

OTTUMWA

City of Bridges



“Whether it is history, culture, athletics or music you are looking for, Ottumwa has it all. You'll find something new and exciting to do every day in Ottumwa where there is always a new adventure awaiting on the other side of the bridge.

Ottumwa... the name means place of perseverance and land of rippling waters. Ottumwa embodies the westward expansion of the United States, plentiful game, good fishing, and the river's rippling waters. These qualities enticed Iowa's most famous chiefs, Wapello, Keokuk, and Appanoose, to settle here.

They weren't alone for long, in the land rush of 1843 a group of white investors staked out 467 acres along the winding Des Moines River, to make a town. The railroad came through in 1859, opening Ottumwa and Wapello County to the world and ensuring the city's continued growth over the next 100 years. By 1870 Ottumwa boasted a population of over 5,000 people.

The city's population boom was fueled by rapid industrial growth. Large deposits of coal drew mining and manufacturing plants making sewing machines, agricultural tools, box car loaders, cigars, and more. As Ottumwa moved into the 20th century, Dain Manufacturing opened a new factory that would become John Deere, one of Iowa's largest employers.

Trade, meat packing, and entertainment all flourished as well. Industrialists populated the bluff along the river with prestigious homes that embraced a variety of significant and enduring architectural styles. They were also staunch supporters of Ottumwa's flourishing arts and culture.

While the river fueled the growth of the city it also formed a natural barrier dividing the town. In the 20th century several bridges were built to unite Ottumwa. The most distinctive was the Jefferson Street Viaduct, completed in 1936.

Ottumwa's population peaked with the city hitting its stride as a center of business, education, and health care. From the early 1970's Ottumwa began a steady decline. The manufacturing base that had built the city dwindled. As factories downsized and closed, the city changed.

Ottumwa is once again growing and thriving. New businesses continue to open and expand, preserving Ottumwa's place as regional economic center. With very active civic arts groups and the opening of Bridge View Center, Ottumwa's own state of the art Civic Center, we continue to grow as a cultural center.

Today, Ottumwa has come to mirror the increased diversity around the country. There are more than 39 different countries represented throughout Ottumwa and Wapello County; Mexico, South and Central America, West and North Africa, Europe, Asia, South East Asia, and the Pacific Rim just to name a few.

There are more reasons than ever to come to Ottumwa, stay in Ottumwa, and take pride in Ottumwa.”

Our Schools

- Ottumwa High School
- Evans Middle School
- Douma Elementary
- Eisenhower Elementary
- Horace Mann Elementary
- James Elementary
- Liberty Elementary
- Wilson Elementary
- Ottumwa Community Preschool
- Ottumwa Christian School
 - Pre-K through 12
- Seton Catholic School of Ottumwa
 - Pre-K through 5
- Indian Hills Community College
- Buena Vista University

Recreational Facilities

- YMCA
- Ottumwa Country Club and Golf Course
- Cedar Creek Municipal Golf Course
- Indian Hills Disc Golf Course
- Beach Ottumwa Water Park
- Baseball Little Leagues
- 18 City Parks
 - 679 total acres
 - Tennis and Basketball Courts
 - Disc Golf Courses
- Honey Creek Resort State Park
 - Lake Rathbun
- Lake Wapello and Lake Red Rock, where you can hunt, fish, hike, nature watch and bike
- Wapello County Trail System
 - Enjoy the scenic Des Moines River from the Ottumwa Levee Trail System with over 14 miles of paved and gravel trails where you can walk, run, bike, and eagle watch

Where to Eat

- Whether you are looking for a romantic fine-dining experience or a healthy lunch at a local deli, you'll find it in Ottumwa. Home to over 50 unique restaurants, you will never find yourself far from a great dining experience

American	Chinese	Filipino
Latin	Italian	Ethiopian
Bakeries	Delis	Fast Food

Art/Theatre/Music/Dance Programs

- Ottumwa Community Players
- Ottumwa Community Children's Playhouse
- GOVAP Children's Chorus
- Ottumwa Civic Music Association
- Ottumwa Symphony Orchestra
- Southern Iowa Symphony Orchestra
- Ottumwa Area Arts Council
- Bridge View Center
- Partners, Unlimited
- Premier Dance Center
- Dance, Inc.
- Potpourri Fine Arts Academy

Places of Worship

- There are over 106 places of worship in and around the Ottumwa Community

Where to Shop

- Quincy Place Mall
 - Over 27 major retailers
- Target
- K-Mart
- Wal-Mart Super Center
- Menards

Wapello County's Top Employers

Cargill	2400
John Deere Ottumwa Works	940
Ottumwa Regional Health Center	750
Ottumwa Community Schools	616
Hy-Vee	426
Wal-Mart	364
Indian Hills Community College	322
City of Ottumwa	263
Winger Contracting	242
Dr. Pepper/Snapple Group	199

For more information on Ottumwa and the surrounding area, please visit the following websites:

<http://www.exploreottumwa.com>
<http://www.ottumwachamber.org>



**OTTUMWA
REGIONAL
HEALTH CENTER**