

Advancing Local Growth *Together*

**A Partnership Approach to
Economic Development**

Greater Rockford Chamber of Commerce



Why Together
is Better

O+



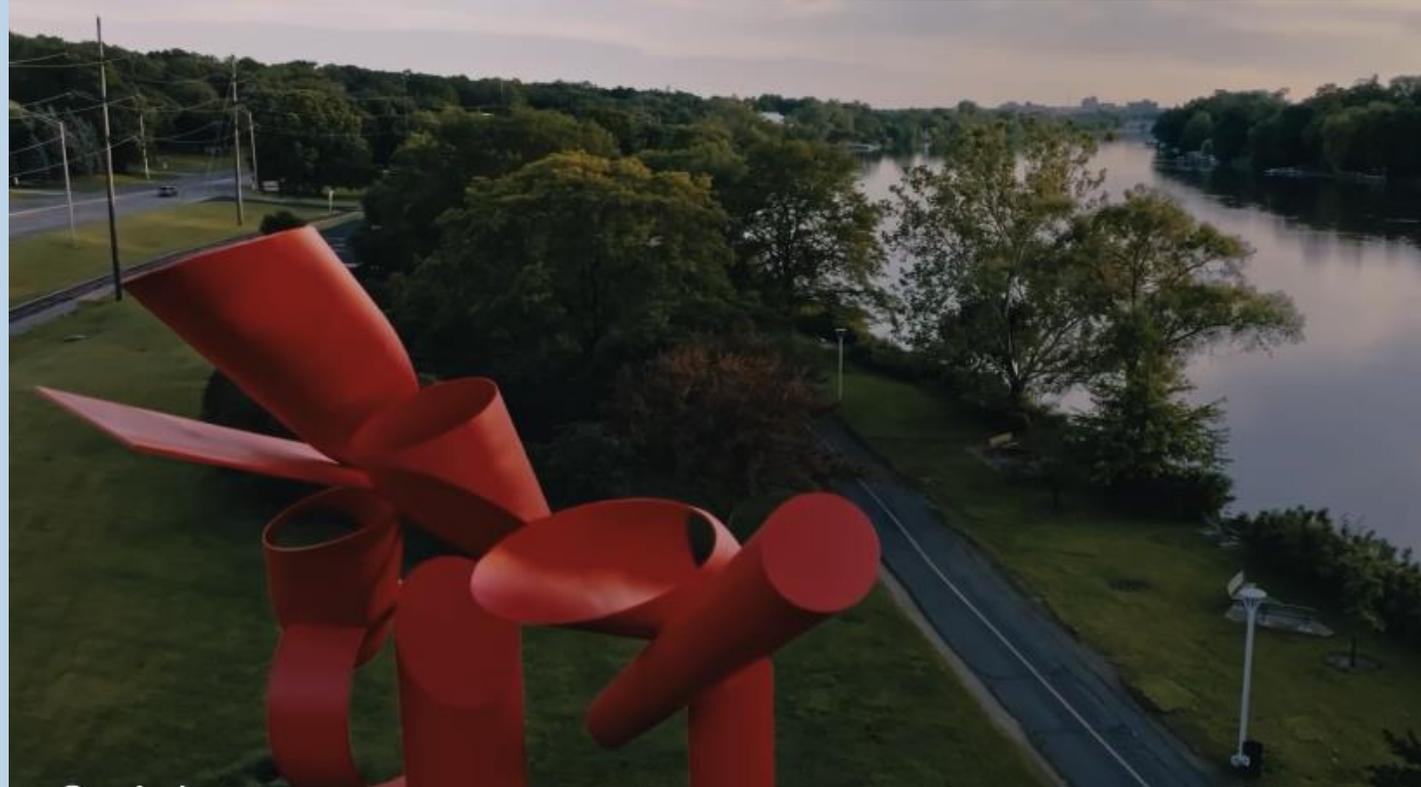
Collaboration that Drives Results

Why It's Important

- Economic development is cross-functional by nature
- Businesses experience the community as one system
- Shared accountability improves outcomes

Best Practices

- Regular, structured communication
- Shared data and intelligence
- Mutual respect for roles and authority
- Focus on outcomes, not ownership



Courtesy of GoRockford

One Region. Stronger Communities.

- **Expanded Capacity with Minimal Municipal Cost**
- **Stronger Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Outcomes**
- **Increased Competitiveness for Business Attraction**
- **Single Point of Contact for Prospects & Partners**
- **Workforce Alignment that Supports Local Employers**
- **Data-Driven Decision Support**
- **Regional Collaboration Over Fragmentation**
- **Enhanced Access to State & Regional Resources**
- **Proactive Site Readiness Strategy**
- **Long-Term Tax Base & Community Growth**

What This Means for Elected Officials

- **Delivers Results Constituents Care About**
- **Strengthens the Local Tax Base Without Raising Taxes**
- **Reduces Risk in Economic Decision-Making**
- **Adds Resources for Local Businesses**
- **Enhances Regional Competitiveness**
- **Provides Professional Capacity Without Expanding Government**
- **Protects Jobs and Prevents Business Losses**
- **Creates Clear Lines of Accountability**
- **Builds Long-Term Community Stability**

Investing in the GRCC Mission & Talent

2022



GREATER ROCKFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

LEADING BUSINESS GROWTH

2025-2029



MISSION

Deliver benefit to the community by leading regional economic growth, pro-business advocacy, and services and educational opportunities that help our members grow. In short, Leading Business Growth.

