to write the ordinance.					
2B.7	Offer density bonuses in infill locations.	CGC	X				
Project 2B.7: Density Bonus Guidelines		Develop guidelines for determining the what density bonuses will be offered, when they will be offered, the locations that are eligible for them, and how a developer can obtain them. Then adopt them into the zoning code.					
2B.8	Seek state and regional partners.	CGC					X
2B.9	Identify and engage anchor institutions.	CGC					X
2B.10	Engage philanthropic organizations.	CGC					X
2B.11	Strengthen code enforcement in priority commercial areas.	CGC					X
2B.12	Create pedestrian and bike transportation routes throughout the community.	CGC, MCT				X	
Project 2B.12a: Bike Ped Master Plan		Develop a bike/pedestrian master plan that connects major destinations (e.g. downtown, Crossroads Plaza) to neighborhoods throughout the community.					
Project 2B.12b: Bike Route Funding		Pursue grant funds to finance the construction of the bike route.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
2B.13	Build Complete Streets.	CGC				X	
	Project 2B.13a: Identify Future Complete Streets	Identify future complete streets in transportation or comprehensive plans.					
	Project 2B.13b: Adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance	Adopting a Complete Streets ordinance, (a declaration of intention to design future street improvements with all users in mind (pedestrians, cyclists, transit and drivers).					
2B.14	Hold public events and festival in priority commercial redevelopment districts.	CGC					X
2B.15	Enact a property tax abatement program for redevelopment sites outside TIF and EZ.	CGC, GCSD, Park, SMRLD		X			
2B.16	Implement a land banking program.	CGC, County	X				
	Project 2B.16a: Property Data Collection	Collect data on all of its properties, such as data on tax delinquency and code violations. The city can use these data to identify specific areas where a land bank could operate.					
	Project 2B.16b: Determine Land Bank Management Structure	Determine how the land bank will be managed (by City or other autonomous agency), and set criteria for acquiring and selling properties.					
2B.17	Attract private equity.	CGC					X
	Project 2B.17: Developer Outreach Campaign	Develop a list of potential developers/investors whose past work lines up with the community's vision for the target area for redevelopment. Then systematically reach out to each one, sharing marketing information in an attempt to solicit their investment into the community.					
2B.18	Encourage community development corporations (CDCs).	CGC					X
2B.19	Encourage crowdfunding for projects and businesses in priority development areas.	CGC, BF, CCSWMC					X
2B.20	Utilize TIF and Business Districts.	CGC					X
2B.21	Establish a Capital Reserve fund.	CGC		X			
2B.22	Generate revenue through naming rights and advertising.	CGC					X
2B.23	Utilize the arts to foster a unique character and a greater sense of place.	CGC, FG, Alf, 6MSW					X
	Project 2B.23a: Support G-CADD and Alfresco Productions	Support the growth of the Granite City Arts and Design District (G-CADD). G-CADD is a section of downtown Granite in the 1800-1900 blocks of State Street. It is an endeavor being led by Fort Gondo, Inc. a non-profit developer and arts group. Alfresco Productions operates the Alfresco Arts Center downtown. Six Mile Sculpture Works hosts the iron pour every two years in downtown.					
	Project 2B.23b: Sculptural Arts Program	Work with Fort Gondo, Six Mile Sculpture Works, Alfresco Productions and Amsted Rail to develop a unique sculptural arts program that has international appeal.					
	Project 2B.23C: 6-Mile Sculpture Works	Promote the iron pour conducted once every two years by Six Mile Sculpture Works. The city should allocate marketing dollars to help promote and sponsor the iron pour in the years when it is held in an effort to draw a larger number of participants and spectators from around the region.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
2C Enhance the design, function and use of public spaces and primary corridors.							
2C.1	Redevelop dilapidated structures along primary corridors.	CGC				X	
Project 2C.1a: Bamboo Bistro Corner		Redevelop the northeast corner of Nameoki and Johnson Roads (the Bamboo Bistro corner).					
Project 2C.1b: Bellemore Village		Encourage owners of Bellemore Village to reface the center, add landscaping and lighting.					
Project 2C.1c: Priority List		Make a prioritized list of other problem areas needing addressed. Utilize both public input to make the list and public assistance to solve the problems.					
2C.2	Tie the receipt of incentives to adherence to the Commercial Design Handbook.	CGC					X
2C.3	Adopt new landscaping standards.	CGC	X				
2C.4	Start a tree planting campaign for primary corridors and public spaces.	CGC	X				
2C.5	Expand “Adopt-an-Area” programs.	CGC		X			
2C.6	Implement Low Impact Development (LID) Practices.	CGC		X			
2C.7	Integrate public art in public spaces and along corridors.	CGC			X		
2C.8	Attempt a pilot project.	CGC		X			
2C.9	Concentrate city resources onto major thoroughfares in the community.	CGC					X
2C.10	Utilize the Power of 10+ to transform the community’s public spaces.	CGC				X	
Project 2C.10: Identify and Plan Public Spaces		Utilizing public input, select ten areas that the city should develop as premier public places. Then, plan for at least 10 activities for people to do in each of those places. Begin implementing these activities.					
2D Address pressing issues pertaining to environmental sustainability.							
2D.1	Develop a Sustainability Action Plan.	CGC, CCC	X				
2D.2	Work to reduce air pollution.	CGC, CCC					X
Project 2D.2a: Thriving Earth Exchange		Coordinate with the Thriving Earth Exchange (TEX) to identify solutions to curbing air pollution in the city.					
Project 2D.2b: Air Quality Monitoring		In partnership with the University of Illinois, TEX, EPA or another entity, the city should ensure that the air quality in the city is being continuously monitored for the purpose of both measuring changes in air pollution to determining the effectiveness of strategies implemented and also to have quantifiable statistics that the city can use to promote the improvement in air quality in the city over time.					
Project 2D.2c: Greenhouse Gas Inventory		Conduct a greenhouse gas inventory through the Cool Cities committee and in partnership with the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). This inventory should measure the amount of greenhouse gas being produced by city operations, and also includes some measurements of household and business carbon footprints.					
Project 2D.2d: Air Purifying Billboards		Pursue grants and other means to fund bringing air purifying billboard technology to the city, placing the billboards along Highway 203 by the blast furnaces.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
GOAL #3: INCREASE THE PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION LIVING IN THE CITY WITH AN ASSOCIATE'S/TECHNICAL DEGREE OR HIGHER TO MATCH THE ST. LOUIS METROPOLITAN REGION BY 2030.							
3A Bring the business, workforce training, and education communities closer together.							
3A.1	Establish a Granite City Business and Education Task Force.	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, County, CCSWMC, ACP, WDB	X				
3A.2	Enhance scholarship and mentoring programs.	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, WDB, CCSWMC, ACP		X			
Project 3A.2a: Pharmacy Card Scholarship		Develop and implement a community-wide pharmacy card scholarship program that generates scholarship funds for Granite City residents, putting an emphasis on scholarships for students seeking technical degrees in manufacturing or other skilled areas.					
Project 3A.2b: Mentoring Expansion		Building off of existing school-based mentor programs offered through Granite City School District, the Business and Education Task Force should work with the school district to expand the number of partner organizations and volunteers in the program to better help elementary students work on academic and social skills.					
3A.3	Align economic development and area education programs (K-12, Vocational, Adult and Post-Secondary).	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, WDB, CCSWMC, ACP			X		

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
3B Promote a vibrant manufacturing labor force for the 21st Century.							
3B.1	Promote manufacturing and skilled trades as a viable career option for young workers.	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, WDB, CCSWMC	X				X
Project 3B.1a: SWIC ITC Field Trips		Coordinate with local businesses, the school district and community college to arrange for field trips to the SWIC Industrial Training Center (ITC), and to have manufacturers come and present to 5th-8th graders about manufacturing and the benefits of making things for a living.					
Project 3B.1b: Career Assessment		Use career assessment and aptitude tests to better identify younger students who have a propensity for a career in manufacturing.					
Project 3B.1c: Manufacturing Career Fair		Establish a manufacturing career fair for high school and jr. high students.					
3B.2	Expand apprenticeship programs to help vocational students gain entry-level positions among existing employers.	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, WDB, CCSWMC, ACP		X			X
Project 3B.2: Work Ready Certification		Use the Work-Ready Certification program to identify and assess quality candidates for apprenticeship programs and connect them with participating employers and schools for work-study apprenticeships.					
3B.3	Give residents the skills and connections they need to compete.	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, WDB, CCSWMC, ACP	X				X
Project 3B.3a: Adult Basic Education		Collaborate with the community college's Adult Basic Education Program, workforce development groups and businesses to move large numbers of underprepared youths and adults to and through some type of postsecondary credential (professional certification) by connecting local businesses to SWIC's ABE program to help build career connections for newly trained workers.					
Project 3B.3b: Training Cooperatives		Encourage local firms to develop training cooperatives to help reduce the cost of customized training.					
3B.4	Form a workforce training subcommittee of the recommended Business and Education Task Force.	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, WDB, CCSWMC, ACP	X				X
Project 3B.4a: Training Need Coordination		The subcommittee should examine how local businesses and training providers can better coordinate and communicate needs versus capacity.					
Project 3B.4b: Incumbent Worker Training		Evaluate existing skilled trade incumbent worker training programs and address any existing gaps.					
Project 3B.4c: Mfg. Leadership Training		Promote and support the Chamber of Commerce's Blue Collar Leadership Training Program.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
3C Engage college students, young professionals and new residents.							
3C.1	Hold events in GC that would appeal to local college students and young professionals and promote them to these audiences.	CGC, CCSWMC					X
3C.2	Utilize scholarships to provide students w/ opportunity for higher education (See Strategy 3A.2).	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, County, WDB, CCSWMC		X			X
3C.3	Partner with local colleges to pair up student interns with local businesses.	CGC, GCSD, SIUE, SWIC, County, WDB CCSWMC	X				X
3C.4	Develop a new generation of leaders.	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, County, CCSWMC		X			X
Project 3C.4: Young Professionals Org.		Establish a Young Professionals Organization (YPO) that has a clear charter, goals and funding.					
3D Invest in early childhood education.							
3D.1	Create an early education subcommittee of the Business and Education Task Force.	CGC, GCSD, SWIC, County, CCSWMC, SMRLD	X				
Project 3D.1: Early Childhood Action Plan		Identify the players necessary to assess the early education programs available in the community, and to identify the gaps that still need to be filled. Brainstorm potential solutions along with potential sources of funding and develop a plan to address the most important needs in the community.					
3D.2	Work with community partners to enhance the network of support for and to provide educational resources to parents of young children.	CGC, GCSD, CYHS, SMRLD			X		
3D.3	Identify and address any gaps in the availability of licensed childcare in the community.	CGC, GCSD, CYHS		X			
3D.4	Promote early reading programs.	CGC, GCSD, CYHS, SMRLD, BF, CCSWMC	X				X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
3E Reach out to former residents, recent graduates and immigrants.							
3E.1	Establish a marketing campaign urging former residents to “Come Home to Granite City.”	CGC, CCSWMC		X			X
3E.2	Market to foreign immigrants who have recently come to the U.S., such as foreign college students attending local universities.	CGC, CCSWMC		X			X
3F Develop creative solutions for retaining dislocated workers and professionals.							
3F.1	Establish an area Talent Team focused on retaining highly skilled professionals in the community.	CGC, County, WDB, CCSWMC		X			
3F.2	Directly connect companies that are reducing their workforce with firms that are adding employees.	CGC, CCSWMC, County, WDB					X
3F.3	Hold targeted career fairs, conduct employer specific recruitment, and screening and host networking events.	CGC, CCSWMC, County, WDB					X
3F.4	Encourage area educational institutions to temporarily hire skilled professionals and tradesmen as instructors and trainers.	CGC, CCSWMC, County, WDB, SWIC					X
3F.5	Foster and support the development of new companies. (See Focus Area #4, Strategy A).	CGC, CCSWMC, County					X
3G Partner with financial institutions and social service groups to enhance financial education among those in poverty.							
3G.1	Work with financial partners like GCS Credit Union to promote financial counseling and training programs.	CGC, CCSWMC	X				X
3G.2	Collaborate with financial partners to develop a Savings Promotion program.	CGC, CCSWMC		X			
3G.3	Consider other programs that might be implemented to promote financial education among community residents.	CGC					X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
GOAL #4: FOSTER A CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND A VIBRANT ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITY WITHIN THE CITY.							
4A Promote entrepreneurship and small business development.							
4A.1	Assess the existing entrepreneurial programs and services available to Granite City entrepreneurs.	CGC, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX	X				
4A.2	Work with partners to enhance services for entrepreneurs to augment the City's entrepreneurial assets.	CGC, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX			X		
Project 4A.2a: Entrepreneurship Training		Collaborate with local partners to offer entrepreneurship training courses such as FastTrac or NxLevel that provide intensive training for potential entrepreneurs.					
Project 4A.2b: Mentor Network		Encourage the development of a mentor network to match new and experienced entrepreneurs.					
Project 4A.2c: Angel Investor Network		Support the establishment of a formal angel investor network to aid entrepreneurs in raising capital.					
Project 4A.2d: Start-up Checklist		Create a one-page "Starting a New Business Checklist." Keep the list simple and provide a point of contact for additional information.					
4A.3	Establish an information clearinghouse to aid entrepreneurs in gaining competitive information, market research and assistance.	CGC, SMRLD, SBDC, BF, JP	X				
Project 4A.3a: Entrepreneurship Website		Partner with the Library District to create a section on the City Web site devoted to entrepreneurship.					
Project 4A.3b: Promote Resources		Actively promote the entrepreneurship website with banners and flyers around town.					
4A.4	Celebrate and support entrepreneurship in the City.	CGC, SMRLD, SBDC, BF, JP, CCSWMC					X
Project 4A.4: Art of Innovation Campaign		The City and its partners should engage in a public relations campaign profiling area entrepreneur "success stories" and to inform residents of entrepreneurial activity and initiatives.					
4A.5	Establish a small-batch manufacturing accelerator in Granite City.	CGC, ACP, CCSWMC, County,DCEO, IMEC, STLM		X			
4A.6	Establish a Makers Space in Granite City.	CGC, SBDC, BF, FG, CCSWMC		X			
4A.7	Support The Business Foundry's efforts to establish a Coworking Center.	CGC, SBDC, BF, FG, CCSWMC		X			

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
4A.8	Provide access to financial resources for entrepreneurs.	CGC, SBDC, BF, JP, CCSWMC					X
Project 4A.8a: Revolving Loan Fund		Utilize a Revolving Loan Fund to support key start-up and small business expansions. (See Strategy 1E).					
Project 4A.8b: Business Plan Contest		Every other year, the City should set aside \$10,000 to fund a business plan contest. The funds could be used to award cash prizes to winning entries, as well as matching grants for business plan implementation.					
Project 4A.8c: Lender Encouragement		Encourage local lenders to offer small business financing to aid area startups and strengthen the banks' Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) ratings.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
4B Support the CEO Program and the creation of further youth entrepreneurship education in Granite City public schools.							
4B.1	Continue to support the CEO Board and the CEO Program.	CGC, GCSD, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX	X				X
4B.2	Expand the benefits of the CEO Class to a broader range of students within the high school.	CGC, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX			X		
4B.3	Implement an entrepreneurship program at lower grade levels, specifically, 5-6th grade and 7-8th grade.	CGC, GCSD, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX			X		
4C Support innovation among existing businesses.							
4C.1	Establish a regional “know-how” network of business service providers.	CGC, SMRLD, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX		X			
4C.2	Assist companies in identifying other sources of technical assistance, such as the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC).	CGC, SBDC, CCSWMC, BF					X
4C.3	Encourage companies to secure local, state and federal government contracts relative to innovation.	CGC, SBDC, CCSWMC					X
4C.4	Help businesses pursue SBIR and STTR federal grants to support innovation.	CGC, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX					X
4C.5	Sponsor a local design competition.	CGC, SBDC, CCSWMC, BF		X			
4C.6	Work with existing providers to develop an ultra high-speed fiber internet infrastructure within the community.	CGC			X		
4D Provide support to main street and sole proprietor business types.							
4D.1	Establish a Buy Local Program.	CGC, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX	X				X
4D.2	Support the Business Foundry and other small business networks.	CGC, CCSWMC, BF, SBDC, JP, UIX					X
4D.3	Streamline the permitting process to make starting a business as smooth of a process as possible.	CGC					X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
GOAL #5: ACHIEVE A 25% INCREASE IN LOCAL/REGIONAL RESPONDENTS WHO RATE THEIR PERCEPTION OF GRANITE CITY AS A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE WORK AND PLAY AS EITHER "GOOD" OR "VERY GOOD" IN AN ANNUAL PERCEPTION SURVEY.							
5A Elevate the image of Granite City both locally and regionally.							
5A.1	Establish a City Message Strategy.	CGC, SWIC	X				
5A.2	Develop and implement an internal marketing effort.	CGC	X				
Project 5A.2a: Calendar of Events		Develop a single city-wide “calendar of events” that allows various community organizations and individuals to manually update their events on the calendar and link to it on their own websites.					
Project 5A.2b: Media Relations		Work with the local media, including both print and broadcast media, to promote positive stories about the community and to publish the calendar of events. Find free-lance reporters, who write for local papers, and develop a relationship with them whereby they would write and submit stories to local papers in partnership with the City.					
Project 5A.2c: Community App		Develop a Community App that can be downloaded onto smart phones and tablets, allowing residents to quickly and conveniently access community information.					
Project 5A.2d: Community Progress Report		Write and publish a regular (quarterly, annually, etc.) progress report that focuses on community and local business achievements including status updates on the initiatives recommended in this plan.					
Project 5A.2e: Kiosk Posting		Coordinate with local businesses, such as grocery stores, restaurants, doctor’s offices etc. to ensure that community information such as events is posted on bulletin boards or kiosks in their lobbies.					
5A.3	Influence the image of Granite City portrayed on the Web.	CGC					X
Project 5A.3a: Manage Wikipedia Page		Assume ownership of Granite City’s entry on Wikipedia. Regularly update the information and data with references.					
Project 5A.3b: Facebook Page		Establish a new Facebook page for Granite City. Join other City-related Facebook groups to influence content.					
Project 5A.3c: Twitter Account		Create a Twitter account to update and inform regional residents and followers of new announcements, upcoming events and salient issues.					
Project 5A.3d: Update City Website		Update the City’s website. Restructure the website to be simple, concise, fresh, friendly, clean and easy to navigate.					
Project 5A.3e: Social Media Coordination		Coordinate social media strategies with other organizations in the city and county such as the chamber, library, etc. to utilize other social media apps such as Next Door, and Instagram, etc. to reach our target audience.					
Project 5A.3f: Hire Marketing Director		Create a position dedicated to traditional and social media monitoring and managing the City’s image and marketing efforts.					

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
Project 5A.3g: City Newsletter/Blog		Create a blog section of the City website to provide content and connect to other sites.					
5A.4	Employ word-of-mouth marketing techniques.	CGC					X
Project 5A.4: Marketing Cheat Sheet		Create and distribute a one-page “cheat sheet” for an internal audience and one for an external audience that outlines the primary message that the City would like to have conveyed, important talking points, and three to five concise sales points.					
5A.5	Capitalize on the success of the Men of Granite movie.	CGC		X			
Project 5A.5: Men of Granite Memorial		Create a memorial or exhibit at Lincoln Place Community Center where visitors can come to learn more about the young men who were portrayed in the movie.					
5A.6	Explore options for regional guerrilla marketing.	CGC					X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS / PROJECTS			TIMELINE				
Description		Local Partner(s)	0-12 mos.	13-36 mos.	37-60 mos.	61-120 mos.	On-going
5B	Encourage civic engagement, transparency and neighborhood leadership to develop community and individual pride within both youth and adults.						
5B.1	Enhance Neighborhood Watch.	CGC	X				X
	Project 5B.1a: Develop Neighborhood Captains	Put out a call for neighborhood leaders. Provide them with a list of suggested best practices and ideas that they can implement in their neighborhoods.					
	Project 5B.1b: Resource Tool Box	Provide neighborhood leaders with a tool box of resources that the City can make available specifically for neighborhood groups.					
5B.2	Organize a semi-annual, community-wide Paint and Plant the Town events.	CGC	X				X
	Project 5B.2a: Campaign Promotion	Promote the Paint and Plant the Town campaign through social media, by providing t-shirts to volunteers and through media coverage.					
	Project 5B.2b: Project Coordination	Coordinate one or two larger projects that anyone can participate in on event days. This could include tree plantings in one of the parks, picking up trash along Nameoki Road, or any number of other ideas that are on a larger scale.					
	Project 5B.2c: Youth Involvement	Encourage youth involvement in community-wide volunteer efforts by partnering with groups like the PTAs for each school, church youth groups, Girls on the Run, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Club Sports Teams, etc.					
5C	Synchronize the existing assets and organizations working in the community to collaborate towards common goals.						
5C.1	Develop a task force made up of representatives of the major organizations working throughout town.	CGC	X				X
	Project 5C.1: Asset Mapping	Map out the various organizations in town and the initiatives and programs they are doing. Then work to enhance collaboration between the groups.					

STRATEGIC DOING

How to Use This Plan:

The intention behind this plan has been to lay out a comprehensive approach to revitalizing Granite City by taking hold of the best opportunities while addressing the primary challenges facing the community, using the existing assets in the City as a foundation upon which to build.

As this plan demonstrates, the nature of economic development has grown increasingly complex and convoluted. While everything in this plan is considered important, and should be addressed eventually, it should not be misinterpreted as a call to attempt everything at the same time. Trying to tackle everything at once will lead to certain failure. Instead, successfully implementing this (or any) economic development strategic plan requires a focused, intentional and long-term effort. The city cannot afford to burn up valuable resources and political capital recklessly, or in a diluted manner.

Because successful implementation of this plan will require a sustained, intensive effort, the most critical asset necessary to succeed is political will. As was mentioned in the Executive Summary, it is imperative that the vision for the future of the city become part of the political fabric of the community. When that happens, and community leaders exert political will, they place in context the many fundamental programs and improvements necessary to be competitive, mobilize the community's resources and implement programs that foster public-private partnerships, which are crucial for long-term success.¹⁴⁰

What is Strategic Doing?

Strategic Doing is a concept developed out of Purdue University that is designed to build strong collaborations out of open, loosely connected networks. The way that it works is by bringing together diverse groups of individuals and organizations who focus intensively and relentlessly on the questions of 1. Where are we going? and 2. How do we get there? By answering these questions, together, groups are able to develop strategic action plans. Over time, the group will continue to make adjustments to these plans as they learn by doing.



This plan was developed in a similar fashion, whereby a steering committee of 25 committed business and community leaders came together to address the most important issues facing Granite City. That group soon identified five focus areas which they determined were critical to address in order for the community to successfully address its challenges and make the most of its opportunities. The group then formed into five separate focus groups, who each worked to tackle the issues and challenges about which they were passionate. Each of those groups grew, adding more people who further contributed to efforts to develop this plan. Out of those groups came the ideas and recommendations that are found in this planning document.

However, this document is only meant to serve as a snapshot in time of the planning process developed by this group. It is meant to provide an initial answer to the questions of “where are we going?” and “how do we get there?” As these community players continue to work together, it is expected that they will continue to make iterative changes to this plan as they together seek to accomplish the overarching goals set out through this planning process. In other words, this planning document should not be considered as set in stone. Accomplishing the goals set out for this community will require both agility and the ability to adapt this plan as new information is learned.

GRANITE CITY DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Given the above, the most important recommendation in this entire strategic action plan is to create the Granite City Development Network, made up of business and community leaders along with every day residents and workers, and for the City Council and Mayor to recognize this network, formally, if not legally. This network will ultimately be the natural progression of the steering committee and its focus groups and will evolve to take the form determined by the group’s representative members.

Create Core Partnerships...

