

BUILDING BUSINESS MOMENTUM | CEDAR RAPIDS REGIONAL LIVING & AMENITIES

FORWARD CR

SPRING/SUMMER 2026 | ISSUE #1

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Welcome

A Letter from Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance



In a little less than a year of relocating to this beautiful region and state, I can emphatically speak to the successes that make me proud. In the pages of this publication the common theme reflected is momentum, life, innovation, and collaboration; all elements that drive the Cedar Rapids region forward.

Whether you are considering investment, evaluating expansion opportunities, exploring relocation, or learning more

about our market, we are pleased to share the story of a region growing with purpose.

Over the past several years, our region has experienced extraordinary investment. In fact, within recent years, our community secured the largest capital investment project in Iowa's history at \$10.1 Billion Dollars. This milestone reflects the strength of our economy and the confidence global industry leaders place in our workforce, infrastructure, and long-term vision.

It is an achievement that is part of a broader story. Iowa has earned national recognition as one of the country's leading states for opportunity, and we see that reflected throughout the Cedar Rapids region. From major capital investments and business expansions to entrepreneurial growth and workforce development, opportunity is not just a ranking, it is something we experience every day.

Companies small and large have a place here. With our healthy business climate and private and public sector support, you'll see your vision become a reality.

We look forward to being a part of your business journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliet Abdel".

Juliet Abdel, President & CEO
Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance



Forward CR is brought to you by the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance.

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Read more about our Mission,
Vision, Values, and our work, at
cedarrapids.org.

CONTENTS



12

*Doing Business
in Iowa*



14

*Does Cedar
Rapids Really
Have 5 Seasons?*



20

*Nuclear Power
Returns to Iowa*



26

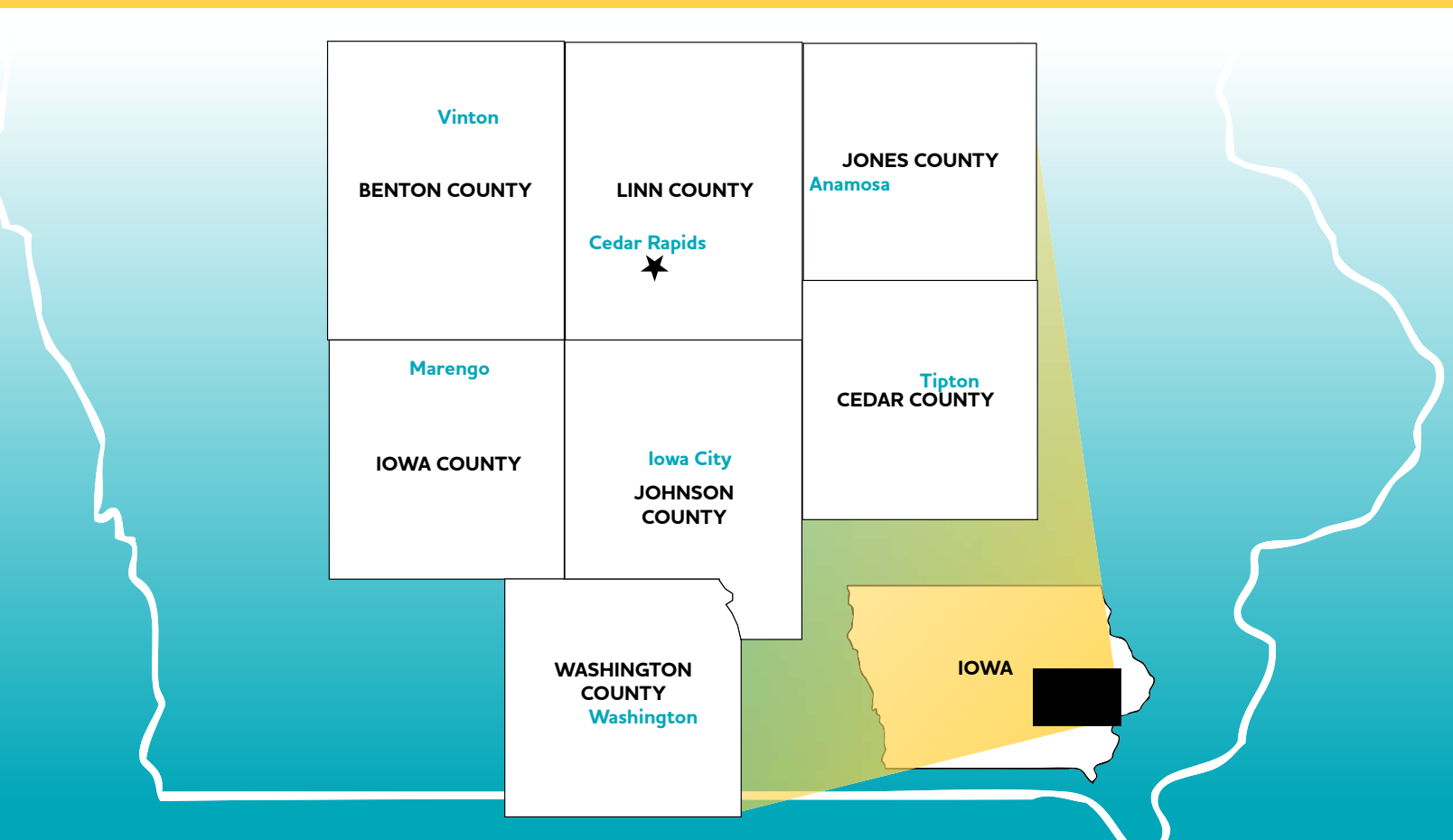
*Bet on
Cedar Rapids*

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 6 | The Cedar Rapids Region | 39 | Fresh Perspective From a New Resident |
| 8 | Area Demographics | 40 | Affordable Housing |
| 10 | Top Industries in the Cedar Rapids Region | 42 | Downtown Cedar Rapids |
| 11 | International Investment | 44 | Nationally Recognized Health District: A Growing Hub for Healthcare, Business, and Downtown Life |
| 12 | Doing Business in Iowa | 49 | Connected Appeal - The District: New Bohemia & Czech Village |
| 13 | Economic Development Services | 50 | Crucial Connector for the American Discovery Trail |
| 14 | Does the Cedar Rapids Region Really Have Five Seasons? | 52 | The Amana Colonies: A Trip to the Past Isn't Far Away |
| 17 | Passport to Opportunity | 54 | Area Things to Do |
| 20 | Nuclear Power Returns to Iowa | 56 | Moving Tips & Checklist |
| 25 | National Rankings | 59 | Local Rail Network |
| 26 | Bet on Cedar Rapids | 60 | Middle America: By Car, By Air |
| 30 | Poised for Growth | 61 | Inside the Cirrus Experience |
| 32 | Corn Capital of the World | 62 | Multi-Modal Transit |
| 34 | Largest Milling Facilities in North America | | |
| 37 | Explore Regional Higher Education Opportunities | | |
| 38 | Regional Laborshed Area | | |

A silhouette of a construction site at sunset. Two large tower cranes are visible against a bright orange sky. In the foreground, the skeletal frame of a multi-story building is under construction. The overall scene conveys a sense of industrial growth and development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**ACCOLADES
DOING BUSINESS IN IOWA
GLOBAL
INDUSTRY
DEMOGRAPHICS**



THE CEDAR RAPIDS REGION

There are numerous things to do and see in the Cedar Rapids Region all year long! Here are just a few notable highlights from each county for taking a day or spending just a few hours visiting a certain destination.

Benton County

Vinton is the county seat and is known for its historic downtown. It is also well known for Boom-Fest, a fireworks festival that lights up the night sky with remarkable fireworks along with vendors and festivities during the day.

Cedar County

The town of West Branch is the birthplace of the 31st US President; thus, the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum is located here and is a must see.

Iowa County

Home to the Amana Colonies, a National Historic Landmark consisting of seven villages settled by German Pietists in 1855, this county serves as a major tourist destination for dining, craft shops and historical culture.

Johnson County

Primarily known as the home of the Iowa Hawkeyes! Iowa City boasts the University of Iowa, as well as the University of Iowa

Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC), a public teaching hospital with 811 beds. Coralville and North Liberty are also in the area.

Jones County

The Great Jones County Fair is held annually in Monticello and known for big-name national musical acts. Built in 1872, the Anamosa State Penitentiary also resides in the county and is the site of Iowa’s largest correctional facility. Visitors are welcome at the museum detailing it’s history. Wapsipinicon State Park is near Anamosa offering fishing, hiking, camping. It features the unique Ice Cave and Horse Thief Cave.

Linn County

The second largest city in the state and ranked 33rd out of 100 Best Places to Live, Cedar Rapids, is the major economic hub in Eastern Iowa. Home of the Eastern Iowa Airport and leading in population and industry, Cedar Rapids drives the region. The Alliant Energy Powerhouse offers

national touring live events and tradeshow.

Washington County

The State Theatre, located in the city of Washington, is recognized by Guinness World Records as the world’s oldest continually operating movie theatre, showing movies since 1897. The Kalona area is home to one of the largest Old Order Amish communities west of Ohio, featuring unique shops, dairy products, and tourism.

COUNTY
DEMOGRAPHICS

County	Population	Med Age	Med Income	BA Degree
Benton	25,724	43	\$45,391	17%
Cedar	18,231	44	\$43,911	28%
Iowa	16,423	42	\$42,945	24%
Johnson	161,225	31.5	\$74,575	55%
Jones	21,100	49	\$73,531	22%
Linn	231,762	39	\$42,372	34%
Washington	22,732	41	\$75,600	26%
TOTAL	497,197	41	\$56,904	29%

Source: 2024 Census

Rated as One of the Top 100 Best Places to Live: Cedar Rapids is ranked 2nd In America for Economic Opportunity!

(Source: Just The News - June 2026)

Local Economic Profile

(2024 census data)

Median Age in Cedar Rapids.....	37
Average Household Income.....	\$93,772
Median Household Income.....	\$70,424
Average Income per capita.....	\$41,256
Owner-occupied housing unit rate..	68.5%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units.....	\$187,100
Median gross rent.....	\$967
Mean travel time to work (age 16+)..	18 minutes

Local Population Per City/ Suburb/Linn County

Cedar Rapids.....	137,927
Marion.....	43,026
Hiawatha.....	7,430
Mt. Vernon.....	4,502
Robins.....	3,360
Fairfax.....	2,900
Center Point.....	2,580
Lisbon.....	2,238
Palo.....	1,627
Springville.....	1,154
Central City.....	1,254
Coggon.....	701
Walker.....	688
Alburnett.....	674
Bertram/Prairieburg/Troy Mills..	673
Unincorporated.....	17,584
Total County.....	230,702

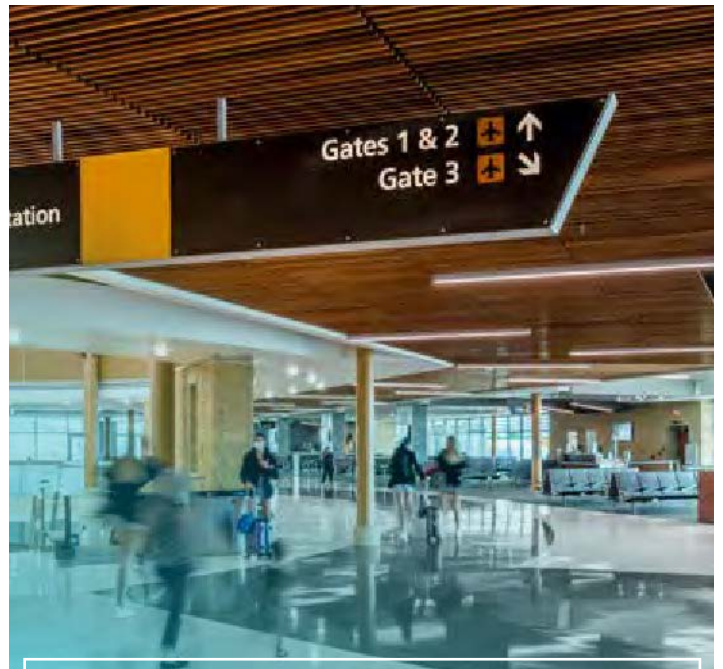
Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Statistical Area = 279,000

Cedar Rapids Profile

(2025 census data)

White.....	76.2%
Black.....	11.3%
American Indian.....	0.3%
Asian.....	2.6%
Hispanic.....	5.2%
Pacific Islander.....	0.5%
Other.....	1.8%
Mixed.....	7.3%





Eastern Iowa Airport (CID)

More than 1.6 million people per year choose to Fly CID for business and leisure travel. With five airlines, 17 nonstop flights, and more than 400 one-stop destinations, CID can get you where you need to go.

Photo Credit: Eastern Iowa Airport



The ADM logo is in the top left corner. The main image shows a large stream of yellow corn kernels falling from a metal grate. In the center, there is an inset photograph of a person's hands holding two ears of yellow corn. The background of the lower half is a solid green color.

