



## Position Summary

# President & Chief Executive Officer

## Greater Peoria Business Alliance

### Peoria, Illinois

---

#### The Organization

The Greater Peoria Business Alliance (“GPBA”) is a nonprofit organization which focuses specifically on the needs of private business and regional economic development. The GPBA is comprised of two subsidiary organizations: the Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce and the CEO Council.

**The Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce** (“the Chamber”) is a membership organization of approximately 1,000 area businesses, delivering value to its members by cultivating a thriving business community, presenting the united voice of local business to government, offering continuously upgraded products and services for business enhancement and providing strategic business advisory services. The Chamber’s recently developed strategic plan is focused on the following guiding principles:

- **Succeed:** Deliver *membership* programs and opportunities to support business success.
- **Advocate:** *Represent* the interests of business in the region.
- **Lead:** Develop *leaders* to serve the Chamber and region.
- **Strengthen:** Improve the *region* by supporting business prosperity.
- **Align:** Lead a respected *Chamber* with a pivotal role for aligning resources to benefit the region.

**The CEO Council** (“CEOC”) consists of approximately 60 business CEOs, decision makers and community leaders who invest time and resources beyond their Chamber membership and share a common interest in developing the Greater Peoria Region as a destination place to work, live and play. By working together, these business leaders provide insight and energy to fuel real and meaningful regional initiatives. The CEOC’s mission is to utilize collective regional business leadership to promote a common vision and strategies. Based on internal research and a vote of members, the CEOC priorities are:

- Technical training and job preparedness.
- New business attraction and creation.
- Recruitment and retention of talent.
- Quality of life and place.
- Growth and retention of existing business.

More information can be found on these websites:

- Peoria Area Chamber: [www.peoriachamber.org](http://www.peoriachamber.org)
- CEO Council: [www.peoriaceocouncil.org](http://www.peoriaceocouncil.org)

The GPBA President & Chief Executive Officer recently left the organization to lead another chamber organization. As a result, the GPBA Board of Directors has embarked on a national search to recruit a new President who will guide the Greater Peoria Business Alliance and its prominent business leadership activities.

#### Peoria, Illinois

Peoria has a population of 115,000 and is part of regional MSA of almost 380,000. Peoria is in north central Illinois, along the Illinois River and served by I-74, I-474 and I-155, approximately 165 miles southwest of Chicago, 70 miles north of the state capital in Springfield and 160 miles northeast of St. Louis. Peoria boasts a big city lifestyle with a small-town feel, having world class healthcare and educational opportunities.



**Position Summary**  
**President & Chief Executive Officer ~ Greater Peoria Business Alliance**

---

Peoria’s major employers include Caterpillar, Komatsu, RLI Corp., Unity Point Health, OSF Healthcare, Bradley University, University of Illinois College of Medicine, Maui Jim along with numerous financial institutions, service businesses, higher education and manufacturing operations. Peoria was ranked the 22nd most innovative city in the nation by 24/7 Wall Street and is currently building out a world-class Innovation Hub downtown with a focus on the underserved through innovations in healthcare, food, agriculture, education, and autonomous vehicles.

The community has a transformed riverfront and Warehouse District with restaurants, shops and nearby cultural attractions including symphony orchestra, ballet and theater. The area boasts minor league professional baseball and hockey teams (and a minor league soccer team this summer), golf courses, biking and hiking trails, parks, shopping and dining. Peoria is an excellent place to live, conduct business and raise a family. Residents benefit from attractive housing choices, outdoor recreation with parks, and shopping options at boutique stores and national retailers. Educational opportunities include public and private schools along with college and university environments.

In 2013, the City of Peoria received national recognition by earning the All-America City Award by the National Civic League. This marked the fourth time Peoria has achieved this Award. The effort was led and executed by the Young Professionals of Greater Peoria (“YPGP”), the largest group of young professionals in the region, in conjunction with city leaders and area businesses. The YPGP is part of and sponsored by the Chamber.

