

Business Investment Guide

MARION IOWA

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SMOKY BLE
ESSE MAN



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UptownMarion.com | CityofMarion.org | MarionCC.org | Medcolowa.org

MARION



Welcome to one of the Midwest's fastest growing and most dynamic cities.

Marion is a place where people work smarter, set lofty goals and strive to achieve the very best for their families and their community.

We pride ourselves on being the best place in Iowa to raise a family and grow a business. Here, we reach higher in everything we do!

Marion is known for its historic charm and community appeal as well as its progressive, forward-thinking ambitions. Our city is consistently one of the state's safest communities and offers excellent schools, more than 600 acres of parks and trails and an expanding list of award-winning public amenities that help residents experience an unequalled quality of life.

An increasing number of business owners and investors are realizing the potential of Marion and joining our supportive, collaborative business community. On behalf of all who live, work and do business here, we invite you to be part of our city's growth and progress. You'll soon discover that in Marion the sky is not the limit!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicolas AbouAssaly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nicolas AbouAssaly
Mayor of the City of Marion

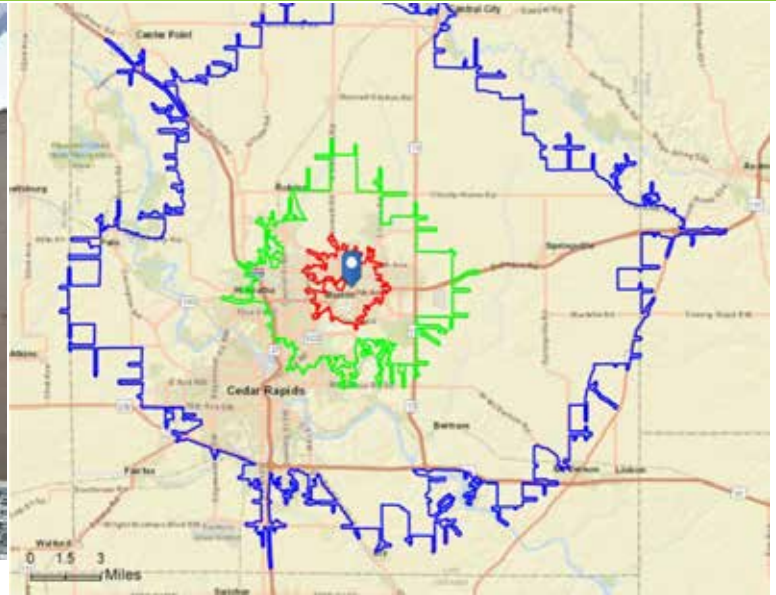


8 Reasons To Do Business in Marion



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The Marion Market



MARKET SNAPSHOT Esri 2019

Marion, a Main Street Iowa community, is taking a pro-active approach to planning for the future prosperity of the community's traditional downtown business district.

The efforts of Uptown Marion and its partners are working to generate interest and invite members from all sectors of the community to participate. The Main Street Iowa Market Study and Strategies service engages the market itself – community members, area residents, business persons and other stakeholders – to gain an understanding of local and regional market conditions and trends impacting the district's position in the market and opportunities for the future.

This Market Snapshot, prepared as a first step in Main Street Iowa's Market Study and Strategies service and process, highlights and summarizes demographic, lifestyle and retail data, characteristics and trends in the marketplace. The information, along with market insights to be explored during the project's ensuing phases, provides groundwork, benchmarks and direction for local downtown transformation strategies and activities.



Marion is a Main Street Iowa community.

The mission of the Main Street Iowa Program is to improve the social and economic well-being of Iowa's communities by assisting selected communities to capitalize on the unique identity, assets and character of their historic commercial district.



POPULATION

197,061

20 MINUTE DRIVE TIME | 2018
2018—23 GROWTH: 1.0%

Population	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
2018 Estimate	21,973	82,707	197,061
Growth (2018-23)	0.95%	1.05%	1.00%

i Est. State Pop Growth (2018-23) 3.2%



DAYTIME POP

207,912

20 MINUTE DRIVE TIME | 2018
DAYTIME CHANGE: +10,851

Daytime Population	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
Total Daytime Pop	21,551	83,453	207,912
Workers	10,726	41,806	108,297