Rooted in our Community

©2026 ADM



TOP INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYMENT IN THE CEDAR RAPIDS REGION

- > *Government*
- > *Health Care and Social Assistance*
- > *Manufacturing*
- > *Retail Trade*
- > *Accommodation and Food Services*
- > *Construction*
- > *Finance and Insurance*
- > *Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services*
- > *Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services*
- > *Transportation and Warehousing*
- > *Wholesale Trade*
- > *Other Services (except Public Administration)*
- > *Educational Services*
- > *Management of Companies and Enterprises*
- > *Information*
- > *Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation*

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INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT

	COUNTRY	INDUSTRY
	Milano, Italy	Adv. Manufacturing and Engineering
	The Hague, Netherlands	Financial
	Hard, Austria	Adv. Manufacturing
	London, United Kingdom	Aerospace
	Zory, Poland	Food Manufacturing
	Tokyo, Japan	Adv. Manufacturing
	Berkshire, United Kingdom	Digital Marketing
	Holzmuhle, Germany	Chemical Manufacturing
	Lille, France	Food Manufacturing
	Aurora, Ontario, Canada	Adv. Manufacturing
	Hamburg, Germany	Energy
	London, United Kingdom	Education Services
	Seoul, Korea	Adv. Manufacturing
	Halfing, Germany	Adv. Manufacturing
	Aalen, Germany	Adv. Manufacturing
	Paris, France	Adv. Manufacturing and Engineering
	Ontario, Canada	Adv. Manufacturing
	Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel	Web Design
	Cairo, Egypt	Construction

DOING BUSINESS IN IOWA

Business Incentives for Growth (BIG) Program

- Investment tax credits; sales tax refunds; research activities tax credits
- Amounts are based on number of qualifying jobs, wage and benefits, and amount of investment

Unemployment Insurance

- Tax rate is determined by employer's benefit ratio; calculated using unemployment benefit history, covered wage growth, and balance of Iowa's Unemployment Trust Fund

Right to Work

- Iowa has been a "right to work" state since 1947

Workers Compensation

- Iowa requires workers compensation by law to cover medical care and provide disability benefits for injured workers. Prior to COVID-19, Iowa employers were experiencing a consistent decrease in workers compensation claims filed

Utility Rebate and Efficiency Programs

- Custom rebates for all types of high energy efficient equipment and lighting
- Free energy design assistance and financial incentives to help offset the cost of implementing energy-efficient strategies

RISE Road Funding

- Funding for new or improved streets, roads, and bridges for public use administered by the Iowa Department of Transportation

Rail Funding

- Financial assistance to strengthen, enhance, or preserve Iowa's rail transportation system

Iowa New Jobs Training

- Employee training at reduced or no cost for participating businesses for the purpose of manufacturing, processing, assembling products, warehousing, wholesaling, or conducting research and development

- Program can be administered through a local community college

Property Tax Exemption/Rebates

- Industrial Property Tax Exemption (427B). Eligible to value added by new construction or remodeling. Partial exemption over 5 years: 75%, 60%, 45%, 30% 15%, respectively
- Methane Gas Conversion Exemption. Eligible for properties used in processes to decompose waste and convert waste to gas, property used to collect gases produced as a by-product of waste decomposition and property used to convert gas to energy

Major Economic Growth Attraction (MEGA) Program

One of Iowa's premier economic development incentive programs, MEGA is designed to attract large-scale projects with capital investments exceeding \$1 billion that create high-quality jobs and strengthen Iowa's economy. The program targets industries such as:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Biosciences
- Research & Development

Headquarters Expansion and Development for Growth & Employment (EDGE) Program

A targeted economic development incentive administered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) to attract new corporate headquarters to Iowa and encourage existing headquarters to remain and expand in the state.

Research & Development Tax Credit Program

The program is designed to encourage innovation and technology development by supporting businesses that conduct qualified research activities in Iowa.

- Eligible businesses may receive a tax credit of up to 3.5% of qualified Iowa research expenditures (QREs)
- The credit is refundable but not transferable
- Credits are claimed the year after the qualifying research expenditures are incurred.
- Companies must be certified by IEDA and comply with annual reporting requirements

Corporate Income Tax

Based on tax triggers each year to identify the capacity to make a cut or not.

Target rate of 5.5%

Current Corporate Income Tax Rates 2023:

\$0-\$100,000	5.5%
\$100,001->\$250,000	7.1%

Property Tax (machinery and equipment) . . .	No Tax
Personal Property Tax	No Tax
Sales Tax (machinery and equipment)	No Tax
Inventory Tax	No Tax
Computers	No Tax
Pre-Installed Software	No Tax
Utilities Sales Tax	No Tax on the purchase of electricity, natural gas, and water used in qualifying production activities

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance Economic Development Organization works with companies and regional partners to strengthen our business community by advocating for pro-growth public policies, attracting and retaining talent and enhancing quality of life for all. Working directly with

companies, site-consultants, and allies to promote the Cedar Rapids region for expansion and attraction business projects, we serve as the single point of contact for consultant's companies and commercial real estate professionals assessing our market. Our team is led by:



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- In-Market Tours
- In-Market Industry Support

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- First Friends & Accompanying Spouse
- Newcomers Guide

OUR EXISTING 5 INDUSTRIES

**ADVANCED
MANUFACTURING**

BIOSCIENCE

**FOOD
PROCESSING**

**LOGISTICS &
WAREHOUSING**

**EDUCATION
TECHNOLOGY**

DOES THE CEDAR RAPIDS REGION REALLY HAVE FIVE SEASONS?

Hint: Since the Beginning of Time!

By Peggy Degnan, Staff Writer

Everyone is familiar with the traditional four seasons consisting of spring, summer, autumn and winter. However, Cedar Rapids claims a fifth season. This fifth season isn't measured by the planting of crops, the changing leaves, the humidity of summer or snow falling from the sky.

Ask residents of the Cedar Rapids area what the fifth season is and you're certain to receive different answers: Fun, Smells, Enjoyment, Opportunity, Hospitality and Seasonings (personal favorite)! Depending on whether they asked AI or Google, what consistently came up was TIME.

The fifth season represents time to enjoy and appreciate the beauty and activities the other four seasons bring, which is the idea behind the city slogan "City of Five Seasons." Offering shorter commute times, people aren't spending extra hour(s) sitting in traffic or driving many miles across the metro to and from work.

The origin of the slogan "City of Five Seasons" dates back decades---developed in 1967 for the Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce to attract new residents. Believe it or not, the same concept is seeing a major resurgence because it still holds true today. It is currently being used to recruit new residents to this region because the sentiment of a work-life balance is in the forefront of today's mind.

One will hear the words "five seasons" referenced from time to time. A program founded by the Chamber in 1982-83, Leadership for Five Seasons (LFS), is an ongoing and successful program offered by the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance. Our team directs several LFS pro-

grams with a conscious effort to ensure individuals going through the program know that the fifth season is time and to know the reason why. “With it being the slogan for our city, people should be able to ask a local and receive the correct answer.” Our goal is to increase the number of people in Cedar Rapids who really know what the fifth seasons is.”

Transplants often notice the extra time they have after moving here. Gone are the 45-60+ minute commuter drive times to and from work, the sitting at a complete standstill in traffic or being dictated by public transit schedules---having to wait for the next train or bus because you were running seconds late. In the Cedar Rapids region, people can enjoy many of the same amenities and activities found in larger cities such as live theater, concerts, hiking, spas, golf courses, etc., but don’t spend a ton of time getting there.

After their second child was born, Emily Wilkenson and her husband Matt, made the decision to move their growing family to Cedar Rapids. Having been born and raised in Cedar Rapids, Emily is considered a boomerang because she has moved back to where she grew up. “We moved here to be closer to family and to spend less time in traffic since time spent getting anywhere in Denver, CO made doing things less appealing because the traffic was terrible,” commented Wilkinson. She also mentioned the cost of living is much higher there. Here things are more manageable and their family time has increased by having more time before and after evening and weekend activities since they have much shorter drive times.

To commemorate the gift of time, the city of Cedar Rapids even has a Tree of Five Seasons which was erected in 1996. It is a signature public sculpture in downtown Cedar Rapids. The 60-foot stainless steel sculpture weighs approximately 110,000 pounds. The tree has five separate branches with each branch representing one of the five seasons.

Being part of the creative team that came up with the City of Five Seasons slogan, Gary Anderson thought the city also needed a landmark to go along

“Sitting on the rooftop deck of Pickle Palace on a summer evening, enjoying a glass of wine, listening to live music and looking at the sun’s rays bouncing off the Tree of Five Seasons is just magical.”

-LISA SHANNON

with it. As an artist, he designed and presented a 14 foot tall model to the Mayor and City Parks Commissioner in 1993. They determined it should be placed in the City Park at the corner of First Avenue and First Street. This location is thought to be where the first settlers built a log cabin and tavern. Thus, making this another rea-

son this location was the perfect place for the city sculpture.

An engineering company offered to come up with some rough approximations for the initial cost of \$850,000. Engineers also had to decide what grade of steel should be used to withstand the strong Iowa winds. After raising enough funds from private donors, the tree was erected in 1996. The tree was to be a landmark for Cedar Rapids. Over the years, the tree has been the backdrop for many photos and a marketing tool for those promoting this city.



The tree was actually moved 80 feet to the east in late 2024, from where it had stood since its installation in 1996. A crane moved the sculpture to make room for the floodwall/pump station; and to incorporate it into a new elevated park with river views, landscaping and bike trail which is slated for completion in October 2026. The Tree of Five Seasons will once again become the prominent

featured sculpture it was intended to be. It will be located in a newly designed park across the street from City Hall and will have LED uplighting for nighttime views.

The Tree of Five Seasons can be seen easily just east of the Cedar River downtown from First Avenue, with a common address of 131 1st Avenue SE. It can also be seen when traveling north on I-380.

Once you start looking, you'll notice references and replicas of the Tree of Five Seasons around town. For instance, there's a smaller replica of the "tree" incorporated into the miniature golf course at Twin Pines and there's a Five Season's Room inside Parlor City Pub & Eatery. You'll also see the City's logo contains the tree and can be seen on all city vehicles. Keep an eye out for other subtle nuances.

For local resident, Lisa Shannon, the fifth season in Cedar Rapids is the season to enjoy life. "We work hard so it's a reminder to step back every now and then to soak in all Cedar Rapids has to offer." To Shannon, the fifth season provides the opportunity for better life balance. She mentioned, "Sitting on the rooftop deck of Pickle Palace on a summer evening, enjoying a glass of wine and listening to live music all while looking at the sun's rays bounce off the Tree of Five Seasons---it is just magical." 





WELCOME IS OUR LANGUAGE

Czech, German and Lebanese cultures have strongly influenced business in the Cedar Rapids region by shaping tourism, food traditions, neighborhood commerce, craftsmanship, and entrepreneurship. Their influence is visible not only in historic settlement patterns but also in the businesses, districts, and institutions that continue to drive local economic activity today.

Czech Heritage

Czech immigrants began arriving in the 1850s to work in meat-packing factories and helped establish what is now the Czech Village and New Bohemia District. Their legacy continues to shape one of the region's most visible business districts, where heritage has

become a driver of tourism, retail, hospitality, and arts-based development.

- **Tourism, Retail, and Placemaking:** Czech heritage helps define Czech Village and New Bohemia as a destination with locally owned shops, restaurants, events, and cultural attractions such as murals and the lion bridge. The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library anchors Czech Village west of the Cedar River and helps attract visitors, which supports foot traffic and spending for nearby small business establishments.
- **Food and Beverage:** Traditions remain visible in specialty foods and locally branded hospitality experiences. Kolaches (pastry), heritage festivals and Czech-inspired beer styles. Heritage-focused businesses capitalize on this history by brewing Czech-style pilsners, deeply connecting neighborhood commerce to Eastern European tradition.
- **The Czech School of Cedar Rapids:** This course-work is a historic, community-driven program, dedicated to preserving Cedar Rapids' rich Bohemian heritage. The school provides intensive, in-person summer classes to children and adults to learn the Czech language, music and culture.



German Traditions

The German roots of the Amana Colonies established in 1855, have had a major business influence on the wider Cedar Rapids region. The colonies' traditions of communal production, precision craftsmanship and self-sufficiency created a model of enterprise that still shapes the regional economy through manufacturing, specialty goods, food businesses and heritage tourism. Located about 17 miles southwest of Cedar Rapids, the area consists of seven distinct villages.

- **Craftsmanship and Specialty Production:** German traditions from Amana continue to influence businesses built around woodworking, textiles, meat processing, brewing and specialty foods. These industries reinforce the region's reputation for quality, handmade, and locally rooted products.
- **Entrepreneurship and Tourism:** The Amana Colonies remain a major German-heritage tourism destination whose restaurants, shops, annual festivals and artisan businesses support the broader regional economy. The entrepreneurial legacy of Amana also extends into larger commercial success stories, including Amana's historic connection to appliance manufacturing.



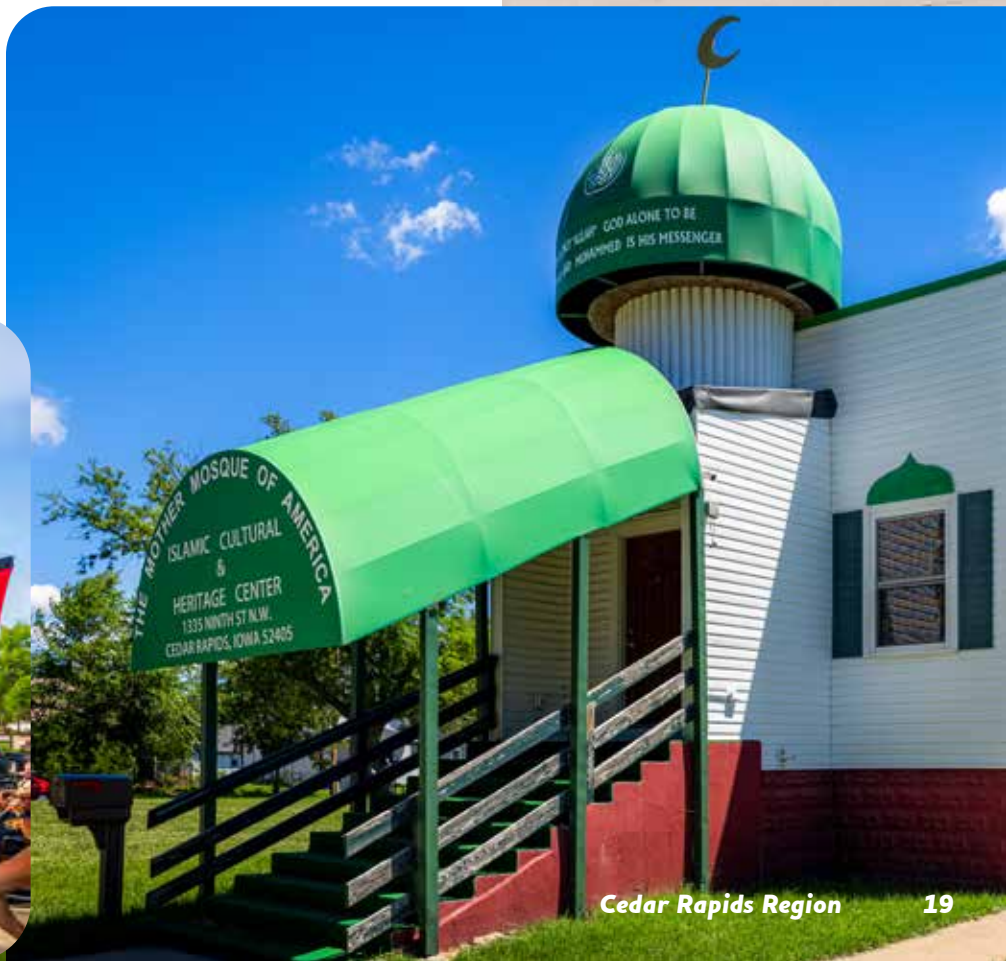
Lebanese & Middle Eastern Influence

A small but vibrant segment of Iowa's immigrant population include immigrants from the Middle East. A large Lebanese population grew in the vicinity of Cedar Rapids brought by a wave of immigration from 1895 through 1945. The first immigrants fled poverty in their homeland to find refuge in Iowa.