More information on Greater Peoria and the region can be found on the following websites:

- Peoria Region: [www.peoriaregion.com](http://www.peoriaregion.com)
- Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau: [www.peoria.org](http://www.peoria.org)
- Greater Peoria Economic Development Council: [www.hellogreaterpeoria.us](http://www.hellogreaterpeoria.us)

**The Position**

**Location**

The President & Chief Executive Officer (“President”) position is based in the GPBA’s offices at 403 NE Jefferson Avenue, Peoria, Illinois 61603; telephone 309.495.5900.

**Reporting Relationships**

The President of the GPBA primarily reports to the 9-member GPBA Board of Directors, comprised of the four officers from both the Chamber and the CEOC with the President serving as the ninth GPBA Board member. The GPBA Board of Directors, along with strong guidance from the Chamber and CEOC Boards, shall have ultimate decision-making authority for the organization.

The President of the GPBA simultaneously reports to a 17-member Chamber Board of Directors and a 6-member CEOC Board of Directors. This President will supervise Chamber and CEOC staff which currently includes Vice President-Operations, Director-CEO Council Program & YPGP, Director-Communications & Marketing, Director-Membership Engagement, Director-Sales along with 3 Interns for Events, Graphic Design and Programs. Other important interactions include executives of partner organizations including the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council, Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, neighboring Chambers of Commerce, Downtown Development Corporation, etc. Additionally, the President will maintain strong relations with elected officials on the local, state and national levels, education and workforce training leaders and community organizations as needed.

**Major Duties and Responsibilities**

- Serve as a leader to maximize regional collaboration and common vision.
- Responsible for oversight and implementation of the GPBA annual program of work and strategic plan.
- Supervise, lead, motivate and challenge staff to drive success.



**Position Summary**  
**President & Chief Executive Officer ~ Greater Peoria Business Alliance**

---

- Oversight of Board governance; coordinate agendas with Board Chair and staff; prepare or oversee the preparation of supporting reports and materials.
- Assist the Board and Executive Committees in recruiting and selecting qualified personnel for committee assignments.
- Serve as the GPBA's key leader in overall volunteer development, recruitment and relations efforts, working with Board and other staff as required. Ensure volunteers at all levels are engaged, utilized effectively and recognized appropriately.
- Serve as the spokesperson for the GPBA with the media and other public audiences including members, the business community, elected officials and community at large.
- Serve as staff member to actively manage and assist policy and project committees.
- Function as the advocacy/government affairs expert for developing policy and position papers for the organization.
- Responsible for building and maintaining working relationships with local, state and federal elected and appointed officials.
- Membership acquisition/retention responsibilities; serve as a source for identification for potential new members; assist Chamber sales team as needed.
- Overall responsibility for member development and retention program; ensure that members are connected, engage and recognize value of Chamber/CEOC membership; maintain a regular schedule of member retention visits particularly with high value members.
- Budget development and oversight for the GPBA/Chamber/CEOC budgets in collaboration with staff, finance team and boards.
- Manage external relations with affiliated groups and organizations.
- Other duties as assigned.

***Compensation***

The President is expected to earn an attractive compensation package; appropriate benefits and some relocation assistance will be provided.

***The Candidate***

***Education***

A Bachelor's degree is strongly preferred; an advanced degree in business, finance, law, public administration or related field is desirable. If the candidate's professional experience includes chamber or development industry background, then a graduate of the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management or a Certified Chamber Executive designation is desirable.

***Professional Qualifications***

The ideal candidate must have a proven track record of success and may come from a variety of backgrounds such as: serving as the top executive within a progressive and comparably-sized chamber of commerce, or related significant business association, or economic development-focused organization; experience as a "#2" or other senior-level executive at a larger like enterprise as noted above; or an executive from a complex private or public sector entity. At least five years of experience in a leadership role is required. In addition, significant Board interaction and experience leading large numbers of volunteers is strongly desired.

***Desired Experience***

- **Business experience** (programmatic success of serving small business enterprises and working with entrepreneurs; concurrently effective in dealing with large corporations and executives)
- **Management experience** (strong staff leadership and human resource development; can build internal staff and enhance culture of the organization)
- **Board relationships** (Board development and recruitment, governance issues and Board of Director interactions).



