



PROGRAM REPORT

June 11, 2026



 **ECONOMIC ALLIANCE**
OF KANKAKEE COUNTY



MISSION

The Economic Alliance of Kankakee County is a public-private partnership committed to fostering a thriving environment through economic growth initiatives.

The Alliance works collaboratively to improve the local business climate and advance development in key areas including business retention, expansion and attraction, workforce and community development, residential growth, and educational outcomes.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jeff Bennett,
Chairman**

Managing Partner
McColly Bennett
Real Estate

**Theodis Pace,
Vice Chair**

President
Kankakee County
NAACP

Matt Alexander-Hildebrand, Kankakee County Board

Bernie Anderson, Regional Manager, Community Affairs, Nicor Gas

Dr. Michael Boyd, President, Kankakee Community College

Dr. Gregg Chenoweth, President, Olivet Nazarene University

Rosemary Foster, Kankakee County Board

Jeff Hammes, President / CEO, Peoples Bank

David Johns, Partner, GJM Advisory

Phil Kambic, President / CEO, Riverside Healthcare

Ryan Marion, Kankakee County Board

John McCann, Economic & Business Development Manager, ComEd

Chad Miller, Kankakee County Board

Michael O'Brien, Market President, Midland States Bank

Melissa Tanner, Senior Communication Specialist, CSL Behring

Russell Tobey, Vice President, Kankakee Valley Construction Co.

Sara Vaubel, Owner / CEO, SV Events & Co.

Dr. Matt Vosberg, Superintendent, Bradley Bourbonnais Com. High School

Patrick Young, President, Kankakee Iroquois Building Trades



THE



KANIKAKEE

COUNTY **A D V A N T A G E**

MOMENTUM IN MOTION

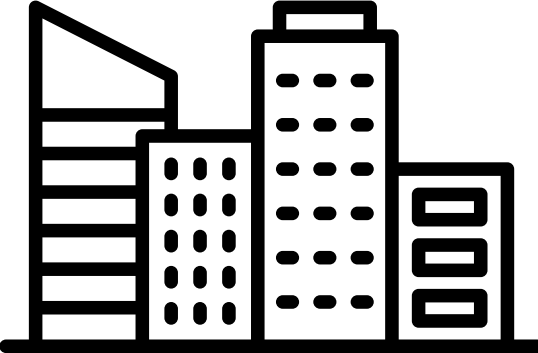
OPPORTUNITY IN REACH

The community is moving, and people and businesses can move with it.