Many of the Lebanese immigrants to Cedar Rapids were Muslims. By 1934 they had constructed an Islamic house of worship. The mosque in Cedar Rapids was the very first built in the United States and is the oldest mosque still in use. It is known as "The Mother Mosque of America" located at 1335 9th St NW. In 1948, the Cedar Rapids Muslim community established the first Muslim cemetery in the United States.

Lebanese immigrants contributed to the region's business culture through trade, small retail, numerous grocery businesses, and strong community networks. Many began as peddlers and merchants, later establishing permanent businesses that became part of the city's commercial life.

- **Entrepreneurship and Commercial Networks:** Lebanese families helped build business networks through small stores, trade relationships, and community-based support systems. This reflects how cultural communities created spaces that strengthened civic ties and helped immigrant businesses take root.
- **Cuisine and Local Service Businesses:** Lebanese culinary traditions have influenced the regional food economy through restaurants, catering, grocery offerings and Mediterranean-inspired menus. Popular places today focus on authentic, quick-service gyros, shawarma and fresh hummus. These businesses add to the area's diversity and expand the kinds of food and hospitality experiences available in this region. 



NUCLEAR POWER RETURNS TO IOWA

*By Charlie Nichols
and Mike Lukan*

WHAT CLOSURE ACTUALLY COSTS

To understand the significance of a restart, it helps to first understand what Duane Arnold's closure meant for the community.

For decades, Duane Arnold served as a major economic anchor for the Cedar Rapids metropolitan area. The plant supported hundreds of high-quality jobs and a wide network of contractors and suppliers throughout eastern Iowa. Its workforce was deeply integrated into the region's schools, neighborhoods, and civic organizations.

When the plant ceased operations in 2020, the effects were immediate. Roughly 500 direct jobs disappeared, many of which paid wages well above the regional median. Contractors and suppliers lost longstanding business relationships. Skilled tradespeople began searching for work elsewhere, and families faced decisions about whether to relocate.

The 1,200 residents of the nearby town of Palo had long viewed Duane Arnold as part of its identity. Palo Mayor Eric Van Kerckhove told the Daily Iowan in February 2025, "As the traffic died off, some of our local businesses, restaurants, gas stations, that type of thing, their business slowed down. We had a few residents that lived in Palo and worked at the nuclear plant,

who have since found employment elsewhere and have moved out of the community."

Fiscal impacts soon followed. Lower tax revenue affected school district funding and required adjustments to county financial planning. Decommissioning activity continued on the site, but the economic footprint was smaller and less stable.

The lesson learned from Duane Arnold's premature closure is straightforward: The loss of a major nuclear facility creates economic disruption that is difficult to replace quickly with other industries.

THE ECONOMIC CASE FOR RESTART

Restarting Duane Arnold represents a substantial new investment rather than a return to previous operations.

Independent analysis estimates that recommissioning the plant could involve roughly \$1 billion in construction and refurbishment. During that phase, the project could support more than 1,600 direct, indirect, and induced jobs across the state and generate more than \$200 million in economic output in Linn County alone. For local businesses, this activity would be tangible.

Hotels, restaurants, equipment suppliers, and construction firms would see sustained demand over several years.

In a November 14, 2025 article published by Iowa Public Radio

News, Cedar Rapids Mayor Tiffany O'Donnell was quoted as saying, "Here in Linn County, we'll see the benefits firsthand from new residents and families putting down roots, to local businesses, restaurants, and service providers thriving with increased demand. The plant will also contribute millions in local tax revenue, helping to strengthen our schools, infrastructure, and rural and urban resident services."

The long-term impacts are even more significant. Once operational, Duane Arnold is expected to support nearly 400 full-time positions at the facility and more than 1,000 total jobs in the regional economy when supplier and induced employment are included. These are stable careers that allow workers to remain in the region for decades.

As electricity demand across the United States enters a new phase and the value of reliable baseload power increases, communities capable of supporting around-the-clock generation are increasingly attractive locations for data centers, advanced manufacturing, and similar industries.

Over a projected 25-year operating period, the recommissioned plant could generate billions in regional economic activity and contribute roughly \$75 million in local tax revenue. According to Brandy Meisheid, Linn County supervisor for District 3, "Approving the Duane Arnold Energy Center's rezoning

application is a significant step for Linn County. Restarting this facility responsibly will support local jobs, drive economic growth, and provide a reliable energy source for our community.”

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Although the Nuclear Regulatory Commission regulates radiological safety and plant operations, local governments retain authority over how land is used within their jurisdictions—and that authority plays an important role in a restart scenario.

In Linn County, the Duane Arnold site underwent a full review under the county’s zoning ordinances, and the Linn County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the rezoning in January 2026. As part of that process, the county adopted what may be the first zoning ordinance in the United States specifically addressing

nuclear power plant recommissioning and restart.

The process included development applications, public hearings, and evaluation by elected officials. The county considered land-use compatibility with surrounding agricultural areas, infrastructure impacts, environmental buffers, and long-term planning goals. Linn County Supervisor Kirsten Running-Marquardt, chair of the county’s board of supervisors, said, “By approving the Duane Arnold rezoning application, we are working toward Linn County growing responsibly in the future. Our role as a board was to act on the rezoning application, and we used the authority we have to make sure residents have a seat at the table. Through the Host Community Agreement and the MOU tied to this approval, we’re focused on quality of life and making sure NextEra pays its fair share of the project-related costs, so local taxpayers aren’t left footing the bill.”

PLANNING AHEAD

When a plant transitions into decommissioning, emergency planning infrastructure naturally scales down. Restarting operations requires rebuilding that capacity. In Linn County, this includes updating evacuation planning based on current population patterns; restoring alert and notification systems; retraining emergency management staff; and conducting joint drills with local, state, and federal agencies.

Modernizing emergency systems also strengthens preparedness for other hazards such as severe weather and flooding.

This work must occur before the plant resumes operations. The county’s position has been consistent: The resources necessary to rebuild emergency preparedness infrastructure should be provided before operations resume and should not fall to local taxpayers.

Spent nuclear fuel management is another challenging issue



Photo Credit: NextEra Energy Duane Arnold

faced by nuclear host communities in the United States. As in other host communities, spent fuel is stored on-site at Duane Arnold in an independent spent fuel storage installation while the federal government continues to search for a long-term repository solution.

This reality exists whether or not the plant produces another kilowatt-hour of electricity. Restarting operations would eventually add additional spent fuel to the site, which means local planning must account for the long-term presence of dry cask storage and the land-use considerations that come with it.

County officials have approached this issue as responsible stewardship rather than in opposition to nuclear energy. Public confidence depends on local governments addressing the entire life cycle of nuclear fuel.

Host communities often require agreements that go beyond statutory tax payments. These agreements can address infrastructure maintenance, emergency preparedness funding, communication protocols, and long-term community investments.

Linn County and NextEra Energy jointly developed an agreement designed to clarify expectations between the county and the plant operator. As Meisheid said, “Thanks to the signed Host Community Agreement, we can prioritize the needs of Linn County residents while ensuring taxpayer dollars are never used to subsidize private business.”

RESTART IN ACTION

- Linn County has taken several actions in support of Duane Arnold’s restart:
- Adopted a nuclear restart zoning ordinance—among the first of its kind in the United States.

- Completed the land-use review and unanimously approved rezoning of the Duane Arnold site.
- Negotiated and approved an agreement with NextEra Energy, requiring an annual payment starting at \$1.9 million, inflation-adjusted annually.
- Entered into a memorandum of understanding with NextEra for reimbursement of preoperational emergency management costs.
- Coordinated with local and state emergency management agencies.
- Participated in statewide discussions through the Iowa Nuclear Energy Task Force.

With local approvals complete, the remaining steps to restart involve state and federal regulatory processes: completion of NRC regulatory review and licensing, Iowa Utilities



Commission certificate of public convenience and necessity, restoration of emergency preparedness infrastructure, and continued coordination with state and federal agencies.

The restart of Duane Arnold reflects a broader shift in how the United States values reliable, carbon-free base-load generation. For Linn County, however, the decision has always been fundamentally local. It concerns the workers who will staff the plant, the families who live nearby, and the communities that host the facility.

Reliable nuclear generation begins with sound engineering and strong regulation. It also depends on communities willing to host these facilities and governments prepared to manage the responsibilities that come with them.

Linn County has done its part. Local approvals are complete, agreements are in place, and

the county stands ready to support the state and federal processes that remain. We hope the lessons learned from our experience prove useful to other communities considering the same path. **CR**

Charlie Nichols is the planning and development director for Linn County, Iowa. Mike Lukan is the director of economic development for the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance.



Honey Nut Cheerios

Lucky Charms



For 160 years, General Mills has been a cornerstone of American pantries, with our brands in over 90% of households across the country. As America celebrates its 250th birthday, we're incredibly proud to help families add joy to the table, celebrating the moments, big and small, that matter most.



Cheerios

**CEDAR RAPIDS REGION RANKS
HIGH ON NATIONAL LISTS**

**#3 BEST PLACE
TO LIVE IN THE MIDWEST** (SPACEWISE 2026)

**#4 FOR
AFFORDABLE
RENT**
(WALLETHUB 2025)

**#11 BEST SMALL
CITY FOR
AFFORDABLE
HOUSING**
(WALLETHUB 2025)

**#12
BEST BIG CITY
FOR
ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY**
(US NEWS WORLD REPORT 2025)

**#16
BEST PLACE TO
BUY A HOUSE
IN AMERICA**
(NICHE.COM 2026)

**#19
SAFEST CITY IN
AMERICA**
(WALLETHUB 2026)

**#15 BEST PLACE
TO RENT AN APARTMENT** (WALLETHUB 2025)



Rendering Credit: Cedar Crossing Casino

BET ON CEDAR RAPIDS

By Peggy Degnan, Staff Writer

Cedar Rapids is seeing a boom in construction, with one of the most visible being Cedar Crossing Casino & Entertainment Center, seen from I-380 when driving by the 200 block of F Avenue NW downtown. Being the first casino in Cedar Rapids, this is a historical moment for our region. It broke ground officially in February 2025 with a planned opening date of December 31, 2026, so watch for a New Year's Eve celebration to ring in 2027!

"We are rolling full steam ahead for our December opening" says Kim Pang, Executive VP and General Manager. "After years in the making, to finally see all the hard work, planning and detailed curation come together is truly a dream realized." Pang said the rich finishes and craftsmanship are inspiring---he can't wait for the community to experience it themselves.

Residents are going to feel the excitement of Cedar Crossing come alive over the coming months. Per Pang, announcements will be made soon about entertainment acts and how guests will be able to join the players club for the chance to win prizes. "People should be on the lookout for insider information, behind-the-scenes images, show tickets and more."

The total investment for the casino is approximately \$275 million. The project has created significant construction work and will offer hundreds of permanent positions once fully operational. Peninsula Pacific Entertainment (P2E) owns and operates a portfolio of gaming and entertainment properties across the United States.

Developers project Cedar Crossing will draw 1.2 million visitors annually, making it a tourism destination because of its magnitude of activity. The center will feature a variety of community focused amenities to include multiple restaurants, theme bars, a 1500-seat live performance venue and special spaces for youth and families. Of course, it wouldn't be a casino without gambling options; 700 slot machines and 22 table games will be on-site for guests to enjoy.

One restaurant planned is the Clubhouse by Zach Johnson (a chef-run steakhouse). "It was important to design the casino to have a comfortable, local feel, yet offering something completely new. Our signature restaurant nods to our Iowa roots and was developed in collaboration with Iowa's champion golfer. It will serve as a relaxed steakhouse featuring

locally sourced steaks and chops." This brings a fitting local connection to the local restaurant scene. Another restaurant planned is River's Edge Smokehouse as the casino is just steps away from the Cedar River. For nightlife options, theme bars such as the Center Court Sports Bar and Strings Guitar Bar are being developed.

Unique to this casino and to Cedar Rapids, a state-of-the-art STEM Lab is being designed. "Our cutting-edge Arts and Cultural Center will spark creativity and foster a deeper understanding of the world through immersive experiences including interactive exhibits that support STEM education," shared Pang.

In addition, the Cedar Crossing Casino has pledged to donate 8% of its annual net gaming revenue to local non-profits through the Linn County Gaming Association---almost triple the state's 3% minimum requirement. With the numerous non-profits in the Cedar Rapids region, this is an incredible benefit.



