



CEDAR FALLS TOURISM

FY25 Annual Report

The City of Cedar Falls completed the Gateway River Park project in late fall 2024. An official ribbon cutting and community celebration was hosted by Cedar Falls Tourism on June 7, 2025.

Gateway River Park was created with many different engineered features, including rocks, waves, and obstacles placed to create fun and challenging water flows. These features are great for activities like kayaking, river surfing, and learning new skills in a more predictable environment.

In January 2025, Cedar Falls was announced as an overnight stop on RAGBRAI LII, a weeklong bicycle ride across Iowa each July. Cedar Falls incorporated the theme Ride the Wave into the July 24 celebration to highlight the new Gateway River Park to 20,000+ outdoor enthusiasts during the event.



FY25 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Meetings & Conferences



- Hosted 31 meetings/conferences (16 new)
 - Estimated Attendees: 5,426
 - Estimated Overnights: 3,272
 - Estimated Economic Impact: \$1,109,794
- Hosted 9 trade shows/special events (1 new)
 - Estimated Attendees: 51,750
 - Estimated Overnights: 1,777
 - Estimated Economic Impact: \$3,899,794
- Hosted 10 site visits with meeting planners with 7 of those booking in Cedar Falls following visit and 2 pending

Sports



- Cedar Falls hosted 22 sporting events (4 new)
 - Estimated Attendees: 94,705
 - Estimated Overnights: 5,941
 - Estimated Economic Impact: \$10,746,605

Leisure Travel



- Advertised throughout the year promoting trails, weekend getaways, holiday events, and family-friendly trips. Experienced 11% increase in website traffic bringing this activity in house
- Secured \$10,000 Iowa Tourism Grant for a Gateway River Park video and digital advertising campaign
- Hosted travel journalists and influencers
- Promoted Cedar Falls at the Iowa Bike Expo in Des Moines, Canoecopia in Madison, WI, and LaCrosse Sport Show
- Cedar Falls named a Trail Town by American Discovery Trails Association

Local Tourism Industry Collaboration



- Led Cedar Falls RAGBRAI planning efforts with Community Main Street and other City of Cedar Falls Departments
- Engaged with UNI on their Sesquicentennial planning efforts
- Assisted UNI with installation of purple street signs near campus

Attractions and Asset Development



- Hosted Gateway River Park Ribbon Cutting & Celebration
 - Created signage and website for Gateway River Park
- Contracted a Sports Tourism Destination Assessment
- Continued work with Great American Rail-Trail / Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- Barn Quilts of Black Hawk County named a Silos & Smokestacks heritage area site.

SALES SNAPSHOT

31

Conferences &
Meetings

9

Conventions &
Tradeshows

22

Sporting Events

2024 TORCH AWARDS

Event

Cedar Valley Wrestling

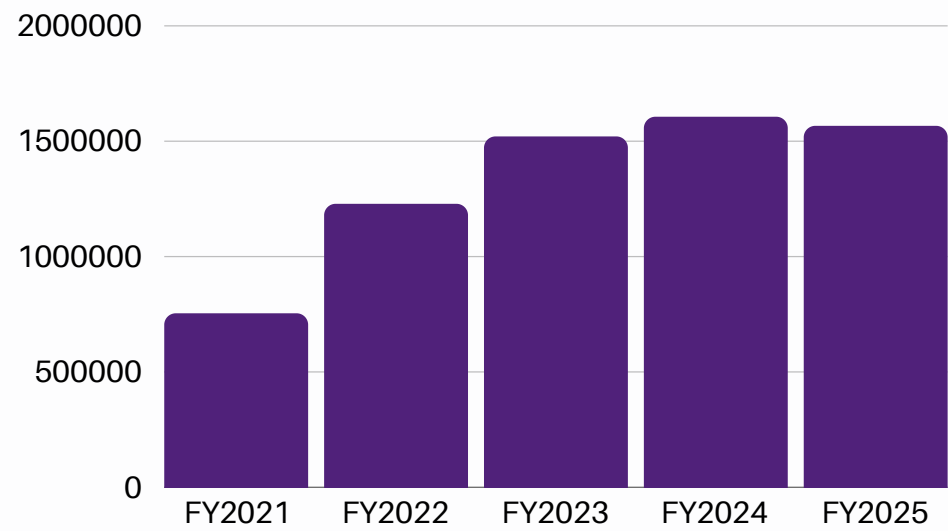
Partner

Comfort Suites

Volunteer

Doug Johnson,
Tourism Board Member

HOTEL | MOTEL TAX COLLECTION - \$1,566,632



FY25 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Iowa York Rite	\$1,500
Midwest Assn. of Independent Inns	\$1,500
Quad States Car Show	\$1,500
NWCA Wrestling Tournament	\$10,500
Cedar Valley Wrestling Camp	\$500
IHSAA Football Semi-Finals/Finals	\$14,000
FIRST Robotics	\$5,000
Iowa Square & Round Dance Convention	\$1,000
Game One Bowl	\$1,000
UNI Overseas Fair	\$2,500
Iowa Thespian Festival	\$2,500
Iowa Reading Association	\$3,000
Iowa 7v7 Tournaments	\$6,000
Iowa Pheasants Forever Conference	\$2,000
Iron Elite Wrestling Tournament	\$1,500
Lakes & Prairie Exchange Club Conference	\$750
Cedar Falls RAGBRAI	\$10,000

The Cedar Falls Tourism Board awards this funding.

VISITOR SERVICES

Visitor Center
Traffic
5,493


Guide
Distribution
21,362


Trail Guide
Distribution
4,929


Website Traffic
148,833

Volunteer Hours
488



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