

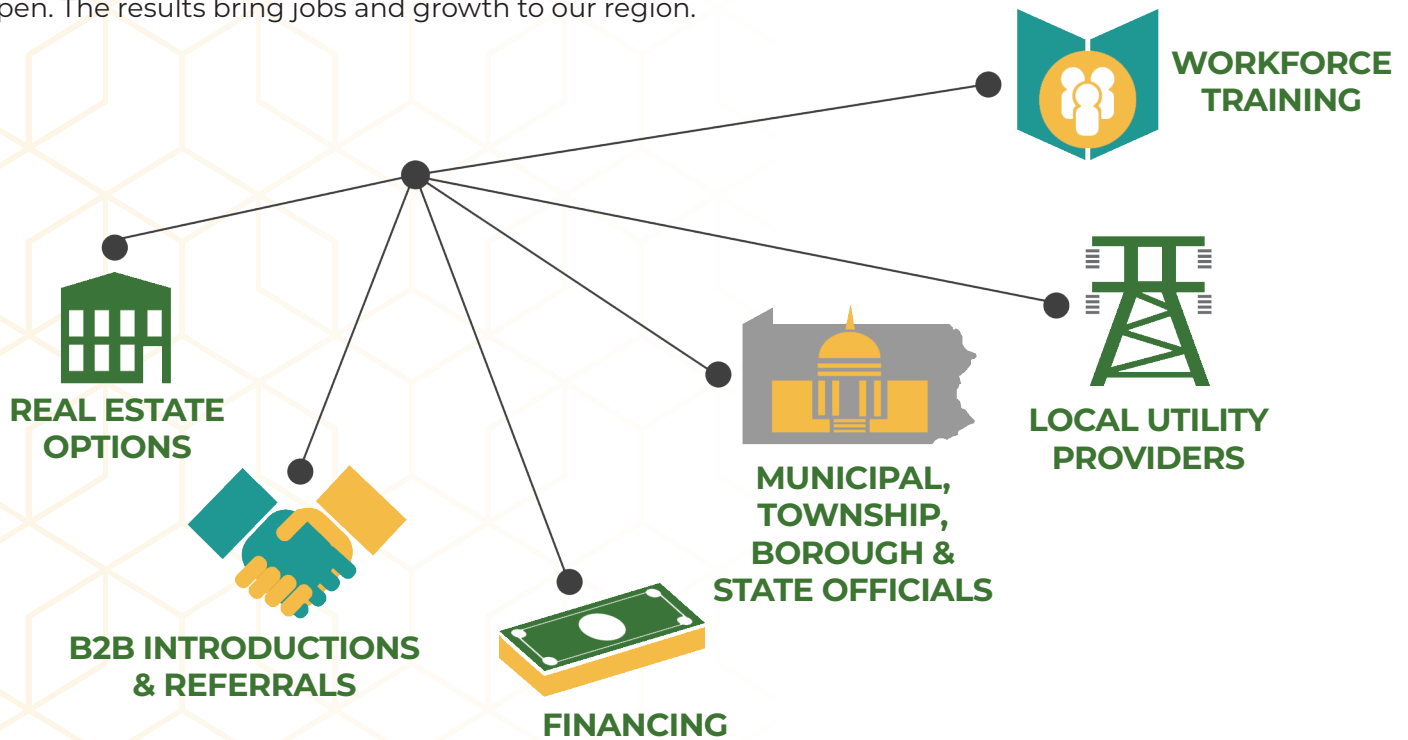


2022

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY + INVESTMENT**

THE GRCA TEAM WORKS TO SET BUSINESSES UP FOR SUCCESS IN BERKS COUNTY.

The economic development team works to bring the necessary tools and resources to the table to help companies locate or grow their business in our community. Whether a company is seeking information to better understand its customer, looking for a property to accommodate relocation or expansion or requires assistance with financing, our team has the resources to make it happen. The results bring jobs and growth to our region.