HOUSEHOLDS

80,449

20 MINUTE DRIVE TIME | 2018
2018—23 GROWTH: 0.95%

Households	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
2018 Estimate	9,225	34,140	80,449
HH Growth (2018-23)	0.86%	0.95%	0.95%

i Est. State HH Growth (2018-23) 3.0%



MEDIAN HH INCOME

\$61,588

20 MINUTE DRIVE TIME | 2018
2018—23 GROWTH: 1.37%

Median HH Income	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
2018 Estimate	\$64,780	\$65,892	\$61,588
Growth (2018-23)	1.62%	1.72%	1.37%

i 2018 State: \$56,647 | 2018-23 Growth: 8.7%



HOUSING UNITS

2018 HOUSING UNITS SUMMARY

Housing Units	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
2018 Estimate	9,800	36,188	86,046
- Owner Occupied	71.5%	68.5%	68.3%
- Renter Occupied	22.6%	25.9%	25.2%
- Vacant	5.9%	5.7%	6.5%
Estimated State Percent Vacant (2018)			9.1%



TENURE AND MORTGAGE

HOUSEHOLDS BY TENURE AND MORTGAGE STATUS

2010 Tenure/Status	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
Owner Occupied	74.4%	70.6%	71.7%
— With Mortgage	54.2%	51.6%	51.3%
— Free and Clear	20.2%	19.1%	20.4%
Renter Occupied	25.6%	29.4%	28.3%



DIVERSITY

2018 DIVERSITY INDEX

Drive Time Households	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
2018 Diversity Index	23.6	29.1	30.2

The Diversity Index summarizes racial and ethnic diversity. The index shows the likelihood that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, belong to different race or ethnic groups. The index ranges from 0 (no diversity) to 100 (complete diversity).



\$35,056

PER CAPITA INCOME
5 MINUTES | 2018

10 Minutes	\$35,639
20 Minutes	\$33,724
State	\$30,363



38.6

MEDIAN AGE
5 MINUTES | 2018

10 Minutes	37.4
20 Minutes	38.1
State	38.9



97.2%

2018 EMPLOYED
5 MIN. CIVILIAN POP 16+

10 Minutes	97.4%
20 Minutes	96.9%
State	97.0%



2018 EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

2018 Employed 16+	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
Total Estimate	11,306	41,748	98,898
- White Collar	64.1%	67.4%	64.8%
- Services	16.3%	15.0%	14.7%
- Blue Collar	19.5%	17.7%	20.6%

Esri's Community Tapestry is a geodemographic segmentation system that integrates consumer traits with residential characteristics to identify markets and classify U.S. neighborhoods. Tapestry Segmentation combines the "who" of lifestyle demography with the "where" of local geography to create a classification with 67 distinct behavioral market segments (Tapestry Segments).

Top Drive Time Area Esri Tapestry Segments



Rustbelt Traditions (5D) | #1

5 Minutes		10 Minutes		20 Minutes	
HHs	Percent	HHs	Percent	HHs	Percent
2,376	25.8%	3,931	11.5%	9,884	12.3%

Rustbelt Traditions residents are a mix of married-couple families and singles living in older developments of single-family homes. While varied, the work force is primarily white collar, with a higher concentration of skilled workers in manufacturing, retail trade, and health care. They represent a large market of stable, hard-working consumers with modest incomes. Family oriented, they value time spent at home. Most have lived, worked, and played in the same area for years.

Avg. HH Size: 2.47

Median Age: 39.0

Med. HH Income: \$52K

- ▶ Most have graduated from high school or spent time at a college
- ▶ Watching television is a common pastime
- ▶ Read newspapers
- ▶ Budget aware shoppers
- ▶ Favor American-made products
- ▶ Residents are connected; entertainment activities like online gaming are common



Soccer Moms (4A) | #3 / #1—10 minute DT

5 Minutes		10 Minutes		20 Minutes	
HHs	Percent	HHs	Percent	HHs	Percent
1,189	12.9%	5,344	15.7%	5,344	15.7%

Soccer Moms is an affluent, family-oriented market with a country flavor. Residents are partial to new housing away from the bustle of the city but close enough to commute to professional job centers. Life in this suburban wilderness offsets the hectic pace of two working parents with growing children. They favor time-saving devices. Like banking online or housekeeping services, and family-oriented pursuits. They are connected, with a lot of wireless devices from iPods to tablets—anything that enables convenience, including paying bills and shopping online. Most households are married couples with children where family-oriented purchases and activities dominate their spending.

