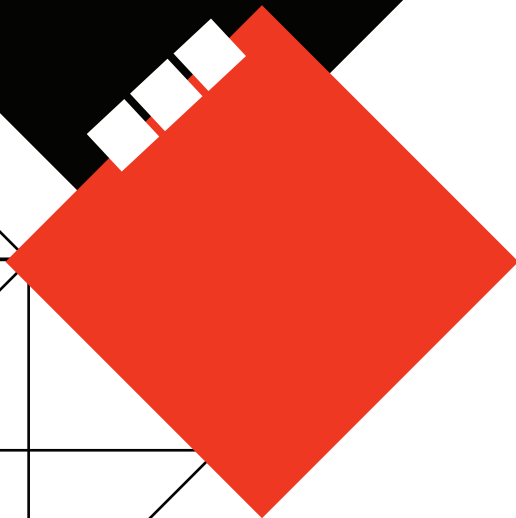




Annual Report

FY2018-19



2018-19 BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

PRESIDENT

Randy Calaguas, *First Citizens Bank*

VICE PRESIDENT

Olivia Stalker, *Globe Gazette*

SECRETARY

Steve Bailey, *Century 21*

TREASURER

Crystal Shellhart, *Holiday Inn Express*

Molly Angstman, *Fat Hill Brewing*

Mark Barthelme, *Church & Dwight*

Jason Baumann, *North Iowa Events Center*

Mary Holmes, *Coloff Media*

Mellisa Leach, *Historic Park Inn*

Abigail Lee, *Lee Realty*

Tom Thoma, *City of Mason City*

Jessica Vetter, *North Iowa Area Community College*

OUR TEAM.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lindsey James

VISITOR SERVICES COORDINATOR

Rose Walker



■ *Experience the art of hospitality* ■

OUR MISSION.

To enhance the economy of Mason City and the North Iowa area through the promotion of the area as a destination for overnight visitors.

A LOOK AT THE PAST YEAR.



LINDSEY JAMES

Executive Director

As we examined the past twelve months, we reflected on a number of success stories. The following pages highlight a variety of metrics that show the positive impact of tourism on our local economy.

As an industry, tourism in Cerro Gordo County generated \$214.46 million in travel-related expenditures during 2018, an increase of more than 6% over 2017. In Mason City, visitor spending exceeded an estimated \$136 million!

Our team continued to build awareness of Mason City as an accessible, affordable, and centrally-located destination for leisure travelers, motorcoach groups, meetings, conventions, and sport events.

In addition to implementing our annual marketing campaign we provided service and support to more than 100 large group events. We attended appointment-based tradeshows and hosted site visits for motorcoach operators, meeting planners and sports coordinators. We also worked with numerous travel writers and social influencers.

Partnerships continue to be a big focus for our team. During FY18-19, we collaborated with Central Iowa Tourism Region, Travel Iowa, and the Iowa Group Travel Association to host a one-day guide training workshop. Attendees from all across the state participated in the workshop, including 30 representatives from Mason City and Clear Lake attractions. 13 of whom went on to complete their individual certifications.

We collaborated with Leadership North Iowa to launch the "Frame Mason City" sculpture frame project. We also teamed up with the City of Mason City, Mason City Chamber of Commerce, and Main Street Mason City to secure re-certification as an Iowa Great Place and designation as an Iowa Cultural and Entertainment District. We continue to work with community partners and City leaders on efforts related to the River City Renaissance Project.

During this time, our team also served in leadership roles for other groups and organizations including the Iowa Group Travel Association, ABA 2020 Host Advisory Committee, and Vision North Iowa.

Mason City was named "Midwest Destination of the Year" by the Midwest Travel Network, and highlighted as a feature motorcoach destination in *Group Tour Magazine* and the American Bus Association's *Destinations Magazine*.

We have much to be proud of from the past year and many great stories to tell. We look forward to building on these accomplishments in the year ahead.

Thank you for your continued support.






IMPACT OF TOURISM.

In 2018, visitors to *Mason City* spent
\$136.18 MILLION.

