

# PEOSTA

TODAY • TOMORROW • TOGETHER



## ACTION PLAN

This action plan reflects the collective voice of Peosta. Through hundreds of surveys, dozens of interviews and meaningful conversations at Community Heart & Soul events, we've gathered insights from residents across our town. The priorities and ideas presented here are rooted in what we heard most often—what you value about Peosta and your aspirations for its future.

**This document translates those shared values into actionable steps, guiding our efforts to preserve Peosta's small-town character while thoughtfully planning for growth and improvement.**

# History of PEOSTA

Peosta, Iowa is a community of approximately 2,000 people located in Dubuque County. It is named after Chief Peosta, leader of the Meskwaki people that once lived in the area.

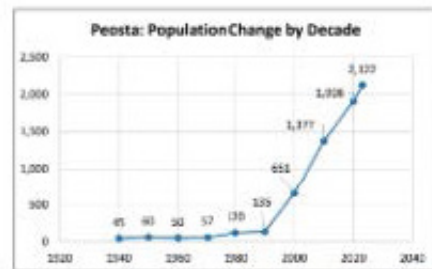
For most of its history, and even as recently as 1990, Peosta was a small rural town. Industrial growth began in Peosta with the establishment of the Mi-T-M Corporation in 1971 and once the city's industrial park began to flourish in the 1990s, the population began to increase rapidly. The opening of the Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) Peosta campus in 1979 and the expansion of the four lane, US Hwy 20, in 1996, have contributed significantly to Peosta's population growth. This growth has helped attract new businesses and services to Peosta, which has nearly doubled in population from 2000 to 2023 with a percent change of 195.2%.



## When Did The WORK GET DONE?

In June 2024, the Peosta Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) initiated a conversation with Jason Neises of the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. This meeting marked the beginning of a deeper exploration into Peosta's identity and aspirations. Through the introduction of the Community Heart & Soul initiative, the group began aligning its efforts with what truly matters to Peosta residents—ensuring that future planning reflects the values, hopes, and character of the community.

### Population Change by Decade

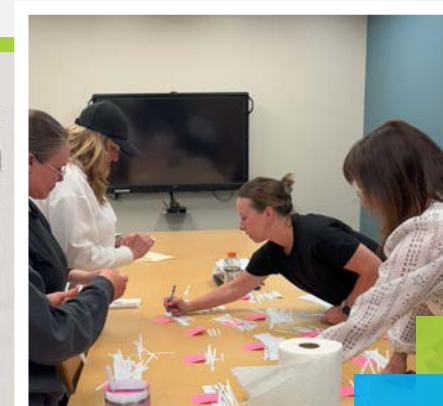


For most of its history, Peosta was a small rural town. Once the city's industrial park began to flourish in the 1990s, population began to increase rapidly. Peosta grew from 135 people in 1990 to over 2,100 in 2023. Note that annual growth rate slows because the base on which it is calculated is much larger.

Year	Population	Period Population Change	% Change during Period	Annual Growth Rate
1940	45			
1950	60	15	33.3%	1.3%
1960	50	-10	-16.7%	-1.7%
1970	57	7	14.0%	1.4%
1980	135	63	110.5%	11.1%
1990	135	15	12.5%	1.3%
2000	651	516	382.2%	38.2%
2010	1,177	726	111.5%	11.2%
2020	1,908	531	38.6%	3.9%
2023	2,122	214	11.2%	3.7%
1940 to 2023		2,077	97.5%	1.2%
2000 to 2023		1,471	69.3%	3.0%



Peosta's growth from the 1970s (left) through the 1990s (center) to the Summer of 2023 (right). Source: Iowa Geographic Map Series, accessed Oct. 2024



How long have you lived in Peosta? (Including Central, Thunder Hills, Buris, Thunder Ridge.)

# TIMELINE

- 1** — **SEPTEMBER, 2024**  
Project Coordinator hired

**1**
- 2** — **DECEMBER, 2024**  
Received Heart and Soul seed grant

**2**
- 3** — **DECEMBER, 2024**  
First Peosta CH&S team meeting

**3**
- 4** — **MARCH, 2025**  
First survey sent out to the public: What do you love about Peosta and what would make it even better?