WORKFORCE



**BUSINESS
ATTRACTION**



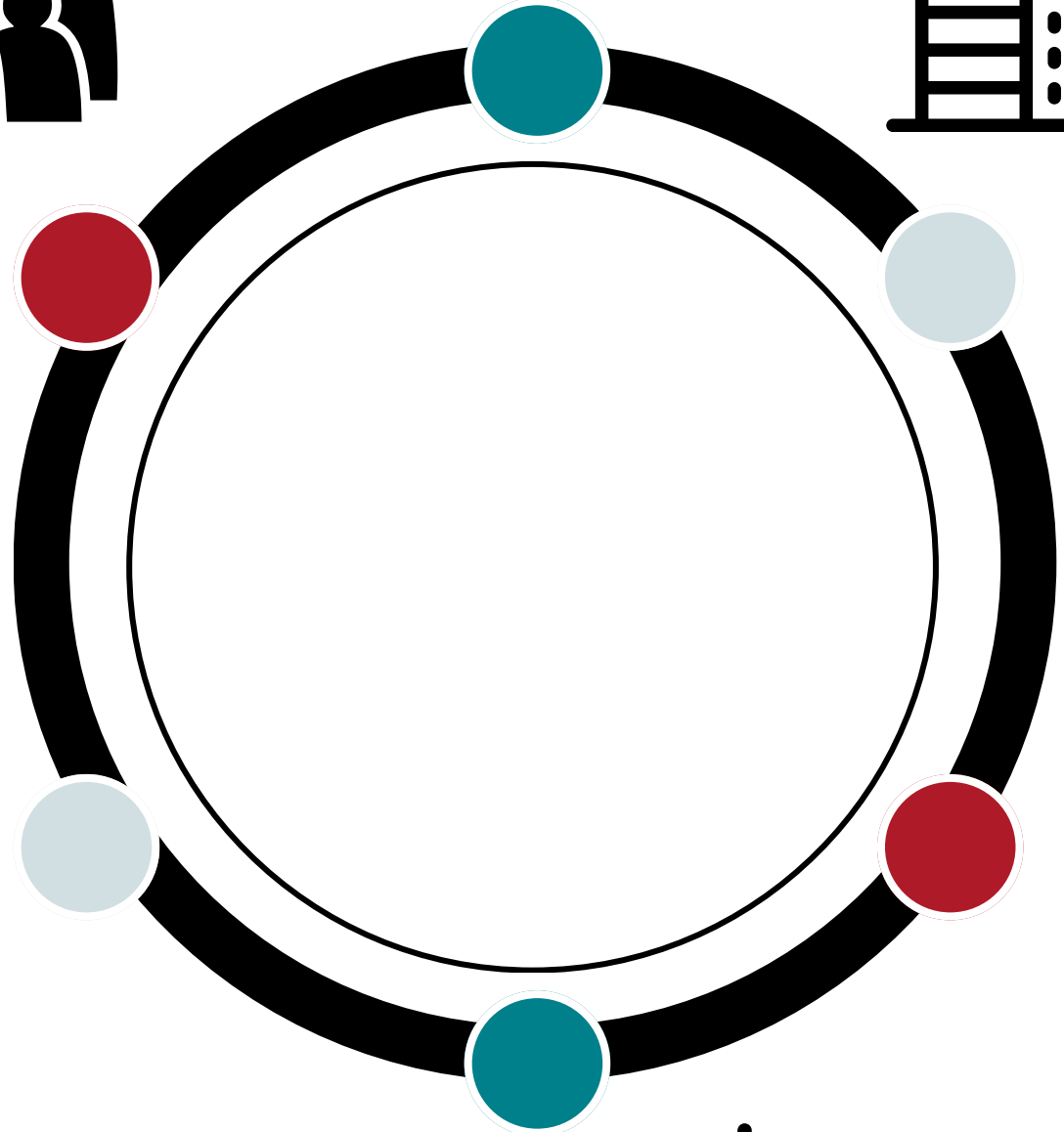
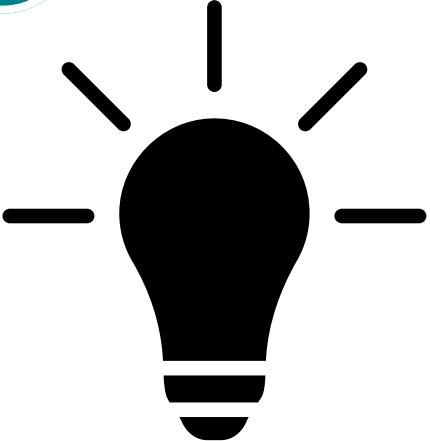
**RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT**