This plan lays the groundwork for building a prosperous, sustainable future for both current and future generations. However, no individual or organization, including city government, can build that future alone. Revitalization of the city will only come about through the cultivation of close working partnerships that are motivated by enlightened self-interest. The city must seek to find synergies between needs and opportunities and unite the interests of disparate groups. Together, we must work to build strong coalitions of innovative thinkers, actors and stakeholders



to develop and implement a competitive, long-term strategy for revitalization. Long-standing rifts can no longer be nurtured or tolerated.¹⁴¹

Open, honest, focused and caring collaboration among diverse participants is the path to accomplishing clear, valuable, shared outcomes.¹⁴²

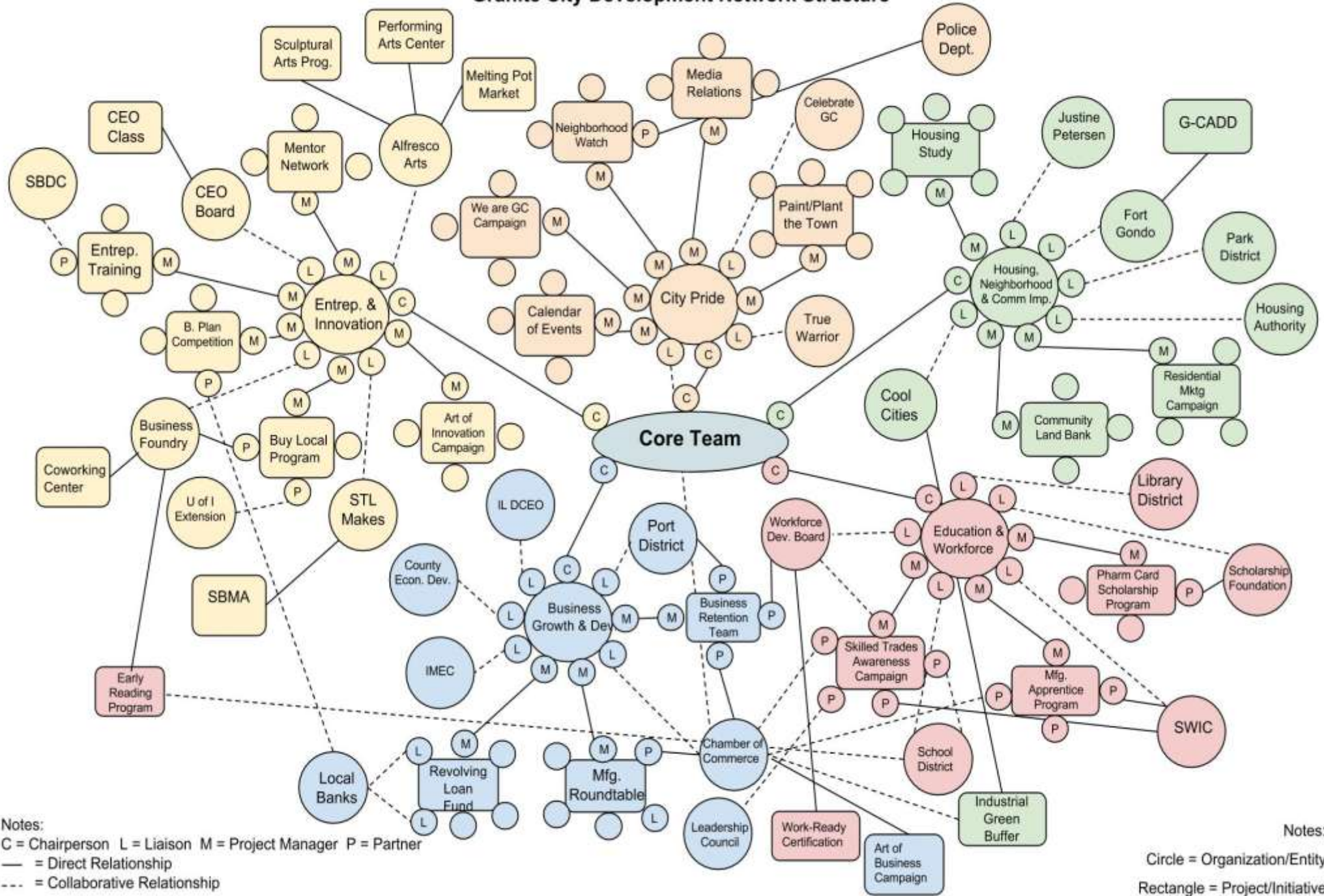
The purpose of the Granite City Development Network will be to meet this need. Based around the five focus areas identified in this plan, the Network will consist of four to five focus groups. Each group should consist of a strong core of leaders. These leaders should either be the representatives of key partner organizations (e.g. the School District is a key partner for the Education and Workforce focus group, so the Superintendent of the School District should have a seat as a core leader of this group) or they should be those individuals who are the project/program leaders for specific initiatives being undertaken by the group. The goal of this structure is to 1. Enhance collaboration between those community partners with similar interests and objectives and 2. Build synergy around enacting the strategies and actions identified within each focus group.

... While Maintaining Porous Boundaries

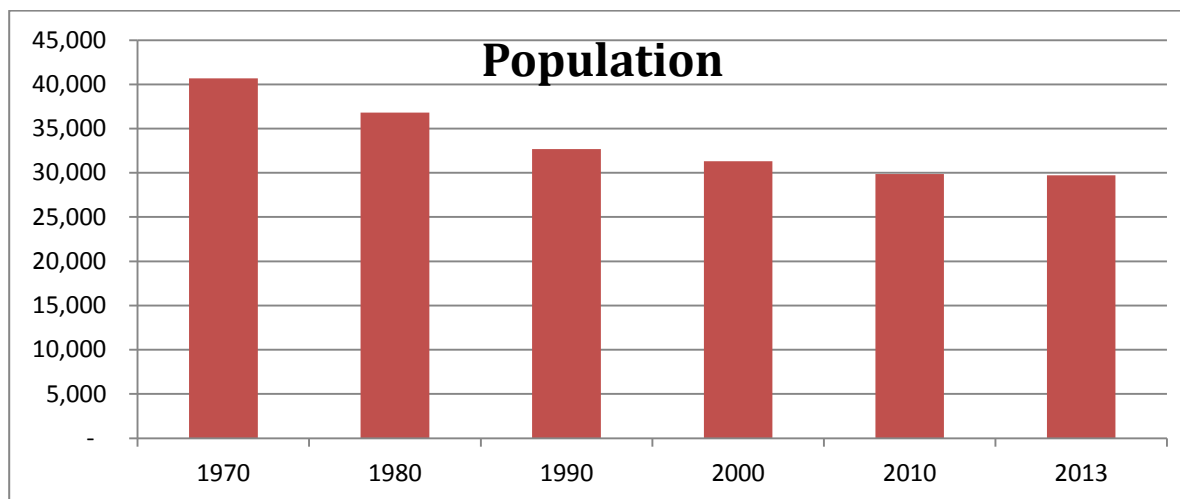
Beyond the core group of leaders, the Development Network should be open to anybody and everybody who is interested in contributing to the mission of the network, which is the betterment of Granite City by addressing the key focus areas identified above. These individuals will be given the opportunity to join up with project teams that are working on specific action items as a sub-group to each focus team. This format will provide an outlet for individual residents, workers and business owners, to plug into a larger effort, by allowing them to contribute their time, energy and other resources at their own discretion. It will be up to the project team leaders, however, to maintain long-term focus and guide direction of each effort.

The following page provides a diagram of how the Granite City Development Network might look and be structured.

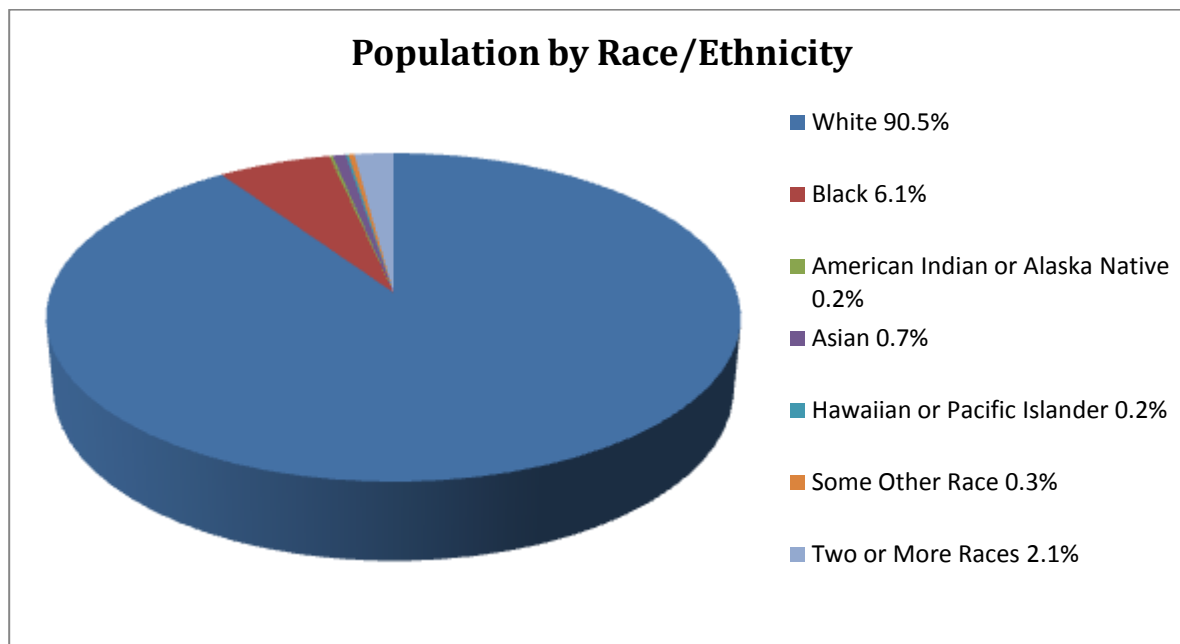
Granite City Development Network Structure



DEMOGRAPHIC and ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT



Source: US Census 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Source: U.S. Census 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

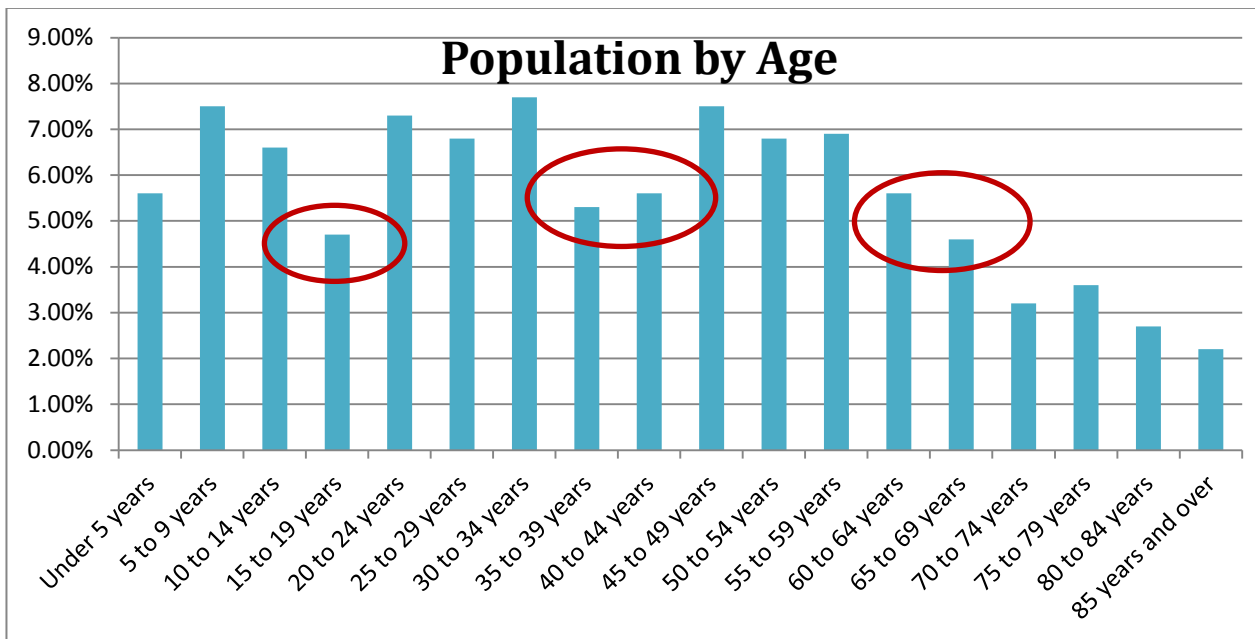
Population Patterns

Granite City hit its peak population in 1973. From that year until now, the city has seen a consistent decline in its number of residents. Halfway between two decennial Censuses, it appears that the trend of population decline will continue unabated when the 2020 Census is completed, as the City has seen an approximate loss of 250 people since the 2010 Census.

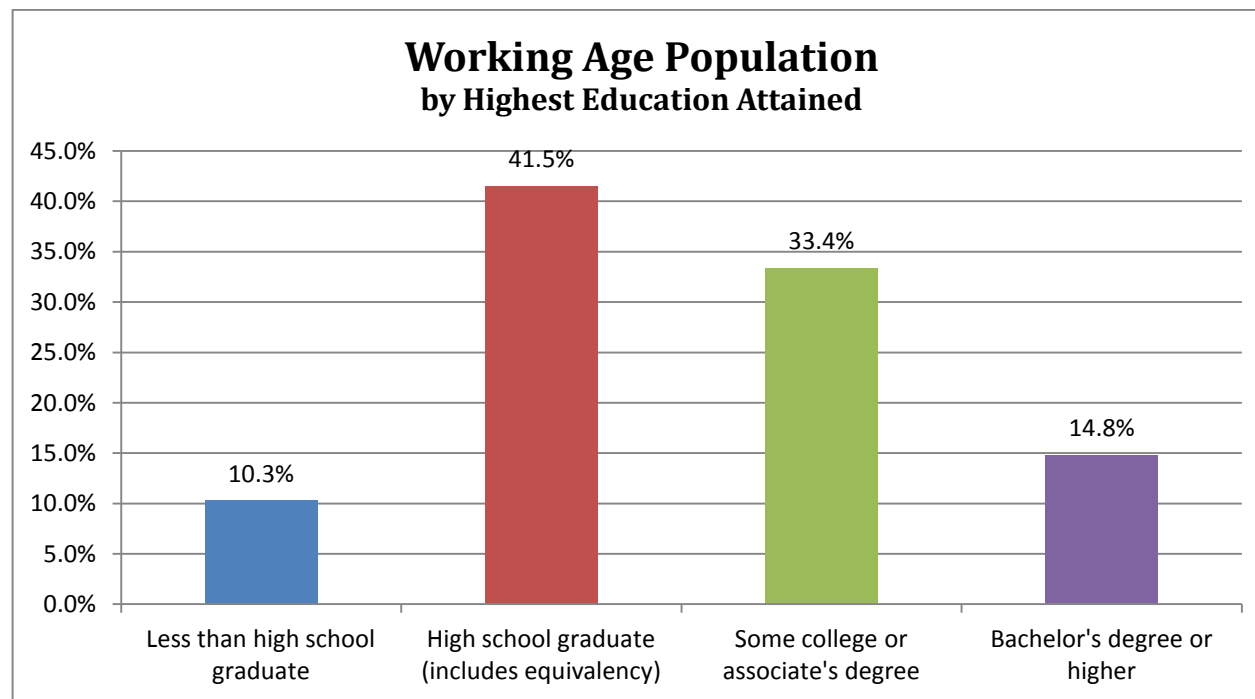
The good news is that it does appear that the city's population losses are flattening out, so there is hope that by 2020, the City could recover the 250 or so people lost and then some to break the four plus decade trend of population decline.

Racially and ethnically, Granite City has always been fairly diverse with regards to national origin, having a large representation of people who are ethnic Armenians, for example, along with many other nationalities represented from throughout Eastern and Western Europe. However, the city is just starting to become more racially diverse with a relatively small, but growing number of African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians and those of two or more races.

Ethnic and racial diversity, in and of itself, can be a very good thing, and should be embraced by the City, especially as younger Millennials continue to place a high value on diversity as a criteria for deciding where they want to live.



Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

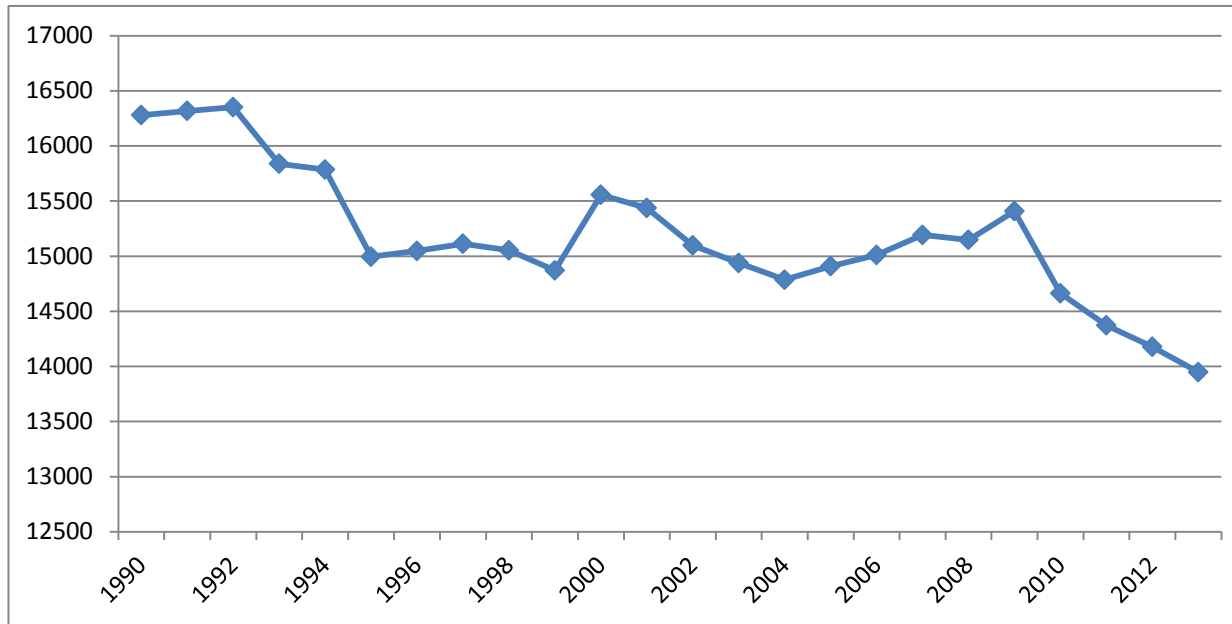
When it comes to the age distribution of the City's population, there are three key story lines that can be gathered by looking at the data. First, as with the nation as a whole, the city's population is getting older. Already, nearly 16% of Granite City residents are over age 65. As birth rates decline and people live longer, this percentage of people will continue to climb.

Second, as shown in the chart to the left, the city has a lower than expected number of people age 15 to 19 and also age 35 to 44. Compared with the nation, the city has 33% fewer 15-19 year olds as a percentage of its populations and 17% fewer 35 to 44 year olds than would be expected as compared to the nation. This data indicates that families with high school age teenagers may be moving out of the city. It also could be an indicator that recent high school grads are leaving for college, although, young college grads may be returning, likely because of the low cost of housing. Yet, at the age of 35-44, when people start their peak earning years, they are leaving the city, and taking their kids with them.

Third, the city has a relatively high percent of people with only a H.S. diploma and relatively few people with a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Granite City Labor Force (1990-2014)

Source: www.bls.gov



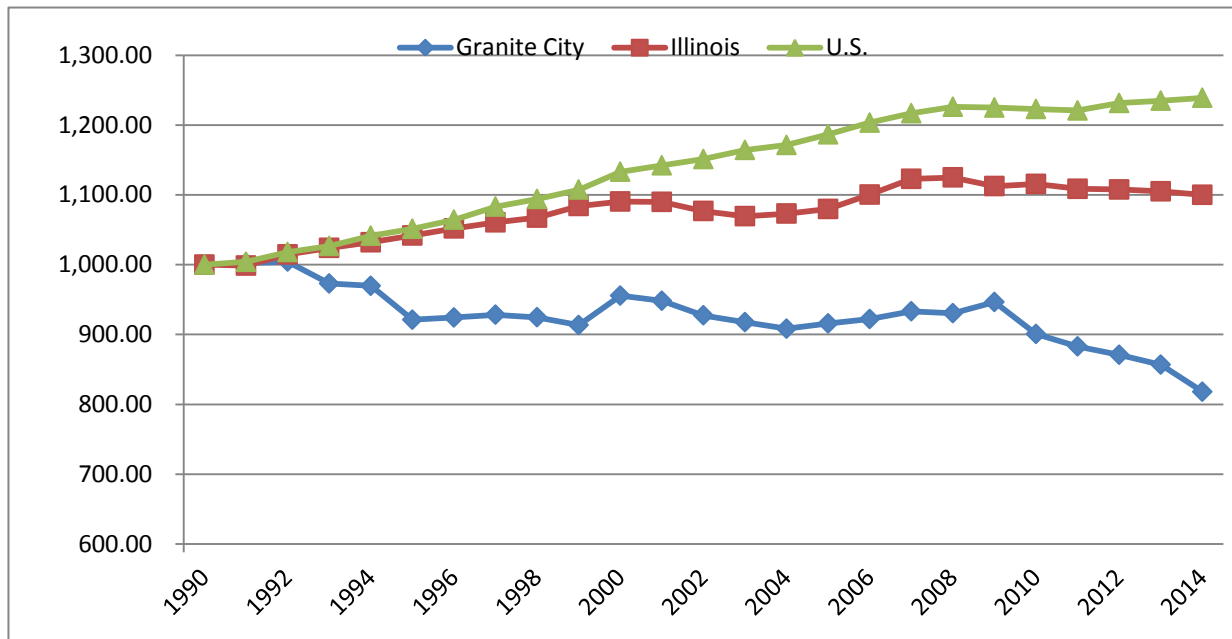
Workforce

Largely owing to the factors above, the labor force in the city has been declining at a rather rapid rate. The labor force has declined by over 18% since 1990, whereas the population has declined by only 9.5% during that same period of time.

The difference in these drops can be attributed to two factors, primarily. One, is that working age people in their 30s and 40s are leaving the city and the other is that many of those people who are of working age are dropping out of the labor force, as is depicted in the charts below.

Labor Force Trends Comparison

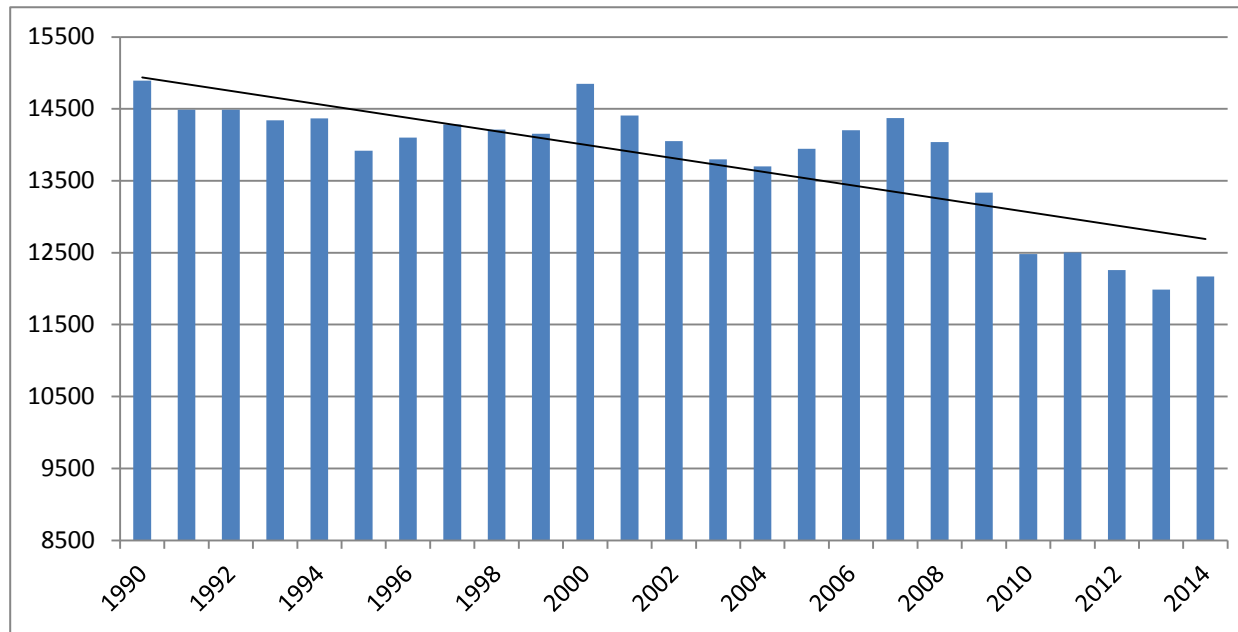
Source: www.bls.gov



While the aging of the population is also a factor, when comparing the labor force trends with those in the state and the nation, which are also both being similarly affected by the aging population, it is evident that Granite City's labor force decline is not part of a larger statewide or nationwide trend (although the State's labor force growth is also significantly lagging behind the nation).