**4**
- 5** — **APRIL, 2025**  
Conducted resident interviews

**5**
- 6** — **MAY, 2025**  
Community event: What matters most

**6**
- 7** — **JUNE, 2025**  
Peosta Value Statements written using input from community

**7**
- 8** — **JUNE, 2025**  
Community event: Prioritizing action ideas

**8**
- 9** — **JULY, 2025**  
Second survey sent out to public: Priorities for action

**9**
- 10** — **AUGUST, 2025**  
Heart and Soul Value Statements adopted by city council

**10**
- 11** — **SEPTEMBER, 2025**  
Narrowed down ideas for action

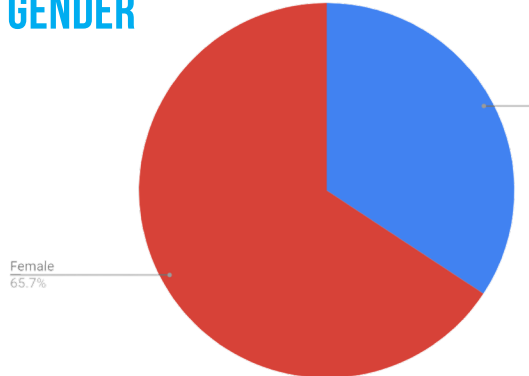
**11**
- 12** — **OCTOBER, 2025**  
Community event: Action plan shared with the public/CH&S video premiere