**BUSINESS
RETENTION**



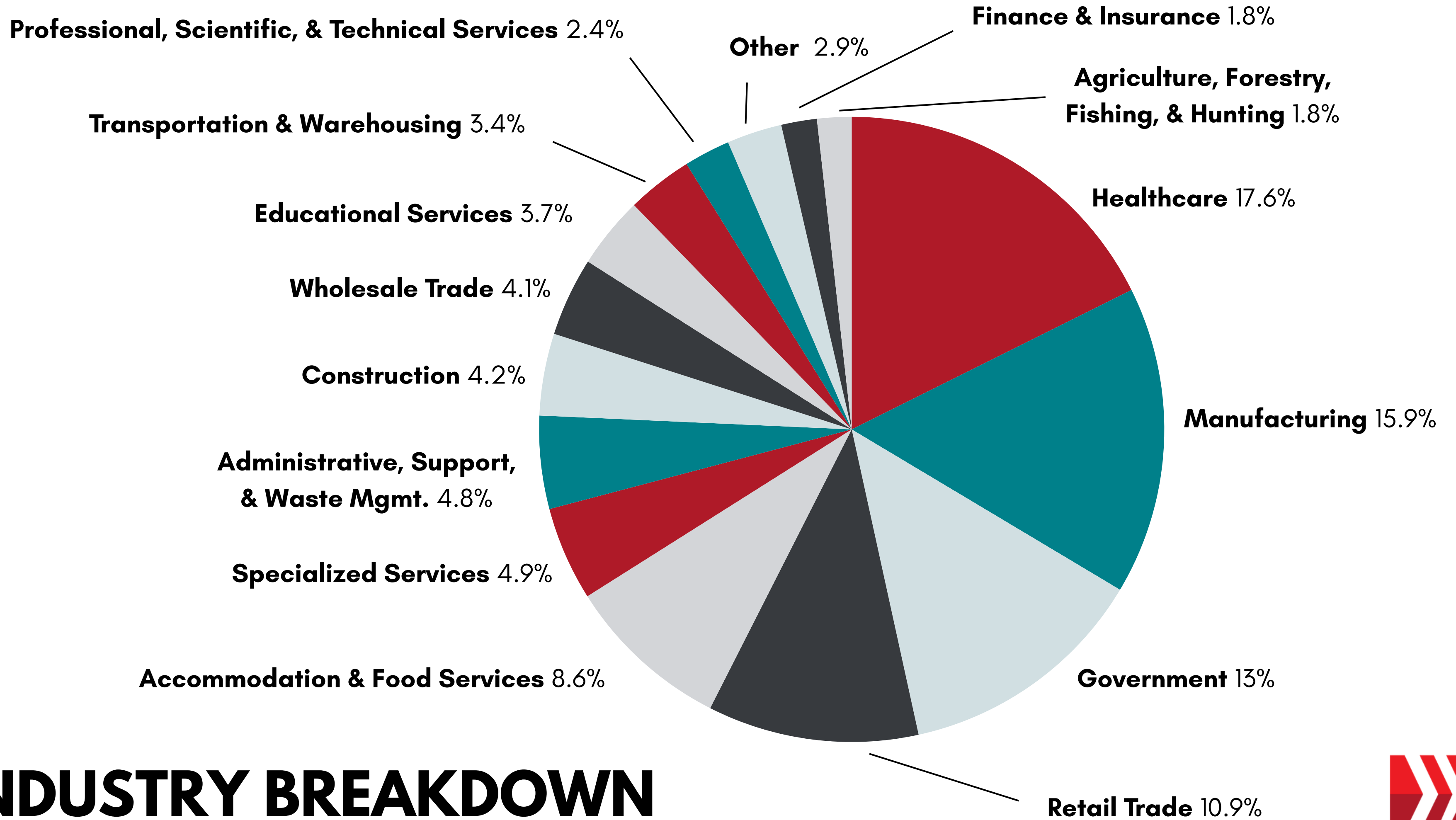
EDUCATION





GROWTH IN INDUSTRY





INDUSTRY BREAKDOWN



TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

1,000+

Transportation & logistics jobs



A.N. Webber Inc.
Since 1947



TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

6 I-57 exits

40k+ Daily vehicles through
Kankakee County on interstate



TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

3 Class 1 Railroads in Kankakee County

CANADIAN NATIONAL | NORFOLK SOUTHERN | UNION PACIFIC

1 in every **4**

freight trains in the nation crosses through Illinois



TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

Greater Kankakee Airport

- Serving community since 1962
- 100 private hangars
- Runway: 5,981 ft.