**Position Summary**  
**President & Chief Executive Officer ~ Greater Peoria Business Alliance**

---

- **Planning** (experience in developing and implementing both operational and strategic plans).
- **Sales orientation** (serves as the “head cheerleader” for the GPBA, Chamber and CEOC; has an ability to market and promote a regional economy).
- **Membership** (track record of strong membership development, retention, increased value and appropriate expansion).
- **Media/public relations** (effectively articulates objectives and policy positions to the media and community at large).
- **Government relations** (develops effective working relationships with elected/appointed officials and their staffs; can effectively lobby and advocate for business).
- **Varied industries** (experience with diverse industries including advanced manufacturing, agriculture, services, education, healthcare, retail).

***Desired Personal Traits***

- **Leadership** (a take charge individual; can manage, motivate, challenge and delegate to others; seen as a true leader in the community).
- **Energetic** (genuinely enthusiastic; strong personal work ethic).
- **Visibility** (strong ability to reach out and build relationship with chamber members and community; highly visible to staff, members and business leaders; active in the region and community).
- **Integrity/ethical** (honest; possesses the highest moral standards).
- **Communication skills** (strong communicator with internal and external audiences; good listener; excellent written and oral communication skills).
- **Creative** (imaginative; able to envision nontraditional solutions to issues).
- **Executive presence** (polished; self-confident).
- **Organizational visibility** (effective at promoting the mission, events and accomplishments of the GPBA, Chamber and CEOC in the regional community).
- **Teamwork** (work with the Alliance staff and Board leadership to complement and work with the CEO Council for the betterment of the community).
- **Entrepreneurial** (has experience with perceiving and capitalizing on available business opportunities; in addition, manages the entire GPBA enterprise like an entrepreneur not an administrator).
- **Value proposition** (can develop and articulate value equation for Chamber membership; has a strong service mind set in working with members and others in the community).
- **Change agent** (willing to push the envelope and challenge traditional thinking; has a vision of tomorrow).

***Challenges and Opportunity***

The projected first year accomplishments for the new President of the Greater Peoria Business Alliance include:

- Establish presence as the GPBA’s President and become completely familiar with all operating aspects of the GPBA, the Chamber and the CEO Council, including staff, finances, program of work, Board and volunteers.
- Initiate formal and informal introductions and connections with Chamber and CEO Council members and throughout Peoria, Peoria County and the regional community through varied communications and in-person gatherings and meetings, thereby developing strong and trusting relationships with key constituencies and raising the overall profile of the GPBA.
- Take a fresh look and evaluate all aspects of GPBA operations to include finances and budgets, programs, events, written materials and publications, website and forms of communication to membership and the regional community. Identify areas for value added changes to programs and services. Seek to engage and attract a larger group of member organizations to the Chamber.



**Position Summary**  
**President & Chief Executive Officer ~ Greater Peoria Business Alliance**

---

The President position of the Greater Peoria Business Alliance is an outstanding opportunity for a chamber of commerce, association, or private/public sector executive to lead and expand a solid chamber and CEO leadership organization in a growing regional community. The GPBA Board along with the Boards and members of the Chamber and the CEO Council are committed to the success of their business environment and this position offers an exciting opportunity to take the GPBA to the next level.

**Contact**

The client organization we represent and WAVERLY PARTNERS firmly support the principle and philosophy of equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of race, religion, sex, age, national origin or disability. If you are aware of an outstanding chamber or business executive who meets these requirements, please contact WAVERLY PARTNERS, the executive search firm retained by the GPBA Board on this search and the “preferred provider” of executive search services of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

Eric N. Peterson, Managing Director & Principal  
WAVERLY PARTNERS, Cleveland, OH  
(440) 892-5961 [Peoria@Waverly-Partners.com](mailto:Peoria@Waverly-Partners.com)

**WAVERLY PARTNERS**  
Executive Search Consultants

*February 2020*