Visitor spending in Cerro Gordo County during 2018 totaled **\$214.46 MILLION.**

Breakdown of Visitor Spending



-  **TRANSPORTATION**
\$67.81 MILLION
-  **LODGING**
\$16.21 MILLION
-  **RETAIL**
\$9.67 MILLION
-  **ENTERTAINMENT
& RECREATION**
\$13.62 MILLION
-  **FOOD SERVICE**
\$28.87 MILLION

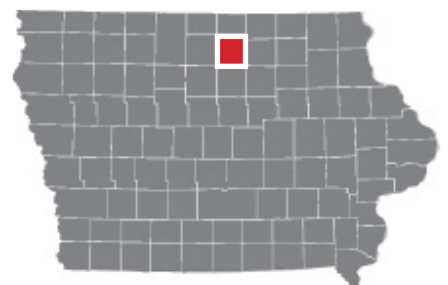
\$10.07M state & local tax receipts
 were generated by visitor spending in Mason City during 2018.

2018 LOCAL TAX RECEIPTS

Mason City: \$2.34M
 Cerro Gordo County: \$3.68M

2018 STATE TAX RECEIPTS

Mason City: \$7.73M
 Cerro Gordo County: \$12.18M



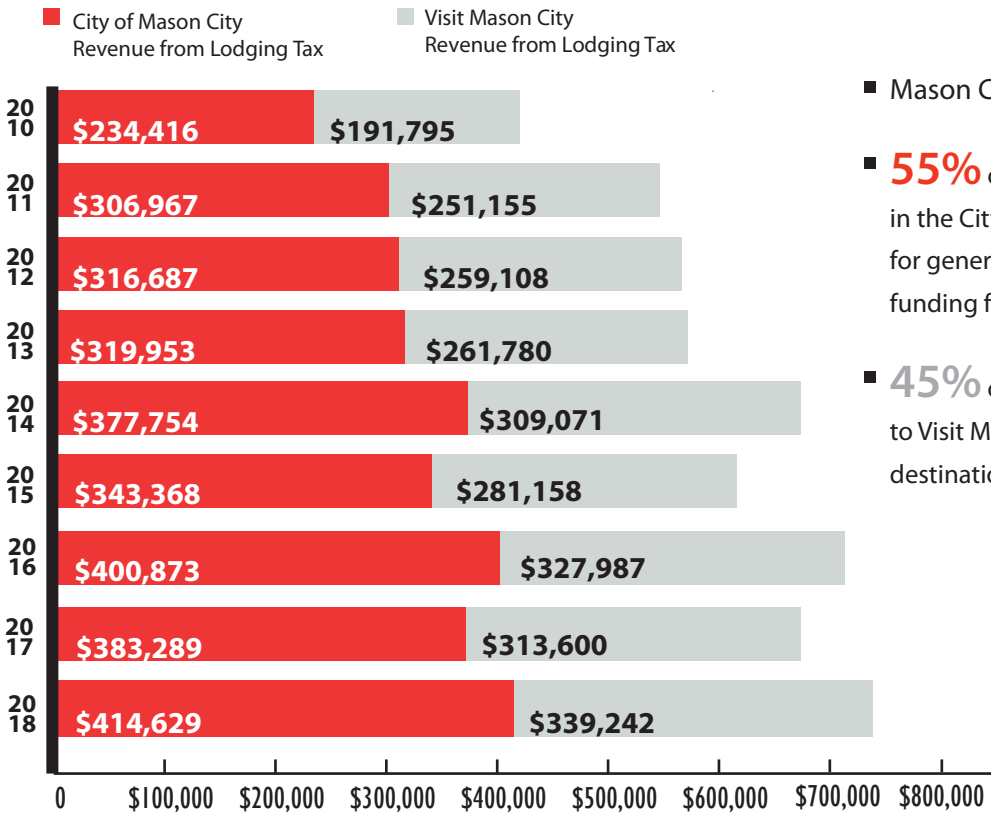
CERRO GORDO COUNTY



RANKS #11

FOR VISITOR SPENDING

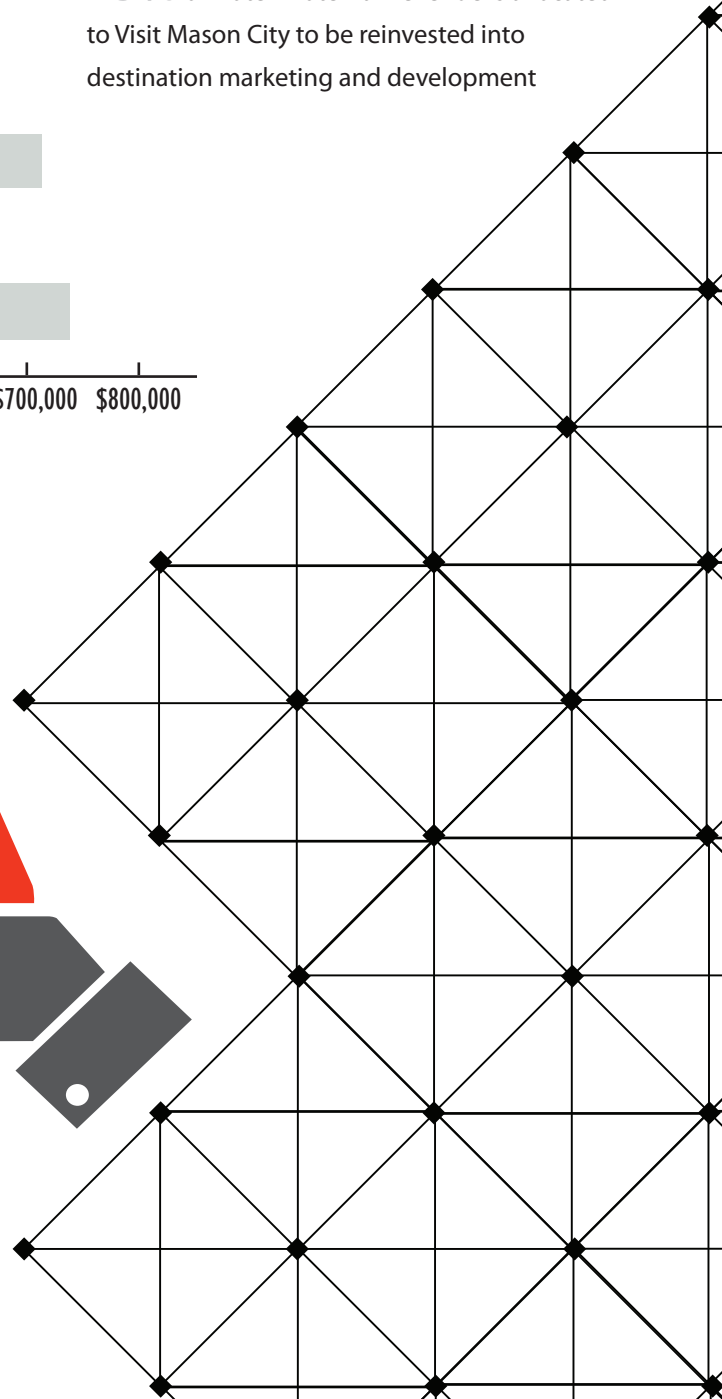
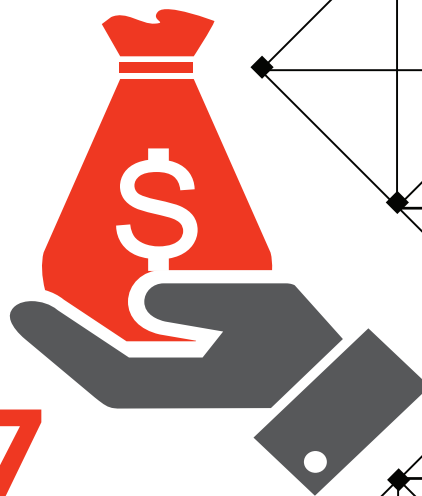
LODGING TAX RECEIPTS IN MASON CITY