Avg. HH Size: 2.97

Median Age: 37.0

Med. HH Income: \$90K

- ▶ 40% are college graduates
- ▶ Most households have 2 or 3 vehicles for long commute time
- ▶ Own minivans and SUVs
- ▶ Carry a higher level of debt
- ▶ Outdoor activities and sports are popular activities
- ▶ Are well insured and invested

Information on Esri Tapestry methodology and applications, along with descriptions for Tapestry's 67 segments, are available from the Esri website at: <http://doc.arcgis.com/en/esri-demographics/data/tapestry-segmentation.htm>

Reaching Higher



Private Development

Squaw Creek Crossing

On the corner of HWY 151 and HWY13, Squaw Creek Crossing is a large mixed-use development with over 20 acres of retail, hospitality, commercial, and residential uses. Current tenants include Dupaco, Kwik Star, Pizza Ranch, Pancheros, and an apartment complex. Commercial and lot spaces are still available.

Tower Terrace Development

The Tower Terrace Road Corridor bisects Marion's high-growth residential neighborhoods, providing fresh opportunities for neighborhood retail, commercial, and office development. This emerging arterial connects neighborhoods and four high-growth communities. Commercial and lot spaces are still available.

Broad & Main

Broad & Main is a full-block redevelopment in the center of the Uptown District that will include two multi-story buildings. The north building will contain first-floor commercial and two floors of residential. The south building will include residential, adding multiple housing options and styles to the Uptown District. The current strip mall on this site is slated to be demolished in the fall of 2020 for construction to begin in spring 2021.

Prospect Meadows

Prospect Meadows is a baseball and softball complex northeast of Marion. In May 2019, the facility celebrated a ribbon cutting and grand opening for the nine fields in the first phase of the project. The complex hosts local league play and weekend tournaments, drawing teams from across the Midwest. Located just south of County Home Road and east of Highway 13, the over 120-acre complex will feature 17 fields - including one Miracle Field, specially built for people with disabilities - at full build out. The project is unique to Marion and positions the community and metro area as a destination for sports tourism. It also demonstrates regional collaboration - with involvement from multiple cities, Linn County, Linn County Conservation District and Perfect Game USA. More than 120,000 people are expected to visit the complex annually.

Marion Iron Site

In 2015, developer GLD Properties LLC secured \$1 million in brownfield/grayfield tax credits to support the cleanup and redevelopment of the site that was once home to industry and several abandoned railroad lines. The redeveloped site includes a Marriott TownePlace Suites, Starbucks, Your Pie Restaurant, and First Federal Bank. It also includes a roundabout connecting the two merging thoroughfares through the corridor. (See photos on page 7). Commercial and lot spaces are still available.

Community Projects

Uptown Master Plan

The Uptown Master Plan is currently in the works and includes multiple phased projects to improve the Uptown District. The plan includes a streetscape redesign for 7th Avenue and select adjoining streets between 7th Street and 26th Street. The plan also calls for a pedestrian plaza within Marion Square Park and along 11th Street. Streetscape renovations are expected to kick-off in the spring of 2021.

New Marion YMCA

The construction of this new facility has been many years in the making, and will host both YMCA and City of Marion Parks & Recreation programming. The new 75,000 square foot facility will feature expansive fitness and multi-use space for programming and classes for all ages. The building will also have a six-lane lap pool, a warm water pool for water aerobics and swimming lessons, two racquetball courts, three full-size basketball courts, community gathering space and more. The new Marion YMCA will serve thousands of Marion residents and surrounding communities with its convenient location on the Tower Terrace commercial corridor making it regionally accessible. This project is expected to be complete in early 2021.

New Library

The Marion Public Library is in the process of designing a new library building to be constructed on a full block site known as the Katz Block, which is adjacent to the current library and City Hall. The project is anticipated to be 50,000 square feet split between two floors. Key features include a rooftop patio, meeting rooms, studio and teen spaces, and a culinary demonstration kitchen. This project is expected to be complete in 2022.

New Fire Station

Sited in a rapidly growing area of Marion along Tower Terrace Road, the City's third fire station and new headquarters will be built with the firefighters' physical and mental health in mind. It will include decontamination areas and a stress-lowering design. The station will be 20,000 square feet and include the Fire Department's administrative offices, housing for 12 firefighters and three engines. Also on the land, officials plan a retention pond that doubles as a place for ice-rescue training. The new fire station will improve response times and reduce the number of times all units are out on call. This project is expected to be complete in early 2021.

Uptown Artway

The ImaginArt in the Alley project, now referred to as Uptown Artway, has given an under-utilized alley in the Uptown district new life. The space features nine, permanent public art installations and serves as the perfect pedestrian destination with new restaurants, pubs, gathering spaces, and lighting to illuminate the night scene. This project was completed in 2017.



