



# DOWNTOWN PEORIA NEWSLETTER

MAY 2022

---

## DDC Activities

### Welcome New DDC Board Members!

At the 2022 annual meeting held on May 5th, the DDC Board of Directors approved the reappointment of board members to new terms and approved the slate of candidates, which includes two new board members, Branden Martin, filling the Real Estate & Development seat vacated by Jeff Kolbus; and Paul Kouri, filling the Architecture, Construction & Engineering seat vacated by Karen Jensen. Mike Hatfield (Caterpillar founders seat) and Roberta Parks (Downtown Resident seat) have elected to retire from the board; their replacements will be named soon. We want to thank Jeff Kolbus, Karen Jensen, Mike Hatfield, and Rob Parks for their dedicated service on the Board. Many accomplishments can be attributed to their involvement. Welcome to Branden Martin and Paul Kouri. We know you will be great assets as we strive to improve and redevelop downtown Peoria.

### Officer Appointments

The board also authorized the appointment of officers as follows: Bob Anderson, Chairman; Zachary Oyler, Vice Chairman; Jon Williams, Treasurer; and Jeanine Spain, Secretary. Michael Freilinger remains as President/CEO. Committee appointments were also approved at the annual meeting. To view the complete listing of DDC board members and officers, visit the DDC web site at [www.downtownpeoria.us/ddc-board](http://www.downtownpeoria.us/ddc-board).

# Rail Open House



DDC staff members attended an open house last month held at the Gateway Building to get input from the public on three sites being considered for an Amtrak station in Downtown Peoria. The three sites are The Gateway Building, the Rock Island Depot (River Station), and the U.S. Post Office site on State Street. As downtown Peoria continues to grow its retail, commercial and

residential population, it seems that the passion is there for an Amtrak stop. Planning is in its early stages. Members from the planning team were on hand to discuss the study to date, gather public feedback, and answer questions. The public open house was a good opportunity to fill the suggestion box as site options are being considered.

# Strategic Transportation Planning Session



On Thursday, April 28th, DDC staff attended the Strategic Transportation Planning Session organized by the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and held at the beautifully renovated Scottish Rite Theatre in Downtown Peoria. The keynote address was presented by Ray LaHood, former US Secretary of Transportation, who shared many interesting possibilities regarding transporta-

tion project opportunities with the assistance of a new infrastructure bill. The address was followed by a roundtable discussion moderated by Erik Cempel and consisted

of the following panel: Kurt Bialobreski, Hanson Professional Services; Chris Setti, Greater Peoria Economic Development Council; Ron Rasberry, both representing the City of Peoria's Joint Commission on Racial Justice and Equity, and both Co-Chairs of the Transportation Committee.

General transportation needs, priorities, and solutions were discussed, such as improving access to jobs for citizens through increased bus stops, employers providing transportation to employees, the change of travel habits due to the pandemic, connectivity between regions, as well as the importance of freight networks by river and rail.

After a question-and-answer session, attendees participated in a live digital SWOT exercise to discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the City of Peoria followed by final discussions and conclusion.

To learn more about the topic, email [strategicplanning@tricountyrpc.org](mailto:strategicplanning@tricountyrpc.org) and/or view the following link to access handouts and live survey results from the event: <https://tricountyrpc.org/transportation/strategic-transportation-planning-session/>.

## New Business Spotlight

### The Bins at UFS



UFS has opened a new store, The Bins at UFS. Located across the lot from UFS's main store, The Bins at UFS bring an exciting and new shopping experience to Peoria.

The Bins at UFS capitalize on the latest shopping craze to hit the US, with truck-loads of overstock, shelf pulls and returns. Everything from electronics and household items to clothes and toys. If you can find it online or in stores, there's

a good chance they'll have it. The entire store gets restocked every Friday with prices set at \$8 per item, and the sales continue until Wednesday when all remaining stock



is priced at \$1. With The Bins at UFS, the family-owned company is getting back to their roots in retail. Store president, Gerard Wiegand is excited for the new venture, **“In 1945, UFS began as the Unclaimed Freight Store by purchasing unclaimed freight from the freight yards for pennies on the dollar and re-sold the merchandise to locals at incredibly low prices. In a lot of ways, this is unclaimed freight for the modern age.”**

UFS is a third-generation family-owned retail destination on Adams Street just south of Downtown Peoria. Operating three retail locations, UFS specializes in furniture, cabinets, appliances, flooring, alcohol and closeout items. At UFS, it’s all about the deal!

## Development Update

### OSF Headquarters



As anticipated, the OSF HealthCare Ministry Headquarters at 124 SW Adams St. is seeing upwards of 500 people a day working in the building. That number could be higher on any given day as OSF hosts teams from its other facilities throughout the Ministry in addition to others.

The Human Resources department relocated into the building this Spring (from the Franciscan Prairie building by the Shoppes at Grand Prairie).