VALUES

We work as a team.

We are connectors, conveners,
and collaborators.

We make business personal.

We are forward thinking.

We strive for operational excellence.

We are energized by good work, good
laughter, and good coffee.

EQUITY PROMISE

We partner with members and the
community to foster a business culture
of equity and belonging.

VISION

Relentlessly grow, develop, and support a thriving business community.

KEY INITIATIVES

- Strengthen our capacity and establish leadership roles in economic development.
- Drive business retention, expansion, and attraction with collaborative engagement across the region.
- Market the region as a competitive location for existing and new businesses with emphasis on targeted industries.
- Collaborate with the region's innovation leaders to amplify break-through ideas and technology.
- Serve as the unified voice of members in pro-business advocacy.
- Develop our region's leaders and workforce members through training, best practice sharing, recognition, and networking.
- Strengthen our publications and communications as the region's confident, reliable source of business news and information.
- Partner with GoRockford, The Workforce Connection, and our region's schools to address members' current and future workforce needs.
- Implement systems of productivity, efficiency, and innovation as a model of profitability and performance excellence.

Meet the Team



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How GRCC Supports Economic Development

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SIX VISION-DRIVEN FOCUS AREAS

GRCC VISION: Relentlessly grow, develop, and support a thriving business community

- 1. Organizational Development & Leadership**
Goal: Strengthen internal capacity and establish leadership in regional economic development.
- 2. Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)**
Goal: Drive business expansion, retention, and civic engagement across the region.
- 3. Marketing & Business Attraction**
Goal: Market the region as a competitive location for business with emphasis on targeted industries.
- 4. Site Readiness**
Goal: Collaborate in improving marketability of existing sites and help advance more sites toward readiness.
- 5. Workforce Alignment & Talent Attraction**
Goal: Enhance how businesses interact with workforce development resources and support talent attraction initiatives.
- 6. Innovation**
Goal: Collaborate with the region's innovation leaders to amplify break-through ideas and technology.

GRCC Serves as an Extension of Your CED Staff

- ✓ **Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)**
- ✓ **Project Management & Confidentiality**
- ✓ **Lead Generation, RFIs, & Site Visits**
- ✓ **Site & Building Data Management**
- ✓ **Incentive Coordination & Navigation**
- ✓ **Workforce Development Alignment**
- ✓ **Regional Marketing & Storytelling**
- ✓ **Policy & Advocacy Support**
- ✓ **Market Intelligence**



Recent Successes

GRCC worked hand-in-hand with the new owners of **Rockford Brake Manufacturing**, connecting them to RLDC, banks, elected officials, government programs, and new vendors that led to an investment of **\$6.6M** and the retention of the **City's oldest manufacturer** and **150+ jobs**.

We are currently **managing 30+ leads and projects** with individual companies and site selectors related to retention, expansion, and attraction of businesses. **More than half represent manufacturing companies, estimating more than 5,000 new jobs.**

Annually, we produce the **Midwest Aerospace Conference**, our 2025 matchmaking sessions **paired 40 local companies with procurement leaders** from Boeing, Gulfstream, Collins, Woodward, and GE Aerospace; **14% of buyers said yes to follow up discussions** and 44% were further evaluating suppliers.



Proposed Financial Investment

\$75,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Business Retention & Expansion