Granite City Resident Employment - (1990-2014)

Source: www.ides.illinois.gov



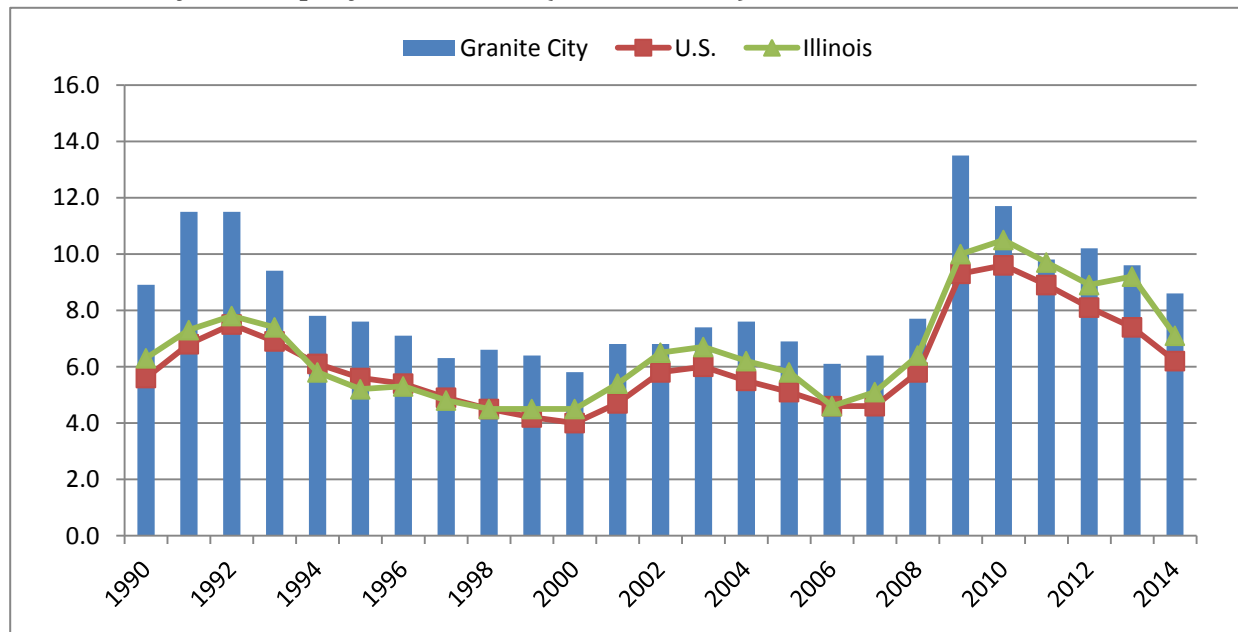
On the flip side of labor force size, employment in Granite City has also been on the decline since the 1990s.

Importantly, this is a measure of the number of residents in the city who are gainfully employed, not a measure of the number of jobs available in the city.

Similarly to the decline in the labor force size, employment has also decreased by about 15% since 1990.

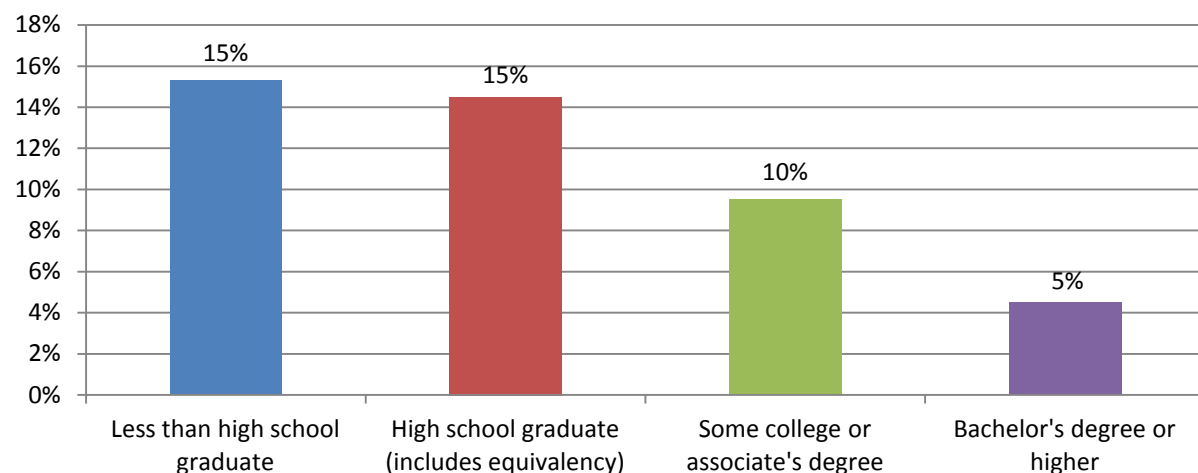
Granite City Unemployment Rate (1990-2014)

Source: www.bls.gov



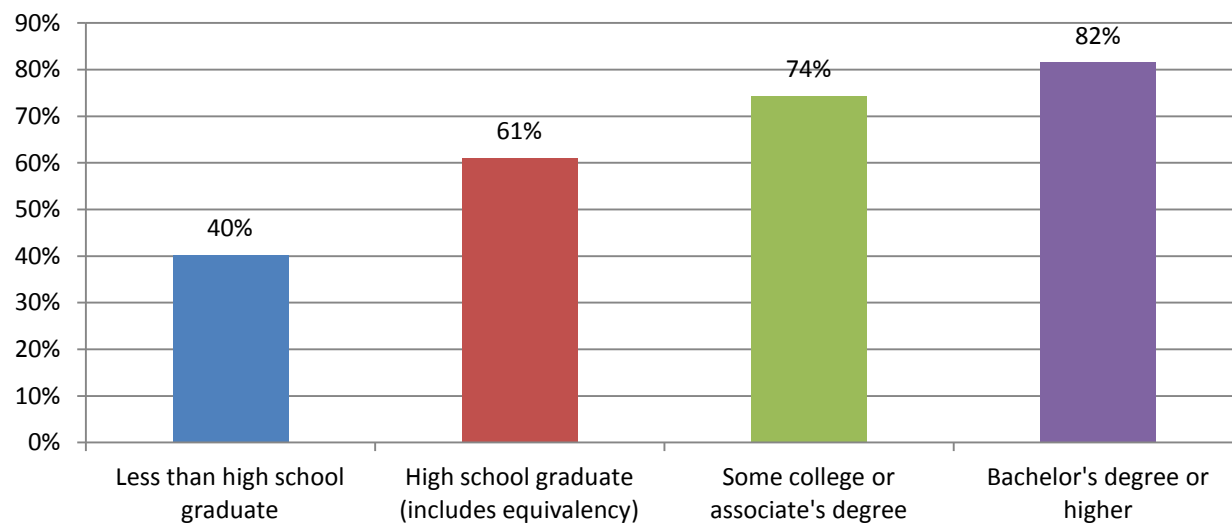
In the meantime, the unemployment rate in the city is actually lower than it was in 1990. In fact, (though it is not reflected in the chart on the left, according to the latest Local Area Unemployment Statistics from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), the unemployment rate in Granite City in May 2015 was at 6.7%, which compares to the national unemployment rate of 5.3%.

Unemployment Rate by Highest Education Attained



Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Percent of Working Age Population Actively Employed (by Highest Education Attained)



Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

While the unemployment rate is on the decline, overall, data from the Census Bureau indicates a significant difference in the unemployment rate for those with lower levels of education compared with those of higher education levels.

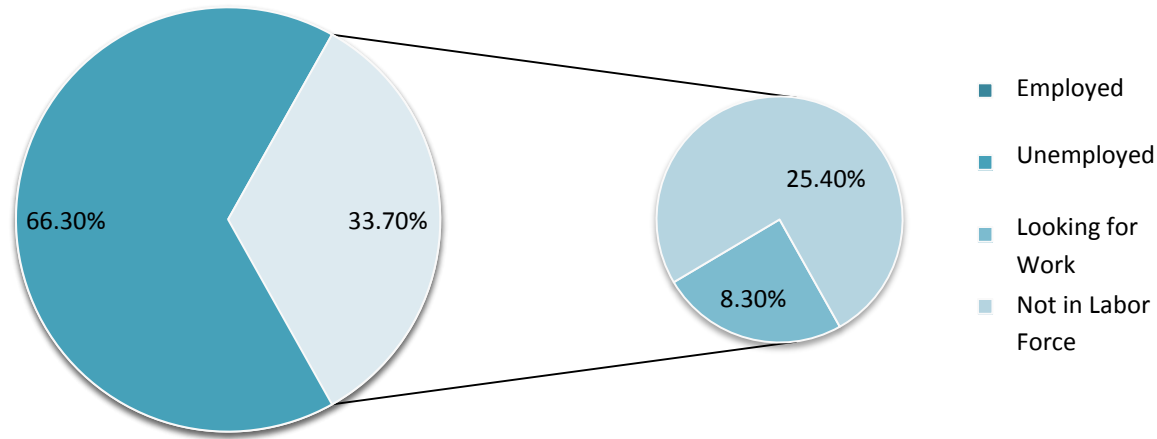
The 2013 5-year American Community Survey estimates (the most recent available) indicate that people with only a high school diploma or less are 3 times more likely to be unemployed.

However, that does not tell the full story, as the unemployment rate only measures those people who are actively looking for work. When looking at the percentage of people who are actively employed by level of education, U.S. Census statistics reveal that 60% of working age (25-64) people with less than a high school education are not actively working, whereas 39% of those with only a high school diploma are not actively employed. This is compared to 18% of Granite City residents with at least a 4-year degree who are actively employed.

Nationwide, 52% of non-high school graduates are employed and 66% of high school graduates are employed.

Employment Summary

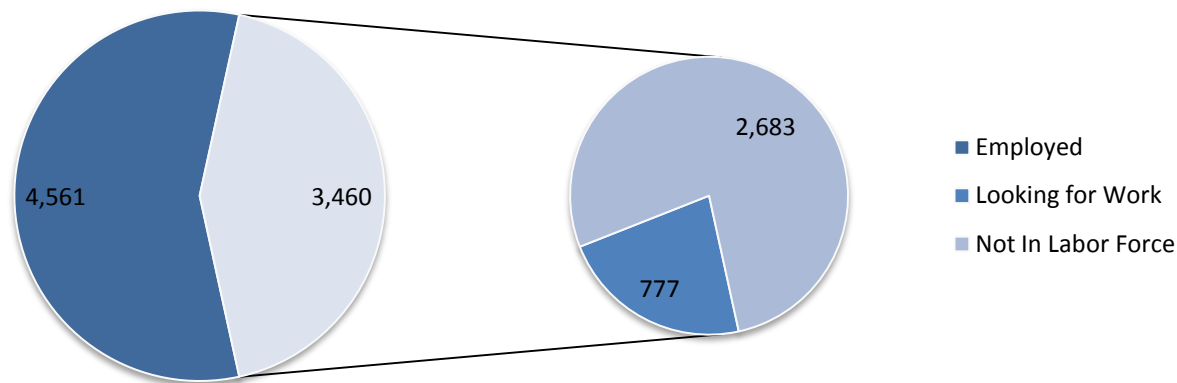
Working Age Population: 25 to 64 years



Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Employment by Education Level

High School Grad or Less



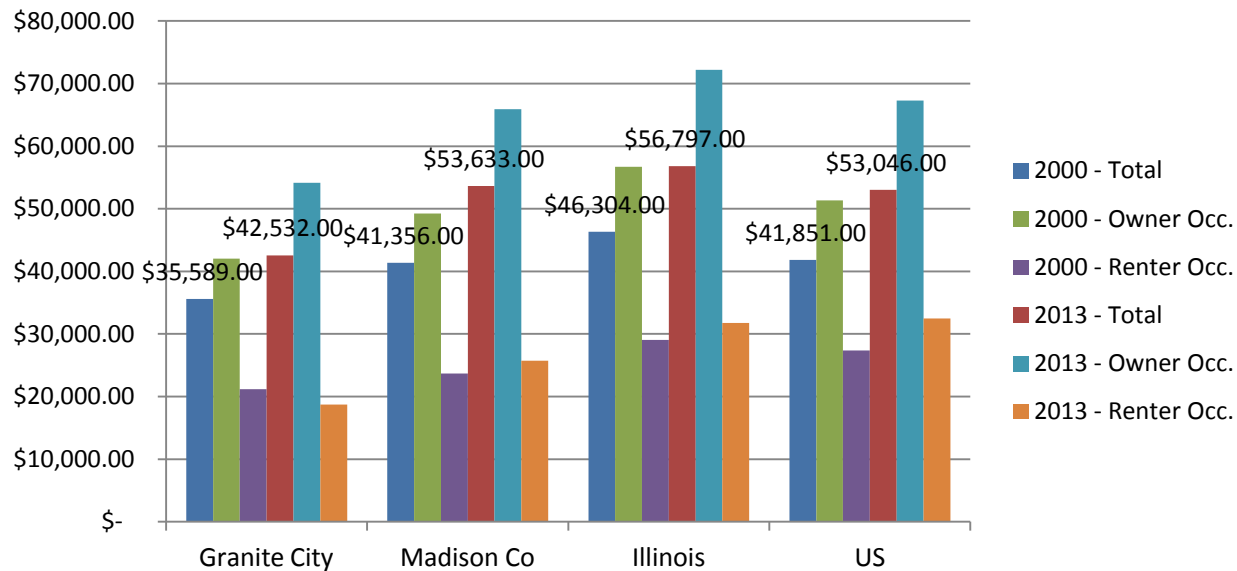
Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

These charts show a further breakdown of the employment and how education levels affect the probability that a person will be actively employed.

The Employment Summary chart shows that, of working age Granite City residents, 66.3% are currently employed. Out of those that are not employed, over three quarters of them are not looking for work. City-wide, this represents just under 4,000 people (or 25%) who are of working age, unemployed and not looking for work. This is compared to the nation as a whole, for which 77.9% of 25 to 64 year olds are considered part of the Labor Force, with 71.2% of this group currently employed.

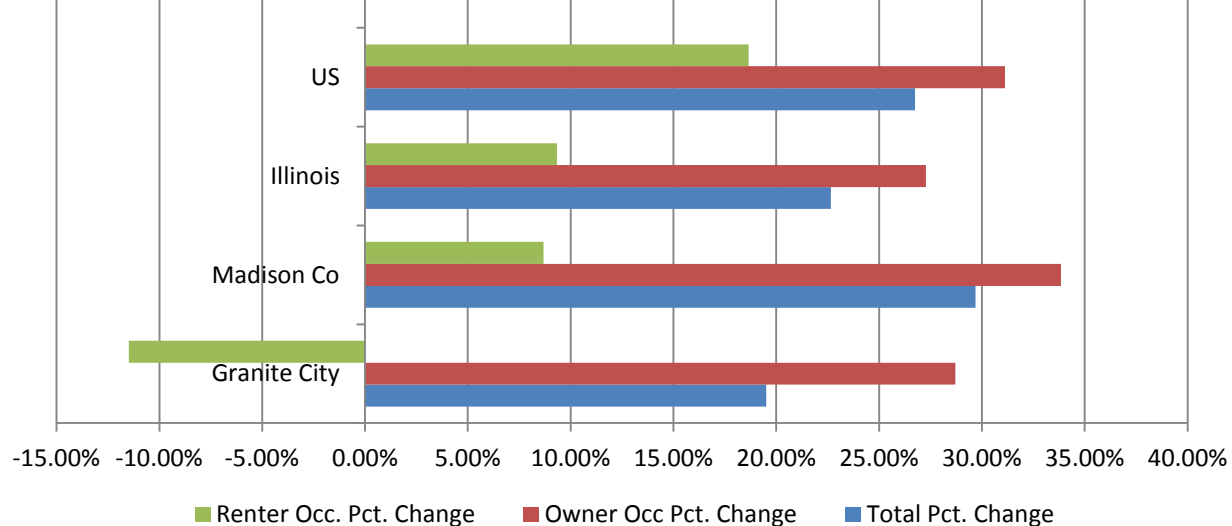
When evaluating just those residents who have a high school diploma or less, 57% of residents are currently employed (compared to approximately 62% nationwide). Further, 2,683 of 8,021 people (33%) are unemployed and not actively looking for work out of this demographic group, which compares to about 30% nationwide.

Median HH Income



Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Median HH Income Growth 2000-2013 (Not Inflation Adj.)



Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Household and Per Capita Income

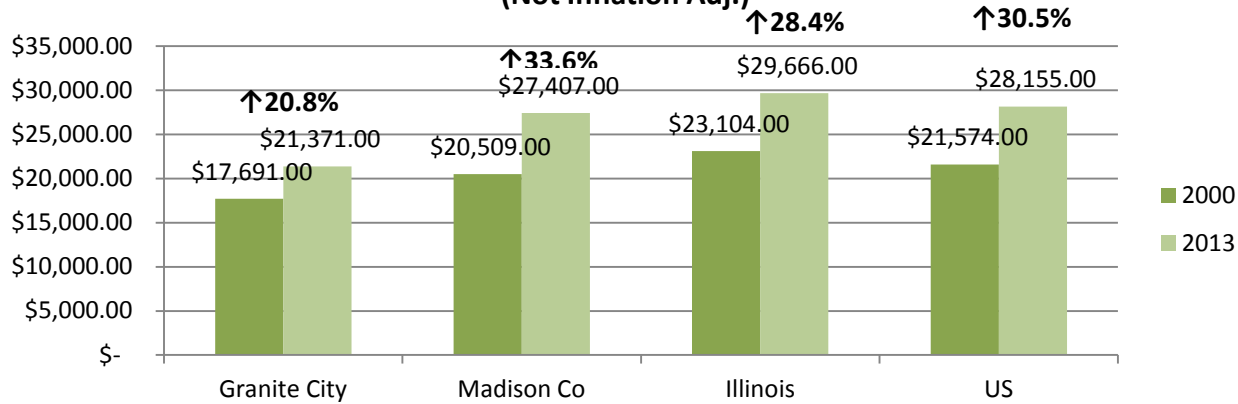
The effects of the changes in employment and labor force participation, described above, are having a direct affect on changing incomes across the City.

From 2000 to 2013, median household income in the city has not kept up with county, state or national incomes. During this time span, aggregate median income in the city increased by 19.5% whereas it increased by 29.7, 22.7 and 26.8% for the county, state and nation, respectively.

A deeper dive, however, shows that median household incomes for owner occupied households have fared much better. In fact, incomes for these households have increased faster than they have for the state, and only lag the county and the nation by 5% and 2.5% points, respectively.

When renter occupied households are considered, however, it is a different story. Median household incomes for renter occupied homes actually decreased from 2000 to 2013 by 11.5%. This compares with increases for renter households at the county, state and national levels of 8.7, 9.3 and 18.7%, respectively. Clearly, renter-occupied households in Granite City are falling way behind, economically.

Median Per Capita Income (Not Inflation Adj.)



Median per capita incomes tell a similar story as household incomes. Again, on an aggregate level, median per capita incomes in the city have increased over the period from 2000 to 2013, but they have not kept pace with other areas.

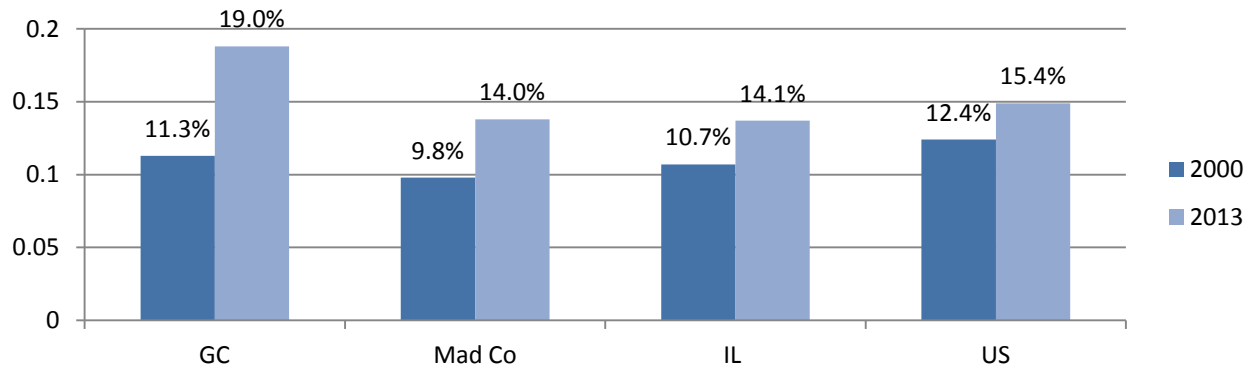
As was mentioned above, renter-occupied households are falling behind economically in Granite City. This is the chief factor for the increase in poverty rates in the city.

While poverty rates have been increasing all over the state and nation, including here in Madison County, they have increased significantly faster in Granite City.

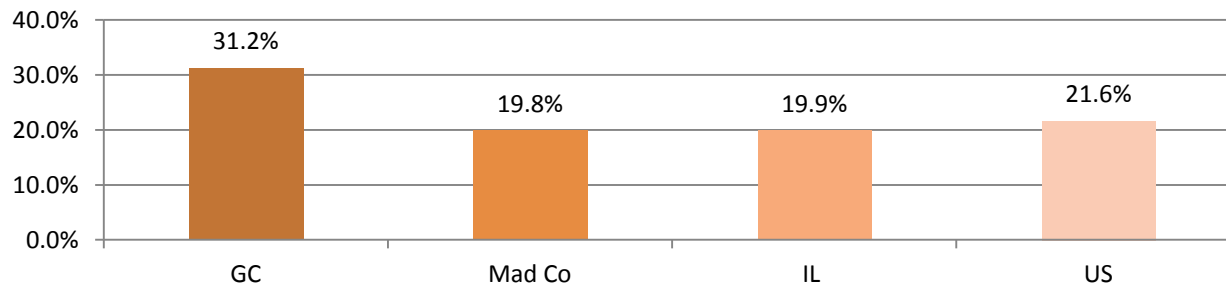
Where poverty rates at a national level increased by 24%, for example, from 12.4% to 15.4%, from 2000 to 2013, they have increased by 68% in Granite City, from 11.3% to 19.0%.

Sadly, and very significantly, households with children are much more likely to be afflicted by poverty than other households. In 2013, nearly 1 in 3 children aged 18 and under was classified as living in poverty in Granite City, which over one and a half times the rate of the county and the state.

