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CITY OF SAC CITY & SAC CITY MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

WHAT: A progressive small city with metropolitan-level amenities and a municipal airport serving as a vital transportation hub for business and agricultural operations

WHERE: Western Iowa

WEBSITE: www.saccity.city

HOW THIS PROGRESSIVE IOWA COMMUNITY AND ITS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT WORK IN TANDEM TO DRIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WHILE ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE. n western Iowa, Sac City demonstrates how a small community can offer metropolitan-level amenities while preserving its close-knit atmosphere. "We have a lot to offer for a town of our size," says Jamie Lawrence, City Administrator of Sac City. "We're a progressive city with a small-town feel. Everybody knows everyone, but we also welcome newcomers and show them the exceptional recreational opportunities we have, from camping to our expanding trail systems."

The city's quality of life has caught the attention of residents and businesses. "Sac City has done great with



a clear focus going forward. "We want to make sure that the businesses that locate here are the right fit for the community. We have to take a common sense approach to development," maintains Stanford. Part of the effort includes leveraging proximity to major industries. "Intel is driving a lot of the economic development discussion in central Ohio, and we're very much aware of that," he says. "But we're also focused on other industries, like automotive and advanced manufacturing, which remain dominant in the region."

BRINGING OUT THE BEST OF PLAIN CITY

As Plain City continues its evolution, Lupton says she is guided by adaptability and a forward focus. "We can't be everything to all people, and it's important to resolve issues and move on to the next. We can't take anything personally – we must stay focused on what's best for our community," she stresses. Stanford reinforces the village's approach, noting "We are very creative. We're very collaborative. We want to work with people, and as long as it is for the good of the community, we're going to do it." Looking ahead, Hutchinson concludes, "The decisions we make today are going to affect the future. We get one shot at this, and we want to make sure that we do it right."

PREFERRED VENDOR/PARTNER

Union County Chamber of Commerce www.unioncounty.org

Union County Economic Development delivers business resources, from site selection to small business support. Union County Chamber of Commerce fosters growth through networking and advocacy. Union County Tourism helps visitors experience "Naturally Crafted" adventures by guiding them to local wineries, shops, and farm-to-table events.

focusing on quality of life," explains Brandy Wilson, Executive Director of Sac Economic and Tourism Development. "There aren't a lot of communities this size in the state that offer what Sac City does in terms of art, recreation, amenities, and trails."

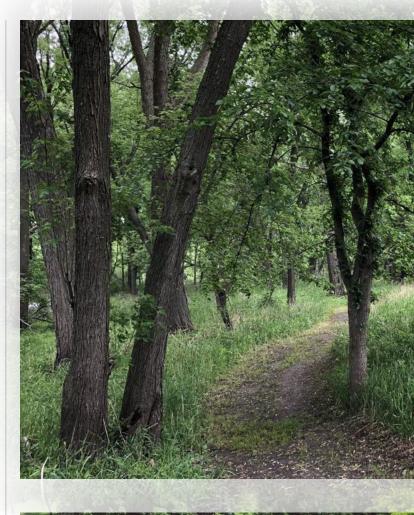
The community's business district shows this blend of small-town charm and modern convenience. Local enterprises include a thriving grocery store, a recently opened coffee shop, and various specialty retailers uncommon in similar-sized towns. The Cattleman's restaurant, recognized throughout the Midwest for high-end dining, serves as a culinary destination. The city's layout, influenced by its position on a historic Highway 20 route, creates a unique commercial corridor that extends from the downtown district eastward and westward, offering convenient access to services and shopping.

"We're really focused on creating amenities for residents who want to move here," Lawrence says. "We're seeing more people, especially younger generations, choose their location first and their career second. With the increasing presence of remote work opportunities, people can create careers and work online without relocating to large cities. They can settle in a smaller city, accomplish their work, and have a great place to raise a family."

RECREATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Sac City's ambitious recreational development includes a transformative 100-acre project combining multiple outdoor attractions. "We've acquired three pieces of land that join together into slightly over a hundred acres for our trails complex," Lawrence explains. "It involves natural hiking trails, mountain biking trails, bicycling trails, and the water trail that runs down the Raccoon River."

The project will connect the Sauk Rail Trail from Lake View to Sac City, adding significant mileage to the existing multi-use trail system. "By the end of summer, we'll have five or six miles of hiking trails established," says Lawrence. "We've already developed excellent kayaking and floating opportunities on the Raccoon River, with camping sites on both sides and launch areas north and south of the city." The completion date is projected for 2028-2029, though timing may shift based on available grant funding.