- Mason City Hotel-Motel Tax is 7%
- **55%** of Hotel-Motel Tax revenue remain in the City of Mason City's budget to be used for general fund expenses and quality of life funding for residents
- **45%** of Hotel-Motel Tax revenue is allocated to Visit Mason City to be reinvested into destination marketing and development

Return on Investment

For every **\$1.00** invested in marketing, promotion and sales efforts by Visit Mason City, the community received an estimated **\$47** return on investment in visitor spending.

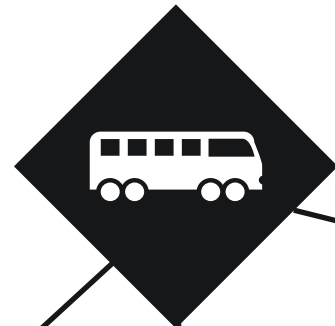


VISIT MASON CITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

In Fiscal Year 18-19, Visit Mason City staff worked with 119 meetings, sport events, and /or motorcoach tours resulting in more than **64,252 visitors** to our community and an estimated **\$6.46 million** in visitor spending from meetings/conventions, sport events, and motorcoach groups.

GROUP TOURS

\$117,566



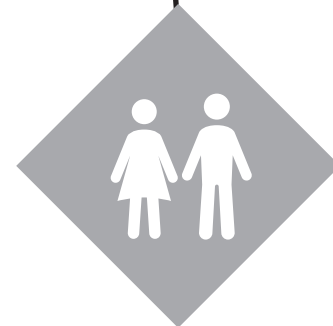
SPORTS

\$4,538,807



MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

\$1,805,353



LEISURE TRAVELERS

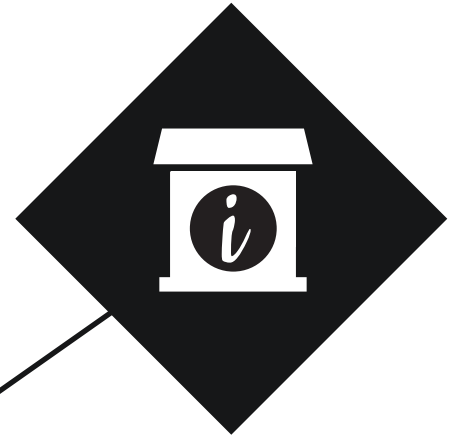
\$9,755,383



Visit Mason City employs 3 full-time staff. During FY18-19, the VMC team of volunteers contributed 535 hours of assistance with projects, request fulfillment and welcoming guests to the Visitor Center.