Percent of Population in Poverty

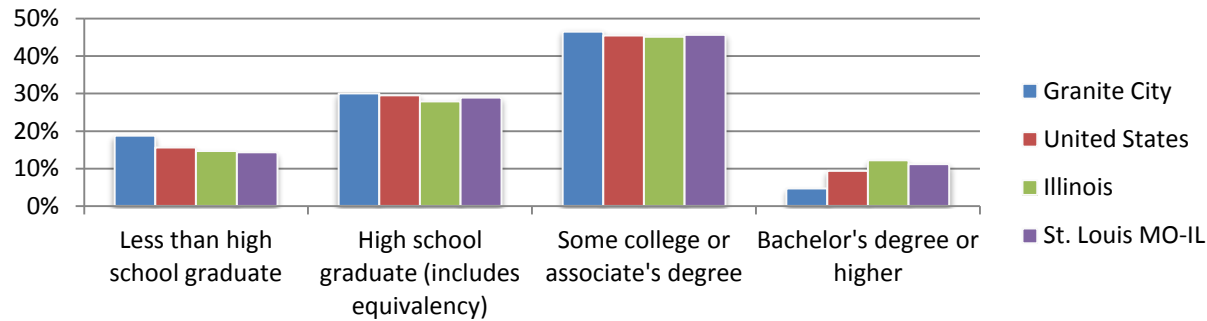


Percentage of Children 18 & Under in Poverty

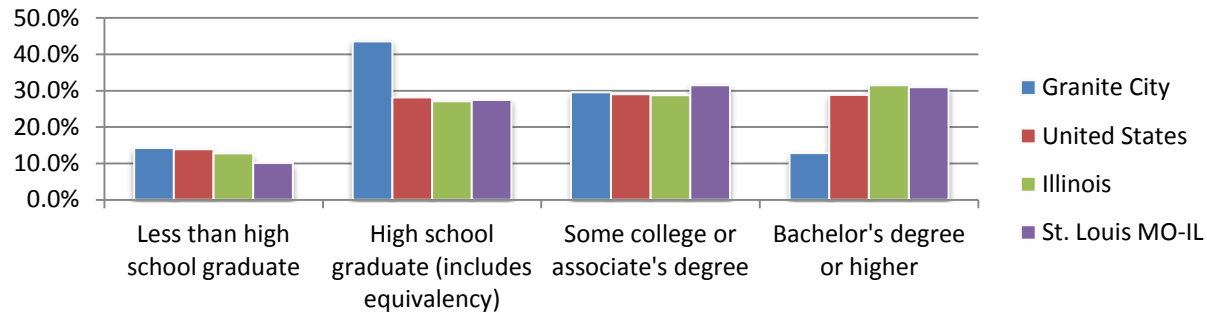


Source: US Census 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

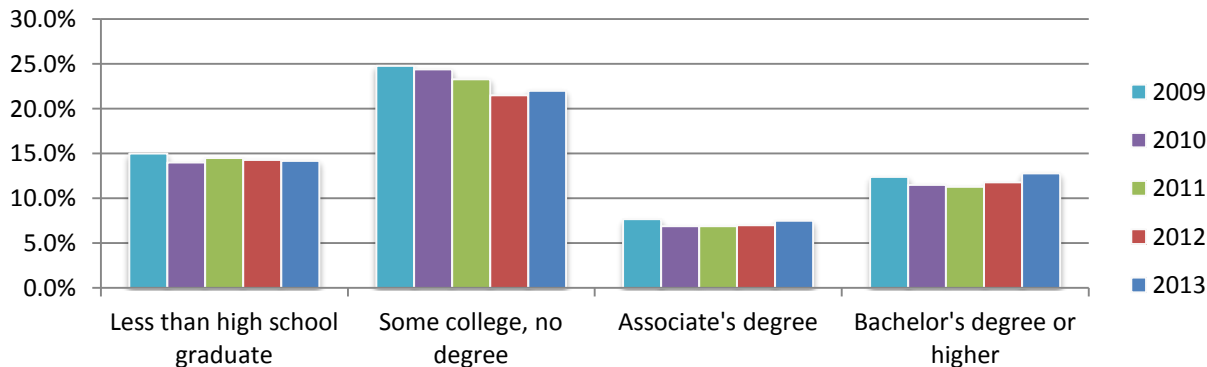
Highest Education Attained (Pop. Age 18-24)



Highest Education Attained (Pop. Age 25+)



G.C. Educational Attainment 2009-2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment

As the top graph on the sidebar of page 6 of this document portrays, education level has a significant impact on income levels throughout the United States.

Looking at rates of educational attainment in Granite City, therefore, reveals telling information that can help to explain and account for the lagging income growth discussed, above.

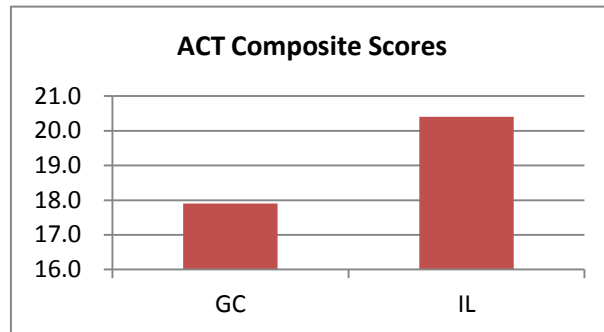
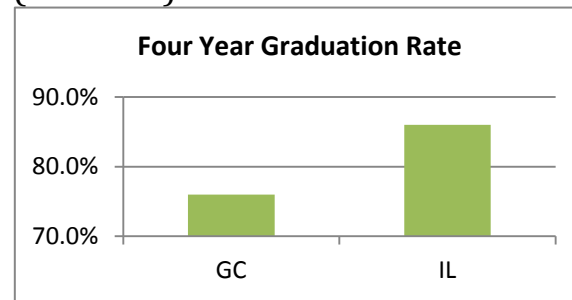
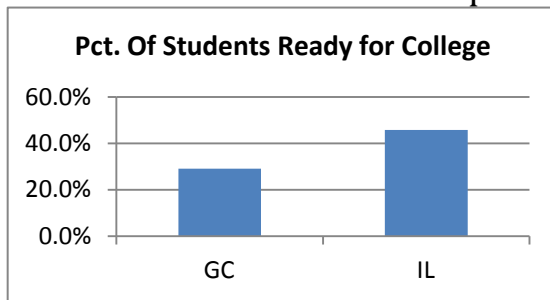
Compared to the St. Louis metro area, the state of Illinois and the nation, Granite City has both a higher rate of people who dropped out of high school and a significantly lower rate of people who have attained a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Also, the city has nearly double the percentage of people whose highest level of education attained is a high school diploma compared with the region, state and nation.

More troubling, is that for those residents age 18-24, the city has a significantly higher rate of high school drop outs, and lower rates of college completion, compared with these other areas.

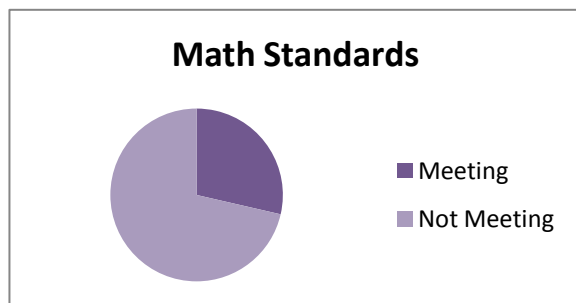
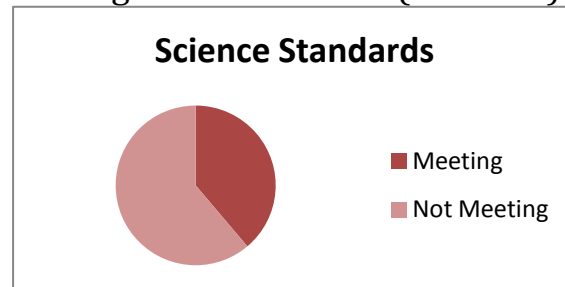
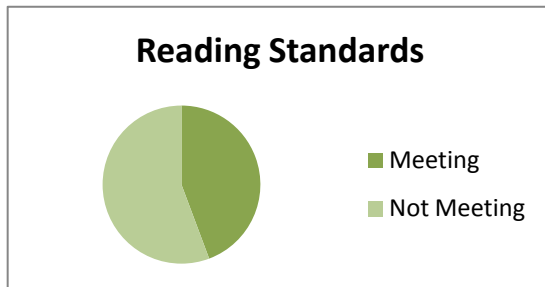
One bright spot in this data is that the percentage of people with a college degree has increased by over one percentage point since 2009, while the total number of those with less than a h.s. diploma has dropped.

GCHS vs. State of Illinois Comparison (2013-14)



Source: ISBE School Report Cards

Percent of GCHS 11th Grade Students Meeting State Standards (2013-14)



Source: ISBE School Report Cards

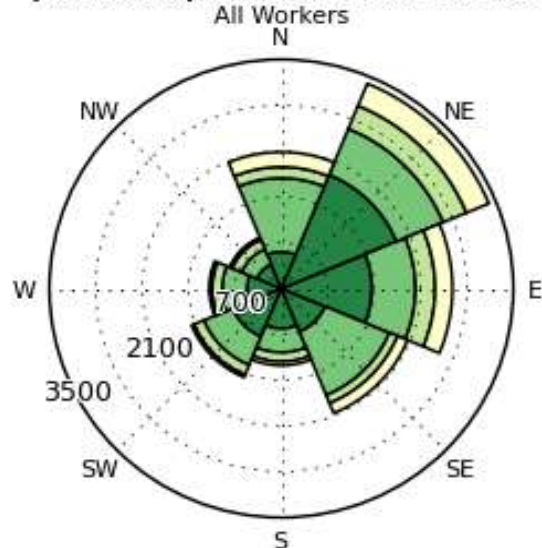
Increasing the rate of educational attainment is a primary way in which the city can begin to boost incomes and with it, improve a whole host of other economic indicators within the city.

Looking at the performance of the local school district indicates that there is room for improvement when it comes to preparing students for college and the workforce. Granted, there are many numerous factors at work that are far outside of the school district's control that impact the performance of students in Granite City schools. On average, however, a more effective approach needs to be devised to help improve test scores and graduation rates, as the city lags behind the state and surrounding municipalities on a wide range of student test scores.

Commuting Patterns - Where Workers Live (2012)

Source: U.S. Census

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2012



Jobs Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) Where Workers Live - Primary Jobs

	2012	
	Count	Share
Granite City city, IL	3,189	21.7%
Collinsville city, IL	494	3.4%
Pontoon Beach village, IL	416	2.8%
Edwardsville city, IL	388	2.6%
St. Louis city, MO	357	2.4%
Alton city, IL	342	2.3%
Belleville city, IL	323	2.2%
Glen Carbon village, IL	210	1.4%
Madison city, IL	200	1.4%
Godfrey village, IL	197	1.3%
All Other Locations	8,576	58.4%

Commuting Patterns

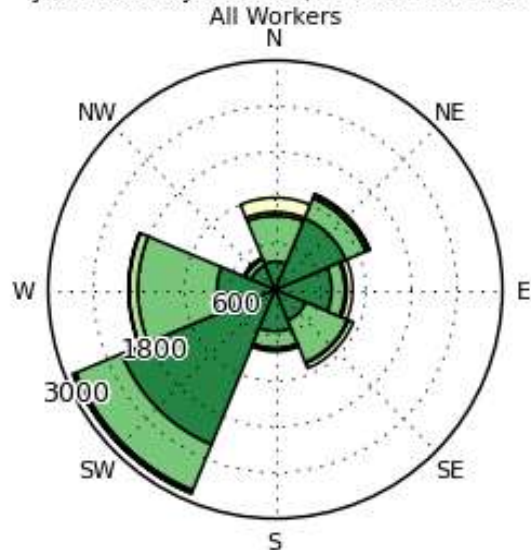
Data from the Census on the Map tool, reveals that the vast majority of people who work in Granite City are residing in other municipalities, with the majority of workers coming from communities to the east and northeast of Granite City. Only 21.7% of primary jobs in Granite City are filled by Granite City residents.

Conversely, only 30% of Granite City residents work in the City, while the majority of city residents work on the Missouri side of the Mississippi River.

Commuting Patterns - Where Residents Work (2012)

Source: U.S. Census

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2012

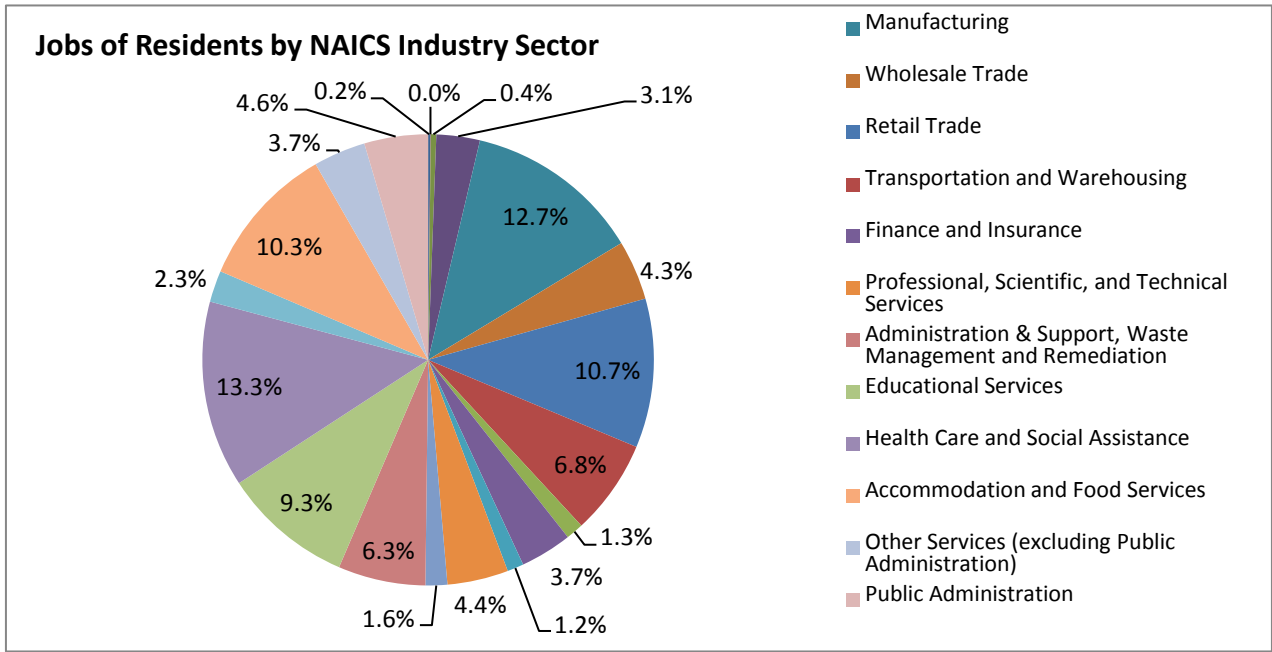


Jobs Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) Where Workers are Employed - Primary Jobs

	2012	
	Count	Share
Granite City city, IL	3,189	29.6%
St. Louis city, MO	1,400	13.0%
Edwardsville city, IL	515	4.8%
Collinsville city, IL	356	3.3%
Alton city, IL	310	2.9%
Belleville city, IL	221	2.0%
Pontoon Beach village, IL	207	1.9%
Madison city, IL	175	1.6%
Maryland Heights city, MO	169	1.6%
Fairview Heights city, IL	168	1.6%
All Other Locations	4,076	37.8%

Talent Mix by Industry (Workers 29 and Older)

Source: www.onthemap.ces.census.gov



Talent and Occupation Mix by Industry

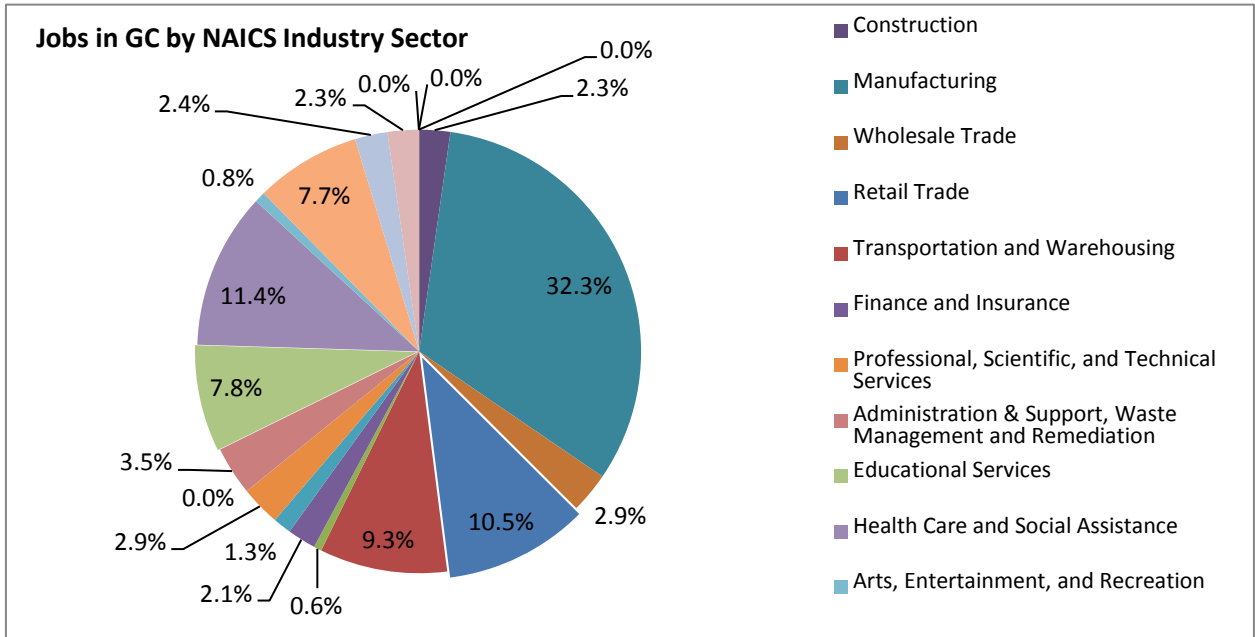
Looking at the jobs held by residents vs. the jobs that are available in Granite City, reveals a distinct difference between the industries where residents work and the industries that are located in the city.

The biggest distinction is that while nearly one third of all jobs available in the community are in manufacturing, only about one in eight residents works in the manufacturing sector.

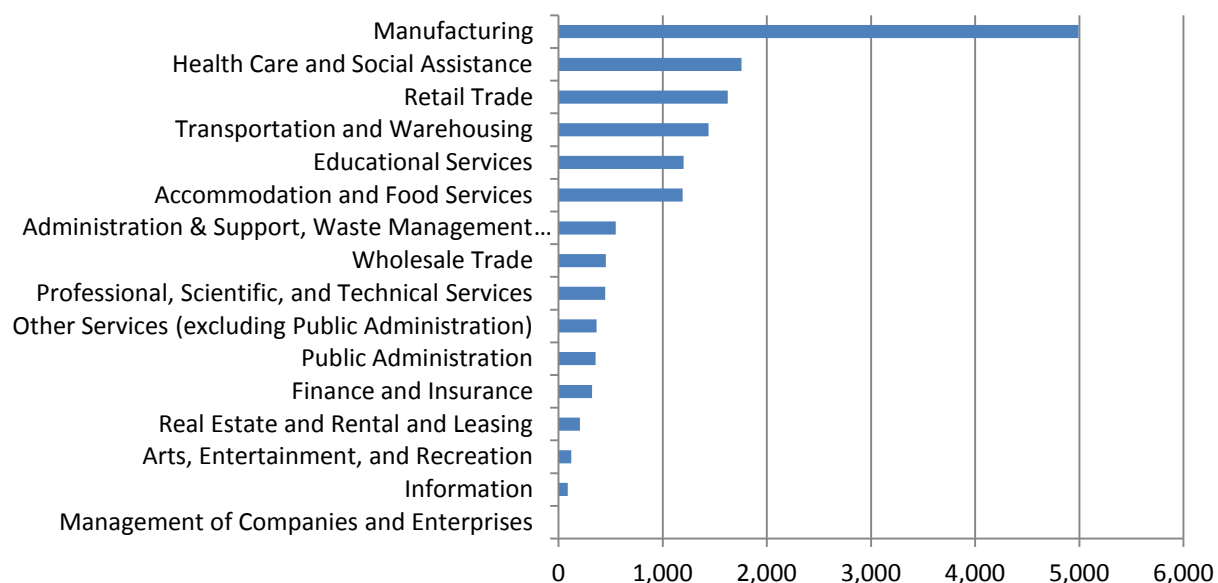
Occupational Mix by Industry – (Workers 29 and Older)

Source:

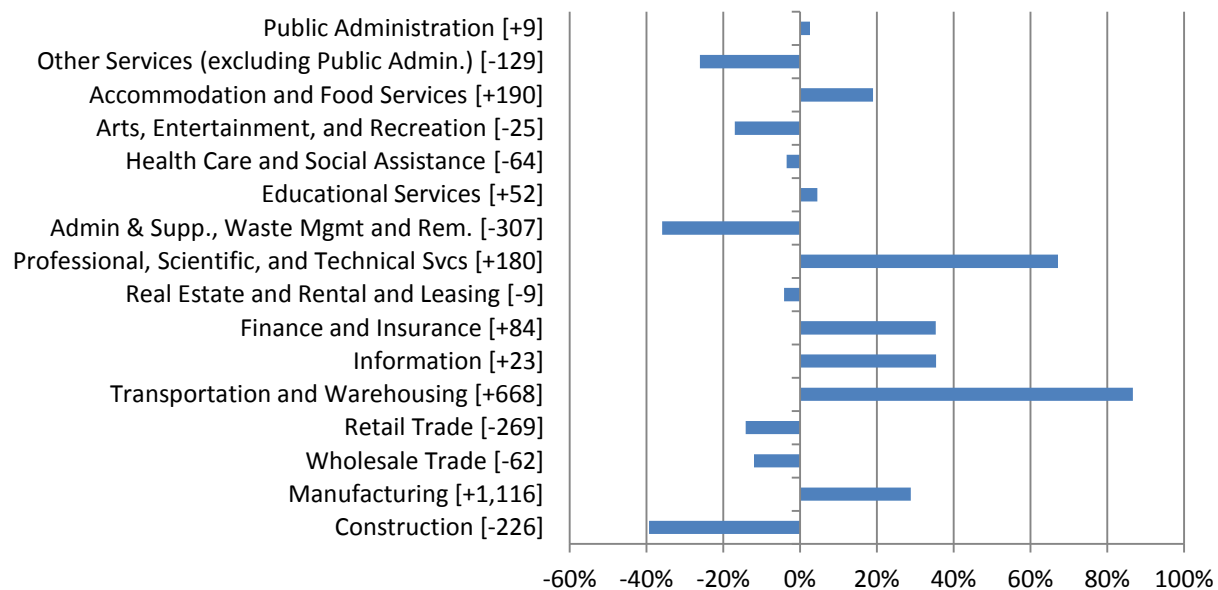
www.onthemap.ces.census.gov



2012 Employment by Industry



Granite City Employment Change by Industry (2002-2012)



Source: www.onthemap.ces.census.gov (2012 is most recent data available).

Jobs in Granite City

Employment by Industry in the City, which is a measure of the jobs that are available in the community (as opposed to the industries where residents work), shows a very large concentration of manufacturing jobs in the community, followed by Healthcare and Social Assistance in a distant second.

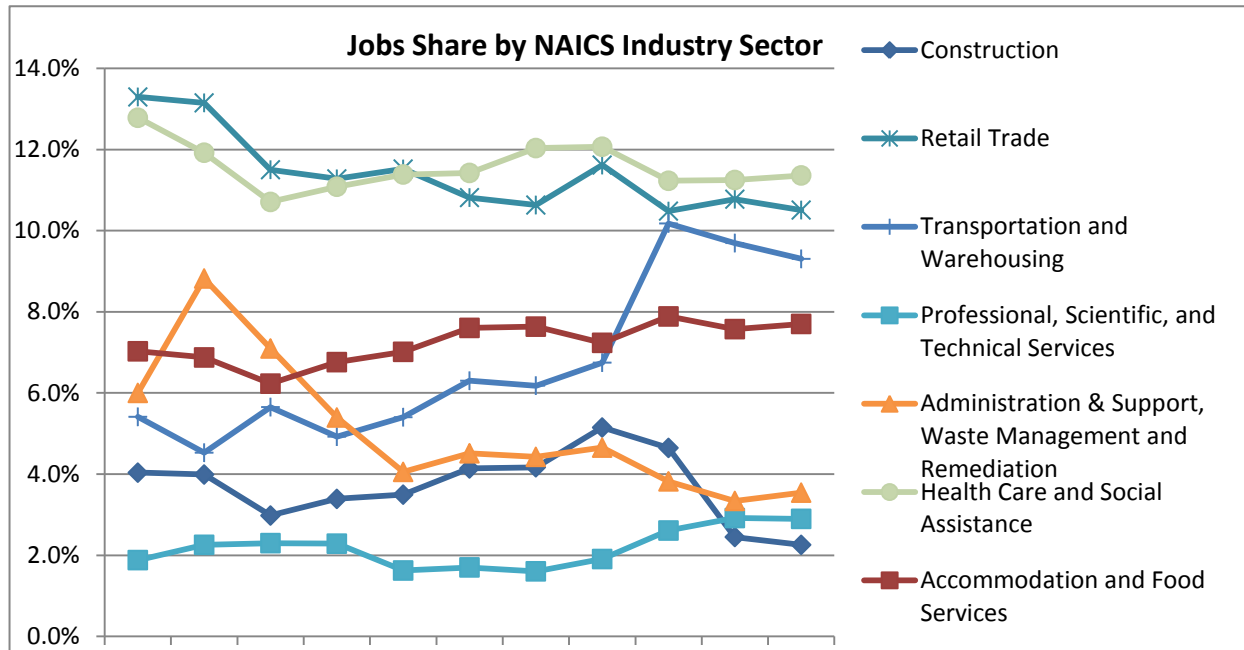
Interestingly, the change in jobs available between 2002 and 2012 reveals that, unlike the national trend, manufacturing jobs actually grew in number, even despite the Great Recession. This can also be seen, below on p. 127, which shows that payrolls have been steadily increasing at jobs offered in the community.