Financing & Incentives



While these are the most often used resources, this list just scratches the surface for what is available through local, state & federal programs.



LOCAL Financing Resources

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing is available to qualifying businesses that generate new property taxes through either new construction or substantial renovation of their current facility. New property taxes created through capital investment are rebated back to your company over an agreed upon period of time.

Small Business Revolving Loan Fund

The purpose of the City of Marion and Marion Chamber of Commerce Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) is to provide business creation and expansion assistance for small businesses located within the City of Marion boundaries. The RLF supports a diversified economy including small locally owned businesses in the retail, office, services, nonprofit, and food markets.

SBA Loans

504 Program - The SBA 504 loan program provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and buildings.

Micoloan - The Microloan Program provides small, short-term loans to small business concerns and certain types of not-for-profit child-care centers. The maximum loan amount is \$50,000, but the average microloan is about \$13,000.

State & Federal Programs

High Quality Jobs (HQJ) program - This program provides qualifying businesses assistance to off-set some of the costs incurred to locate, expand or modernize an Iowa facility. This flexible program includes loans, forgivable loans, tax credits, exemptions and/or refunds. The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) offers this program to promote growth in businesses, which employ Iowans in jobs defined as high-quality by state statute.

Brownfield / Grayfield Tax Credit Programs - Brownfield sites are abandoned, idled or underutilized industrial, or commercial properties where real or perceived environmental contamination prevents redevelopment. Grayfield sites are abandoned public buildings, industrial or commercial properties that are vacant, blighted, obsolete, or otherwise underutilized.

Workforce Housing Tax Credits - This program provides tax benefits to developers to provide housing in Iowa communities, focusing especially on projects using abandoned, empty, or dilapidated properties.

Historic Tax Credits - The State Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program provides a state income tax credit for the sensitive, substantial rehabilitation of historic buildings. It ensures character-defining features and spaces of buildings are retained and helps revitalize surrounding neighborhoods.

Uptown Resources

These Resources are specific to development and businesses located within the Uptown Marion Main Street District(see page 10).

Challenge Grant

Through the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) a competitive construction grant is available for projects nominated by an accredited Iowa Main Street District. This grant is for the rehabilitation and build out of businesses within the district and has been a transformative tool for some of the most prominent buildings to date. Past projects include the renovations for the Uptown Snug, Brick Alley, Urban Pie, and upper story housing in the historic Marion hotel.

Sign & Awning Grant

Owners and/or tenants of existing commercial buildings within the Uptown Marion District are eligible for a sign or awning grant. Signage is often the final piece of the puzzle for businesses before opening and can be a costly expense. This grant is in place to encourage elevated signage to add to the vitality and uniqueness of Uptown.

Open 4 Business Competition

Open 4 Business was developed by Main Street Iowa and the Iowa Economic Development Authority, to help provide local financial and technical support for business retention and expansion efforts within each Main Street district. The Open 4 Business competition is an opportunity for businesses to receive free seed financing and business support to grow business in Uptown Marion.

Community Catalyst Building Remediation

The Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program assists communities with the redevelopment, rehabilitation, or deconstruction of buildings to stimulate economic growth or reinvestment in the community. Projects must demonstrate a catalytic affect on the area that stimulates additional investment and growth.

Here to help.

This is a small list of the many resources available to developers and small businesses! Local, state, and federal incentives can be confusing and finding what your project/business qualifies for can be a challenge. We're here to help navigate that process and work with you through those applications.

Marion has a number of local financial institutions dedicated to building community and supporting local small businesses. The Marion Chamber of Commerce can connect you with the local financial institutions that fit your needs.

From financing to choosing the right location, we're here to walk you through the process.



All About Location



Marion, Iowa

Marion's location offers easy access to some of the biggest cities in the Midwest. A four-hour drive will take you from Marion to Minneapolis, Chicago, Omaha, or Saint Louis. We're right next door to Cedar Rapids, the second-largest city in Iowa with a population of over 130,000. Marion residents enjoy the relaxed atmosphere (and short commutes) of a small town with convenient access to big city amenities.

Historic Uptown Marion

Marion has beautifully designed neighborhoods, but we're more than a bedroom community. We have a vibrant and culturally rich downtown that's home to small businesses offering unique services, gifts, food, drinks, and entertainment.