Additional interview questions answered by Pang:

Why was this riverfront site the right location, and how do you want the development to change the way people experience this part of downtown?

“The riverfront truly is a symbolic place for an entertainment center like Cedar Crossing, which represents a journey and transformation for the area. Cedar Rapids has a distinctive history and has faced many challenges that show the determination of the people who live and work here. The northwest side was hit hard by the flood of 2008 and while other parts of the city have been revitalized, it’s finally the moment for this part of town. We have been working with the city on flood protections to keep the area’s restoration permanent.”

How will the property connect with downtown and other nearby attractions?

“We want to make it easy for people to reach Cedar Crossing from different parts of town and to make it convenient for guests to access and explore the city. We will have a shuttle service connecting key areas of Cedar Rapids, including local hotels, downtown and cultural areas like Czech Village and New Bohemia. We have been

working with local businesses to create a point partner program that will benefit from increased foot traffic, ensuring Cedar Crossing bolsters local businesses. The shuttle service and point program will bring in more business and elevate all the sectors in our local economy.”

What kinds of jobs and career paths will be available?

“There will be more than 500 hospitality jobs at varying levels of responsibility, in addition to back-of-house management. Someone can start as a server or dealer and climb their way up to these management positions. This will give people rewarding leadership roles in enjoyable jobs. Anyone who is driven and likes to work with people will find good career opportunities here.”

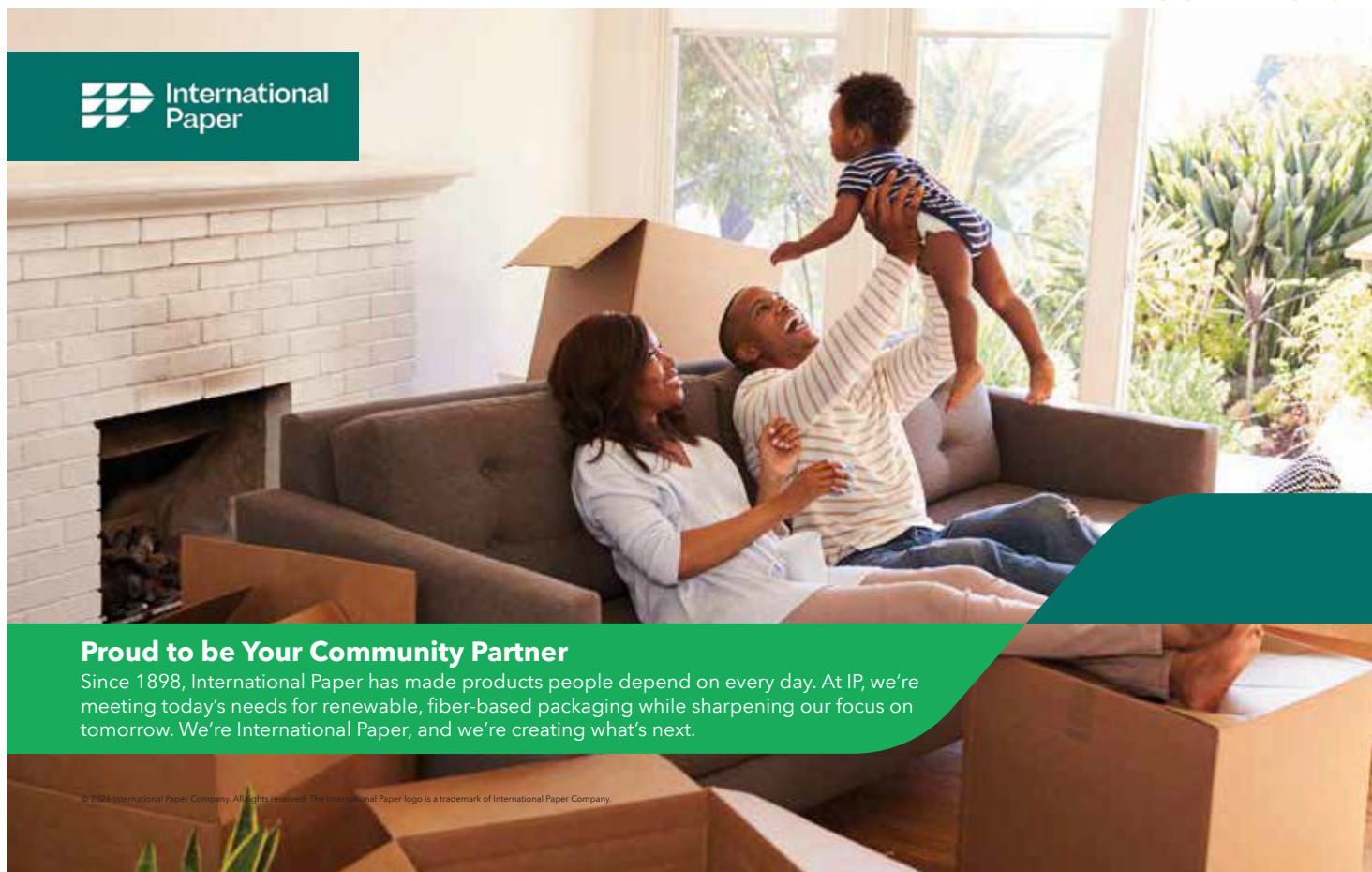
Which partnerships will matter most in making this a true Cedar Rapids regional destination?

“Partnerships with local government officials and business leaders, trade unions and community organizations strengthened the ties between Cedar Crossing and the broader community. Cedar Crossing will boost tourism, create jobs, generate tax revenue, provide much-needed support for nonprofits and compliment downtown activation.”

“Watching it all take shape from the ground up and seeing the care behind every decision made has been truly meaningful,” expressed Pang. As the saying goes for another eastern Iowa attraction, “If you build it, they will come.” It’s going to be rewarding to see long-time supporters, residents and visitors discover all Cedar Crossing has to offer.”

Find updates and announcements about Cedar Crossing Casino & Entertainment at cedarcrossing.com or Facebook.com. **CR**

Peninsula Pacific Entertainment (P2E) owns and operates a portfolio of gaming and entertainment properties across the United States. Since 1999, they’ve focused on creating inviting destinations and delivering great experiences for guests and meaningful opportunities for team members. They believe in building lasting partnerships, investing in local economies and providing exceptional service every day.



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POISED FOR GROWTH

Cedar Rapids is poised for growth by three industry clusters: aerospace and defense, bio-economy and technology sectors. The city's economic ecosystem leverages deep-rooted corporate leadership, specialized workforce training, and major capital investments across these sectors.

1. Aerospace and Defense

Cedar Rapids is a globally recognized powerhouse for aerospace innovation. The city is the historic home base for Collins Aerospace (a unit of Raytheon Technologies), which maintains a major engineering and manufacturing presence and continues to secure defense, avionics, connected aircraft, and next-generation systems work. It is also home to significant operations for BAE Systems, reinforcing the region's role in national security supply chains and mission-critical electronics. Beyond its major employers, the cluster benefits from a deep bench of precision manufacturers, suppliers, and specialized service firms that support testing, production and component integration.

Regional organizations, including the Eastern Iowa Airport, continue to advance the aerospace ecosystem through business recruitment, workforce development, and industry partnerships, helping position Cedar Rapids as a center for both defense solutions and emerging aviation technologies such as autonomy, advanced communications and digital systems integration.

2. Bio-economy

Known as one of the leading bio-processing and agricultural ingredient centers in North America, Cedar Rapids has one of the largest concentrations of

corn processing and food ingredient production in the world. Major corporations include Cargill, ADM, Ingredion, Quaker Oats (PepsiCo), and General Mills, all of which contribute to a dense network of production, logistics, warehousing and agricultural sourcing. International Flavors & Fragrances (IFF) also operates a large-scale biotech manufacturing plant focused on enzyme production and sustainable product growth, broadening the cluster beyond traditional grain processing into industrial biotechnology and value-added ingredients.

This concentration gives the region a powerful competitive advantage in manufacturing, energy and innovation. This cluster is a major economic growth engine, connecting this region to global consumer and industrial markets.

3. Technology

Cedar Rapids fosters a thriving technology ecosystem that is closely connected to its manufacturing and industrial foundation, giving Cedar Rapids an advantage in applied innovation and commercialization. Leading technology-oriented employers include Crystal Group, a premier manufacturer of rugged computer hardware and servers serving both commercial and defense sectors; Geonetric, a healthcare digital marketing and web development firm that builds software platforms for hospitals and health systems; and Collins Aerospace, a Fortune 500 employer that anchors the region's engineering, software, and advanced systems talent base.

With a mix of employers that support a broad range of positions, from software development and electrical engineering to robotics, machining, and systems integration. Innovation

nonprofits, entrepreneurial support organizations and training partners. In 2024, the largest investment in the state of Iowa's history exceeding \$10B dollars was made in Cedar Rapids and in this industry cluster.

Overall Growth Outlook

The three primary industry clusters in Cedar Rapids are well positioned for continued growth because they combine strong legacy employers, specialized workforce capacity, established infrastructure, and robust supplier networks with innovation support systems that help firms adapt and expand.

Aerospace and defense are expected to benefit from rising demand for defense systems, avionics modernization, autonomy and digital integration.

The bio-economy is poised to grow through increasing demand for value-added food products, energy inputs, and bio-enabled manufacturing.

Technology and advanced manufacturing are similarly

positioned to expand as trends in AI, robotics, smart manufacturing and digital transformation align closely with the region's capabilities.

Collectively, these advantages position Cedar Rapids to remain competitive in national and global markets while supporting future investment, job creation and commercialization.





CORN CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

By Peggy Degnan, Staff Writer

Turns out Cedar Rapids is the largest corn-processing city in the world. Yes, the entire WORLD! The city is strategically positioned in the heart of Iowa and the heart of this country's corn belt. It's no wonder Cedar Rapids is a global industry hub serving as a top-tier and critical center for agricultural food ingredients and bio-processing.

Major processing plants located here are:

Archer Daniels Midland (ADM): operates a corn wet/dry mill processing 750,000 bushels of corn daily, primarily for corn syrup.

Cargill: runs a critical mill processing grain.

Ingredion: anchors local manufacturing, with a recent \$50 million facility expansion to process an extra 5 million bushels of 100% Iowa-grown corn annually.

These local facilities process so much volume that more than 1,000 grain trucks drive into Cedar Rapids every day.

Key Reasons for the Abundance of Corn

As the nation's leading corn-producing state, with an output that surpasses most countries, Iowa puts the Cedar Rapids region at the center of a globally significant agricultural economy. One might think Iowa just grows corn, but the truth is corn grows Iowa!

Most Iowa field corn is used for industrial purposes rather than direct human consumption. Over 50% goes to ethanol production, while roughly 33% is used for livestock feed, and the rest goes toward exports and industrial products like sweeteners and plastics.

It's well known by area farmers that livestock love the taste of corn! In fact, Iowa livestock consume 357-million bushels

of corn each year with a bushel being about the size of a laundry basket. We can thank corn for the meat, dairy, poultry and eggs we all enjoy.

Iowa weather is perfect for growing corn for a number of reasons:

- Growing season is long enough and warm enough to support corn production.
- It usually rains enough to support healthy corn production.
- Corn seeds like the deep, rich soils in this area.
- Waste from livestock includes nutrients that are key to fertilizing fields for better corn production.
- A variety of corn hybrids are available that do especially well in our environment.

Feel free to blame corn for the



high humidity during July and August, because “corn sweat” is a real thing. Large cornfields undergo transpiration or corn sweat, driving up summer humidity.

Corn fields are very important to the Cedar Rapids Region’s culture and identity. Residents often smell the grain processing from nearby factories. This concentration makes corn essential to the identity, economy, and even the aroma of Cedar Rapids.

From sports to an adventure farm, here’s some fun and “corny” things to check-out:

The Cedar Rapids Kernels: Catch a local Minor League Baseball Game this summer with a team named the Kernels, a High-A affiliate of the Minnesota Twins. They play at Veterans Memorial Stadium at 950 Rockford Road SW. Their team mascot is fondly called “Mr. Shucks.”

Corn Maze: Bloomsbury Farm is a premiere adventure farm in nearby Atkins, where they have a corn maze every Fall. The maze is 10 acres and takes people approximately 45 minutes to find their way out of the maze.

Sweet Corn Festival: Volunteers husk and clean 18,000 ears of corn for the annual festival held at St. Jude’s church grounds this coming August 7-8-9 at 50 Edgewood Road NW.

Roadside Vendors: During harvest time, numerous pop-up roadside stands will appear selling sweet corn during the mid-summer months.

Interesting Fact -- Sweet corn is the only safe corn for human consumption and represents only 1% of Iowa’s corn production.

2.4 Billion Bushels of Corn

*Produced by Iowa farmers
for grain with 12.9 million
acres harvested each
year according to the U.S.
Department of Agricultural
Statistics Service*



LARGEST MILLING FACILITIES IN NORTH AMERICA

(Quaker Oats in Cedar Rapids is the Largest Milling Facility Worldwide!)

General Mills manufacturing plant in Cedar Rapids has helped define the region's food economy for more than five decades. Since opening in 1969, the facility has grown into a major production hub employing around 800 people and turning out some of the company's best-known products—from breakfast cereals to fruit snacks such as Gushers and Fruit Roll-Ups. It is also the only domestic producer of Betty Crocker frosting, giving the Cedar Rapids plant a uniquely important role in the company's national supply chain.

The facility's scale is reflected in both its output and its organization. Roughly 40% of the plant is devoted to dry cereal production, including Cheerios and Lucky Charms, while about half of the operation focuses on fruit snacks such as Fruit Roll-Ups, Fruit by the Foot, and Gushers. Another 10% of the plant's capacity is dedicated to Betty Crocker ready-to-spread frosting. Together, those product

lines make the site a rare mix of everyday breakfast staples and iconic snack brands, all produced under one roof. Just as significant is the workforce behind that output: more than 800 employees work at the Cedar Rapids plant.