The industries that have grown the most are transportation and warehouse, which aligns with the City's focus on the logistics and transportation cluster, and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, on a percentage basis. In terms of number of jobs created, manufacturing grew the most during this time span.

Industries that shrank the most include Construction, Administration and Support, Waste Management and Remediation and Other Services. Interestingly, retail trade positions also declined during this time span.

Jobs by Industry Trends (2002-2012)

Source: www.onthemap.ces.census.gov



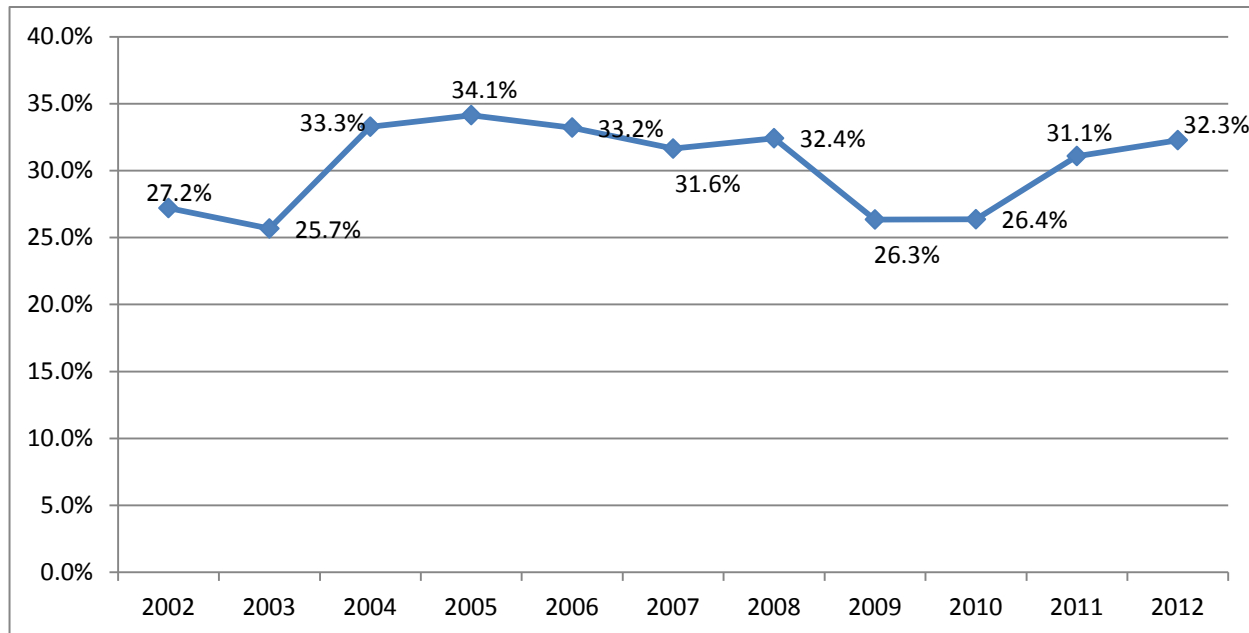
These charts show the trend in jobs by industry available in the community from 2002 to 2012, which is the most recent data available.

These charts show the percentage of total jobs in the community that each industry sector represents.

The most interesting items to note here are the big increase in transportation and warehousing jobs as a percentage of all jobs in the community, the decline in retail jobs, and, most significantly, that manufacturing jobs have held steady as a percentage of all jobs in the community.

Manufacturing Jobs Trend (2002-2012)

Source: www.onthemap.ces.census.gov



Select Occupational Clusters – St. Louis, MO-IL

Source: www.bls.gov

Occupation Title	Total Employment	Location Quotient	Annual Median \$
Rolling Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	970	3.07	44,040
Metal-Refining Furnace Operators and Tenders	640	2.98	*
Pourers and Casters, Metal	280	2.74	41,190
Patternmakers, Metal and Plastic	110	2.69	38,890
Rail Car Repairers	360	1.89	65,110
Food Scientists and Technologists	270	1.83	69,980
Conveyor Operators and Tenders	670	1.70	32,690
Maintenance Workers, Machinery	1,420	1.63	47,870
Tool and Die Makers	1,020	1.33	56,790
Electric Motor, Power Tool, and Related Repairers	240	1.33	47,460
Millwrights	500	1.31	56,970
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	4,760	1.31	28,120
Structural Iron and Steel Workers	730	1.30	54,870
Plating and Coating Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	460	1.30	31,190
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	1,740	1.28	39,300
Tool Grinders, Filers, and Sharpeners	140	1.27	37,960
Sheet Metal Workers	1,570	1.20	69,400
Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	770	1.18	55,740
Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	680	1.18	34,680
Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	1,040	1.14	34,740
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	3,380	1.13	51,840
Insulation Workers, Mechanical	300	1.10	73,260
Layout Workers, Metal and Plastic	140	1.10	61,620
All Occupations	1,291,420	1.00	35,510

A more detailed look at occupational clusters in the entire St. Louis metropolitan region gives a better understanding of the strength and types of jobs in the region.

The location quotient is a way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region as compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a particular region “unique” in comparison to the national average. Occupations with a location quotient greater than 1 indicate a greater concentration of workers in that occupation in the region relative to the rest of the nation.

This table reveals that the St. Louis region has some of the highest concentrations of metals-related manufacturing workers in the country.

This is valuable information when it comes to building upon the area’s industry clusters, as a skilled workforce is one of if not the key driver to a strong industry cluster.

Leading Employers

1. U.S. Steel	2,074	18. Chestnut Health Care	113	35. Mayco Industries	52
2. ASF-Keystone/Amsted Rail	1,400	19. Schnucks	112	36. Custom Fab. and Coating	52
3. Gateway Regional Medical	1,031	20. Ozburn-Hessey Logistics	108	37. Southern Illinois Healthcare	50
4. Granite City School District #9	700	21. Shop N' Save	105	38. Heartland Healthcare	50
5. Kraft Foods	435	22. Lowe's Home Improvement	92	39. LFI Staffing	50
6. Wal-Mart	360	23. Heidtman Steel Products	90	40. Amsco Mechanical	47
7. Southwestern Illinois College	301	24. Guarantee Electric	90	41. M and K Chemical Engineers	43
8. Dynamic Transit	260	25. Stearns Nursing and Rehab	84	42. Gliks Corp.	42
9. Granite City Municipal Gov't	252	26. Weber Chevrolet	82	43. Koetting Ford	40
10. Lewis and Clark Marine	205	27. Arnette Pattern	80	44. Steel Works, LLC.	40
11. Reichmann Transport	200	28. Stein Mill Services	80	45. S and S Pallet Corp.	38
12. Total Metal Recycling	165	29. Precoat Metals	75	46. Feralloy	35
13. Icon Mechanical	163	30. Metro Marble and Granite	75	47. Tube City	27
14. Gateway Packaging	161	31. Baily International	65	48. The Fountains	26
15. Sun Coke Energy	150	32. Illinois Electric Works	60	49. Midwest Metal Coatings	25
16. Ehrhardt Tool and Machine	135	33. Air Products and Chemicals	55	50. Cargill	25
17. Prairie Farms Dairy	125	34. Haas Environmental	55		

Major Investments by Industry (2007-2014)

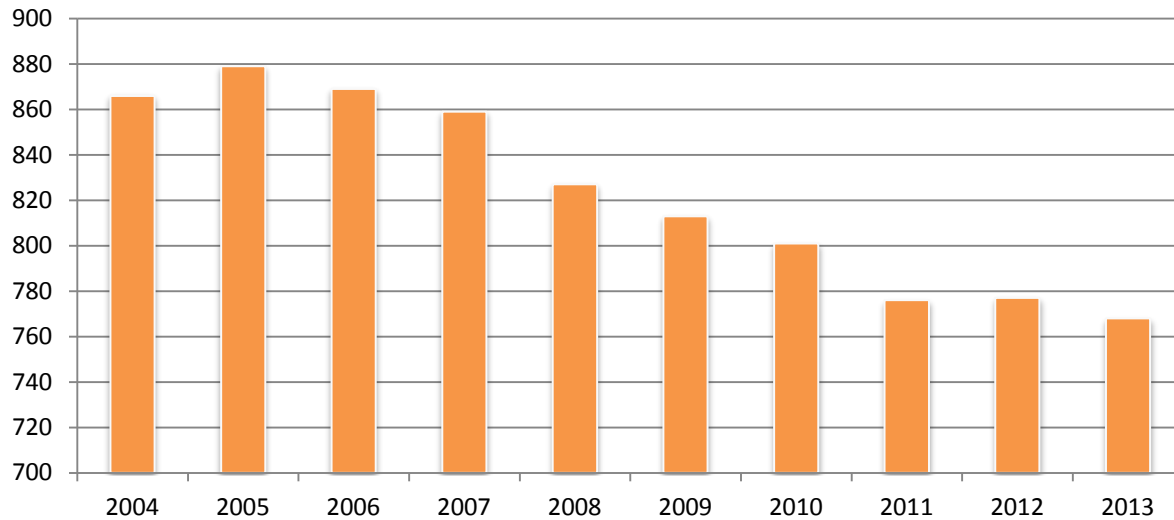
Industry	Investment (\$ Mil.)	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained
Primary Metal Mfg.	\$640.1	141	2,401
Food Processing	\$70.0	205	525
Chemical Mfg.	\$66.3	17	46
Retail/Restaurant	\$55.7	230	262
Healthcare/Social Services	\$48.1	14	1,070
Utilities	\$26.7	0	0
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	\$7.6	114	151
Paper Products Mfg.	\$7.0	10	151
Electrical Equipment Repair	\$3.0	35	20
Transportation and Logistics	\$2.0	5	30
Engineering Services	\$1.3	15	100
Finance/Banking	\$1.0	0	5
Auto Repair	\$0.5	0	0
Non-Profit	\$0.2	0	0
Other	\$6.5	N/A	N/A

Employers and Investments

These tables show the 50 largest employers in the community. Note the concentration of manufacturing, food processing, logistics and transportation and healthcare companies.

Similarly, investments by industry since 2007 also show similar patterns. Between 2007 and 2014, these sectors (representing 50 companies (34 of which invested at least \$1 million)) invested \$936 million dollars in Granite City. For every million dollars invested, six jobs were created or retained.

of Business Establishments



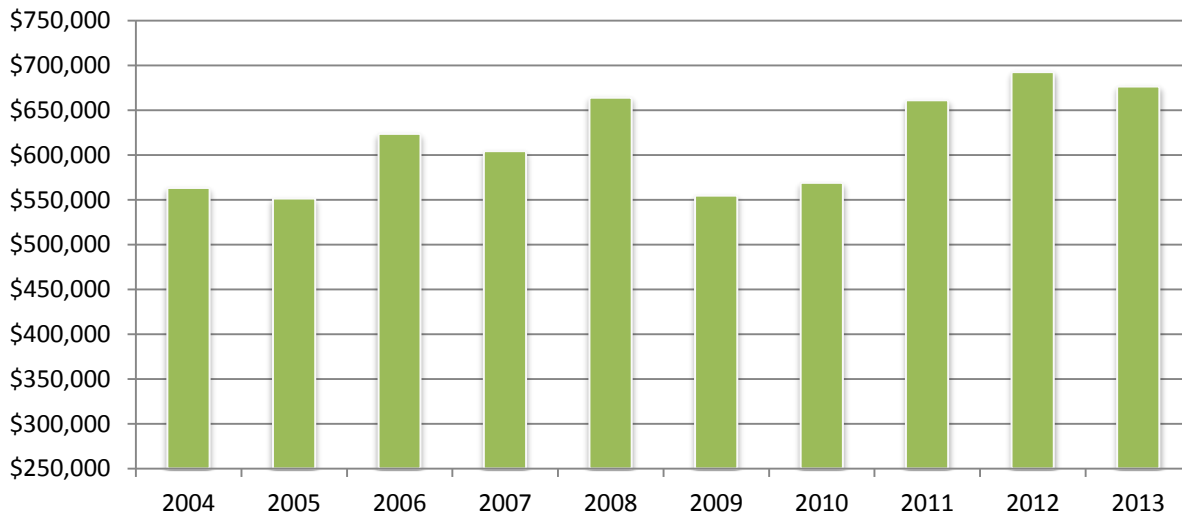
Source: US Census Bureau Annual Economic Surveys, 2013

Despite the growth in investments since 2007, Census Economic Data reveals that the total number of business establishments in the community have decreased since 2004 by nearly 100 businesses, from 866 to 768.

However, even though the number of businesses has decreased the total payroll paid by Granite City businesses has increased, fully recovering to pre-recession levels.

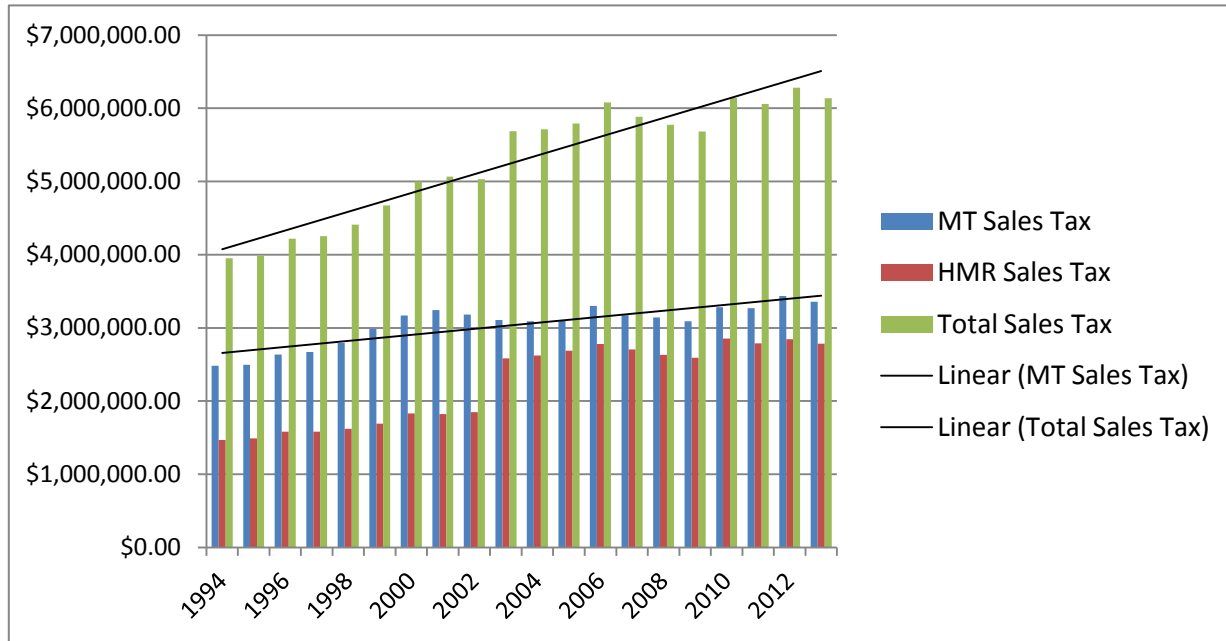
These two indicators are two of the three primary measurements identified in this plan as a way of monitoring the economic condition of the city.

Annual Payroll (\$1,000's)



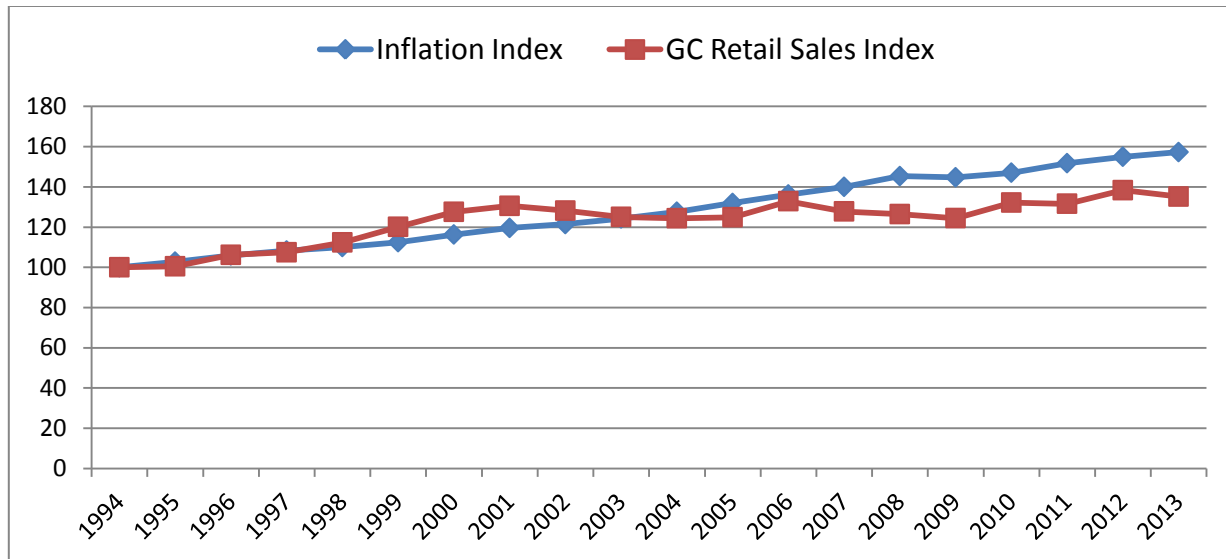
Source: US Census Bureau Annual Economic Surveys, 2013

Granite City Sales Tax Receipts (1994-2013)



MT = Municipal Sales Tax
HMR = Municipal Home Rule Sales Tax

Source: IL Dept. of Revenue



Sales Tax and Retail Sales

Data from the IL Department of Revenue show the change in sales tax collection in the community going back to 1994.

As the charts reveal, sales tax collection has grown modestly over the past 20 years. However, the majority of that growth has come about from an increase in the Home Rule Sales Tax rate, which went into effect in 2004.

When compared to the growth in inflation over this same time span, it appears that actual retail sales have lagged behind inflation, which means that retail sales have actually decreased in real terms since 1994.

Retail Expenditures (Center Point: Nameoki Commons)

Total Spent in Market Area

	<u>3 Mile</u>	<u>5 Mile</u>	<u>7 Mile</u>
Apparel Products	\$1,582,229	\$24,034,597	\$56,451,656
Entertainment and Recreation	\$39,276,198	\$53,734,159	\$122,582,671
Pets and Pet Products	\$7,706,495	\$10,541,582	\$23,794,316
Food Away from Home	\$36,664,090	\$50,530,122	\$117,546,514
Vehicle Loans	\$46,712,477	\$64,403,659	\$147,552,232
Prescription Drugs	\$6,223,390	\$8,501,519	\$19,325,068
Furniture and Major Appliances	\$8,939,005	\$4,503,914	\$28,181,254
TV/Video/Audio	\$15,722,812	\$21,723,100	\$50,579,355
Computers and Computer	\$2,294,467	\$3,137,321	\$7,207,794

Source: Esri Business Analyst Online. These data are based upon national propensities to use various products and services, applied to local demographic composition.

Usage data were collected by GfK MRI in a nationally representative survey of U.S. Households. ESRI Forecasts for 2012.

Retail Gap Report – Nameoki Commons – 5 Mile Radius

Industry Summary	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap/Surplus	# Businesses
Total Retail Trade, Food and Drink	\$479,148,677	\$471,108,017	\$8,040,660	363
Total Retail Trade	\$433,925,740	\$400,638,308	\$33,287,432	283
Total Food and Drink	\$45,222,937	\$70,469,709	-\$25,246,771	80
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	\$81,449,259	\$74,432,353	\$7,016,906	38
Furniture and Home Furnishings	\$8,894,885	\$4,300,186	\$4,594,699	12
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores	\$10,553,365	\$5,192,248	\$5,361,117	27
Gasoline Stations	\$47,364,807	\$68,852,699	-\$21,487,892	17
Clothing and Clothing Accessories	\$25,721,383	\$10,854,702	\$14,866,681	22

Further analysis of retail sales around Nameoki Commons, which is both the main retail hub in the City, and also closely corresponds to the geographic center of the community, shows the total amount of money being spent within the community on a variety of different types of products.

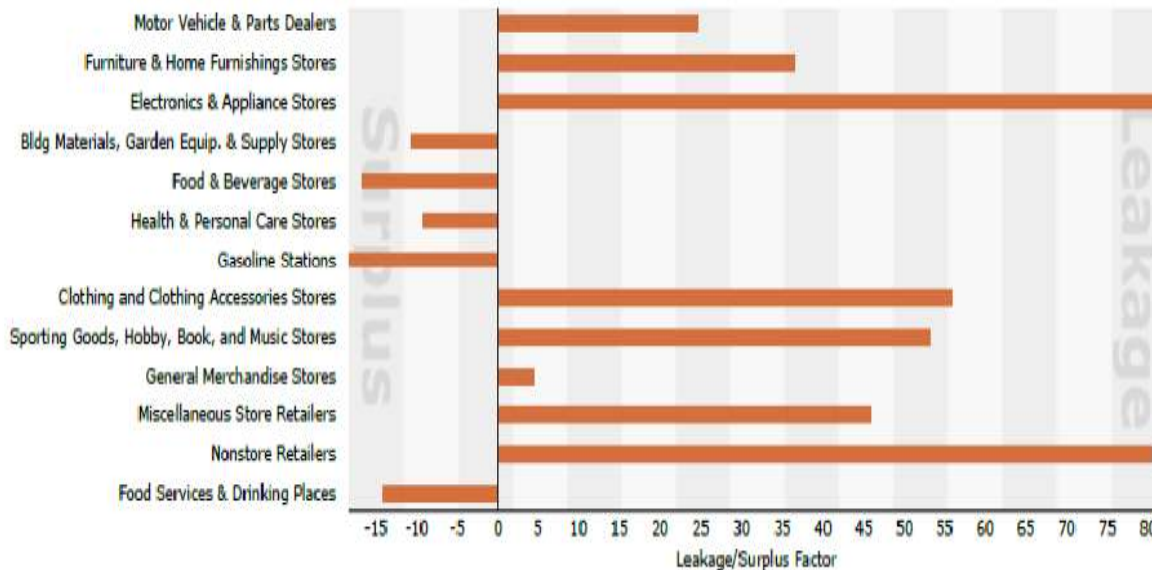
The Retail Demand Gap shows that there is room for more retail stores within the community, based on the amount of retail dollars being spent by residents in the community. However, significantly, these reports indicate that there is a surplus of restaurants in the community based on the amount being spent by residents on restaurants.

This means that the addition of new restaurants runs a risk of causing existing restaurants to go out of business due to oversupply relative to the level of demand. The same is true of gas stations.

The areas where there are significant gaps include general merchandise stores, and clothing stores.