Marion Enterprise Center

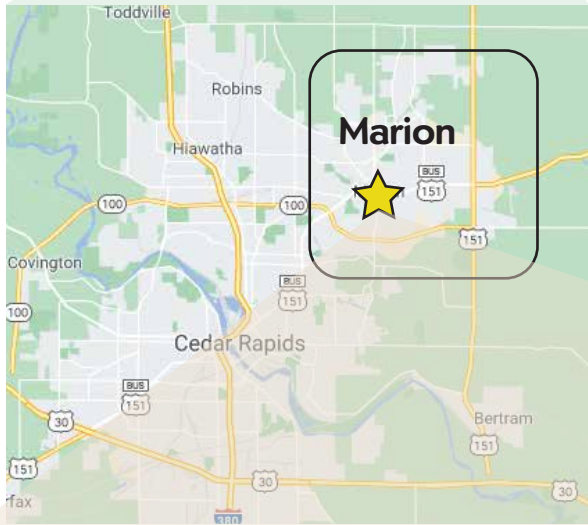
The Marion Enterprise Center (MEC) is a certified 184-acre business park located near north-south state HWY13 and along east-west HWY151. Each site within the park has sanitary sewer, water, and storm sewer in place. In addition, the park has gas, electric, and fiber optics installed and ready to meet your demands.

The Marion Enterprise Center provides direct fiber connectivity to a world-class data center that offers an environment for the highest speed and most demanding data users. Our Marion Enterprise Network delivers a competitive advantage to companies needing high-volume and high-speed connectivity.

Marion Airport

The Marion Municipal Airport opened in 1963 as a privately owned airport. Over the years, the runways have been paved and lengthened with hangars regularly added to accommodate growing demand. In the spring of 2015, the City of Marion purchased the airport as it transitioned to a hybrid public-private ownership model. The City of Marion now oversees the administration, planning, and major capital improvements. The operations and maintenance of the airport is managed by LuxAir Aviation. LuxAir also operates and oversees aircraft maintenance, private hangar rental/sales, fuel sales, and other operational functions. P&N Flight & Charter School at the Marion Airport offers instruction for Private Pilot License, Instrument Rating, Commercial License and Certified Flight Instructor designations.





Did You Know?

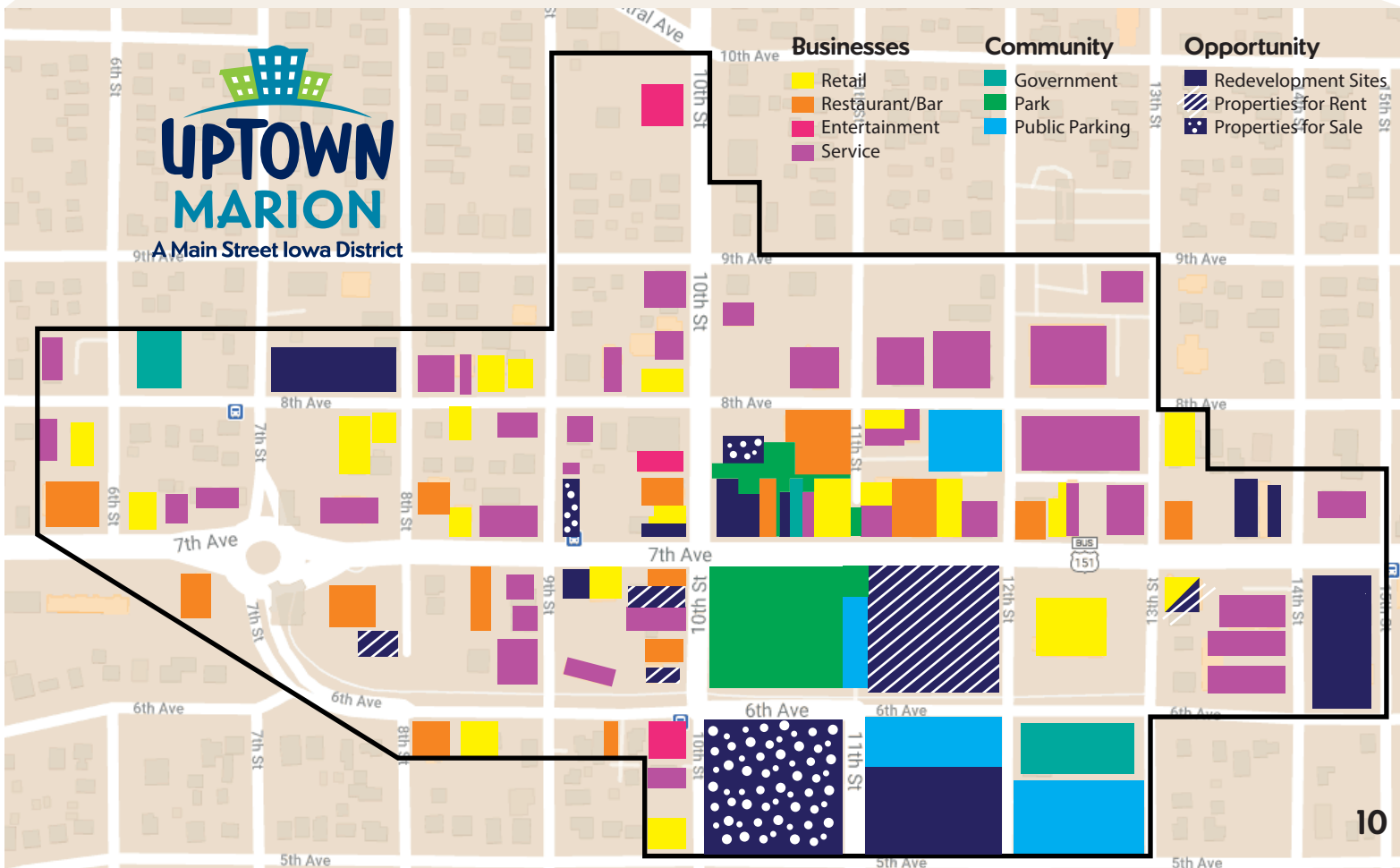
Marion manufactured products can be found in 70 countries around the globe.