Long before General Mills became a household name, its story began beside the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, where water power, grain and ambition helped shape one of America's great food companies. Founded by Cadwallader Washburn, the original Washburn mill quickly grew into the largest mill west of Buffalo, New York; a sign of both the region's rising industrial might and the nation's growing appetite for flour. Demand climbed so rapidly that an even larger Washburn mill opened in 1873, cementing the company's place in the flour trade.

That momentum was shattered on the evening of May 2, 1878. The "A" Mill, then the largest

mill of its kind in the United States, was changing shifts when flour dust in the air ignited. The explosion ripped the roof from the building, leveled neighboring mills and set several city blocks ablaze, leaving 18 workers dead and a stunned city in its wake.

When Washburn heard what had happened, his first response was not simply to rebuild, but to care for the people affected. The disaster became a defining moment not only for the company, but for the industry itself. In its aftermath, Washburn created a fund to support the families of those who had been killed, rehired displaced workers to help rebuild and sent millers to Europe to study safer, more advanced methods. What followed was more than a recovery; it was a commitment to make flour milling safer for everyone.

Then came the rebuilding. Standing in the rubble, Washburn reportedly marked

out the foundation for an even larger mill, signaling a resolve that would become central to the company's story: to come back stronger and smarter after hardship.

That determination also led to one of the company's most important contributions to industrial safety. Seeking a way to prevent another dust-fueled disaster, Washburn arranged for a new exhaust-control device to be demonstrated with technology designed to clear flour dust from the air before it could ignite. Convinced of its value, the equipment was installed in their mills and then shared the innovation with competitors—an unusually open decision that helped make flour milling safer across Minneapolis and beyond.

It was a turning point for the industry. Once the dust-collection systems were adopted more broadly, milling became significantly safer, and the company's response to tragedy became part of its long-term legacy.

By mid-1880, the new "A" Mill was in operation, larger and more advanced than before. Equipped with steel rollers and purifiers that improved both efficiency and flour quality, it reflected a company intent on rebuilding not just quickly, but better.

Washburn-Crosby flour had earned gold, silver and bronze honors at an international millers' competition, an achievement that helped establish the

company as a national leader. The first-place flour would go on to be renamed Gold Medal, a brand that remains familiar in kitchens today and links the company's earliest days to its modern identity.

A new chapter began on June 20, 1928, when it merged the business with other flour mills and General Mills was officially born. From there, the company expanded beyond flour and into the products that would become part of everyday American life such as Wheaties, Bisquick, Kix and Cheerios.

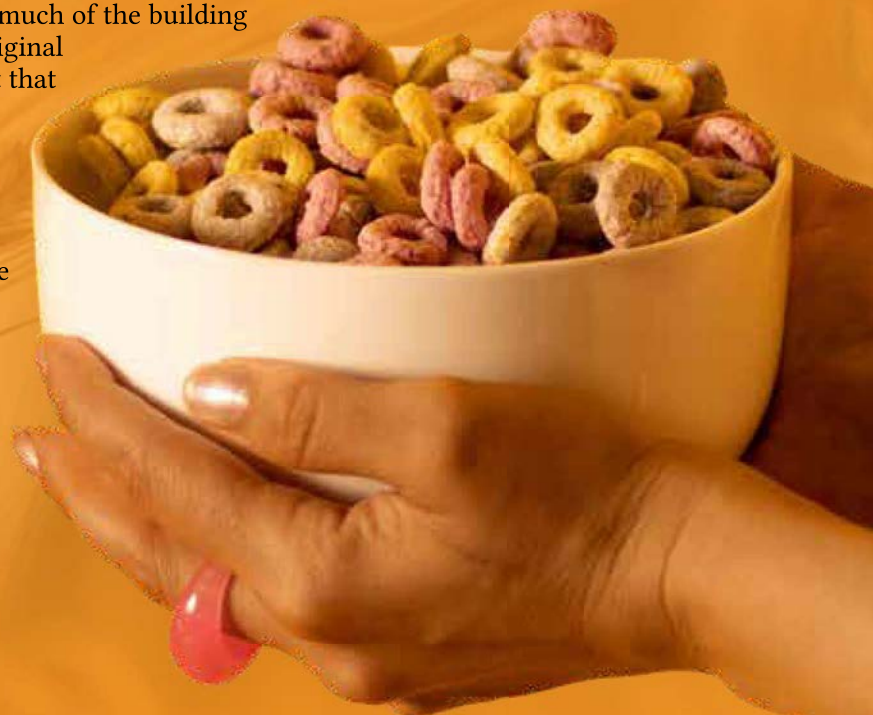
General Mills relocated from downtown Minneapolis to suburb Golden Valley in 1958. The building has undergone 12 expansions and underwent a major addition and renovation in 2004 after acquiring the Pillsbury corporation. This added 480,000 square feet of office and employee use space. It is now an eco-friendly, landscaped 85-acre corporate campus.

As for the "A" Mill, it continued operating until 1965, when General Mills closed the facility. Decades later, a 1991 fire destroyed much of the building and the original equipment that remained inside. Even so, the site's historical importance endured, and the Minnesota

Historical Society began restoring the landmark in 2001.

In 2003, the building reopened as the Mill City Museum, giving visitors a chance to experience the ruins, stories and innovations that helped shape one of America's most recognized food companies. Today, the site stands as both a memorial and a celebration of reinvention; and an enduring reminder of how industry, tragedy and resilience helped define the city of Minneapolis.

Today General Mills operates over 20 plants in North America and abroad, producing a wide variety of products ranging from cereals, snacks, desserts and pet food for consumers around the world. It stands as one of the largest employers in our region and is well-known for multi-generational employment. The Cedar Rapids facility has established itself alongside other grain-processing giants in the city, which is historically nicknamed the "Cereal City".



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Coe College

coe.edu

Ranked among the top 20% of all colleges and universities in the U.S., Coe sits in the heart of Cedar Rapids. Coe places 100% of its students in internships, research, community-based projects or a study abroad program.

Cornell College

cornellcollege.edu

A private liberal arts college in Mount Vernon, Iowa, founded in 1953. This college ranks among the best small colleges in the U.S. Cornell utilizes a block schedule, named One Course At A Time (OCAAT), where students focus intensely on one area of study for a shorter amount of time.

Iowa State University - Linn County Extension Office & Outreach

extension.iastate.edu/linn

Linn County Extension is located in Hiawatha and offers four program areas: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Health and Human Sciences, 4-H Youth Development and Community Economic Development. County staff and ISU extension and outreach specialists work together to provide research-based learning opportunities for residents.

Kirkwood Community College

kirkwood.edu

Kirkwood consistently ranks in the top 5 colleges in Iowa for enrollment. Based in Cedar Rapids, this community college offers classes at 14 locations across 7 counties. Kirkwood is a leading provider in the area for accessible, affordable, and exceptional education and training.

Mount Mercy/St. Ambrose University

mtmercy.edu

The combination of the two universities is expected to be finalized in Summer 2026 pending federal approval. As a private Catholic liberal arts university in residential Cedar Rapids, this school offers undergraduate programs, as well as advanced degrees which can be completed within 12 to 18 months.

University of Iowa

uiowa.edu

This Big Ten school in Iowa City is a premier public research university and home to one of the most acclaimed medical centers in the U.S. Known for excellence in the arts and sciences, offering undergraduate, graduate and professional academic programs in a wide variety of fields.

University of Dubuque – Cedar Rapids

dbq.edu/life

LIFE HyFlex maintains University of Dubuque's unique one class at a time adult learner format while adding improved flexibility. For each five-week class, students may attend classes in-person, online in real-time or watch a recorded class online from anywhere in the world. Students may mix and match each session. The LIFE-Cedar Rapids site is based on class availability.

University of Northern Iowa

iacc.uni.edu

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) does not have a physical branch campus in Cedar Rapids, but does offer flexible degree and transfer programs via partnerships with local institutions. These partnerships provide seamless access for students to finish their bachelor's degrees online.

Upper Iowa University - Cedar Rapids

uiu.edu/locations/cedar-rapids

Earn your college degree from the renowned Upper Iowa University. UIU's Cedar Rapids regional education center offers you a top-notch education close to home. UIU will work to tailor an education program aimed at achieving your unique career goals.

REGIONAL LABORSHED AREA



A STUDY IN LABOR AVAILABILITY AND WORKFORCE CHARACTERISTICS
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
WORKFORCE.IOWA.GOV/LABORSHED

RELEASED
2024

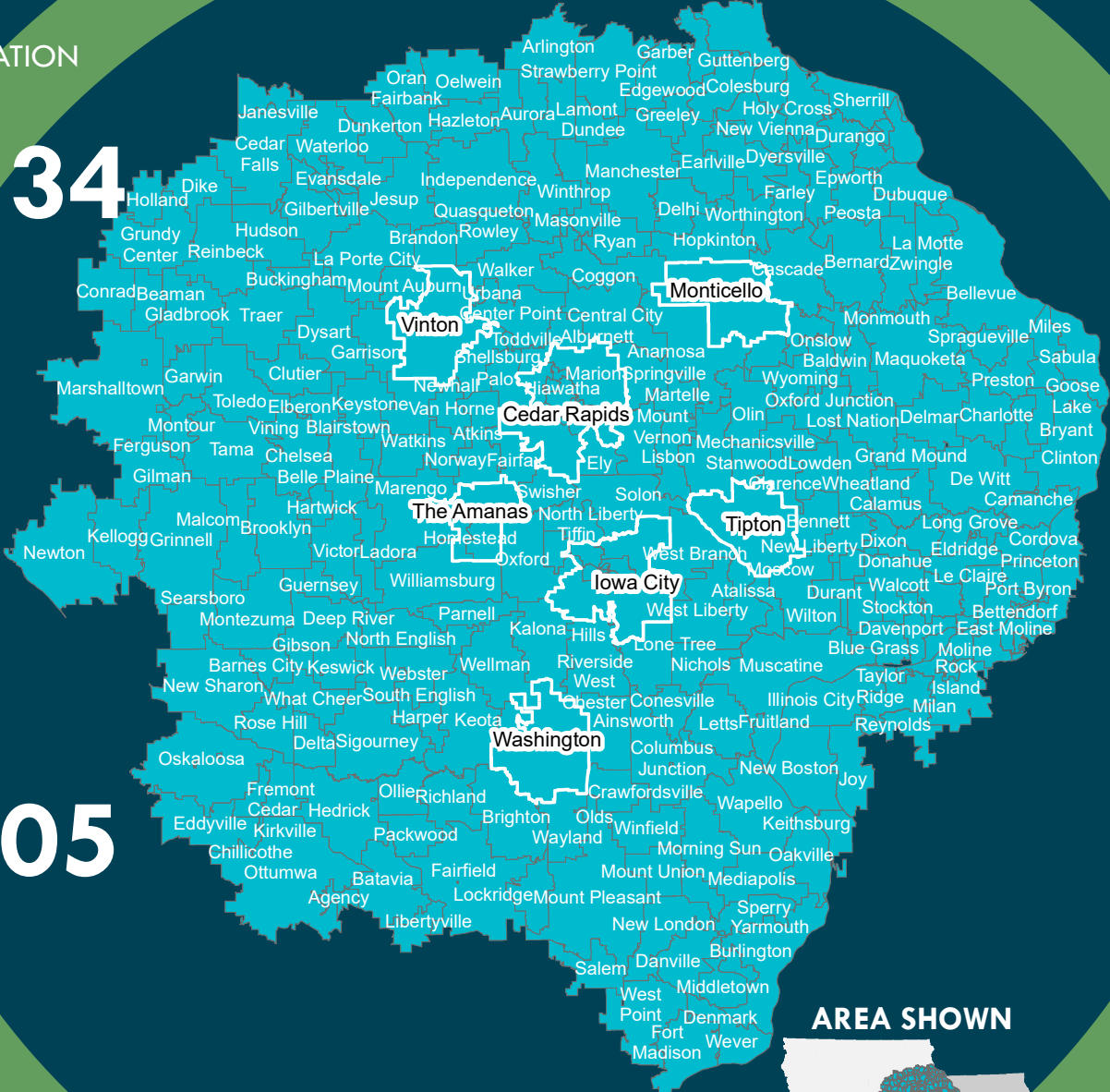
ESTIMATED POPULATION
AGES 18-64

864,134

TOTAL ESTIMATED
LABOR FORCE
AGES 18-64



684,905



AREA SHOWN

FRESH PERSPECTIVE FROM A NEW RESIDENT

After several years of big city living in Tampa and Chicago, one Cedar Rapids native found herself drawn to moving back home. In May 2026, Brianne Carson returned to Iowa with a remote career, a fresh perspective and a renewed appreciation for the community that shaped her. She was born and raised in nearby Swisher and comes from a family with deep local roots.

Carson first left Cedar Rapids in 2019 to experience life in Tampa before eventually making her way to Chicago. While she loved the energy and excitement of big city life, Cedar Rapids never really left the back of her mind because her friends and family are still here and being closer to them became a major reason to return.

As a “boomerang,” (someone who has lived here before and returned) what she found upon coming back was a city that felt familiar yet transformed. Since she’d left, Cedar Rapids had weathered the derecho and the challenges of the pandemic but continued to show resilience. “Cedar Rapids doesn’t just bounce back—it comes back better,” stated Carson.

For newcomers moving to Cedar Rapids, the appeal is easy to understand. The city offers a blend of affordability, convenience, professional opportunity and genuine connection. Livability named Cedar Rapids one of its 2026 Top 100 Best Places to Live, noting its affordability, outdoor access, inclusive community and growing economy.