Indoor recreation matches the outdoor offerings. The Sac Community Center provides comprehensive fitness facilities, including an indoor swimming pool, basketball court, racquetball court, meeting areas, and a complete array of exercise equipment. "It offers everything you'd see in a Gold's Gym or a 24-Hour Fitness," Lawrence notes. The nonprofit-run facility rivals commercial gyms in larger cities. Additionally, the community-organized Kids World Incorporated, established around 2000, addresses childcare needs through a nonprofit board structure.

The 33-mile Sauk Rail Trail and the 41-mile North Raccoon River Water Trail enhance the region's recreational appeal. These established routes offer residents and visitors extensive opportunities for outdoor activities. The city partners with the county Trails Group to advance these initiatives. "It's a lofty goal, but I think we're going to accomplish it within ten years," Lawrence says. The comprehensive trail system, connecting to downtown restaurants and establishments, positions Sac City as a destination for outdoor enthusiasts while providing valuable amenities for current and prospective residents.

MEETING GROWING HOUSING DEMAND

Five years ago, a comprehensive housing needs assessment in Sac County revealed a pressing demand for single-family homes and apartments, and professional housing options. Professional recruitment also showed the need for new housing. "In visiting with our businesses and industries, we were told that housing was a big need," Wilson says. The city responded with a multi-faceted approach to address these concerns.

Recent developments showcase Sac City's innovative housing solutions. The city utilized a Homes for Iowa program, featuring prisoner-built housing from Newton, Iowa, marking the state's first privately purchased unit of this kind. "Sac City has undertaken a housing development of 13 lots across from the country club," Wilson explains. "Sac City also developed another area with three lots, which are all taken now, and we're taking down old, dilapidated houses to make room for infill housing."

A particularly creative solution emerged from the closure of the local middle school. "About two years



ago, we started talking to a housing developer when the middle school closed down," Wilson says. "They're going to have 25 units in the school building. This year, they're building one four-plex unit and one five-plex unit on the vacant lot, with room for two more fourplexes and two more five-plexes as the first units begin to fill."

The city has employed innovative financing strategies to make these developments more accessible. "For our Deer Run development, we used a TIF program to build the infrastructure," Lawrence explains. "We built roads and all the utilities out to that area, which allowed the city to essentially pay for that and not have to raise the land prices for the homeowners. The homeowners wanting to build out there are getting a discounted price on the land."

MANUFACTURING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Sac County's robust industrial base creates significant employment opportunities and drives economic growth. Evapco, the county's largest

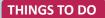
employer located in Lake View, recently expanded its operations manufacturing evaporators, cooling towers, unit coolers, and condensers. "About a year ago, they did an expansion project where they were supposed to grow by 83 employees, and they ended up growing by over a hundred," Wilson says. This growth intensified the need for workforce housing in the region.

The manufacturing sector continues to diversify with several key players. "VT Industries is located right here in Sac City as a countertop manufacturer," Wilson explains. "Almost Famous acquired what used to be Cedar Creek Popcorn in Sac City and they make gourmet popcorn. Western Iowa Energy is a biodiesel facility in Wall Lake." The food manufacturing sector shows particular strength, with companies like Cookies Food Products in Wall Lake, producing barbecue sauces, seasonings, and specialty foods. Molly & You, featured on Good Morning America, produces beer breads, seasonings, dips, and mug cakes. Lundell Plastics out of Odebolt creates custom plastic products, including poly auger





Sac County, located in the heart of Northwest lowa, is filled with surprises. Whether looking for safe and affordable living, a fun destination to make vacation memories, or an ideal business investment location, exploring Sac County is a great option. Agricultural roots, Midwestern hospitality, strong work ethic, and natural beauty are waiting for your visit.



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CONTACT US

Sac County Economic and Tourism Development and Sac Development Corporation share similar missions, working together to foster commercial development and to promote the Sac County, Iowa area. Board members utilize their knowledge of agriculture, banking, real estate, business, government and economic development to create new opportunities in Sac County by focusing on business attraction, retention and expansion. Our organizations work to make Sac County even more attractive to residents and future investors.