New Business Attraction

Marketing to Target Industries

Metric and Data Tracking



Appendix

04

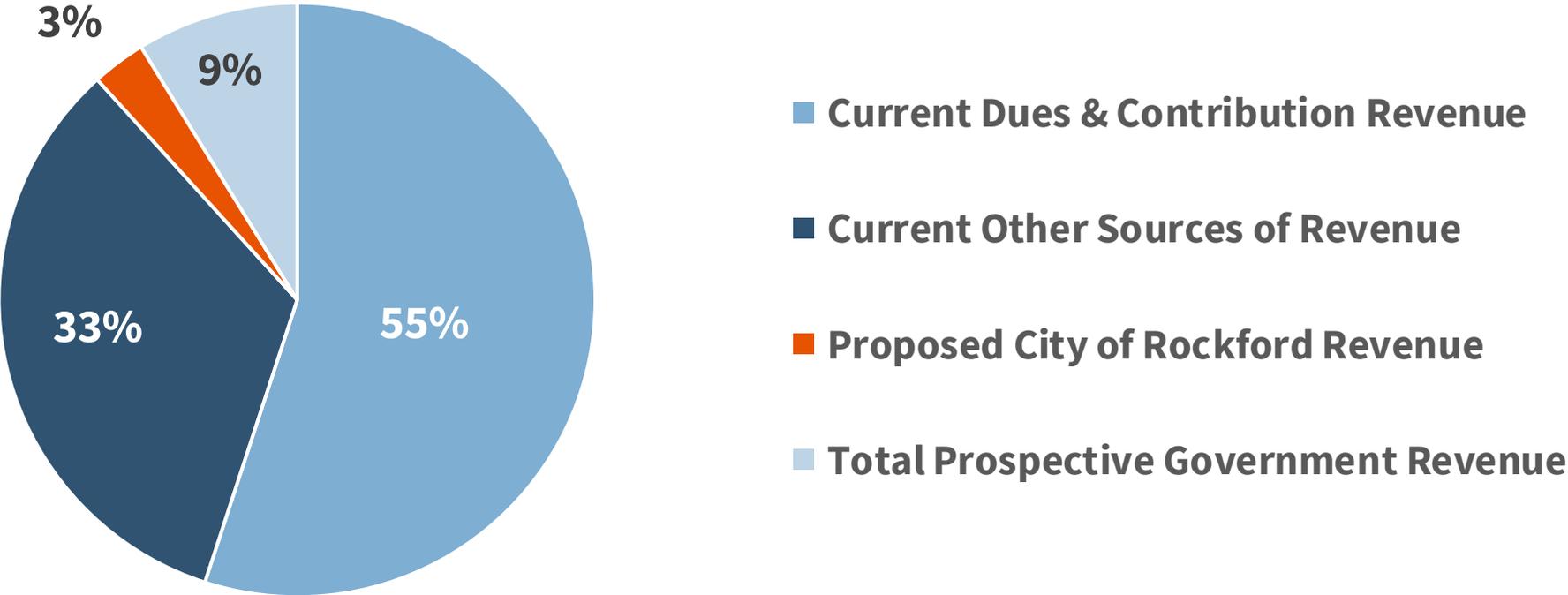


GRCC 2026 Budget

	% of Budget	Budget
Revenue		
Dues & Contribution Revenue*	62.3%	1,410,534
Other Sources of Revenue	37.4%	853,660
Total Revenue		2,264,194
Direct Expenses/Cost of Goods Sold	22%	493,831
GROSS PROFIT		1,770,362
Operating Expenses		
Payroll/Staff Expenses	51%	1,157,504
Overhead Expenses	27%	611,267
Total Operating Expenses		1,768,770
NET OPERATING REVENUE		1,592
Interest Income		6,000
Unrealized Gain on Endowment Fund		3,304
NET REVENUE		10,896

* Includes memberships, contributions from government entities, and grants

2026 GRCC Current and Prospective Sources of Revenue



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP



EIGHT FIFTEEN
Impact



**GREATER
ROCKFORD**
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

GRCC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP



SIX VISION-DRIVEN FOCUS AREAS

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1. Organizational Development & Leadership

Goal: Strengthen internal capacity and establish leadership in regional economic development.

01

Build
Organizational
Capacity

02

Strengthen
Community Trust
and Engagement

03

Enhance Visibility
of Economic
Development
Work and
Successes

04

Grow Membership
and Investment

2. Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)

Goal: Drive business expansion and retention with civic engagement across the region.

01

Enhance BRE
Visit Program

02

Support Existing
Business Growth
and Expansion

03

Create
Opportunities
for Industry
Collaboration

3. Marketing & Business Attraction

Goal: Market the region as a competitive location for business with emphasis on targeted industries.

01

Enhance Targeted Messaging and Branding

02

Drive Lead Generation and Outreach

03

Emphasize Digital Marketing and Strengthen Storytelling

4. Site Readiness Support

Goal: Collaborate in improving marketability of existing sites and help advance more sites toward readiness.

01

Maintain Property Catalogs
and Assessments

02

Advance Strategic Site
Readiness in Partnership
with Region 1 Planning
Council

5. Workforce Alignment & Talent Attraction

Goal: Enhance how businesses interact with workforce development resources and support talent attraction initiatives.

01

Increase Employer Engagement in Collaboration with Schools and The Workforce Connection

02

Enrich Local Leaders through Training and Development Programs

03

Promote Talent Attraction in Collaboration with GoRockford

6. Innovation

Goal: Collaborate with the region's innovation leaders to amplify break-through ideas and technology

01

Tell Region's
Innovation Story

02

Facilitate
Collaboration
Among Region's
Innovation
Partners

03

Strengthen
Ecosystem and
Access to Capital

COMPLETE PLAN DOCUMENT

Contact the GRCC for the complete
Economic Development Roadmap, including

- Approach to Planning
- Economic Context
- Strategic Inputs
- Organizational Assessment
- Focus Areas
- Data Insights



GRCC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP





GRCC

GREATER TOGETHER