Those qualities are especially meaningful for remote workers. Carson works fully remote as an account director at a full-service advertising agency headquartered in Omaha and travels there once a quarter. The arrangement gives her the flexibility to continue doing work she loves while living in a place where daily life feels more manageable and connected.

Carson said one of the biggest surprises after returning was how much Cedar Rapids seems to have grown. “Coming back felt like stepping into a new version of the city, in the best possible way.”

The Kingston Yard area has quickly become one of her favorite discoveries. “With destinations like Pickle Palace and Big Grove Brewery, the area brings a new sense of en-

ergy and vibrancy to downtown and the west side of the river,” she said. Carson said this gave her an immediate sense of the city’s momentum.

Housing is part of Carson’s next chapter. She is currently exploring the possibility of building a home here, which she was not considering while living in a 600 square foot apartment in Chicago. Although she’s still in the decision-making process, it has given her a chance to imagine what putting down deeper roots in Cedar Rapids could look like.

For anyone moving to Cedar Rapids, Carson thinks one of the city’s strengths is how quickly it can become personal. “Whether someone is looking to grow a professional network, join a running club, volunteer, or find a favorite local band, there is usually someone ready to point them in the right direction.”

As an avid runner, she noticed immediately that this area has no shortage of running clubs. She is also looking forward to paddleboarding at Lake Macbride, soaking up Iowa summers and reconnecting with the places that make this region so special.

Carson was a recipient of the Make-MyMove collaborative initiative by Cedar Rapids, Marion, Hiawatha and the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance to incent remote workers and/or their families to relocate to the metro area.

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AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Cedar Rapids Ranks in the Top 13% of Most Affordable Cities to Buy a Home (WalletHub 2026)



With the cost-of-living 10.1% lower than the national average, houses in the Cedar Rapids area usually are about 30% less than the national average. Lower land costs allow developers to build more affordably, passing the savings along to buyers. In addition, a stable economy and higher-paying positions in advanced manufacturing and aerospace give residents the purchasing power to obtain mortgages.

2026 Average Home Price for Cedar Rapids Metro:
(source: Cedar Rapids Area Association of REALTORS®)

April \$268,126

May \$268,335

June \$291,926

Cedar Rapids Ranks #4 for City with the Most Affordable Rent (WalletHub 2025)

With all the growth, the rental market is booming. Recent developments, including Fulton Lofts and Loftus, continue to meet demand.

Ranked at #7 as a top city for renters (Newsweek 2025), Cedar Rapids stands out because of more affordable and attainable prices compared to larger metro areas. Prices can fluctuate depending on the specific neighborhood. Currently, the average rent for all property types and all bedrooms in Cedar Rapids is \$1,375.

In 2024, rental vacancy rates citywide were close to 1.5 percent, which is far less than the 5 percent recommended for sufficient choice, competitive rates and unit turnover. With an increase anticipated in the city's overall population, the demand is up to 3,046 rental units to be added citywide between 2024 and 2030.

Buying vs. Renting

Benefits to Home Ownership:

Freedom: The homeowner is free to decorate and landscape anyway they want.

Tax breaks: Homeowners can deduct the interest paid on a mortgage, property taxes and some of the costs when purchasing a home.

Ownership Interest: Money paid for rent is money never to be seen again, but mortgage payments allow you to build equity in a home.

Savings: Building equity in a home is like a savings plan.

Gains: Home prices usually increase annually, though there is no guarantee.

Predictability: Unlike rent, mortgage payments usually don't increase over the years. However, property taxes and insurance costs will rise.

Stability: Living in the same neighborhood develops community, friendships and offers school age children educational stability.

Benefits of Apartment Rental Living

Easier to Get Started: Move-in costs often include a security deposit and first month's rent, which is much less than a down payment and closing costs required to buy a home.

Low-Maintenance Living: Major repairs, outdoor upkeep and appliance issues are usually handled by the management or landlord, so unexpected expenses such as a broken dishwasher are not the responsibility of the tenant.

Predictable Budget: Monthly costs are typically based on rent, which can make budgeting more straightforward.

Built-In Amenities: Amenities like fitness centers, swimming pools, laundry and security/controlled access that may not be otherwise affordable, are included with rent.

Flexibility to Move: Short leases can be a major advantage for people in transition or who want a change of address. Renting makes it easier to relocate for work without the complicated home-selling process, but renters may pay a fee if allowed to break a lease.

Location, Location, Location: Renting can offer access to vibrant neighborhoods that may otherwise be unaffordable if buying a home in a desirable location.



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Thoughtfully
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curated.*

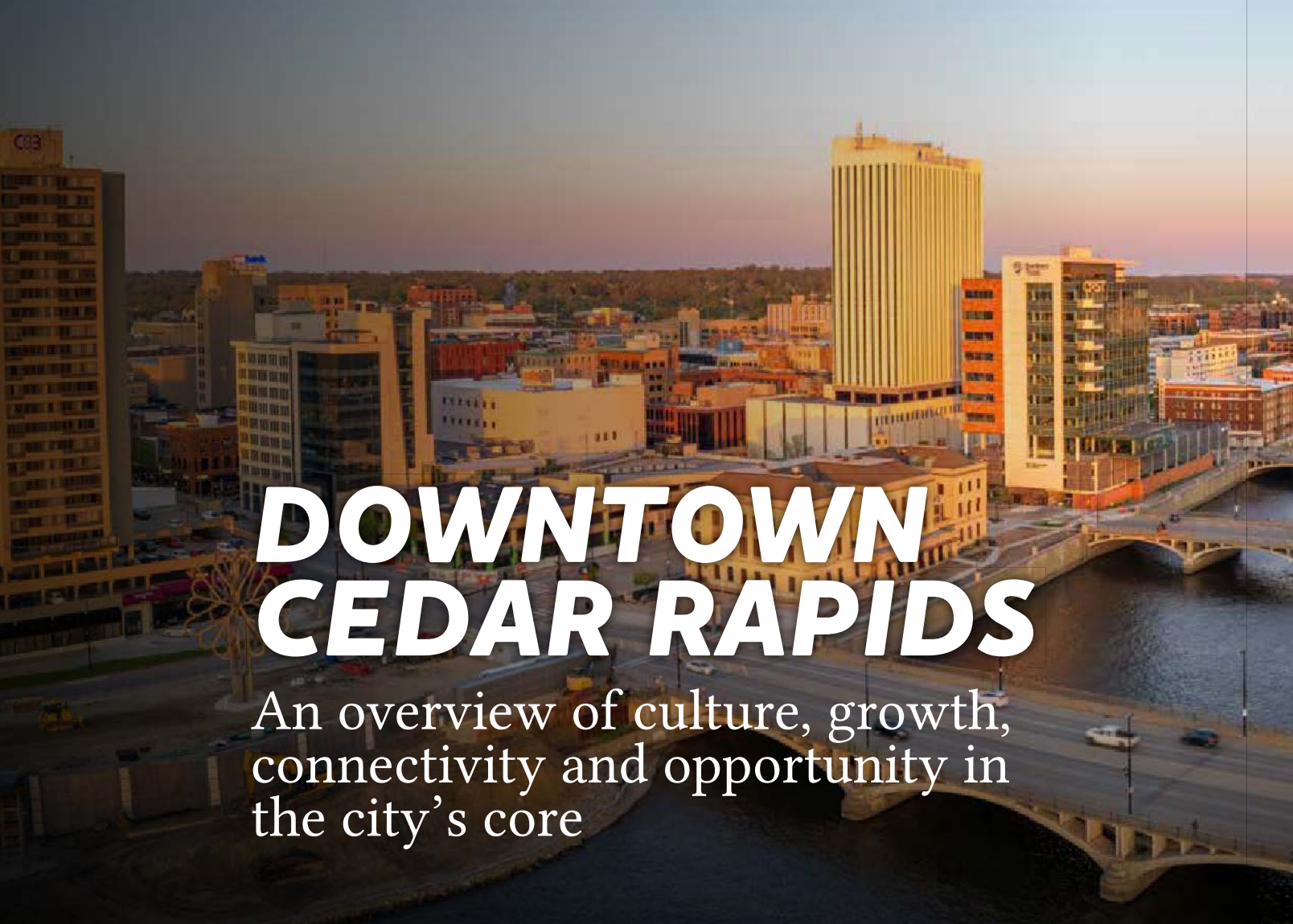
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DOWNTOWN CEDAR RAPIDS

An overview of culture, growth,
connectivity and opportunity in
the city's core



The Downtown District spans 72 city blocks and supports a substantial 10,000 daytime employees across finance/insurance, healthcare, government, and manufacturing, while also serving a growing residential base with completed new housing developments and more underway.

Downtown Cedar Rapids has made a genuine comeback with the rebound of visitor traffic, and by 2025 had officially surpassed pre-pandemic levels, reinforcing its role as both a resilient employment center and a regional destination. With five million annual visitors tied to events such as concerts, marathons, farmers markets, dining and cultural experiences,



downtown continues to demonstrate strong momentum across workforce, visitor and community activity.

The core of downtown is anchored by numerous employers and institutions, including Quaker Oats/PepsiCo and Alliant Energy. A collection of cultural destinations also help define the character of downtown and contribute to a lively atmosphere blending business activity with arts, entertainment and community gathering spaces. Walkable streets, coffee shops, local restaurants and coworking environments further support a downtown experience that is both practical and appealing.

Public and private investment, downtown revitalization efforts, residential conversions and new construction all point to a district that is actively evolving and positioned for growth. Strategic support through the Downtown SSMID (Self Supported Municipal Improvement District) and city partners help create an environment where redevelopment and business expansion can continue, while broader planning efforts reinforce long-term confidence in the area's future.

Downtown also offers a quality of life that strengthens its appeal. The Cedar River, bike lanes, green space and public art create inviting public areas, while the local dining

and brewery scene add energy throughout the week and during major events. Combined with direct access to Interstate 380, proximity to the Eastern Iowa Airport and a walkable, bike-friendly street network with ramp or street parking options, the downtown stands out as a connected urban core for employers, residents, visitors and investors.

Learn more about Downtown Cedar Rapids at downtowncr.org.

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HEALTH DISTRICT

A growing hub for healthcare, business and downtown life

Adjacent to downtown Cedar Rapids, the 55-block MedQuarter Regional Medical District is one of the region's premier centers for healthcare, innovation, and employment. Anchored by Mercy Medical Center, Physicians' Clinic of Iowa, and UnityPoint Health—Cedar Rapids, the district is home to more than 6,000 professionals and welcomes over 350,000 patient visits each year. The MedQuarter brings together world-class healthcare, medical offices, businesses, dining, and downtown amenities in one highly connected, easily accessible district.

The MedQuarter combines the advantages of a thriving healthcare ecosystem with the amenities of an adjacent downtown district. Businesses benefit from established infrastructure, a highly skilled workforce, and proximity to major employers, creating an ideal environment for investment and long-term growth.

Employees, patients, visitors and customers benefit from convenient access to I-380 and nearby services and professional amenities. This mix of services helps create a district that supports both day-to-day business needs and a strong sense of place.

For businesses ready to grow or relocate, the MedQuarter currently offers more than 65,000 square feet of commercial office space available for immediate occupancy. Options range from a 150-square-foot executive suite to larger commercial spaces suited for office, retail or medical uses.

As a core district within Cedar Rapids, the MedQuarter is well positioned for infill development. Many utilities and city services are already in place, helping reduce barriers for new investment and making the area a practical choice for businesses that want to be part of a vibrant downtown environment.



There are number of banks, coffee shops, specialty grocery stores, eateries and attractions such as Gilded Pear Art Gallery and The History Center. These businesses energize the district and give employees, patients, residents and visitors more reasons to spend time in the MedQuarter.

For more information about locating a business, exploring available space or discovering what the district has to offer, visit www.themedq.com.

Quality healthcare has its place.

MedQUARTER

Regional Medical District™

Aerial credit: Amperage Marketing



THE HOME OF *Opportunity*

From preschool to graduation, the Cedar Rapids Community School District offers an unmatched variety of educational choices, including traditional classrooms, magnet schools, virtual learning, STEM, and hands-on learning. We combine academic excellence with endless extracurricular and athletic opportunities, and a supportive community to ensure every student succeeds.

- ✓ **A Strong Start:** Full and half-day play-based preschool classes that build a strong foundation for success. (before & after school care available)
- ✓ **Advanced Academics:** Rigorous coursework featuring 34 Advanced Placement (AP) courses, the most in the area, plus free college-credit options through Kirkwood Community College.
- ✓ **Award-Winning Fine Arts & Athletics:** Whether it's on the stage or on the field, our elite programs provide an opportunity for students to shine in local, state, and national competitions.
- ✓ **Workforce Development:** Community-connected learning through tours, job shadows, and internships with local business partners.

More Opportunities. Brighter Futures.

Tour our schools, meet our educators,
& see the CRCSD difference firsthand.

**ENROLL
NOW**

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 registration@crschools.us

 crschools.us



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student
here



Picture your
student in a school
district defined by
excellence,
opportunity, and
growth – in the
classroom and
beyond.



- ✓ High Quality Academics
- ✓ Extensive Extracurricular Clubs and Activities
- ✓ Unmatched Athletic, Fine Arts, and Music Opportunities
- ✓ Exceptional Teachers and Staff
- ✓ Updated and Modern Facilities

CONNECTED APPEAL

The District: New Bohemia & Czech Village

What makes the New Bohemia and Czech Village District compelling is not just that there is always something to do and things to see, but the two distinct neighborhoods support the routines that define livability: food truck Tuesdays, Friday summer evening “Rock the Block” concerts, occasional weekend celebrations or festivals and a built-in environment that encourages people to linger while experiencing a bit of culture and creativity.

New Bohemia

In NewBo, (as it is commonly called) daily life unfolds at a walkable pace. People drift between coffee shops and galleries and gather at the market for lunch, music or conversation. Just southeast of downtown Cedar Rapids by a couple minutes, this district has evolved into one of the city’s most distinctive neighborhoods.