Retail Sales Leakage/Surplus – 5 Mile Radius: Nameoki Commons

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector



Restaurant Demand Gap – Center Point: Nameoki Commons

3 Mile Radius	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap/Surplus	# Businesses
Total Food and Drink	\$32,869,345	\$51,116,634	-\$18,247,289	61
Full-Service Restaurants	\$14,540,294	\$9,185,548	\$5,354,746	10
Limited-Service Eating Places	\$15,173,200	\$37,229,215	-\$22,056,014	24
5 Mile Radius				
Total Food and Drink	\$45,222,937	\$70,469,709	-\$25,246,771	80
Full-Service Restaurants	\$19,767,858	\$23,057,767	-\$3,289,909	8
Limited-Service Eating Places	\$20,998,637	\$41,630,668	-\$20,642,031	29
7 Mile Radius				
Total Food and Drink	\$104,983,553	\$138,890,013	-\$33,906,459	172
Full-Service Restaurants	\$43,714,397	\$50,174,388	-\$6,459,991	49
Limited-Service Eating Places	\$49,600,555	\$76,017,425	-\$26,416,870	56

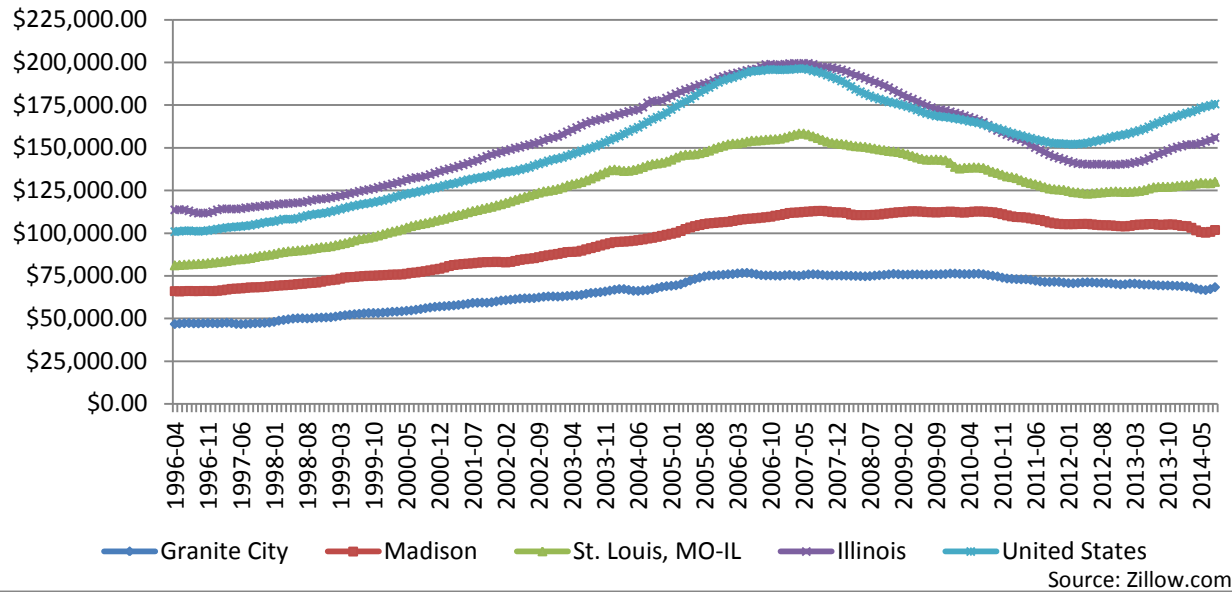
Sources: Esri and Infogroup © 2013

The top chart on this page shows a graphic representation of the retail leakage and surplus in the community.

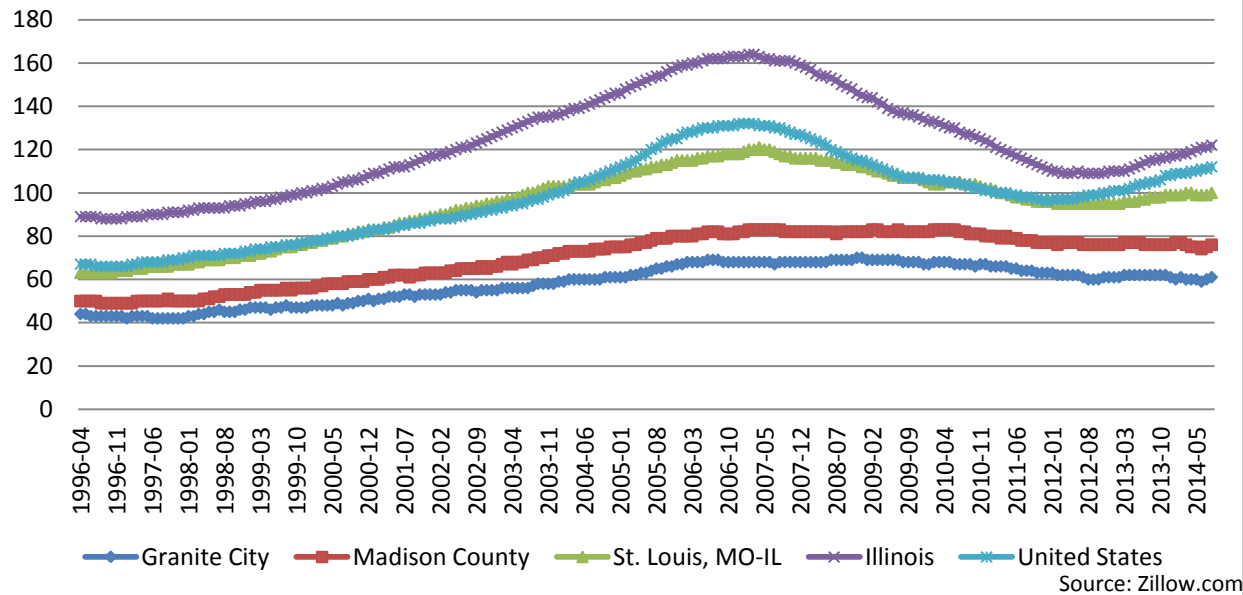
The bottom table gives a further breakdown of the demand and supply for restaurants. As this table shows, there is currently a surplus of limited-service eating places, but a gap for full-service restaurants (as of 2013).

It is important to note, however, that these gap and surplus estimates are calculated given the resident population in the community. Since Granite City has a significant daytime population from workers coming to the city for their jobs, it is possible that the surplus for limited-service eating places is not as large as this data would suggest.

Zillow Home Value Index



Median Home Value/Sq. Ft.



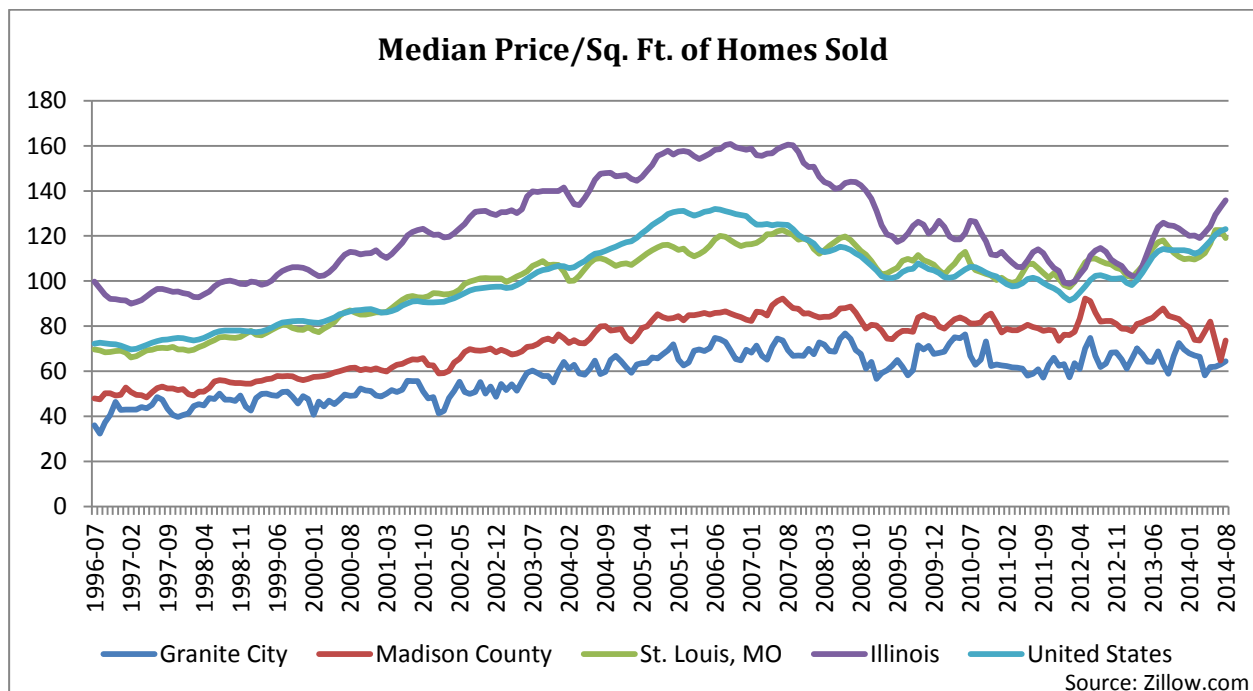
Housing

Housing values are an indicator of demand by people to live in the community. They are also, however, largely impacted by incomes.

As these charts indicate, home prices in Granite City remain well under the value for homes in the county, region, state and nation.

Most alarmingly, however, is that the gap between housing values in the city and in the county, among other places, has increased over time, which means that home values in the city are not keeping pace with these other areas and are instead falling further behind.

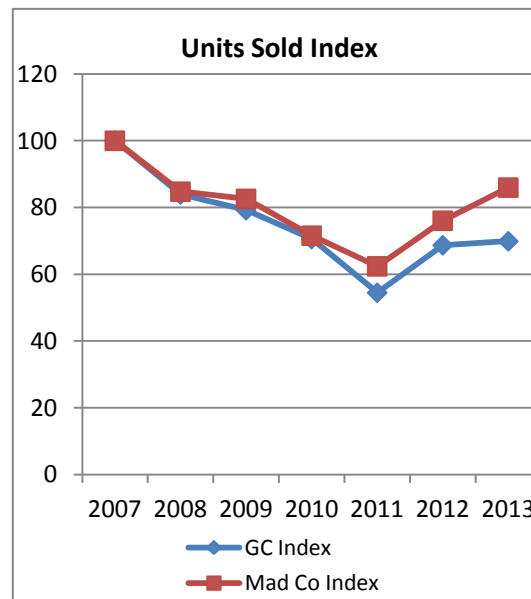
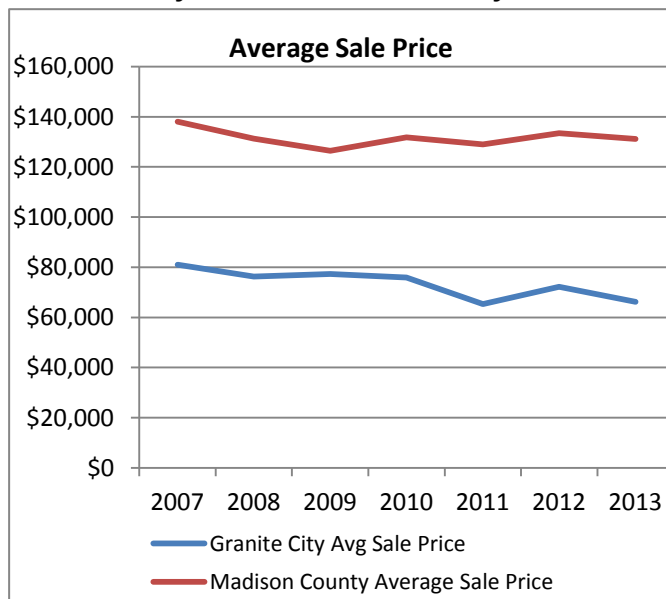
This is great for home buyers, but it is not good for those who want to sell. It also means that buying a home in Granite City does not have the same investment value that it does elsewhere, as the price does not appreciate as rapidly as it might, in a neighboring community.



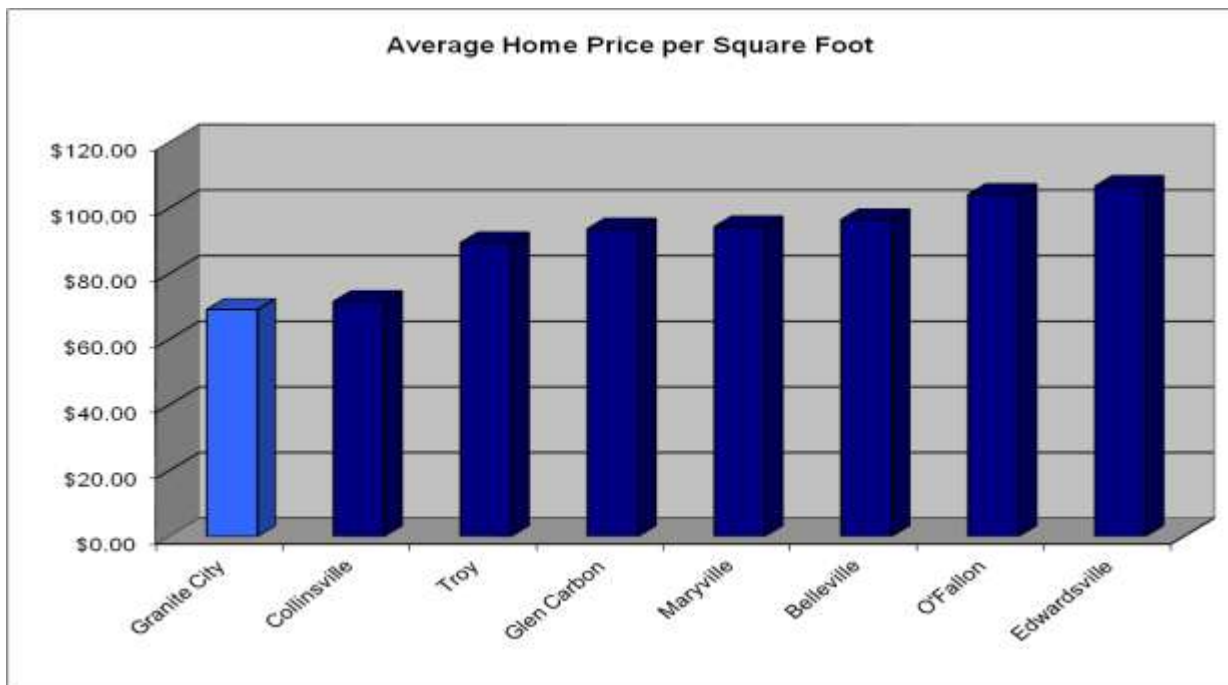
These charts give another look at how home prices have changed over time. Here, we look at the median price per square foot of those homes sold going back to 1996.

The bottom chart gives a more detailed view of the comparison of average home sale prices in the city versus the county. It also indicates that the number of houses being sold in both the city and the county has declined from its pre-recession peak, although the city has not recovered as quickly as the county has in this regard.

Granite City vs. Madison County



Source: Gateway Realtors Association



Locally, Granite City's housing market is one of the most affordable in the St. Louis region. The following chart compares the average price of a home between 2,100 and 2,600 square feet, 3-5 bed, and 2-4 bath in surrounding cities.

Housing Age

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

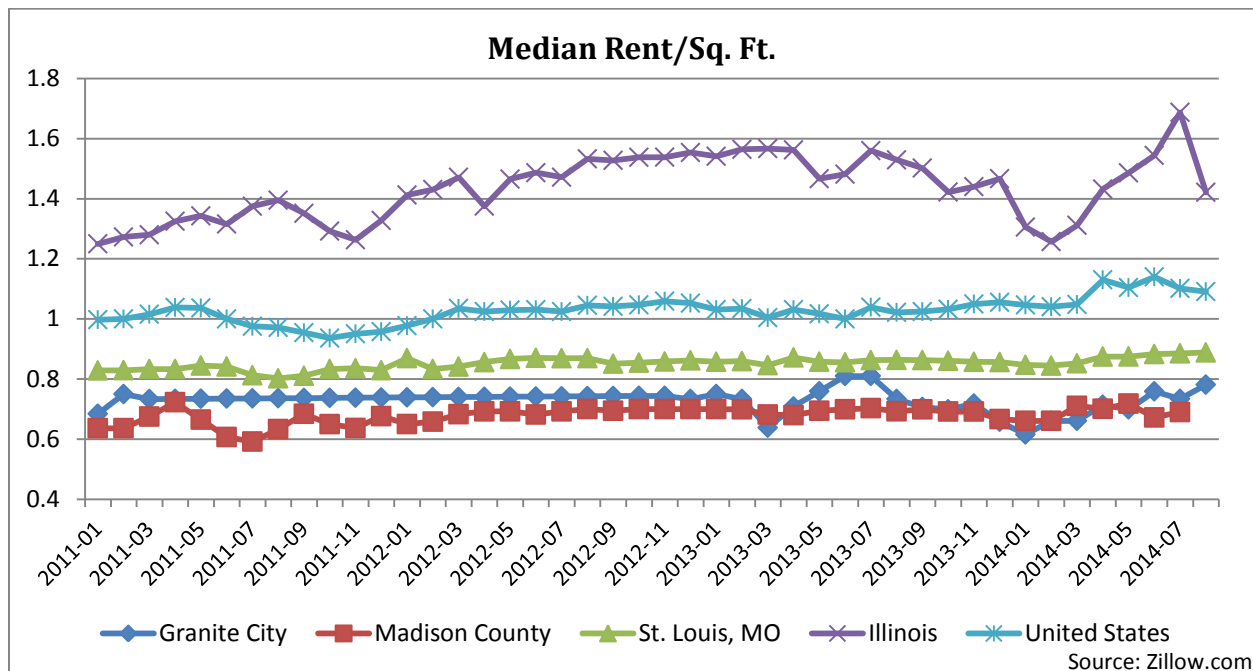
Total housing units	13,920	+/-435	13,920
Built 2010 or later	0	+/-21	0.0%
Built 2000 to 2009	478	+/-163	3.4%
Built 1990 to 1999	458	+/-114	3.3%
Built 1980 to 1989	505	+/-128	3.6%
Built 1970 to 1979	1,163	+/-219	8.4%
Built 1960 to 1969	2,258	+/-325	16.2%
Built 1950 to 1959	3,674	+/-355	26.4%
Built 1940 to 1949	1,857	+/-282	13.3%
Built 1939 or earlier	3,527	+/-295	25.3%

Source: U.S. Census – Housing Characteristics

These charts show the average home price per square foot for similarly sized houses with similar numbers of bedrooms and bathrooms in Granite City and surrounding cities. Once again, Granite City has the least expensive houses per square foot of any of the cities reviewed for comparison.

The lower table gives a breakdown of the age of housing units built in the city. Overall, the city has predominantly older homes, with less than 7% of homes in the city being built after 1990.

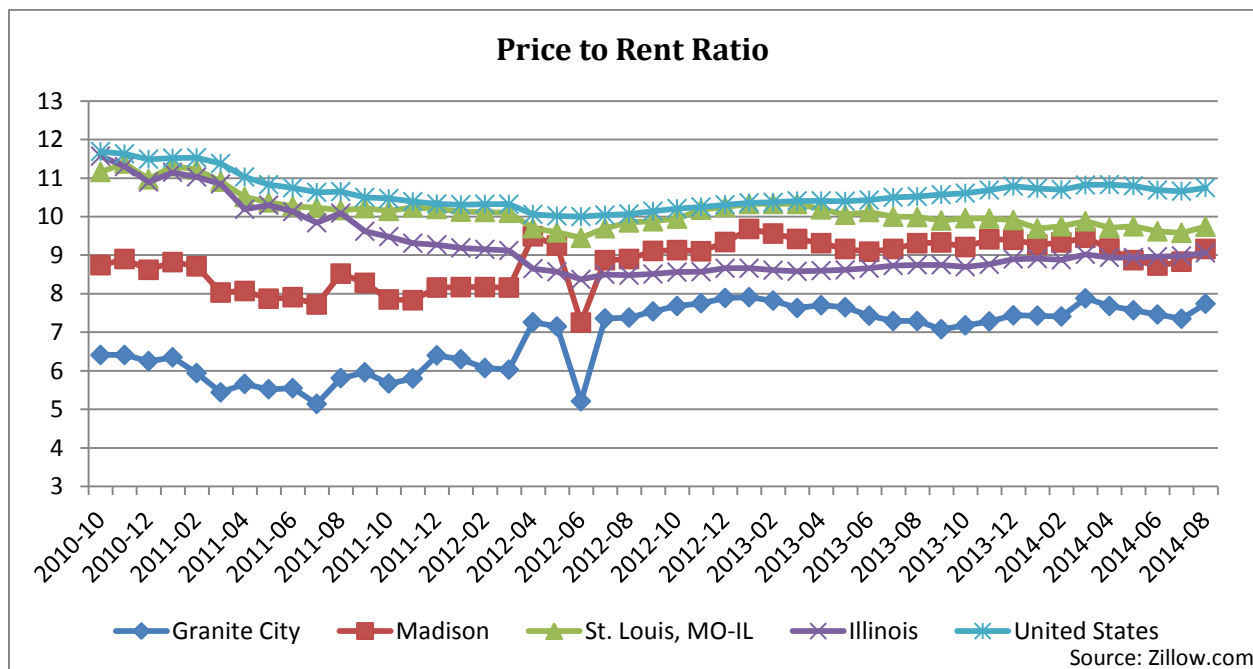
This is likely a significant contributing factor as to why home prices lag behind the rest of the area. It is because Granite City homes are older, which means that they likely require more cost to upkeep or bring up to current living standards.

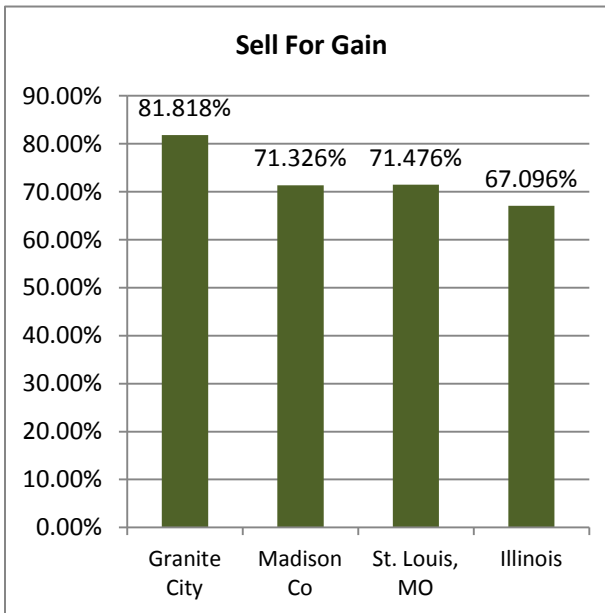
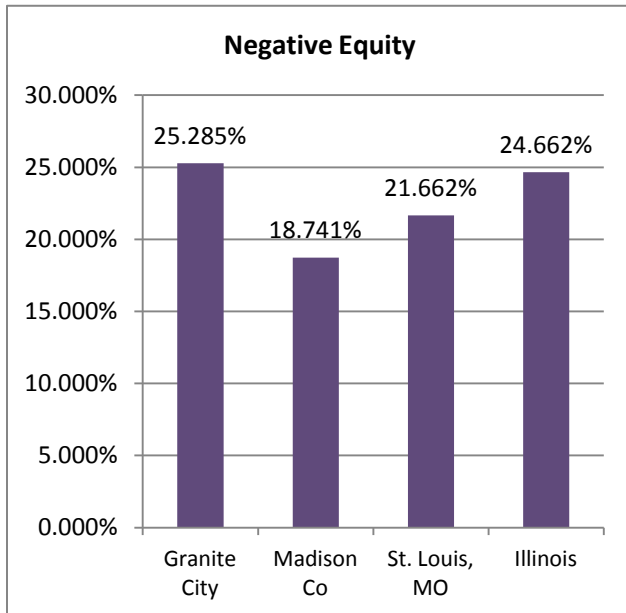
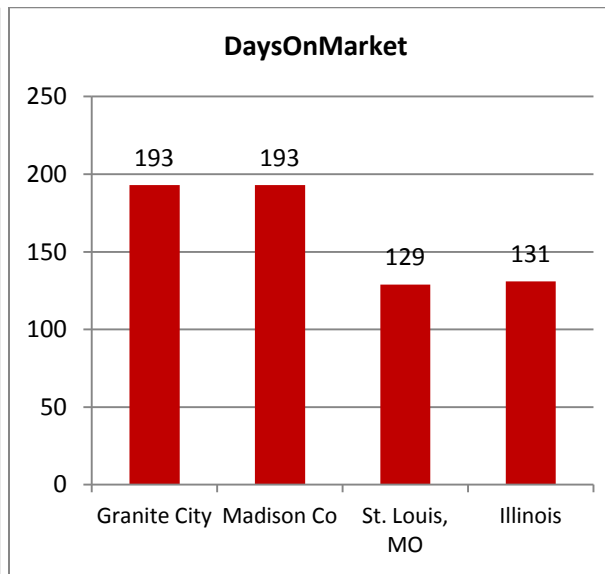
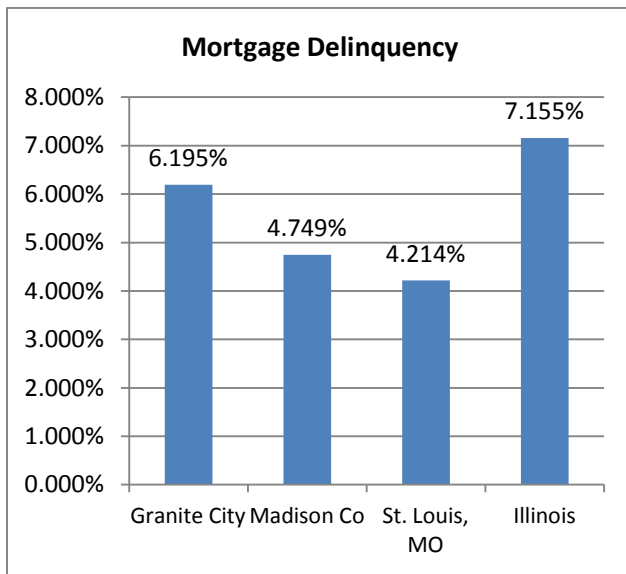


This view of the city's housing market looks at rent per square foot and the price to rent ratio.