Sac County is located on four-lane highway 20 in the heart of Northwest Iowa. Its equidistant location from interstates 29, 90, 35 & 80 provide ready access to the area creating an ideal environment for economic development. Nine vibrant communities offer not only a strong workforce, but a quality of life normally found in areas with much larger populations. Quality healthcare, recreation, educational opportunities and natural beauty help residents and businesses flourish. Our manufacturers produce world-class refrigeration units, countertops, plastic products, agricultural equipment, and food products.

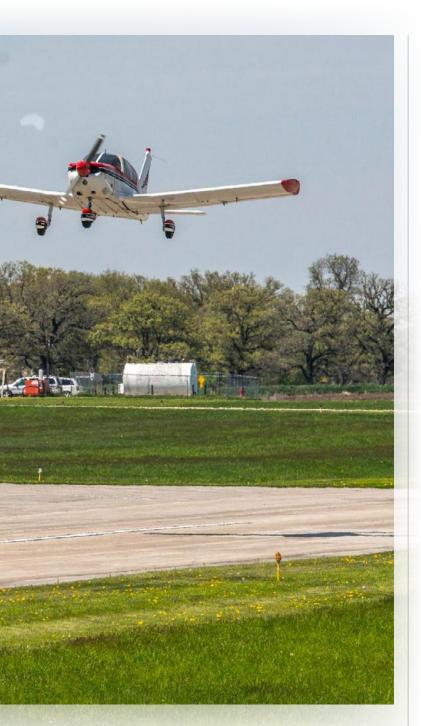
Whether looking for safe and affordable living, a fun destination to make vacation memories, or an ideal business investment location, Sac County is a great option. Agricultural roots, Midwestern hospitality, strong work ethic, and natural beauty are waiting for you.



flighting. Essentia Protein Solutions out of Lytton creates valuable protein solutions for both human and animal consumption. Nutrien AG Solutions, the leading global provider of crop inputs and services, has locations in Sac County and Remington Seeds, one of the largest third-party seed producers in the world, has a location in Schaller, Iowa.

Looking toward future growth, Sac City offers substantial development opportunities. "Sac City has an 18-acre industrial park available for business," Wilson notes. "Sac Economic & Tourism Development has a 90-acre industrial park just northeast of Sac City that's also available." Sac Economic & Tourism Development secured a bio-economy development opportunity zone rating, encompassing Sac City and a 75-mile radius, specifically targeting bio-based economic development.

The city actively promotes these opportunities through a comprehensive marketing strategy. "In the last three or four years, we developed a marketing program with one of our local consultants," Lawrence says. "We've really focused on social media



campaigns as well as other blitzes through mailers and fundraisers. We've had a huge impact with our social media campaign, using most media outlets such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and all the main social media platforms, and we've had an excellent return on that."

SAC CITY MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

The Sac City Municipal Airport is a vital transportation link for the region's growing business community. Strategically positioned near Highway 20 and Highway 71, the airport facilitates efficient access for corporate travelers. "Western Iowa has a lot of empty space, so to be able to fly in cuts a lot of time off their day," explains Matthew Wallace, Chairman of the Sac City Airport Commission.

Recent infrastructure improvements have enhanced the facility's capabilities. "With the apron expansion, what we lost was one of our old hangars in a windstorm," says Ken Myers, Airport Manager. "Rather than rebuilding there due to the limitations of the space, we expanded the apron out to accommodate more aircraft. The apron space was limited to start with, and in summer and fall, we have heavy ag operations that go on there. Now there's room for people to get in and out, plus the ag operators to set up."

The airport has modernized its services to meet user needs. "We've upgraded to LED lighting in the last couple years and upgraded the approach lighting," Myers notes. "The only thing left in our master plan is to replace the rotating beacon, scheduled for next year." The facility also transitioned from a keybased fuel system to a 24-hour credit card system, matching the convenience of modern gas stations.

Looking ahead, the airport plans strategic expansion to support business growth. "If there was an industry that expressed interest at the airport, we'd probably move forward or at least try to get the funding to accommodate them," Myers says. "We're looking at expanding the apron space out to the west, which gives us the footprint to begin, at least to give people the opportunity if they want to move into the area."

The airport's impact on business efficiency is significant. "There's one company in Minnesota that owns a plant in Lake View, and they'll come down a few times a year visiting four or five plants at a time," Myers explains. "Instead of losing an entire day on an eight-hour drive, they're able to visit two to three plants and still be home at night."