50,000 Flight operations per year





BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



KANKAKEE COUNTY BUSINESS

TOTAL COUNTY BUSINESSES **8,742**

BUSINESSES WITH 2+ EMPLOYEES **4,682**



J.R. SHORT™

SNACK PRODUCTS

- Snack products for largest snack company in US
- 3 million lbs. pellets/month
- Line production at Grinnell Road, Festival Drive locations; warehouse on West Court Street
- 148 employees; now hiring





CRESCO LABS®

- Top performing cannabis cultivation site in IL
 - 3 Illinois sites: Kankakee, Lincoln, Joliet
 - Medical and recreational
- 200,000 grams per week
 - Kankakee River water used for irrigation
- 45 employees
 - Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.



Silva[®]

INTERNATIONAL

- Dried vegetables, fruits, herbs
- Headquartered in Momence
- 265 employees
- \$4M investment for R&D center, production space



PROJECT FINANCING



Will Kankakee Regional Development Authority

- Low-cost financing option for development projects
- Double tax exempt status
- Manufacturing bonds, not-for profit bonds, housing bonds

Visit willkankakeerda.com for information





EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE



UNEMPLOYMENT KANKAKEE COUNTY

5.1%

Kankakee County unemployment
April 2026

↓ 2.1% since January 2026

4.7%

Illinois unemployment
April 2026

4.3%

U.S. unemployment
April 2026



UNEMPLOYMENT

	Current April 2026	April 2025	% Change
Labor Force	48,824	49,931	-2.2%
Unemployment	5.1%	4.7%	+0.4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construction Jobs• Manufacturing Jobs• Wholesale Trade Jobs	1,800 7,300 1,800	1,600 7,100 2,000	+12.5% +2.8% -10%