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

- Through the COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Recovery Program (CHIRP) administered **\$4,680,000** in grants disbursed to **177** Berks County businesses
- Administered over **\$3 million** in funding through Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA) + CFDI Rapid Response Program
- The Greater Berks Development Fund, an affiliate of the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance, sold **130+/-** acres of land to support local business expansion and business attraction
- Worked with over **80** companies through Engage!, a statewide business and retention program
- Worked with over **150** companies through the Advanced Manufacturing Next Gen Industry Partnership (AMNGIP)
- Launched an economic development campaign asking its target audience to “Select Greater Reading. Grow Here. Thrive Here.” All campaign elements pointed to a carefully curated microsite, www.selectgreaterreading.com.
- Throughout 2021, GRCA worked with **134** companies — **34%** were in the advanced manufacturing industry

STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS:



BUSINESS RETENTION & GROWTH

The retention of businesses in Berks County and the provision of resources to allow for continued growth will be the highest priority for 2022. As businesses continue to struggle with the effects of COVID-19, supply chain disruption and unprecedented labor shortages, GRCA will offer support through:

- Business visits to identify challenges and opportunities and match appropriate resources
- Financing
- Real estate development of available sites for future use
- Talent attraction and retention
- Targeted industry support for the manufacturing and agricultural sectors specifically
- Training



BUSINESS ATTRACTION



GRCA will continue its marketing efforts to highlight Berks County as an attractive place to locate or grow your business, in addition to being an attractive place to live and work. These efforts include maintaining an up-to-date commercial and industrial property inventory as well as current data on our community in order to respond to inquiries and prospects in a timely manner.

In January 2021, a business attraction marketing campaign entitled "Select Greater Reading" was unveiled. This has been the vehicle to provide timely information to site selectors, real estate brokers, state officials and other parties who are potentially interested in Berks County. In 2022, the Select Greater Reading (business attraction) and Meet Greater Reading (talent attraction) brands will be aligned and merged for consistent messaging and stronger impact across all platforms digitally and in print.



COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GRCA will continue to provide support to the City of Reading and the implementation of the Downtown Plus Strategic Plan. GRCA will provide continued support and partnership with Berks County municipalities as they undertake economic and community development projects. Examples of this support includes working with the Main Street communities, technical assistance and partnership on DCED applications. As the designated coordinator or grantee, GRCA will continue to manage and promote several economic development programs:

- Keystone Enterprise Zone
- Keystone Opportunity Zone
- Keystone Innovation Zone
- Foreign Trade Zone 147

Passenger Rail



GRCA recognizes the critical importance of passenger rail service to Berks County. In partnership with the County of Berks, GRCA will continue to participate in strategic planning meetings, the Tri-County Passenger Rail Committee, and advocate at the state and federal levels. As the project progresses, we will support the Berks communities where proposed stations could be located.

YOUR INVESTMENT

I. Silver Investor Level: \$1,000-\$4,999

Benefits:

- Invitation to quarterly Economic Development Council meetings
- Regular Council reports and updates on Economic Development programs and projects

II. Gold Investor Level: \$5,000-\$9,999

Benefits (All Silver Investor benefits plus):

- Membership on Economic Development Council Leadership Roundtable
- Invitation to two additional (Spring and Fall) Leadership Roundtable Meetings to review and discuss top County projects and priorities, and advise on future GRCA economic development programming and community investment projects.

III. Platinum Investor Level: \$10,000+

Benefits (All Gold Investor benefits plus):

- Company logo recognition on GRCA Economic Development Council Leadership Roundtable and main website
- Company recognition/signage on Economic Development Council Leadership Roundtable-funded community projects*

* In addition to supporting the various programs and initiatives outlined in this publication, for all Investor funds raised over \$200,000 this year, 15% of those additional funds will also be used to support such other community projects as recommended by the Council's Leadership Roundtable.

Please make checks payable to: Greater Reading Chamber Alliance

Mail to: Greater Reading Chamber Alliance, 606 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601

For more information on Economic Development Investment at the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance, please contact Jim Gerlach at jgerlach@greaterreading.org or 610.898.7783