HEALTHCARE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Sac City continues to strengthen its healthcare infrastructure through significant expansion at Loring Hospital. The ongoing development project includes approximately 42,000 square feet of

additional space for a primary care clinic addressing the growing medical needs of the community. "The estimated completion date for that September 2025," Wilson says.

The expansion encompasses multiple critical healthcare services. The emergency department improvements include a notable upgrade to patient access. "Before, when they had patients to drop off, they had to do that outside. Now they'll have a place to pull in, so patients will be out of the elements," Wilson explains. The development also incorporates expansions of the laboratory facilities and adds consultation spaces, enhancing the hospital's ability to serve the local population.

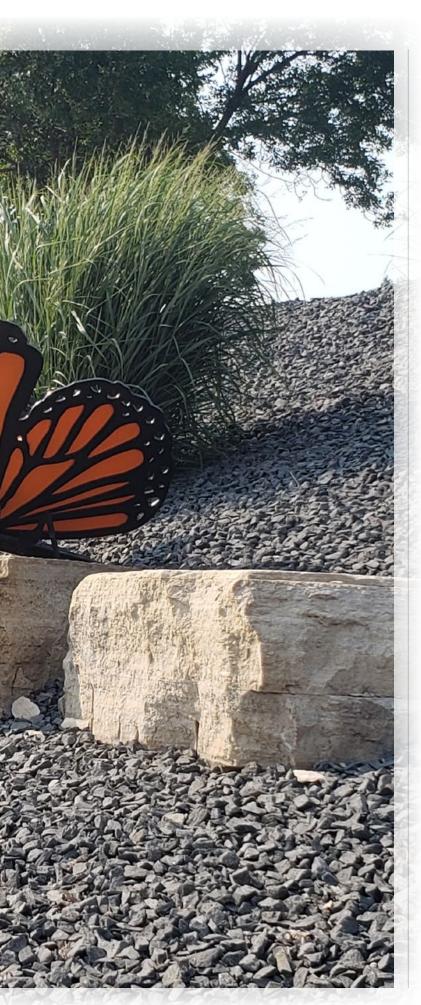
The city's infrastructure planning demonstrates careful consideration of current needs while anticipating future growth. Both public and private developments receive support through strategic use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and other incentive programs. "We're able to build the infrastructure out through TIF," Lawrence notes, describing the city's approach to development. This funding mechanism allows Sac City to implement necessary improvements while maintaining competitive costs for businesses and residents.

The comprehensive infrastructure strategy includes maintaining and upgrading existing facilities while planning for new developments. This balanced approach ensures that as Sac City grows, its infrastructure keeps pace with the expanding needs of residents and businesses. The focus on healthcare facilities, in particular, underpins the city's efforts to provide essential services locally, reducing the need for residents to travel to larger urban centers for medical care.

PRIORITIZING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Sac City's strategic vision gives precedence to creating an environment that attracts residents and businesses, with a particular focus on younger generations seeking an ideal place to establish their careers and families. "We're really focused on further developing amenities for those residents that want to move in here," Lawrence says. "We realize that you're seeing more and more, especially the younger generations, but even the middle-aged people,





tending to pick their location first and where they're going to work second."

The rise of remote work has opened new possibilities for smaller communities. "People can create a career and work online, not necessarily having to relocate into a large city," Lawrence explains. "They can locate into a smaller city, still get their work done, and have a great place to raise a family and live out their life. Our goal is to really create the amenities that attract people to move to town."

The economic development strategy focuses on filling available industrial spaces and attracting new businesses. "One of our goals this next year is to really work towards filling space that we have in our industrial parks,"Wilson says. The recently acquired bio-economy development opportunity zone rating, covering Sac City and a 75-mile radius, positions the area to attract bio-based economic development.

Housing remains a critical component of the growth strategy. "Iowa has a workforce shortage, and I feel that part of our problem has been our housing shortage in Sac County and I think we've addressed that in Sac City," Wilson notes. The comprehensive approach to housing development, combined with industrial park availability and strategic marketing efforts, creates a foundation for sustainable growth. This balanced approach supports the growth of a community that serves current residents while attracting new families and businesses to the area.

PREFERRED VENDOR/PARTNER

- Sac County Economic & Tourism Development www.saccountyiowa.com
- Sac Development Corporation www.saccity.city/sac-development-corporation
- City of Sac City <u>www.saccity.city</u>



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