UNEMPLOYMENT

**Largest sector of
unemployed**

20-29 year olds

35%+ unemployment in some
communities

- Varies between male and
females



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Rep. Jackie Haas Job Fair

EMPLOYERS **41**

350+ JOB SEEKERS



WORKFORCE PIPELINE

CEJA WORKFORCE HUB

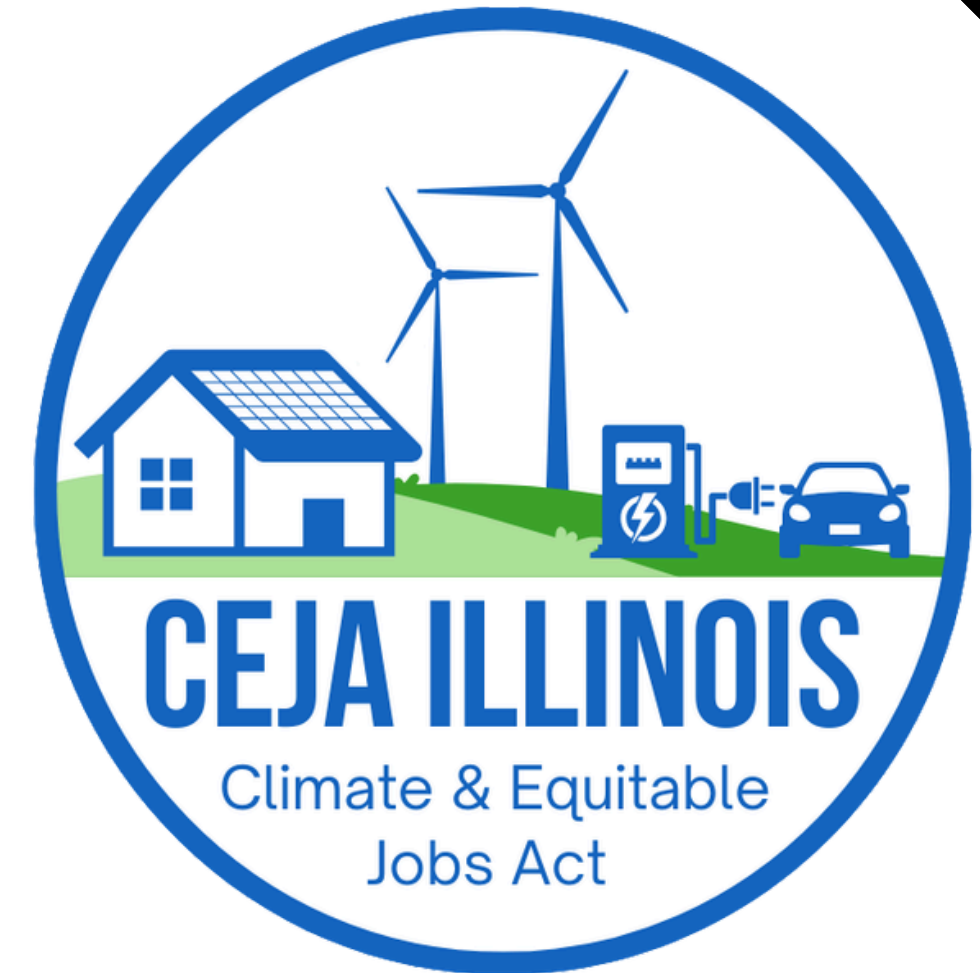
Free training in clean energy pathways

- Energy Audit
- Hybrid/Electric vehicle maintenance
- Solar Photovoltaic

Paid bridge training program

Wrap around services

Job placement



Kankakee Community College

Visit kcc.edu/ceja





EDUCATION



EDUCATION



525 UNDERGRAD

250 GRADUATE DEGREES



Kankakee Community College

400+

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES



ceü[®] KANKAKEE COUNTY

creating entrepreneurial opportunities

END-OF-YEAR TRADE SHOW

FACILITATOR'S NATIONAL CONFERENCE

ORIENTATION FOR CLASS OF 2027





LIVABILITY



COST OF LIVING

KANKAKEE COUNTY

Q1 2026

88.5%

HOUSING	69.5%
GROCERY	97.9%
TRANSPORTATION	92.0%
HEALTH CARE	100.1%
UTILITIES	96.6%
MISC. GOODS & SERVICES	96.5%

COLI is a comparative benchmark of after-tax consumer costs contributing to a professional/managerial standard of living



THE COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY
AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH



ILLINOIS HOUSING BLUEPRINT

THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN ILLINOIS

- Housing Blueprint Survey
- Community Listening Session **July 8, 2026**
Kankakee Community College