**12**
- 13** — **OCTOBER, 2025**  
Launched Small Town Dreams initiative

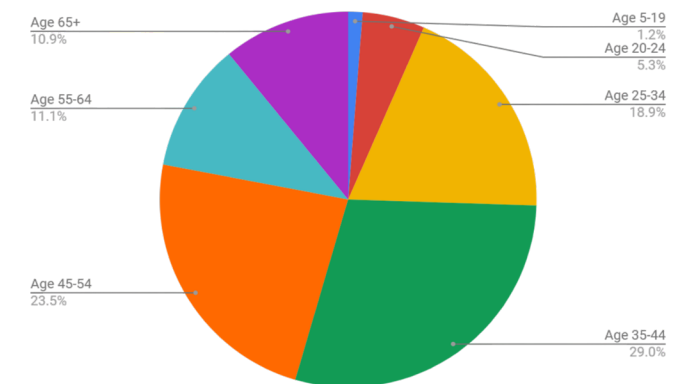
**13**

# Who Did We Hear From? COMMUNITY DATA

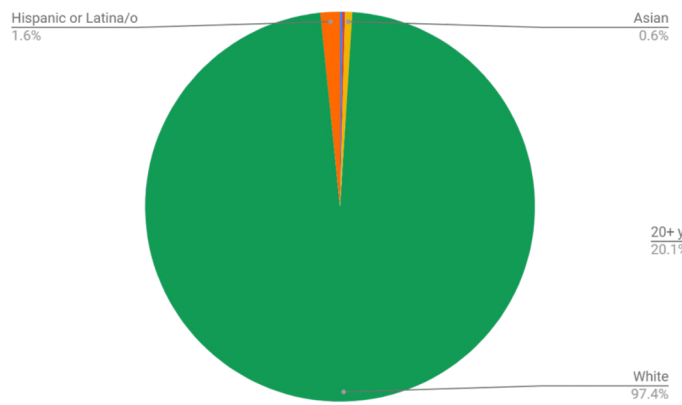
## GENDER



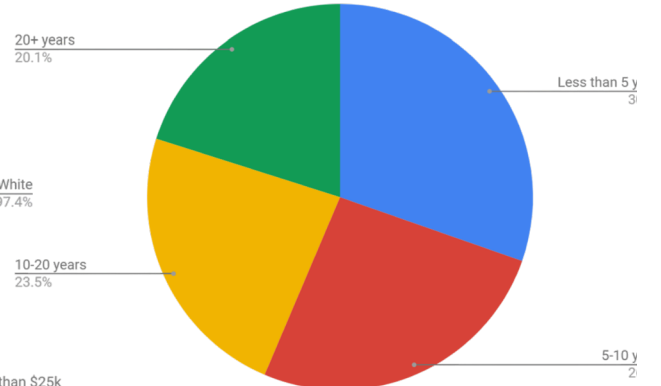
## AGE



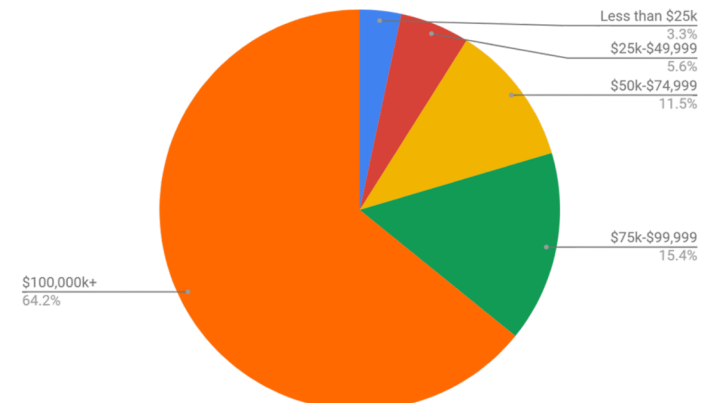
## RACE ETHNICITY



## LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN PEOSTA



## ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME



This is what you told us you love about Peosta!

# VALUE STATEMENTS



## SMALL TOWN FEEL

Our community treasures its small-town feel where friendliness, family values and a strong sense of community create a warm, inviting place to call home.



## LOCATION

Peosta's location offers the best of both worlds - a small town with welcoming neighborhoods that create a peaceful place to live and raise families, while being close to the big conveniences of Dubuque.



## AMENITIES

Peosta residents appreciate convenient local amenities such as restaurants, grocery, health, and other businesses which support daily life, cultivating a strong, dynamic and growing community.



## PARKS & RECREATION

Peosta residents value indoor and outdoor recreation and desire additional options to support wellness, connection, and a vibrant community.



## SCHOOLS

Our community takes pride in our quality education resources - choices of public or private schools and Northeast Iowa Community College, all of which help tie our community together.



## SAFETY

Peosta residents benefit from a robust police presence, safe streets, friendly neighbors looking out for each other, and the joy of seeing families and kids freely exploring the outdoors.

Here's What

# WE HEARD

You told us how we can make Peosta even better.

## SMALL TOWN FEEL

- Create a "Friends of Peosta" 501c3 group - a group of volunteer residents to assist the city in an advisory capacity for the needs of the community. Having a 501c3 helps when writing and applying for grants.
- Update the city's welcoming document/packet for newcomers.
- Create a Veteran's Memorial. Establish a community garden.
- Create events that foster community connections - such as farmer's market, food trucks/movie nights at ball fields or PCC parking lot, bingo, etc.
- Plant trees throughout the city.
- Create ways to keep residents informed about existing zoning changes and moratoriums that prevent the construction of new apartments.
- Determine feasibility of building and developing a city center.
- Host a local farmer's market that would showcase local crafts, foods, etc.
- Offer additional activities for senior citizens.

## LOCATION

- Improvements to infrastructure as the city grows - water, sewer, garbage, streets, public safety services, etc.
- Create ways for residents to engage more in city council meetings so they are better informed.
- Inform residents of the new housing study and find opportunities for engagement and feedback.
- Encourage city council to make affordable housing a strategic goal in their next plan or create a city commission that will address housing affordability.
- Create a resident-driven committee to explore affordable housing in Peosta.

## AMENITIES

- Highlight the opportunities for small businesses to come to our growing city - coffee shops, bakeries, non franchise restaurants and retail.
- Provide resources to help local businesses get started through partnership with the Peosta Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) - business planning, getting connected with the right bankers, navigating the financial challenges, proper financing, etc.
- Perform a feasibility study for bringing fast food restaurants and other franchise businesses into the community (such as a movie theatre, Culvers, Taco Johns, Chick-fil-A), etc.
- Review the housing study and meet with developers about the feasibility for building a 55+ housing facility.