According to Shelli Dankoff, OSF HealthCare Media Relations Supervisor, **“Some OSF Mission Partners do appreciate the opportunity to work a hybrid model, which combines in-office and work-from-home, but the hoteling spaces for them in the building have been noticeably fuller in recent weeks! Approximately 400 additional OSF Mission Partners work two blocks south on SW Adams Street in the OSF OnCall building, which operates 24/7.”**

In addition to boosting the energy in the downtown area, food establishments are benefitting from the uptick in the number of people in downtown on a daily basis,

including The Great Harvest Bread Company which is on the main floor of the OSF headquarters building and opened in late March. Open for breakfast and lunch Monday - Friday, Great Harvest has seen a steady stream of customers from throughout the downtown area. While the variety of bread products and goodies Great Harvest is known for are available, the MHQ location offers a range of healthy choices on the menu, including paninis, sandwiches, and salads.

## New Business Spotlight

### Great Harvest Bread Company



We stopped in at the Great Harvest Bread Co., recently opened at 124 SW Adams St. in the OSF Ministry Headquarters complex.

The lunch crowd was lining up for freshly made sandwiches, paninis, salads, soups, and acai bowls, made with frozen-and-pureed Brazilian palm fruit served as a smoothie.

Avocado toast, grain bowls and espresso drinks also are on the downtown menu. Breads are made from flour milled daily. Plenty of tables were spread out in an open, bright setting.

According to the manager, while the lunch pace is brisk, they would like to see more smiling faces for breakfast. For those of you who have been looking for a great breakfast place downtown, come on in. The fresh pastries are amazing! The store is currently open from 7 a.m. until 4 p.m. on weekdays.



# Downtown Residential Living Options



If you are interested in moving downtown, we want to help you find that perfect place to live. Because downtown living spaces are in high demand, developers are responding by creating, and re-creating, ambient-perfection and cozy environments that are designed to reflect your style. Downtown living spaces come in a variety of options. From refurbished, brick-exposed spaces to modern, bright offerings, the choice is yours. Rental and owner-occupied units are both available, although units turn over quickly.



For video walkthroughs and details on some of the prominent downtown properties, visit our website at <https://www.downtownpeoria.us/rental-properties>.

The 2022 Rental Market Study is an interesting read, offering an insight into downtown living. It provides a good overview of existing properties, listing specific locations, rental characteristics, market demand, etc.: [https://www.downtownpeoria.us/files/ugd/f37c16\\_88263953af674212bc-2cc09f0024b9ec.pdf](https://www.downtownpeoria.us/files/ugd/f37c16_88263953af674212bc-2cc09f0024b9ec.pdf).



If you have been following the testimonials in our newsletter from current downtown residents, you will know how special the downtown vibe is. You could be their neighbor and find out how convenient and fun it is to be a city dweller!

# Downtown Activities

## Peoria Riverfront Market



### Spring has sprung!

Downtown Peoria's RiverFront Market opens Saturday, May 21st, in the 200 block of SW Water Street.

With another fantastic season in store, the market is the place to be every Saturday morning from 8:00 am - noon.

It is wonderful to see how the seasonal products evolve over the spring and summer. Fresh produce, local meats, arts and crafts, and great food from pretzels to cheesecake, scones, fresh cooked omelets, pies, and the list goes on and on. Come on down and support your local friends and neighbors. Homemade and homegrown – what's not to love?!

## Peoria RiverFront Events

We are excited to see this season get started! After two years of silence, Peoria is ready to party! From Memorial Day Remembrance to tribute bands and fests, like Irish and German, downtown Peoria promises something for everyone. Be sure to follow Peoria RiverFront Events / CEFCU Center Stage @ The Landing to see all the upcoming shows on Downtown Peoria's Iconic Riverfront. Check out the lineup and plan your wardrobe accordingly. We'll see you at the Landing.

## ArtsPartners

To stay up to date on what's happening in the art world in the Peoria area, sign up for the ArtsPartners weekly email. There is never a dull moment in the art world; in fact, it's quite colorful! <https://artspartners.net/>.



# Announcements

## Greater Peoria Job Board



### Greater Peoria, IL job board

Search openings across our network

hundreds of opportunities for talented individuals. So, tell a friend. Let's work together to grow our region with the best talent! <http://jobs.peoria.org>.

## Peoria Public Library

### New Programs for All Ages!



As the flagship, Peoria Public Main Library, located at 107 NE Monroe St. in the heart of Peoria's downtown, has always held a vast majority of its multimillion-dollar collection as well as a treasure trove of local history, and now the Main Library is adding a number of new programs and events for the growing residential population in Downtown Peoria. This May, you'll find everything for kids and kids at heart from arts and crafts to story times to free yoga.

Per Jennifer Davis, Manager of Public Relations, **"We're open to adding more of what Downtown residents want. Just ask us."** For a list of events, visit the Peoria Public Library website at <https://peoriapubliclibrary.org/event-directory/> or stop in. Library staff are always eager to help.





Photo credit: [www.chriskhouryproductions.com](http://www.chriskhouryproductions.com)

[www.downtownpeoria.us](http://www.downtownpeoria.us)

**Downtown Development Corporation of Peoria (DDC)**

Michael J. Freiling, President/CEO | e: [michael@downtownpeoria.us](mailto:michael@downtownpeoria.us) | m: 309.369.6038  
403 NE Jefferson Ave, Peoria, IL 61603-3725



@Downtown Development Corporation of Peoria