TAKE THE SURVEY



ATTEND THE LISTENING SESSION





MARKETING & OUTREACH



ILLINOIS BUSINESS BEAT

APRIL FEATURE

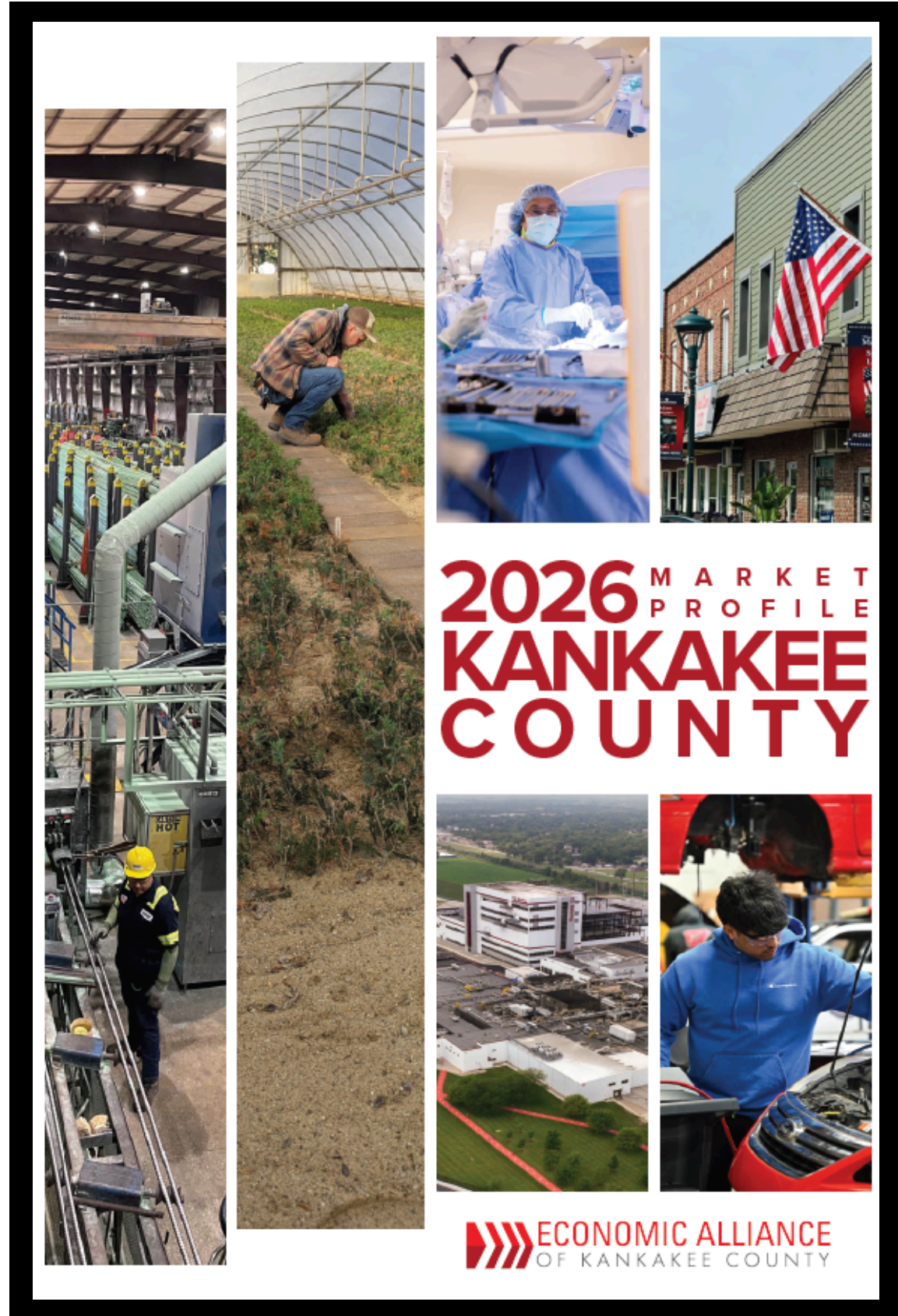
Illinois EDC monthly newsletter

**Spotlight on
Economic Alliance**



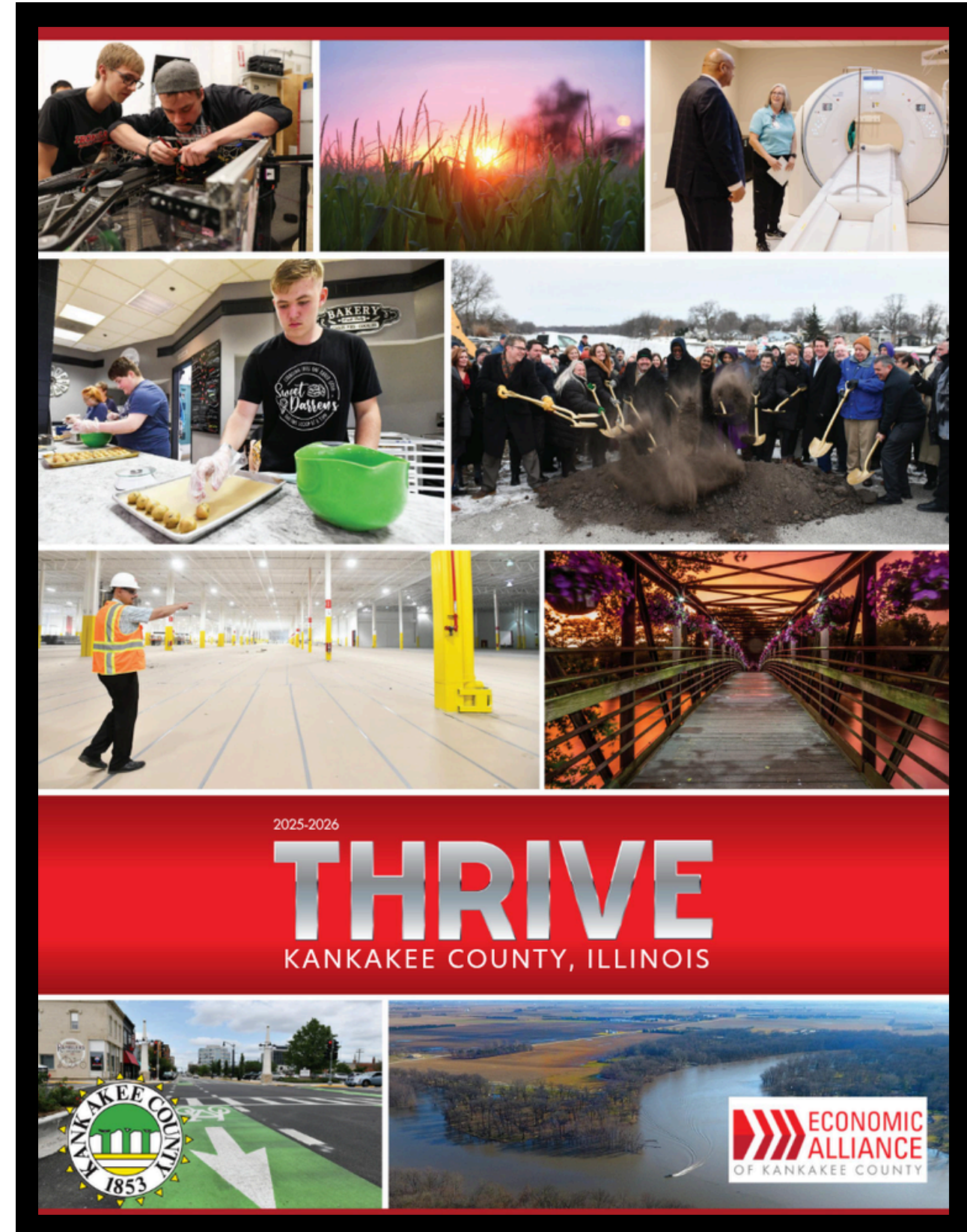
2026 MARKET PROFILE

Contact Hannah Swale
hswale@kankakeecountyed.org



2026 THRIVE MAGAZINE

Contact Hannah Swale
hswale@kankakeecountyed.org



BOARD & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 79th District Economic Opportunity & Advisory Council, IL Representative Jackie Haas
- Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley
- Great Lakes Economic Development Council
- Illinois Industrial Biotechnology Coalition
- International Economic Development Council
- Kankakee Area Career Center Executive Advisory Committee
- Kankakee County Geographic Information System (GIS) Committee
- Kankakee Development Corporation
- Kankakee Co.LAB Advisory Committee
- KCC Business/Office Professional Advisory Committee
- KCC Manufacturing Technology Advisory Committee
- KCC Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity President's Council
- Kankakee County CEO
- Kankakee Riverfront Society
- Pembroke Township & Village of Hopkins Park Utility Infrastructure Initiative
- United Way of Kankakee & Iroquois Counties
- U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly's Economic Development Task Force
- Will Kankakee Regional Development Authority



2026 MEETINGS

September 10, 2026

November 12, 2026

7:30–9:00 a.m.

Locations TBD



Previous board reports available at [kankakeecountyed.org](https://www.kankakeecountyed.org)

CONTACT US



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THANK YOU



ECONOMIC ALLIANCE
OF KANKAKEE COUNTY