## SCHOOLS

- Ask Western Dubuque school system what the plan is for district growth.
- Create more PreK openings so all Peosta 4-year-olds have an opportunity to attend.



## PARKS & RECREATION

- Collaborate with incoming hotel owner/manager, to be built on the east side of town (Thunder Valley Drive), to invest in and leverage the swimming pool for community use.
- Establish a dog park.
- Develop facilities for outdoor pickleball and basketball courts, and soccer fields.
- Perform a study to determine need, use, and cost of a splash pad or pool.
- Create additional sidewalks, and walking, biking, and hiking trails.
- Build a community pavilion/green space for community gatherings.
- Upgrade baseball fields.
- Complete Kelly Oaks Park.

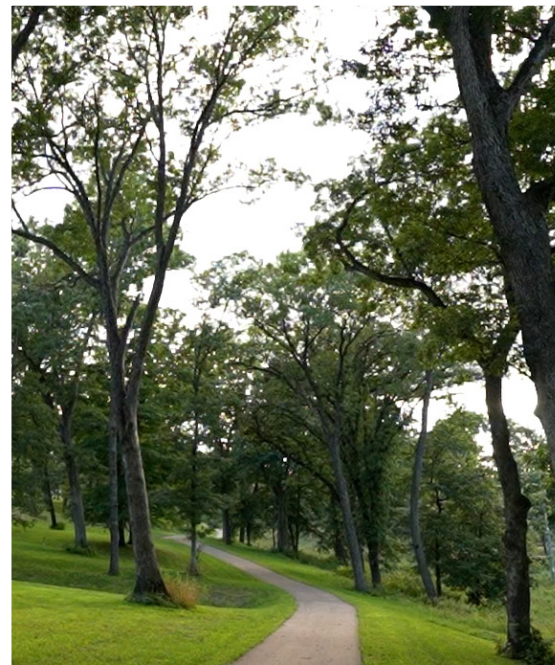
## SAFETY

- Meet with the city council about changing 20 mph flashing school zones to be in effect on school days, during school hours.
- Participate in/keep informed of the DOT study: intersection of Cox Springs/Hwy 20 and Thunder Hills/Hwy 20.
- Develop facilities for outdoor pickleball and basketball courts, and soccer fields.
- Research another way to connect the north side of town to the south side of town.
- Confirm with DOT that the roundabout is the correct diameter for semis.
- Confer with DOT to manage road access to Hwy 20 - converting 2 lanes to 4 lanes, and/or adding a turn lane.
- Confer with DOT for solutions to traffic waiting on Hwy 20 off/on ramps when industrial park shifts end.



## What's NEXT?

With a clear understanding of what Peosta residents value and envision for the future, we are taking the next step: establishing a permanent community fund to support signature projects year after year—indeinitely. Through the Community Foundation's Small Town Dreams initiative, Peosta has the opportunity to launch an endowment that will grow over time. By raising matching funds locally, we can unlock additional resources and ensure that our community's priorities are not only heard—but acted upon for generations to come.



## How You Can GET INVOLVED

This is a community-driven effort, and your participation matters. Whether through a financial contribution, helping spread the word, or volunteering your time, every action helps build a stronger Peosta.

Residents, businesses, and organizations are invited to join us in shaping the future—one project, one investment, one dream at a time.

If any of these ideas interest you, please contact us at:



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# THANK YOU

The accomplishments of this past year would not have been possible without the dedication of our volunteers and the support of our local community.

**We extend our sincere thanks to our core leadership team:**

Denise Grant, Project Coordinator, Robin Banyasz, Luke Boyle, Brenda Fangmann, Chelle Klootwyk, Judy Knowler, Lynn Randall, Madison Randall, and Denise Simms, with special acknowledgement to our coach, Jason Neises, from the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, the PEDC, and to the Community Heart & Soul® nonprofit organization.

**PEOSTA**  
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