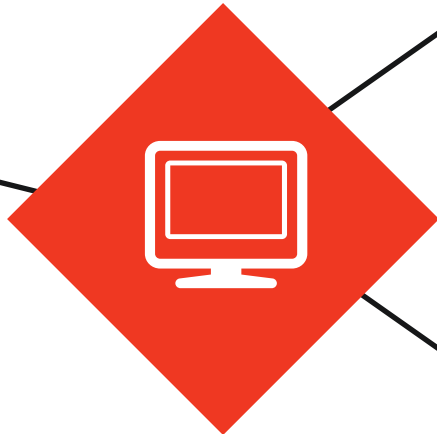
66,819

UNIQUE VISITORS TO
VISITMASONCITYIOWA.COM



4,652

GUESTS TO THE VISITOR CENTER



35,966

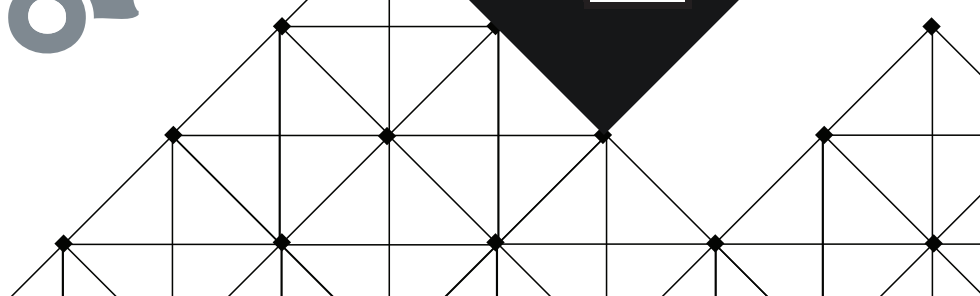
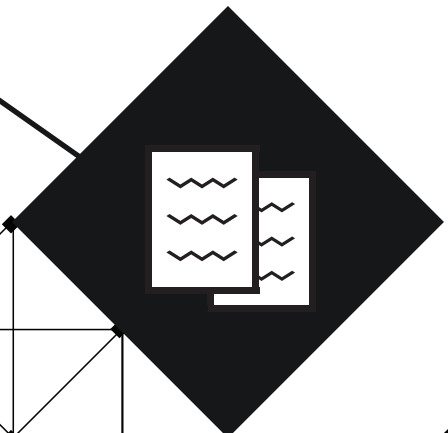
INFORMATION REQUESTS
FULFILLED

INFO PROVIDED TO

763



PEOPLE INTERESTED IN RELOCATING
TO MASON CITY



 **7,429**
Followers

 **1,463**
Followers

 **1,256**
Followers

 **2,884**
Leisure Traveler Subscribers

 **691**
Local E-News Subscribers

2019 MIDWEST DESTINATION OF THE YEAR

- Midwest Travel Network



SCULPTURE FRAMES HIGHLIGHT PICTURE-PERFECT SITES THROUGHOUT COMMUNITY

Visit Mason City teamed up with this year's *Leadership North Iowa* class to install two large photo frames in Central Park and East Park. Funded by Visit Mason City, the frames are part of a project aimed at promoting tourism and highlighting various Mason City attractions and visitor experiences. Additional frames will be added to the collection in FY19-20.



ADVERTISING & MARKETING.



Print, digital and broadcast ads were placed by Visit Mason City in Iowa and neighboring states. Marketing channels included Midwest Living, Better Homes & Gardens, Family Fun, Preservation, Our Iowa, The Iowan, Vacation Iowa, Iowa Tour Guide, Travel Midwest, Minnesota Monthly, Missouri Life, Nebraska Life, Illinois Country Living, Omaha World-Herald, Trip Advisor, and more.

TOURISM GRANTS

Visit Mason City awarded \$12,825 to 21 projects leveraging more than \$44,485 in private funds for tourism marketing. These marketing projects attracted an estimated 45,787 visitors to Mason City, resulting in more than \$4.6 MILLION in estimated visitor spending.

STATE OF IOWA FY19 REGIONAL SPORTS AUTHORITY DISTRICT

\$50,000 awarded to 9 sport events attracting an estimated 10,540 visitors and more than \$4.4 MILLION to Cerro Gordo County.

2018-19 GRANT RECIPIENTS

CHARLES H. MACNIDER ART MUSEUM FRIENDS OF THE 457 **IOWA LIONS DISTRICT 9NC**
HEALTHY HARVEST OF NORTH IOWA **RIVER CITY STEAK CHALLENGE** **KINNEY PIONEER MUSEUM**
MID STATES HORSE SHOWS **NORTH IOWA BAND FESTIVAL** **NORTH IOWA STUDIO TOUR**
MASON CITY LODGING PARTNERS **NORTH IOWA EVENTS CENTER**
RIVER CITY SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION **WRIGHT ON THE PARK**
BICYCLE BLUES & BBQ **CANNONBALL CROSS** **NORTH IOWA NATIONALS**
USDF REGION 4 DRESSAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS **TRI CLEAR LAKE**
NORTH IOWA SNOWSEEKERS **NATIONAL BARREL RACE ASSOCIATION**

CONTACT US.



VISIT MASON CITY

2021 4th Street SW

Mason City, IA

641.422.1663

VisitMasonCityIowa.com