Interestingly, the median rent per square foot in the city is higher than in the county, despite the fact that prices for housing units are much lower than in the county.

This is reflected in the price to rent ratio. The Price to Rent ratio shows that for every dollar that an investor can expect to make in rent per year, they would have to pay just under \$8 to purchase the house that they would rent. This fact makes the city very appealing to landlords, since they can make their money back on their investment much more quickly than they can by investing elsewhere.





Source: Zillow.com

Analyzing the charts to the left shows a mixed bag of positive and negative indicators for the city.

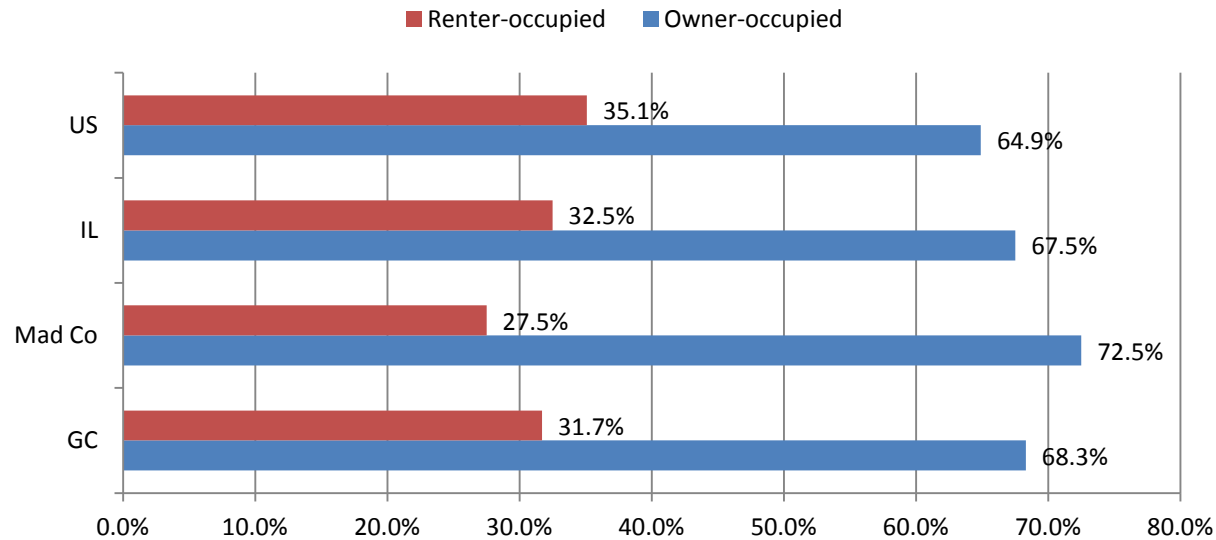
On the positive side, the percentage of homes that are delinquent on their mortgage is lower than it is statewide, although it is higher than in the county or the metropolitan region.

Also positive is that over 81% of homeowners who sell do so for a gain, which is higher than in the county, region or state.

Negatively, however, the percentage of current homeowners who have negative equity in their homes, which means that they owe more than they could get by selling, is greater than 1 in 4 homes, which is higher than any of the comparative areas.

Most negatively, the Days on Market indicates that home sales are soft relative to the region and the state, as it takes longer for a home owner to sell their home here than it does in these other places. However, this figure is the same as it is for the county.

Owner v. Renter Occupancy (2013)

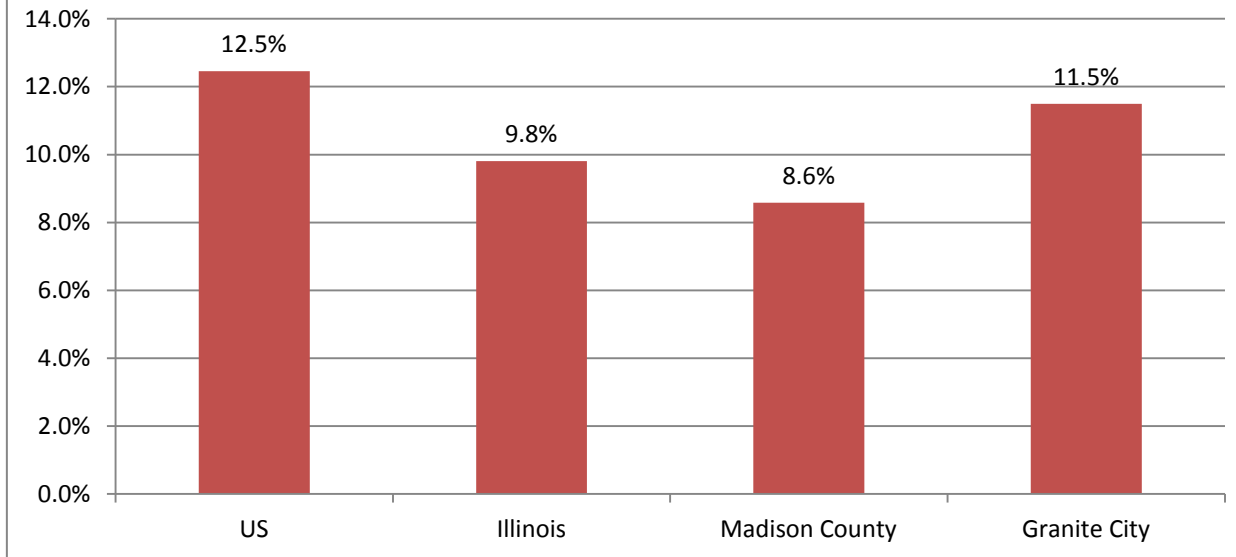


Source: US Census 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

When comparing renter versus owner occupied housing, according to the US Census Bureau, just over 2 in 3 housing units in the city is owner occupied. This is in line with estimates for the state and the nation as a whole, and is slightly lower than the county.

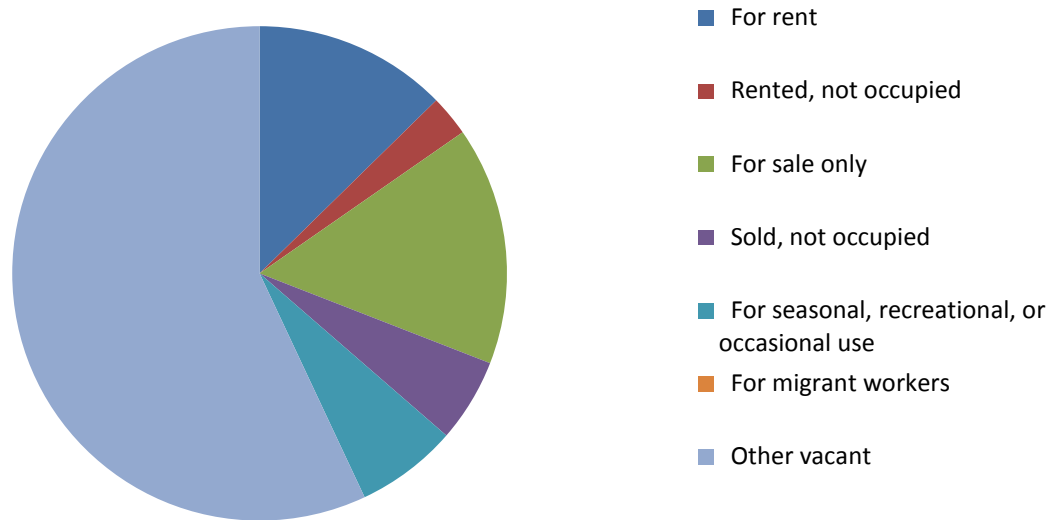
However, the number of vacant housing units in the City is high relative to both the county and the state, but is slightly lower than the nation as a whole. The chart on the next page gives a better idea of the composite of these vacant housing units.

Vacant Housing Units (2013)



Source: US Census 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Vacancy Status



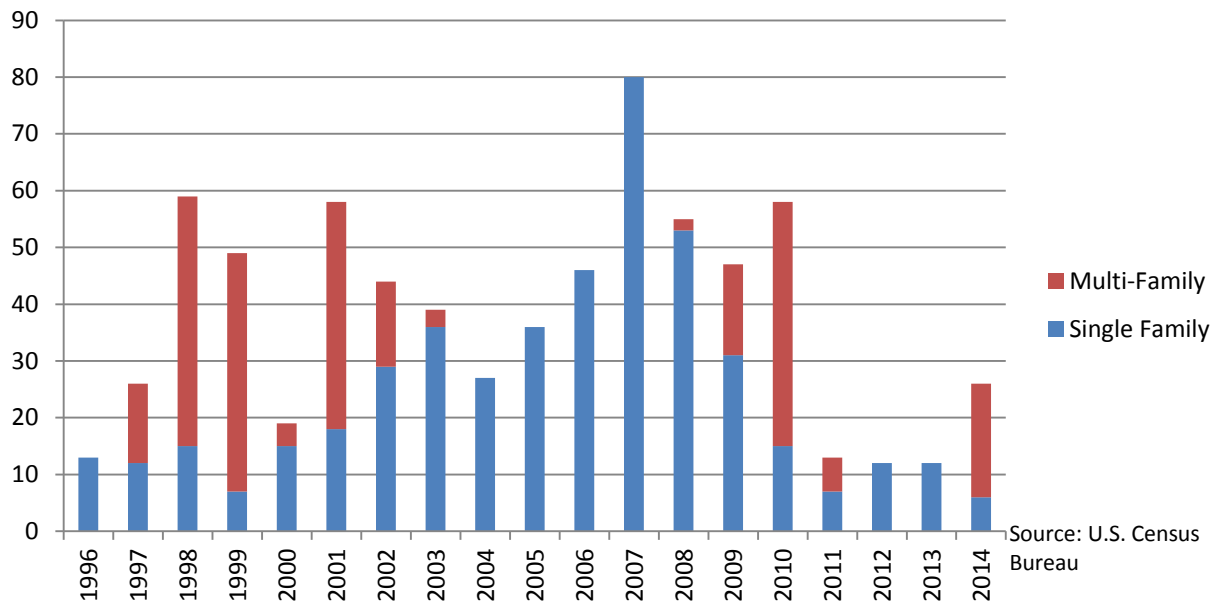
Source: US Census 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The Vacancy Status chart on the left shows the cause for houses being vacant in the city.

The most concerning area, here, is those houses which are listed as “other vacant” which account for 7% of houses in the entire city. These houses are typically those that are empty, but are not listed for sale or for rent. This includes houses that have been abandoned, and those that are in foreclosure.

Lastly, the lower chart shows the number of new housing units that have been permitted annually in the city dating back to 1996.

Granite City New Housing Units Permitted Annually



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In the late 90s and early 2000's and again in the early 2010's, the majority of units being built in the city were for multi-family rental units.

Since the recession, there has been a significant drop off in the construction of residential units of all types, but single family construction has dropped off more so than multi-family construction.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

National/Global

- U.S. is a low-risk, high transparency investment destination

State/Region

- Low cost of living
- Colleges and universities
- Scott AFB
- Technical training schools
- Cultural and recreational opportunities
- Dining and shopping options
- Entrepreneurial programs
- High productivity of regional workforce
- Highly diversified regional economy

Local

- Strong employment base
- Location within metro St. Louis
- Hospital located within the City
- Bike Trails
- Mature manufacturing cluster
- Abundance of infrastructure (road, river, and rail)
- Metro occupations w/ high Location Quotients line up w/ local industry clusters
- High level of ongoing investment by business community
- Plentiful green space options for new construction
- Affordable housing
- Engaged business community
- Proactive city administration

Strengths:

Overall, Granite City is blessed with an abundance of strengths. The two most prominent, and possibly most important, are the strong employment base and the city's proximity to St. Louis City, being located near the center of the St. Louis metropolitan area.

In addition, the Port District and access to certain tax incentives, particularly New Market Tax Credits, give the Granite City economy something extra special that helps distinguish and differentiate it from other communities within the metropolitan area.

If harnessed wisely, the city should be able to use these strengths to help overcome weaknesses by drawing people to live in the city who work here, already, and by attracting commuters who work in St. Louis, or other parts of the region. (See Strategy 2A.1).

On a regional level, the St. Louis area's relatively low cost of doing business and cultural amenities help significantly when competing intra or internationally for business growth.

- Regional employment hub
- America's Central Port
- Dedicated Citizen/Business Groups (e.g. Rotary)
- Foreign Trade Zone
- Access to New Market Tax Credits
- Quality park system
- Tax incentive programs
- Available land with industrial and commercial zoning
- Land costs per acre are relatively inexpensive
- SWIC
- CEO Program
- High productivity of local workforce

Weaknesses

National/Global

- Sluggish growth in U. S. economy w/ consistently high unemployment
- Access to capital

State/Regional

- State work comp. laws
- State financial situation
- State taxes
- Lack of cohesive workforce strategy at national, state and regional levels
- Regional growth disparities

Local

- Non-residential tax base
- Deteriorating housing stock
- High unemployment rate
- Lack of available industrial buildings/warehouses

Weaknesses:

The most glaring weaknesses that the city faces, on a local level, are predominantly concentrated around the issues pertaining to quality of life/place.

Two of most significant weaknesses in this regard are school performance indicators and air pollution, as these are two of the most often cited reasons given for people leaving the community. However, right behind these are the deteriorating/older housing stock, much of which is relatively small and undesirable to families with larger incomes, and poor aesthetic quality of many of the primary corridors (and elsewhere throughout town), which is largely the cumulative result of a lack of proactive city planning in the community over the course of the last several decades.

Finally, low educational attainment is the fifth noteworthy weakness, as it has compounding effects on income, poverty and retail sales. However, low educational attainment is considered both a cause and effect of other weaknesses. It causes issues like those

- Declining population
- Lagging retail sales
- Retail leakage/surplus for retail and restaurants
- School performance indicators
- Lagging median income levels
- Elevated and increasing poverty levels
- Home values lagging behind local, state and national trends
- High number of vacant housing units
- Declining real residential earnings/household income
- Perception within the region
- Low educational attainment
- Main corridors (e.g. Nameoki Road) lack aesthetic appeal
- Perception of environmental conditions
- Air quality
- Crime rate perception
- Lack of adequate comprehensive plan
- Brownfield sites within city limits
- Accumulated effects of past lack of planning in developing areas like Nameoki Rd.

Opportunities

National/Global

- 3D Printing
- Re-shoring trend
- 1099 employees trend (attract as residents and businesses)
- Transition to the “Knowledge Economy”
- Technological advancements
- Sustainable growth emphasis
- U.S. oil production growth
- Social connectivity platforms (Facebook, Nextdoor, etc.)

mentioned, but it is also the effect from a legacy of brain drain which the city has endured for a prolonged period of time. Much of the cause for this brain drain can be found in the quality of life/place issues mentioned above.

However, that, alone, does not account for everything. It is also likely that the town’s blue collar culture may not place as much emphasis on higher education, resulting in a portion of the population simply never seeking post-secondary education.

These combined weaknesses, along with a few others, are the driving factors behind other issues like declining population and increased vacant housing units.

On a state level, the city faces a number of challenges associated with the State of Illinois. Specifically, uncertainty over the State’s poor fiscal health and the possibility of future tax increases are a detriment to attracting and keeping both businesses and residents. For businesses, other issues, such as high Work Comp. costs, among other things are also challenges that the city must face.

- New Market Tax Credit Program
- Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit
- Nanotechnology

State/Regional

- Worker retraining program
- Growing tech sector in STL region
- Regional educational attainment initiative
- MOSAIC immigration initiative
- Rally St. Louis - Grassroots movement
- Growing entrepreneurial ecosystem in STL Region
- Regional talent development initiative

Local

- Market housing to workers
- New housing on undeveloped areas in north/east parts of town
- Use parks to draw residents
- Increase community focus on education
- Re-focus direction of education (not everyone is or needs to be college bound)
- Train people for the jobs we have
- Collaborate with Unions, Employers and Schools to promote mfg jobs to kids
- Housing stock fit with Millennial's needs and wants
- Life skills training
- Manufacturing Day at SWIC
- Greater collaboration with SWIC
- Industrial and commercial growth along Rt. 3 Corridor
- Commercial growth at I-270 and Rt. 3
- Increased transit connectivity to the region
- Enhance the community's aesthetic appearance
- Develop self-pride/confidence of kids in the community

Opportunities:

Granite City has an abundance of opportunity within its grasp. Many of these opportunities are addressed within the strategies described in this plan.

Some of the most significant of those opportunities include the development of the Granite City Art and Design District downtown. This grassroots initiative is being driven by significant players in the regional art world, and has the propensity to become a major draw for young, creative professionals from around the region.

Related to this, are opportunities to combine the strength of manufacturing with the arts, such as the proposed Sculptural Arts program, which seeks to utilize industrial scale steel-making facilities to attract artists from around the globe.

On another front, the release of the film, *Men of Granite*, within the next year could produce a major windfall for the city if its popularity is such that movie goers are drawn to visit the city to learn more about the Boys of Lincoln Place. The city can make the most of

- Work w/ parents to enhance focus on education
- Tell our story (school district, parks, etc.)
- Business/local leader involvement in tutoring/mentoring/reading to kids
- Economic Development Finance Program
- Port expansion
- Retail leakage
- Redevelopment of Nameoki Road
- Continued revitalization of downtown
- Sculptural arts partnership w/ industry and higher education
- Expansion of high speed internet (1 gbps or faster) into GC
- Men of Granite Movie
- 3D Printing consortium project
- Air purifying billboards technology
- New non-motorized transportation options
- Capitalizing on new CEO Program
- Code Red program in local schools and libraries
- U.S. Steel environmental grant
- Redevelopment of old Commonwealth Steel site
- ITAP grant – Nameoki Road
- Artist community development in downtown
- Re-use potential of old YMCA building
- “Eds and Meds” Pharmacy Card Community Scholarship Program
- Redevelopment of Bamboo Bistro
- Development of GC Industrial Park Lot 1
- Proceeds from sales of Bamboo Bistro and GC Industrial Park Lot 1
- Business incubator
- Re-use potential of former Niedringhaus School building
- Capitalize on Rt. 66
- Recycle Bank Program via Waste Management
- U.S. Steel training facility
- Buy Local program

this opportunity by preparing memorials and other interactive exhibits, such as a museum, for tourists to explore when they come to visit.

Industrially, the city has a wealth of sites that are zoned appropriately to serve new manufacturing and/or distribution facilities.

Another important opportunity in this regard is the prospect of new rail to barge intermodal capabilities at America’s Central Port, which will help to drive additional job growth by placing Granite City as the central hub of a vast distribution network.

On the commercial front, the city has a large amount of underutilized commercial space along heavy traffic routes, particularly, along Nameoki Road, which has potential for revitalization. As long as the City can manage to arrange for the acquisition of the most underutilized properties at reasonable market-rate prices, there is no reason why portions of Nameoki Road couldn’t become a major bright spot for the community.

Finally, the CEO Program at the high

- Bank On and other financial literacy programs for residents
- Attract suppliers/customers of existing businesses to the City
- Prairie Farms factory ice cream store
- New/updated Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code
- Development of “healthcare village” around Gateway Regional Medical Center
- Enhanced citizen engagement using social media
- Development potential of Ameren supersite (1,300 acres north of I-270)
- Utilize locally influential people to read to kids grades 3 and under.

Threats

National/Global

- 3D Printing
- Zero Sum Labor
- Unstable commodity markets
- Protectionist trade policies
- Reduced infrastructure funding available
- Aging population
- Terrorism
- US education system lagging behind international competition
- Climate change
- Health Care costs (high)
- Uncertainty w/ Affordable Care Act
- Availability of low wage labor overseas
- Shrinking manufacturing labor force
- U.S. debt levels (high)
- National budget cuts
- Wage deflation
- Transition to the “Knowledge Economy”
- Rapid change in skills required for new jobs (e.g. digital literacy)
- Political gridlock in Washington DC

school is another area of immense opportunity for the community. Already, within just one year of operation, the class has shown positive results by helping students who were previously not college bound to become college bound. Twelve students also started their own businesses as part of the most recent class, which indicates that the program can help grow the small business base of the community. Even more significantly, before and after surveys of the students involved revealed that the class is helping to convince students to stay in Granite City to live and raise their families after college. Prior to the class, less than 1 in 10 students had plans to live in Granite City after college/high school. After taking the class greater than 8 in 10 students said that they wanted to continue to call Granite City, ‘home’ after school.

On a national scale, one item of note is the recently approved JOBS Act that allows for crowd sourcing of funds for commercial real estate deals. While this is new and bound to some risks, it could make development possible in areas where it was not possible, previously.

- Global economic uncertainty (e.g. European Debt Crisis, etc.)
- Complex global environment

State/Regional

- State pension obligations
- State budget deficit
- Slow regional growth
- Divide between Illinois and Missouri
- Slow regional population growth trend
- Slow regulatory and permit approval process in IL
- New Madrid fault line
- Levee decertification/FEMA
- Destabilization of neighboring communities (E. St. Louis, North St. Louis City)

Local

- Long-term high unemployment
- Aging commercial and industrial properties
- Limited options for diversifying tax base
- City pension obligations
- Loss of U.S. Steel (economic implications if it were to happen)
- Outmigration of young workers to other areas
- Enterprise Zone expiration

Threats:

Major threats to the community include the City's pension obligations, the outmigration of young workers to other areas, aging commercial and industrial properties and long-term unemployment and its associated decreasing labor force participation rate.

Outside of the local level, State pension obligations and financial turmoil threaten to obliterate the city's financial health, which could lead to reduced police protection, among other services, thereby making it even more difficult to attract new residents to the community.

At a regional level, slow growth relative to the nation is a hindrance that leaves many communities facing a zero sum game situation whereby the gain of population in one community in the region comes at the expense of lost population in a neighboring community. Granite City has been at the losing end of this exact scenario for the past 40-plus years, as residents migrate from older communities to newer, more modern ones.

Lastly, while it has been mostly alleviated, the threat of decertification of the areas levees by FEMA is a very urgent threat that must be addressed, as it threatens to derail the city's future growth prospects by limiting development opportunities.

END NOTES

¹ Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 62

² <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/> reports total jobs in Granite have grown by 6.6% (14,246 to 15,184) from 2002 to 2011 (most recent avail.) Yet incomes have not kept pace (see Economic Assessment p. 123-129).