At the center of it all is NewBo City Market, a year-round gathering place that functions as both a neighborhood amenity and social hub. Its food vendors, start-up/incubator shops and regular programming, such as trivia night, bingo, food truck day or outdoor yoga, give a diverse easy rhythm. The surrounding streets add their own appeal with independent

shops offering books, flavorful ice cream and popcorns, vintage pieces and other unique finds.

NewBo’s creative energy deepens that experience. Venues such as CSPA Hall and the Iowa Ceramic Center and Glass Studio bring exhibitions, performances and classes into the fabric of the neighborhood, making arts and culture part of everyday life. Since 1993, the African American Museum of Iowa has been dedicated to preserving, exhibiting and teaching Iowa’s African American history.

Many new apartments and warehouse conversions have expanded the area’s residential appeal, offering more opportunities for people who want to live within walking distance of dining, nightlife, novelty and coffee shops and hiking and biking trails.

Connectivity is also becoming a larger part of the story. The Alliant Energy LightLine™ pedestrian bridge, expected to be completed this fall, will strengthen the link between NewBo and nearby Czech Village, adding one more way to move across the river between districts on foot or by bike. Even now, a short moment’s drive or walk across the Lion Bridge on 16th Avenue connects NewBo to the neighborhood across the river, where Czech Village resides.

Czech Village

The impressive National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library (a Smithsonian affiliate) sits just west of the banks of the Cedar River, with an outdoor astronomical clock inspired by Prague’s famous timepiece. At the top of every hour, 12 sculptures of Czech and Slovak immigrants come alive to music by Czech composers during non-winter months.

The main street running through Czech Village is a cute, walkable and restored narrow section of 16th Avenue SW. These few blocks were what was once the shopping district for many immigrants when they began arriving in the mid-1800s. Today, the street is home to a variety of quaint shops and restaurants/bars for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Just behind the south side of this street, the City has been building a new Roundhouse, which was a historic community gathering space originally built in 1863. After being severely damaged in the 2008 flood, a modern version of the Roundhouse will be completed as a multi-purpose space for social events along with a festival street and more parking. This will enhance the charm of Czech Village, along with a nod to its vibrant past of days gone by.



CRUCIAL CONNECTOR FOR THE AMERICAN DISCOVERY TRAIL

Did You Know?

The metro area has over 260 miles of trails and bikeways. Cedar Valley Nature Trail is a 70-mile paved trail running north to Waterloo and South toward Solon.

Cedar Rapids lies in the center of one of the most recreational routes in the United States: The American Discovery Trail, which is a coast-to-coast trail connecting communities, landscapes and local trail systems from the Pacific to the Atlantic. The 35-year-old route goes past numerous historic sites and ecosystems while traveling through 15 states.

In Cedar Rapids, it follows the city's impressive network of bikeways and trails, connecting locals and visitors to downtown, Cedar Lake, the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, Mount Trashmore and the other areas that define the region's identity.

A National Trail with a Local Presence

The American Discovery Trail route covers thousands of miles across the country, weaving through large and small towns, deserts, forests, prairies, mountains and historic sites. Its purpose is simple but powerful: to help people discover America at human speed, whether by running, bicycling, walking or riding horseback where permitted.



That national idea comes into focus in Cedar Rapids. The city's trail system serves as a practical and symbolic connector, linking local destinations to a much larger route that crosses Iowa and continues toward both coasts. For residents, the trail offers access to recreation and a trail thoroughfare. For visitors, it provides a memorable way to experience Cedar Rapids from ground level whether through parks or active neighborhoods or past public art and river views.

How the Trail Moves Through the Cedar Rapids Region

In the Cedar Rapids region, the American Discovery Trail uses existing local and regional trail connections with the Cedar Valley Nature Trail. The Cedar Valley Nature Trail is one of the region's defining recreation assets, running from Cedar Rapids north toward Waterloo and Cedar Falls and south toward Solon and is a vital part of the American Discovery Trail.

Downtown Cedar Rapids gives the route a particularly

visible presence. The trail passes near 4th Street SE and along active railways and trails, positioning the national route close to downtown businesses and public art. Since 2019, an American Discovery Trail mural has been located on the outside wall of a downtown parking garage facing Green Square. It is a tribute to the 6,800-mile national trail system that passes through downtown Cedar Rapids.

The American Discovery 250 Relay

Our region will receive state-wide and national coverage when the American Discovery 250 Relay reaches Cedar Rapids for an overnight stop on October 3-4, 2026. The relay is part of the country's America 250th celebration and will carry a copy of the Declaration of Independence across the nation, beginning in California in July and ending in Delaware in November.

Julie Kraft with ConnectCR shared, "We're planning a welcome ceremony at Cedar Lake and the Sag Wagon on

Saturday, October 3rd, and a send-off ceremony near Mount Trashmore and the Alliant Energy LightLine™ on Sunday, October 4th. Local participation in the relay is strongly encouraged."

Relay participants will encounter many celebrations along the way planned by local communities and organizations.

Why It Matters

Trails connect people and places. For Cedar Rapids, that connection is especially meaningful because the trail links the downtown core with riverfront rejuvenation, various neighborhoods, regional destinations and local recreation with a coast-to-coast mission. As the American Discovery Trail and the 250 Relay pass through the city, Cedar Rapids has a chance to show how a national trail can be rooted within a local trail system.

For more information visit discoverytrail.org or contact relay@discoverytrail.org

THE AMANA COLONIES: A TRIP TO THE PAST ISN'T FAR AWAY



Founded in 1855 by German Pietists seeking religious freedom, the Amana Colonies remain one of Iowa's most distinctive historic communities. Seven villages set across east-central Iowa are located just 17 miles southwest of Cedar Rapids via Highway 151, and roughly 20 miles northwest of Iowa City. In this region, the Amana Colonies are well known for their popular and nostalgic festivals including Oktoberfest, Winterfest and Tannenbaum Forest to name a few.

What makes the Amana Colonies especially compelling today is not just their history as a National Historic Landmark, but the way that history continues to shape the community's character. Visitors come for the preserved architecture, independent small shops, authentic

events, German-inspired food, and a deeper sense of place: a culture built on craftsmanship, self-sufficiency, and neighborly continuity still defines the villages more than a century and a half after their founding.

The story began long before Iowa. The colonies roots trace back to a religious movement that emerged in Germany and later relocated to New York before settling in Iowa in the mid-1850s, in search of land, independence and room to grow. Here, the German settlers established seven villages across roughly 26,000 acres of farmland, woods, and waterways, creating a communal society that would endure for more than 80 years.

That communal era shaped the physical and social fabric still visible today. Residents shared

property and resources, worked in assigned trades, and relied on the community to provide housing, food, medical care, and schooling. Meals were often prepared in communal kitchens rather than private homes, and craftsmanship was not a decorative ideal but a daily necessity. The result was a culture where quality, utility, and stewardship were woven tightly together.

When the economic pressures of the Great Depression brought the communal system to an end in 1932, the Colonies changed without losing their identity. The community reorganized, separating church and business life, and adapted to a more modern economic model. Yet even through that transition, the values that built Amana—hard work, shared memory, and pride in making things well—continues to anchor the villages.

For all its historical significance, the Amana Colonies feel most memorable at their brick-lined street level. This is a place best experienced through the senses: the texture of hand-finished wood, the weight of wool blankets still made in town, the aroma of bakeries and smoke-houses, and where exploration happens one storefront and museum at a time.

The seven distinct villages that make up the colonies are: Amana (Main Amana), East Amana, High Amana, Middle Amana, South Amana, West Amana and Homestead. A 14-mile loop known as the Amana Colonies Trail (Highway 220) connects all of the villages.

Craftsmanship remains central to the Amana experience and you will hear people boast of owning an Amana-made piece of furniture. Woodworking, textiles, clocks, and specialty goods are not just souvenirs here; they are part of a long tradition of making durable things with

care. The Amana Woolen Mill, recognized by the National Park Service and celebrated as one of the community's enduring industrial landmarks, offers a vivid reminder that Amana's legacy is not frozen in time—it is still being worked, woven, and carried forward. Food also, tells the story of the Colonies. Family-style German-inspired restaurants, old-fashioned bakeries and shops known for smoked meats, cheeses and traditional treats give the villages a welcoming, lived-in abundance.

Experience the Amanas by visiting local museums, self-guided walks or by attending seasonal events that all offer an easy entry point into the Colonies' deeper identity. Whether you arrive for a day or a weekend outing, the Amana Colonies leave a lasting impression of authenticity.

Be sure to visit amanacolonies.com for more information and places to stay.



AREA THINGS TO DO

Cedar Rapids is recognized as a silver-level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists since 2010, and was the first city in Iowa to install green pavement marketings within bike lanes.



Cedar Rapids Kernels

The Cedar Rapids Kernels are Cedar Rapids' Minor League Baseball team and the High-A affiliate of the Minnesota Twins. Veterans Memorial Stadium at 950 Rockford Rd SW.

mlb.com/mlb/cedar-rapids



Cedar Rapids RoughRiders

The RoughRiders are a Tier I junior ice hockey team that plays in the United States Hockey League. They play home games at ImOn Ice Arena at 1100 Rockford Rd SW.

roughridershockey.com



Iowa Hawkeyes

University of Iowa Big Ten Sports Teams on campus in Iowa City. 1-800-IA-HAWKS

hawkeyesports.com



Morgan Creek Park & Arboretum

Trails, picnic areas, playground, campgrounds, cross-country ski trail and 250 species of trees, shrubs and a butterfly garden located at 7212 E Ave NW

linncountyiowa.gov/964/Morgan-Creek-Park



Pleasant Creek State Rec. Area

Fishing, boating, swimming beach, campgrounds, picnic area, boat launch rental, camping, cabins at 4530 McClintock Rd., Palo, IA

iowadnr.gov



Indian Creek Nature Center

Nature preserve with exhibits, scenic trails and educational events. 5300 Otis Rd SE

indiancreeknaturecenter.org



Palisades-Kepler State Park

Cedar River bluffs, ravines, wildlife, trails, boat ramp, camping and a lodge. 700 Kepler Dr, Mt Vernon, IA

iowadnr.gov



Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

Vibrant museum of national touring and local art exhibits in downtown at 410 3rd Ave SE

crma.org

ARTS, CULTURE & RECREATION



Exhibits of African American heritage and culture at 55 12th Ave SE

blackiowa.org



Live music and theater performances as well as exhibits. 1103 3rd St SE

cspshall.org



Collections, exhibits, library and archives of the local history. 800 2nd Ave SE

historycenter.org



Historic and stunning venue hosting concerts, live performances and national tours. 119 3rd Ave SE

creventslive.com



Professional opera performances and workshops at 425 2nd St. SE Ste. 960

cropera.org



See more things to do at cedararrapids.org/events-calendar



Active community theater offering stage shows and acting classes. 102 3rd St. SE

theatreocr.org



Art education for clay and warm glass, pottery wheel, fused glass. Located in the Cherry Building in NewBo at 329 10th Ave SE, Ste 117

iowaceramicscenter.org



Since 1949, the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation has partnered with donors, funders, and nonprofit organizations in pursuit of a **vibrant and inclusive Linn County where all people thrive.**

Visit gcrf.org to learn how we can partner with you to make a difference.



MOVING TO THE CEDAR RAPIDS REGION?

We have made it easy to help you get established, make connections and feel at home in the Cedar Rapids Region.

- 1. First things first: meet the neighbors.** Research shows that knowing people who live around you is good for both physical and mental health. Don't wait for your neighbors to come to you-be your own welcome wagon.
- 2. Get your Iowa vehicle registration sticker and license plates.** You can do this at the Linn County Tax Assessor Office located at 935 2nd St SW. You'll need to show proof of ownership, such as a registration or title from your previous home state, as well as proof of insurance.
- 3. Apply for an Iowa driver's license** at the Iowa Department of Motor Vehicles office at 3726 Queen Ct SW. It is best to make an appointment first at dmvappointments.org
- 4. Locate the hospital emergency room nearest your home.** Take a test drive to determine the fastest route before you need it. Likewise, find the nearest urgent care center to your home and office-and review your health insurance policy to discover what it covers.
- 5. Find a new doctor.** Find a new dentist. Find a new hairdresser. Find someone to fix your car when it breaks. Having the people you will need in place before you need them is peace of mind. Ask neighbors and co-workers for referrals.
- 6. If you have kids, register them in school.** If they'll be taking the bus, find out the schedules and routes. If school has already started, arrange a parent-teacher conference to kick things off right.
- 7. If you have a pet,** ask around for a veterinarian referral or check out a veterinarian's office close to your home. The 24-hour animal emergency clinic is BluePearl Pet Hospital at 755 Capital Dr SW. Their phone is 319-841-5161.
- 8. Get up to speed on current local news.** Subscribe to the local paper, The Gazette, or bookmark related websites. Watch or stream the local news stations: KGAN/CBS - Channel 2 and KCRG/ABC - Channel 9.
- 9. Register to vote and locate your polling place.** In Iowa, you can register at the IDOT when obtaining your Iowa Driver's License, through the mail or in person at the Linn County Auditor's Office at 935 2nd St SW.
- 10. Get to know your new co-workers.** Join or suggest an after-work happy hour or ask someone to lunch or coffee.
- 11. If religion is an important part of your life,** explore the churches, temples or synagogues in Cedar Rapids. Our area has a plentiful and diverse selection of places to worship.
- 12. Get outside.** Cedar Rapids has a lot to offer including hiking trails, biking paths and walking/running trails. Walk/run around Cedar Lake, climb Mt. Trashmore or enjoy the many city parks, golf courses and other green spaces in this area.
- 13. Support the home team.** Go to a Kernel's baseball game or check out the Rough Riders hockey team. With Iowa City so close, being an Iowa Hawkeye fan is basically a must, so get to a game or visit a local sports bar to watch a game and be with passionate fans!
- 14. Volunteer.** It's a good idea to give back, and helping in your new community is a great way to meet like-minded people. Cedar Rapids is home to many non-profits that are always in need of help. You can also visit the United Way of East Central Iowa's website at uweci.org/volunteer to find a list of local volunteer opportunities.
- 15. Get some rest.** Moving is stressful. Take care of yourself.



Scan this code for a full list of non-profits providing crucial services to the Cedar Rapids region.



ONE District
Team
Vision
Success for All



DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO OPEN ENROLL AT PRAIRIE

**Incoming Students entering Kindergarten
have until Sept 1st to Register**

**Open enrollment for the 27-28 School
Closes March 1st 2027**

MORE INFORMATION



(319)-848-5202



www.crprairie.org



401 76th Ave SW, Cedar Rapids, IA

OUR DISTRICT

Prairie Pride - The College Community School District, known as Cedar Rapids Prairie, takes great pride in our schools! All PK-12 schools are located on one central campus made up of outstanding staff, high performing learners, supportive parents and an engaged school community.

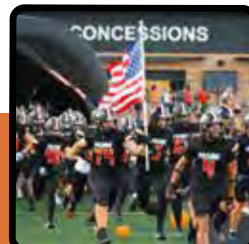
Educational Commitment - Our district is committed to ensuring that every learner has the opportunity to succeed. Our dedicated staff prepares students for their future with an emphasis on personalized learning and innovation.

Career Academies - Our established Career Academies offer a sequence of classes and opportunities designed to prepare learners for diverse career opportunities. These career pathways include Agriculture Science, Arts Communication, Business Leadership, Health Public Services, and Skilled Trades Engineering, empowering students to pursue their unique professional interests and future aspirations.

Activities and Clubs - The College Community School District enhances student experiences by offering a wide range of opportunities, including top-tier athletics, acclaimed fine arts programs, and engaging before and after-school clubs.

Updated Facilities - All Prairie Schools have been updated and renovated including a new Agriculture building, an Early Childhood Center and a new 5-6 intermediate school. The College Community School District is excited to open a new Pool and Recreation Center for the 2026 - 2027 school year in partnership with the Cedar Rapids Metro YMCA.

Prairie Ready - The College Community School District is committed to preparing learners for successful futures. Our robust programming supports various postsecondary options including 2-year and 4-year college programs, certifications, apprenticeships, the military, and other career training programs. Our future readiness programs prepare students for the academic AND workplace skills necessary beyond high school.



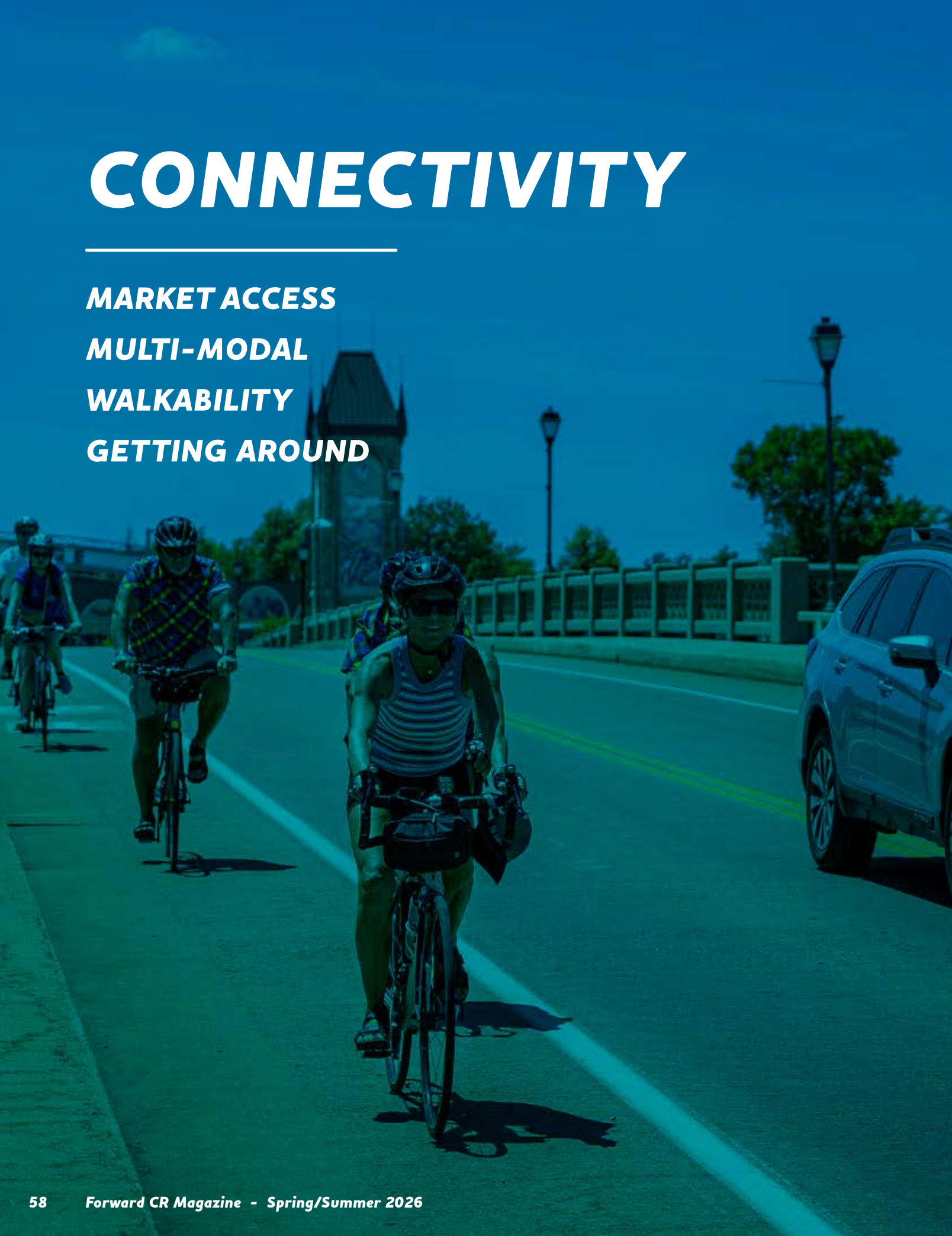
CONNECTIVITY

MARKET ACCESS

MULTI-MODAL

WALKABILITY

GETTING AROUND



LOCAL RAIL NETWORK

Rail has shaped the Cedar Rapids region for more than a century. Trains supported the growth of mills, processing plants and warehouses; making rail an important part of identifying Cedar Rapids as a regional business and transportation hub.

Now part of Traverco, CRANDIC Rail connects local shippers with broader regional and Class I rail networks, while also supporting rail-to-truck transloading, warehousing, switching and car storage services.

Cedar Rapids is also served by Iowa Northern Railway and Iowa Interstate Railroad, giving local industries additional freight connections for agricultural products, renewable fuels, manufactured goods, and other commodities. For a city with deep roots in food processing, manufacturing and logistics, rail continues to provide efficient access to larger transportation networks.



CRST, The Transportation Solution Inc., is one of the nation's largest privately held transportation and logistics companies. The company is family owned and started in 1955 when Mr. and Mrs. Herald Smith started Cedar Rapids Steel Transport, which was renamed to CRST in 1974.

In the beginning, they had no trucks or customers, but Smith contracted the owners and operators hauling livestock to Chicago to return to Cedar Rapids hauling steel instead of driving empty trucks back to the area. Fast forward to today, CRST is integrated with more than 30,000 transportation service providers with 6,000 professional drivers.

The corporate headquarters is located in downtown Cedar Rapids at 201 1st St SE.

MIDDLE AMERICA

Cedar Rapids is centrally located for driving to major Midwest cities and all are easily accessible. Closer regional hubs include Iowa City, Dubuque and Waterloo/Cedar Falls.

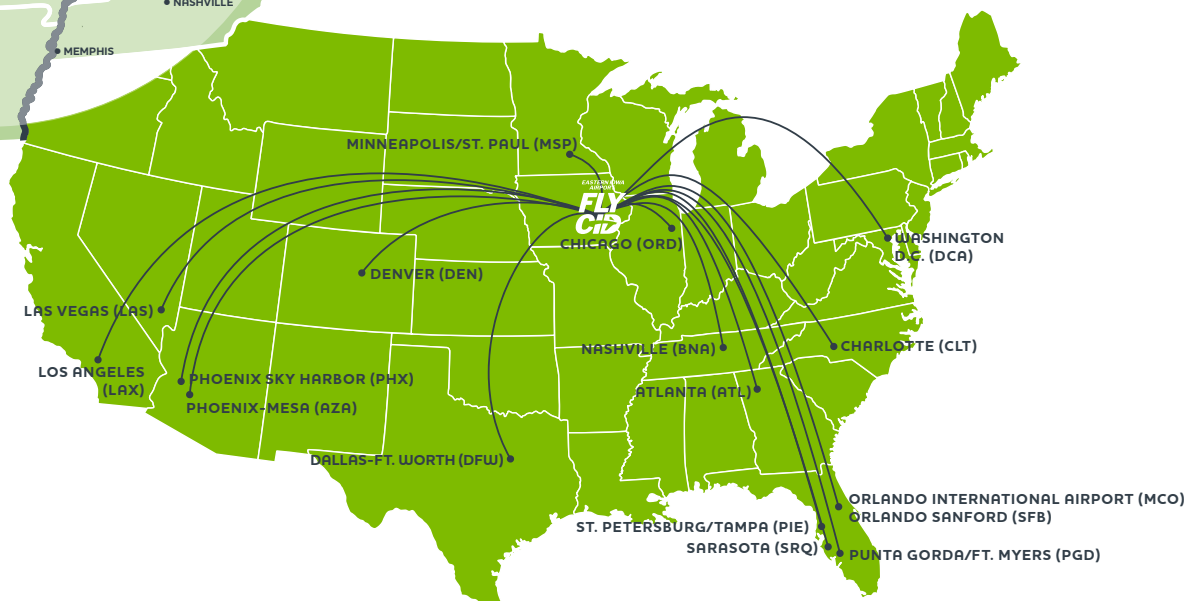


BY CAR

City	Miles	Time to Destination
Chicago, IL	250-275 mi.	4-5.5 hrs.
Kansas City, MO	270-290 mi.	4-5.5 hrs.
St. Louis, MO	284 mi.	4.5 hrs.
Minneapolis, MN	275 mi.	4.5-5 hrs.
Omaha, NE	260 mi.	4 hrs.

Source: Google Maps

BY AIR





INSIDE THE CIRRUS EXPERIENCE

Executive Aero Club is the first and only Cirrus Training Center in the state of Iowa. “We are a private-members-only training center offering high quality and personalized training exclusively in brand new Cirrus Aircraft,” said Matthew Gunderson, founder, during their ribbon cutting in May. Before founding Executive Aero Club, Gunderson worked as an engineer at Collins Aerospace specializing in avionics and aircraft systems.

The Executive Aero Club is not a charter flight service, but it operates as both a private flying club and a certified flight training center. Several aircraft in its fleet are privately owned by members, who make them available for rental through the club’s aircraft management program.

While the aircraft are well-appointed, refined and sleek, safety remains the top priority. Every Cirrus aircraft is equipped with the Cirrus Airframe Parachute System (CAPS), designed to safely lower the entire aircraft to the ground in the event of an emergency. Fortunately, the system is intended only as a last resort—even if the idea of gently floating back to earth has a certain appeal.

Currently, the club has five new aircraft and they have another three ordered. The club also has a high-tech Cirrus simulator available for student use and is simple to operate. It is believed to be the only one in the Midwest.

The Executive Aero Club is located inside the Sinclair Building at 3225 Beech Way SW.



MULTI-MODAL TRANSIT

CR TRANSIT

→ ridecrt.com/routes

Buses operate from the Ground Transit Center (GTC). Download the free TransLoc app. It uses GPS to show the live location of the bus on its route and the estimated time of arrival.



RIDESHARE

→ uber.com → lyft.com

On-demand rides serve the entire metro and the Eastern Iowa Airport.

GREYHOUND

→ greyhound.com

There are two Greyhound Bus stops in Cedar Rapids:
1. 2818 Lippisch Place SW, Ste B
2. Lindale Mall/4444 1st Ave NE
(outside of Cheddar's Restaurant)

380 EXPRESS

→ 380express.com

Ride to/from Cedar Rapids and Iowa City for school or for work. Perfect for students and commuters without the hassle of I-380 traffic.

VEORIDE

→ veoride.com

Find the nearest bike or scooter in Downtown, New Bohemia-Czech Village or the MedQuarter Regional Medical District.

BIKING

→ linncountytrails.org/all-trails

Includes on-street bike lanes and scenic trails. The metro boasts over 260 miles of connected trails.

NEVER MISS ANOTHER...



EMERGENCY ALERT

GARBAGE PICK-UP

ROAD CLOSURE



SIGN UP FOR TEXT AND EMAIL ALERTS
FROM THE CITY OF CEDAR RAPIDS

CRNewsNow.com





Caring is our specialty

Patients across eastern Iowa chose Physicians' Clinic of Iowa for one reason...Care.

For all of us at PCI, this means more than simply providing exceptional, accessible medical care. It means also caring about the unique physical, emotional and financial concerns of all patients and their families. Every member of our team is focused on the one thing that sets us apart and truly impacts the quality of your patient experience... Care. At PCI, caring is our specialty.



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of Iowa, P.C.

PCOFIOWA.COM

Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance
501 First Street SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Life, reimagined

Cedar Rapids is built on connection, dedication, and pride. We share those values – and for more than a century, we've helped people protect what matters and plan with confidence.

Today, we remain committed to the individuals and families who make Cedar Rapids home, and to creating the financial freedom to pursue what's possible.

Visit **transamerica.com**