³ US Census On the Map Inflow/Outflow Private Jobs 2011 <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

⁴ Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 78

⁵ McGahey, Richard. "Regional Economic Development in Theory and Practice." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 4

⁶ Finkle, Jeffrey, Shari Garmise and Shari Nourick. "The Reality of Economic Development in Older Industrial Cities: The Practitioner's Perspective." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 299

⁷ McGahey, Richard and Jennifer Vey. "Report of the 106th American Assembly." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 407

⁸ Ibid p. 396

⁹ Moret, Stephen, Mick Fleming and Pauling Hovey. "Effective Chambers of Commerce: A Key to Regional Economic Prosperity." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 125

¹⁰ "Supporting existing businesses is a critical component of a well-developed strategic investment plan. For the economic development practitioner in older industrial cities, the following action steps are suggested:

- Survey area businesses to understand who they are, their industry sectors, and what their needs are
- Identify available business resources and coordinate partnerships among public, private, and nonprofit sectors to ensure that businesses have access to the financial, technological, and human capital resources for stability, competitiveness, and growth.
- Acts as an advocate to local and state governments for the business community's concerns, and as a broker between the sources of assistance and the companies that need them.
- Foster an entrepreneurial environment in cooperation with the various stakeholders in the community and region in order to provide an infrastructure including support, training, and capital that will enhance small business success." [Finkle, Jeffrey, Shari Garmise and Shari Nourick. "The Reality of Economic Development in Older Industrial Cities: The Practitioner's Perspective." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 322]

¹¹ "Companies that make good targets for economic developers are those that do things that are new, innovative, non-routine, and difficult to perform, producing things that are valued well above their cost." [Luria, Daniel and Joel Rogers. "Manufacturing, Regional Prosperity and Public Policy." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 250-51]

¹² Moret, Stephen, Mick Fleming and Pauling Hovey. "Effective Chambers of Commerce: A Key to Regional Economic Prosperity." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 133

¹³ "BRE programs are typically partnerships among public, business and community leaders that continuously monitor the strength of existing businesses and help those businesses access the physical, financial, technological, and human resources they need to survive and thrive. To assist local businesses, economic development practitioners act as advocates for the business community's concerns within local and state governments, as well as brokers between the sources of assistance and the companies needing them, collaborating with various service providers that can help the business." [Finkle, Jeffrey, Shari Garmise and Shari Nourick. "The Reality of Economic Development in Older Industrial Cities: The Practitioner's Perspective." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 311]

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- ¹⁴ Over time, the results of consultation visits can be analyzed to identify common concerns, and these can be addressed via product development efforts. [Moret, Stephen, Mick Fleming and Pauling Hovey. "Effective Chambers of Commerce: A Key to Regional Economic Prosperity." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 133]
- ¹⁵ "Objectives to improve government economic development policy: 1. Increase transparency of economic development subsidies; 2. Tie subsidies to specific, measurable benefits; 3. Align economic and workforce development programs with the regional economy, not with governmental boundaries; 4. *Work with groups of firms, not individual businesses, whenever possible.*" [McGahey, Richard. "Regional Economic Development in Theory and Practice." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 5-9]
- ¹⁶ "There is widespread opportunity for manufacturing upgrading – here finally defined, simply, as moving firms up the VA/FTE (Value Added/Full Time Employee) ladder within their industry. Although achieving a higher VA/FTE is not a cookbook exercise, industrial engineers and consultants know in most cases what individual firms need to do to achieve it. There are studies of the effectiveness of interventions made with these small firms, principally through the Manufacturing Extension Partnerships (MEP) program. At quite reasonable costs, MEP specialists can achieve very significant – on average, 5 percent, but in some cases 20 to 50 percent – increases in small-firm productivity." [Luria, Daniel and Joel Rogers. "Manufacturing, Regional Prosperity and Public Policy." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 258]
- ¹⁷ Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 81
- ¹⁸ "Economic activity tends to agglomerate in clusters of a similar or complementary nature: metalworking, textiles, plastics, software design, and the like. In the knowledge economy, innovation and productivity flow from an agglomeration of occupations and functions. Focusing on clusters means understanding economic strengths and an area's economic base and responding appropriately. [McGahey, Richard and Jennifer Vey. "Report of the 106th American Assembly." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 398]
- ¹⁹ Ibid
- ²⁰ "Local governments can respond to the collective, as opposed to individual, needs of business with deals that will contribute to the business infrastructure even if the individual firm chooses to leave the area – for example, fixing the infrastructure in an industrial park, investing in transit links to commercial zones, or developing training partnerships in concert with business associations and trade unions. It is a better tactic to attract employers and employees with amenities that are linked to improvements in living standards than to blindly bid for business." [Weber, Rachel. "What Makes a Good Economic Development Deal?" Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 287]
- ²¹ Ibid
- ²² Finkle, Jeffrey, Shari Garmise and Shari Nourick. "The Reality of Economic Development in Older Industrial Cities: The Practitioner's Perspective." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 310
- ²³ Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 82
- ²⁴ Moret, Stephen, Mick Fleming and Pauling Hovey. "Effective Chambers of Commerce: A Key to Regional Economic Prosperity." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 139
- ²⁵ Ibid
- ²⁶ Ibid
- ²⁷ Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 82-83
- ²⁸ <http://communitybuilders.net/walkability/>

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- ²⁹ McGahey, Richard and Jennifer Vey. "Report of the 106th American Assembly." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press p. 405
- ³⁰ <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/322/5908/1681.abstract>
- ³¹ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2015/05/20/how-cities-are-starting-to-turn-back-decades-of-creeping-urban-blight/>
- ³² Vey, Jennifer. "Revitalizing America's Older Industrial Cities: A State Agenda for Change." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press. p. 51
- ³³ <http://www.chicagobusiness.com/realestate/20141209/CRED0701/141209786/fast-foreclosures-not-in-illinois>
- ³⁴ Nowak, Jeremy. *The Market-Building Potential of Development Finance in Older Cities*. Retooling For Growth P. 377-378
- ³⁵ Ross, Lynn M. *Quantifying the Value Proposition of Employer-Assisted Housing: A Case Study of Aurora Health Care*. Center for Housing Policy. May 2008.
- ³⁶ Medical facilities often require certain employees to live within a specified distance to ensure they are available in emergencies.
- ³⁷ Lengthy commute times and traffic congestion diminish quality of life and can make it difficult to retain employees. Offering housing closer to jobs can help foster demand in infill areas while reducing commute times and traffic congestion.
- ³⁸ The Metropolitan Planning Council in the Chicago region found that employees participating in one employer-assisted housing program had far lower turnover rates than non-participating employees. Metropolitan Planning Council. "Employer-Assisted Housing." <http://www.metroplanning.org/work/project/8> Jan 31, 2014.
- ³⁹ EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 31
- ⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 34
- ⁴¹ 35 ILCS 200/18-165; 35 ILCS 200/18-184.5; 35 ILCS 200/18-184.10
- ⁴² Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. *Examination of Local Economic Development Incentives in Northeastern Illinois*. August 2013. <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/82875/FY14-0009+LOCAL+ECONOMIC+INCENTIVES+REPORT.pdf/51b8f555-4579-42df-8667-87587fcc14f1>
- ⁴³ Ibid. p. 12
- ⁴⁴ Urban Land Institute. *What's Next? Real Estate in the New Economy*. 2011. <http://uli.org/report/whats-next-real-estate-in-the-new-economy/>
- ⁴⁵ "Demographic shifts are also influencing demand for housing in infill locations as aging baby boomers seek smaller homes with less upkeep, the Millennial generation starts new households and prefers mixed-use neighborhoods with transportation options, and the number of single-person households increases." EPA. *Smart Growth and Economic Success: Investing in Infill Development*. 2014. <http://www2epa.gov/smart-growth/smart-growth-and-economic-success-investing-infill-development>.
- ⁴⁶ Examples of regional retailers and restaurants include most clothing and electronics retailers (e.g. Best Buy, JC Penney, etc.) and on the restaurants side, those like Olive Garden, Longhorn Steakhouse and others who require being in or near a shopping center that has a large trade area.
- ⁴⁷ EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 9-10
- ⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 19-20
- ⁴⁹ Ibid p. 21
- ⁵⁰ For more information on these and other strategies, see: EPA. *Parking Spaces/Community Places: Finding the Balance Through Smart Growth Solutions*. 2006. <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/parking.htm>.
- ⁵¹ Shoup, Donald. *The High Cost of Free Parking*. Planners Press. 2005 and 2011.

⁵² The Comprehensive plan typically establishes policies that influence zoning and design regulations. Having a strong plan in place is critical to developing flexible codes. EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 55

⁵³ EPA has published a guide that communities of different types and sizes can use to assess and improve their codes. It is titled “Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Urban and Suburban Zoning Codes.” It is available at <http://www2.epa.gov/smart-growth/essential-smart-growth-fixes-communities>.

⁵⁴ Smart Growth America offers several audit tools on its website, including a Quick Diagnostic, a Smart Growth Policy Audit, and a Smart Growth Code and Zoning Audit. Find these tools and more information by visiting <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/leadership-institute/implementation-tools>.

⁵⁵ The Form-Based Codes Institute (FBCI) defines form-based codes as “a method of development regulation, adopted into municipal or county law that emphasizes the physical character of development (its form) and includes – but often de-emphasizes – the regulation of land uses.”

⁵⁶ EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 22-23

⁵⁷ Clear rules reduce subjectivity and give the developer more certainty about what is permitted or desirable. They can reduce delays, which saves money in the predevelopment stage.

⁵⁸ Adaptive reuse refers to converting historic and underutilized buildings to new uses that respond to market demand. The City of Los Angeles has one of the most successful adaptive reuse programs. Information is available here: <http://preservation.lacity.org/incentives/adaptive-reuse-ordinance>.

⁵⁹ EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 24

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 24

⁶¹ Rosenberg, Jeremy. “How Downtown LA Became a Place to Live (without Parking).” KCET. April 2, 2012. <http://www.kcet.org/socal/departures/columns/laws-that-shaped-la/how-downtown-la-became-a-place-to-live-without-parking.html>.

⁶² EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 25

⁶³ Ibid. p. 25

⁶⁴ Ibid p. 28

⁶⁵ Ibid p. 28

⁶⁶ Ibid p. 31

⁶⁷ The Smart Growth Funders Network maintains a list of its members, foundations, that focus on growth, and development issues, at <http://www.fundersnetwork.org/connect>.

⁶⁸ For more information on complete streets, including model complete streets policies, see: Smart Growth America. “National Complete Streets Coalition.” <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>. Accessed June 22, 2015.

⁶⁹ See the following resources: Complete Streets Coalitions Resources page (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/complete-streets-fundamentals/resources>);

⁷⁰ EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 35

⁷¹ The city can promote events and festivals by clearly laying out the rules and processes for holding them.

⁷² The support of institutions (such as the hospital) is key. Their operations could be disrupted, but they could also be key supporters through funding and marketing.

⁷³ In shrinking communities, the housing market might be so depressed that the local government decides to focus investments in services and infrastructure in certain places. The city can use a land bank to take land off the market in some areas while promoting growth in others.

⁷⁴ A useful publication for communities that are interested in land banking is: Alexander, Frank S. *Land Banks and Land Banking*. Center for Community Progress. June 2011. <http://www.communityprogress.net/publications-pages-396.php>.

⁷⁵ A nonprofit entity could run the land bank. Local nonprofit housing organizations or CDCs might already be doing activities similar to those a land bank would do, which would allow the city to support those programs instead of establish a new entity.

⁷⁶ EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 39

⁷⁷ Raulli, Christy. "Mezzanine Financing in Community Economic Development." UNC School of Government. Aug. 9, 2013. <http://ced.sog.unc.edu/?p=4598>

⁷⁸ Morris, Stephen. "CDC and CDCs: Community Development Corporations and SBA Certified Development Companies." U.S. Small Business Administration blog. June 23, 2011. <http://www.sba.gov/community/blogs/community-blogs/small-business-cents/cdcs-and-cdcs-community-development-corporation>.

⁷⁹ EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 41

⁸⁰ <http://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-through-job/green-card-through-investment>

⁸¹ EPA. *Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies*. 2015. P. 46

⁸² Advertising policies and deals should be administered by someone with experience working in or with the advertising or media industries.

⁸³ Ibid. p.47

⁸⁴ The city can preempt any undesirable sponsorship offers by clearly expressing the facilities and locations in which they are willing to sell naming rights. For example, a community may want to limit advertising in or near a public school.

⁸⁵ <https://www.planning.org/research/arts/briefingpapers/character.htm>

⁸⁶ <https://www.heartlandsconservancy.org/p/news-articles/community-aesthetics-9-ways-to-improve-the-image-of-your-community/>

⁸⁷ <http://www.pps.org/reference/august2005whatmakesplacegreat/>

⁸⁸ <https://www.heartlandsconservancy.org/p/news-articles/community-aesthetics-9-ways-to-improve-the-image-of-your-community/>

⁸⁹ <http://urbanforestrynetwork.org/benefits/aesthetic.htm>

⁹⁰ <https://www.heartlandsconservancy.org/p/news-articles/community-aesthetics-9-ways-to-improve-the-image-of-your-community/>

⁹¹ For examples of Low Impact Development practices see here: <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/green/upload/bbfs4aesthetics.pdf>

⁹² <https://www.heartlandsconservancy.org/p/news-articles/community-aesthetics-9-ways-to-improve-the-image-of-your-community/>

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press. p. 83

⁹⁵ <http://www.pps.org/reference/the-power-of-10/>

⁹⁶ "88% of Millennial's choose employers that support their sustainability values" <http://www.usgbc.org/articles/sound-bites-telling-your-sustainability-story>

⁹⁷ Finkle, Jeffrey, Shari Garmise and Shari Nourick. "The Reality of Economic Development in Older Industrial Cities: The Practitioner's Perspective." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press p. 311

⁹⁸ Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 62

⁹⁹ See also: Robert Lerman, "Are Skills the Problem? Reforming the Education and Training System in the United States," paper prepared for the W.E. Upjohn Institute on Employment Policy Conference, a Future of Good Jobs? America's Challenge in the Global Economy (Kalamazoo, June 22, 2007). http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Robert_Lerman/publication/237634495_Are_Skills_the_Problem_Reforming_the_Education_and_Training_System_in_the_United_States/links/5446603b0cf22b3c14de1e36.pdf

¹⁰⁰ Jeffrey Finkle, Shari Garmise and Shari Nourick suggest the following four primary strategies for addressing talent in older industrial areas: "1) Strengthen the incumbent workforce; 2) Increase the pool of knowledge workers, including youths in the education pipeline; 3) Enhance the skill sets of low-skilled and other disadvantaged workers; and 4) Better integrate and align economic and workforce development activities through both systematic and ad hoc attempts at building a workforce system." [Retooling for Growth p. 302]

¹⁰¹ *ibid*

¹⁰² "To thrive, students will have to be, "comfortable with ideas and abstractions, good at analysis and synthesis, creative and innovative, self-disciplined and well-organized, able to learn very quickly and work well as a member of a team. They must have the flexibility to adapt quickly to frequent changes in the labor market as the shifts in the economy become even faster and more dramatic. One idea that seems to achieve this result is called *applied learning*. Research has shown that experiential learning – gaining knowledge through exercises that apply learning to actual situations – increases student engagement and overall achievement. By offering more opportunities for applied learning, particularly when it is customized to students' individual interests, urban education systems can both increase the relevance of their curriculums and boost student's interest in school." [Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 73]

¹⁰³ *ibid*

¹⁰⁴ Moret, Stephen, Mick Fleming and Pauling Hovey. "Effective Chambers of Commerce: A Key to Regional Economic Prosperity." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 136

¹⁰⁵ The Business and Education Task Force should also support state-wide efforts to reform the local tax system. "The over-reliance on local taxes, especially property taxes, for services such as schools has produced the worst of all worlds: high local taxes, low amenities, significant inequalities, as well as intense competition between neighboring jurisdictions for tax "ratable" and an unwelcoming attitude towards children. Ineffective or inequitable local taxes should be replaced with regional or state-level revenue systems. Some states like New Jersey, Connecticut, and others have sought to reduce property taxes and replace education funding with sales taxes or income taxes." [McGahey, Richard and Jennifer Vey. "Report of the 106th American Assembly." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 401]

¹⁰⁶ It is important to minimize the duplication of efforts and the spending of time and resources on unwanted solutions as much as possible. There are two critical steps needed to do so: First, learn about training and placement resources and initiatives available in the area, including but not limited to federal programs. Second, become familiar with types of training and placement issues the business community faces by both talking with employers and reviewing data and reports that communicate both state and national industry needs [Kazis, Richard and Marlene Seltzer. "Workforce Development Strategies for Older Industrial Cities: Toward a New Approach." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 326-27]

¹⁰⁷ In the City of Kalamazoo, MI, a group of individuals started a program called the 'Kalamazoo Promise,' which provides scholarship funding to every graduate of Kalamazoo Public Schools. Funding is raised completely by anonymous donors. For more information see: <https://www.kalamazoopromise.com/FAQ>.

¹⁰⁸ See also: Nancy Hoffman, Joel Vargas, Andrea Venezia and Marc S. Miller, eds., *Minding the Gap: Why Integrating High School with College Makes Sense and How to Do It* (Harvard Education Press, 2007).

¹⁰⁹ Workforce development needs to be reconceptualized as a vertically linked set of learning opportunities that connect high school graduation, career training, postsecondary education, and skills upgrading. [Kazis, Richard and Marlene Seltzer. "Workforce Development Strategies for Older Industrial Cities: Toward a New Approach." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press. p. 327-8]

¹¹⁰ A 'Jobs for the Future' analysis of BLS data found sixteen occupations providing 700,000 jobs a year that paid over \$25,000 a year and required less than a B.A. degree and no experience in the field. This kind of fine-grained analysis for both local job vacancies and trends and the educational requirements for entry into those jobs is critical for identifying workforce development priorities. (See: Susan Goldberger, Newell Lessell, and Radha Roy Biswas, *The Right Jobs: Identifying Career Advancement Opportunities for Low-Skilled Workers – A Guide for Public and Private Sector Workforce Development Practitioners* (Boston: Jobs for the Future, 2005). [Kazis, Richard and Marlene Seltzer. "Workforce Development Strategies for Older Industrial Cities: Toward a New Approach." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press. p.333-34]

¹¹¹ "Local workforce development activities should be focused on skill clusters or occupational clusters. Occupational targeting resembles industrial targeting in that each city must figure out its economic development goals and its existing strengths and weaknesses, and whether it wants to pursue a strategy of bolstering current concentration skill sets, diversifying to other promising skill sets, making up deficits in skills that are underrepresented, or a combination of these." [Markusen, Ann and Greg Schrock. "Placing Labor Center-Stage in Industrial City Revitalization." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press. p. 190]

¹¹² Two-year colleges are emerging as critical institutions to provide workers with skills valued by businesses that can lead to careers, and also provide a more effective way for students to continue and complete four-year college degrees. More flexible than four-year institutions and better resourced than most community-based programs, community colleges have the potential to provide expanded opportunity and to smooth transitions for individuals from basic skill programs into technical skill development programs that lead to credentials. [McGahey, Richard and Jennifer Vey. "Report of the 106th American Assembly." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press p. 402]

¹¹³ Major foundations and the U.S. Department of Labor are now helping to spread workforce development innovations through the new National Fund for Workforce Solutions, which provides assistance to those setting up new partnerships to implement effective training programs tied to growing sectors, such as healthcare, construction, and "green" jobs and to advocate for the necessary system changes required to transform workforce development. [McGahey, Richard and Jennifer Vey. "Report of the 106th American Assembly." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press p. 402]

¹¹⁴ <https://deanbarber.wordpress.com/2014/04/27/much-ado-about-not-much/>

¹¹⁵ "Manufacturers face a growing challenge. Even though the old image of the factory floor as dark, dirty and dumb has given way to a new reality of safe, sanitary and smart facilities, many manufacturing-intensive regions now face a labor shortage. Most manufacturing firms that survive have invested in productivity-enhancing technology instead of more labor. Jobs in manufacturing today are less physically demanding but require increased technology skills. While the salaries are attractive, rising demand for technology-savvy laborers is increasingly hard to meet." [Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." *Retooling for Growth*. Brookings Institution Press. p. 65-66]

¹¹⁶ As the baby boom generation retires in the next twenty years, the labor force is expected to grow more slowly, with virtually all new workers coming from two groups: African-Americans, especially younger workers who have not been attached to the labor market; and Hispanics, many of them either new immigrants or the children of immigrants. For the economy to succeed, these workers will need higher levels of education, job readiness, and sector-based

training to expand their potential for permanent employment and economic sustainability. [McGahey, Richard and Jennifer Vey. "Report of the 106th American Assembly." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 400-01]

¹¹⁷ Kempner, Randall. "The Talent Imperative for Older Industrial Areas." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 71-72

¹¹⁸ Ibid. p. 72

¹¹⁹ The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is one of the primary non-profit organizations working to address issues relating to early childhood education in the nation. Their strategy, whose design is based on the foundation's assessment of early learning programs from across the nation, seeks to upgrade three related areas that will collectively affect early childhood success: parent support and education; comprehensive early learning centers that serve an entire community; and licensed child care.

¹²⁰ "Increasing numbers of immigrants could be a boon to slow or no growth cities. Despite the fact that the integration of foreign immigrants can bring about its own set of trials, over the long term these newcomers can bring new businesses, new markets, and new life into city neighborhoods." [Vey, Jennifer. "Revitalizing America's Older Industrial Cities: A State Agenda for Change." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 35]

¹²¹ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-anti-poverty-experiment-1433517539?KEYWORDS=jason+zweig>

¹²² http://www.missourieconomy.org/community/econ_policy/entrepreneurship.stm

¹²³ <https://hbr.org/2015/04/the-4-types-of-small-businesses-and-why-each-one-matters>

¹²⁴ <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11187-007-9052-3#page-1>

¹²⁵ Stengler, Dane. PATH-DEPENDENT STARTUP HUBS Comparing Metropolitan Performance: High-Tech and ICT Startup Density. Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. Sept 2013.

http://www.kauffman.org/~media/kauffman_org/research%20reports%20and%20covers/2013/09/pathdependentstartuphubscomparingmetropolitanperformancehightechandictstartupdensity.pdf

¹²⁶ Meinen, Seth. "The Keys to Fostering Entrepreneurship." <http://strengtheningbrandamerica.com/blog/2014/04/the-keys-to-fostering-entrepreneurship>

¹²⁷ "Understanding what a community's perceptions are and more importantly how to influence them is critical to fostering entrepreneurship. It allows an economic or community developer the ability to quickly change a risk-adverse community culture to a friendlier one towards the risks and rewards of entrepreneurship." Meinen, Seth. "The Keys to Fostering Entrepreneurship." <http://strengtheningbrandamerica.com/blog/2014/04/the-keys-to-fostering-entrepreneurship>

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ "Fostering new small business growth entails entrepreneurial training: keeping those with an aptitude for self-employment in the region and helping them to foster their entrepreneurial skills and start and maintain their business there. The programs customarily apply a mix of practical training and assistance in acquiring capital. Economic development professionals can assist small businesses and start-ups by providing technical assistance, education and training, marketing assistance, access to capital and other financial alternatives, and legal assistance and by developing business incubators to nurture fledgling entrepreneurs with wide-ranging services (such as management assistance and access to finance) as well as providing an entrepreneurial atmosphere." [Finkle, Jeffrey, Shari Garmise and Shari Nourick. "The Reality of Economic Development in Older Industrial Cities: The Practitioner's Perspective." Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 309]

¹³⁰ <http://spaces.makerspace.com/>

¹³¹ "The most common tools used for small business financing include direct lending, revolving loan funds, micro loan programs and minority and female

business programs.” [Finkle, Jeffrey, Shari Garmise and Shari Nourick. “The Reality of Economic Development in Older Industrial Cities: The Practitioner’s Perspective.” Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press p. 310]

¹³² Ibid. p. 315

¹³³ Ibid

¹³⁴ Glover Blackwell, Angela and Radhika Fox. “Promoting Inclusive Economic Renewal in Older Industrial Cities.” Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 364

¹³⁵ A local example of an effort already doing this is the True Warrior campaign started by the High School.

¹³⁶ “Successes should be assertively communicated to the public and key stakeholders, with care taken to provide ample recognition for decision makers and other supporters who helped achieve the policy victory.” [Moret, Stephen, Mick Fleming and Pauling Hovey. “Effective Chambers of Commerce: A Key to Regional Economic Prosperity.” Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 146]

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ <http://www.messagesthatmatter.com/messaging-defined/>

¹³⁹ Moret, Stephen, Mick Fleming and Pauling Hovey. “Effective Chambers of Commerce: A Key to Regional Economic Prosperity.” Retooling for Growth. Brookings Institution Press. p. 140

¹⁴⁰ Shelton, Bill R. *Three Community Assets that Trump Incentives*. www.buxtonco.com

¹⁴¹ For example, the city and the chamber need to overcome their differences and learn to work together as partners instead of working as individual entities.

¹⁴² Purdue University Center for Regional Economic Development. Strategic Doing Viewbook. Aug. 2014. p. 4