Compared to other states, Iowa ranks high for businesses on utilities pricing, corporate income tax, low crime rate, and home values. We think you'll find Iowa quite attractive!

Our cost of living is below the national average. That keeps costs low and helps your business be more profitable.

Our community and region are leaders in innovation across the industries of: Insurance & Finance, Food & Bio Processing, Biotech & Medical Technologies, and Engineering & Automation

The region provides you with a highly trained workforce at a competitive cost compared to other nationwide locations. Plus, our population has increased by over 7% in just the last six years.



Your Marion TEAM



LOCAL Business Support

Marion Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO)

Marion Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO) is the community's development corporation that supports primary employers and developers focused on all types of multi-family, commercial, and industrial development. MEDCO is an investor supported organization with a team of professionals working every day to make Marion, Iowa the best place to grow your business.

Contact: Nick Glew | 319-743-4724 | nick@medcoiowa.org

Marion Chamber of Commerce

The Marion Chamber of Commerce works hard for your business and for the community we serve. The Chamber supports policy laser focused on creating the BEST business climate and the BEST quality of life. The Marion Chamber strives to provide its members value through strong communication, exceptional member benefits, and community leadership.

Contact: Jill Ackerman | 319-743-4721 | jill@marioncc.org

Uptown Marion Main Street

Uptown Marion Main Street's mission is to drive continued revitalization, growth, and preservation of historic character through appropriate design, promotion, and economic strategies that improve our community. The Uptown Organization is a subsidiary of the Marion Chamber of Commerce and spans over 20 square blocks of Marion's historic commercial core.

Contact: Brooke Prouty | 319-743-4726 | brooke@marioncc.org

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The Kirkwood Center collaborates with federal, state, local, and private resources to ensure maximum benefit to its clients. Its expert, confidential, and free business counseling is available in Benton, Jones, and Linn counties and includes business planning, financing options, market research, loan proposal assistance, business growth strategies, new business guidance, business succession strategies, and business disaster counseling.

Contact: Scott Swenson | 319-377-8256 | scott.swenson@kirkwood.edu

City of Marion

The goal of our city council, our city administrators, and our economic development partners is to continue to develop Marion as a business-friendly community while working with our school districts (two of the finest in the state), churches, service organizations, and citizens to ensure we continue to offer our residents the quality of life they value.

Contact: Amal Eltahir | 319-743-6357 | aeltahir@cityofmarion.org

Regional Business Support

Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance

The Economic Alliance collaborates with the business community and other stakeholders and partners, including local municipalities and entities, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Iowa Chamber Alliance to develop a local, state and federal policy agenda. We then provide a unified voice to advocate for pro-business and pro-growth issues key to our members and the region.

ICR IOWA

ICR IOWA is a nonprofit organization launched in 2017 by the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance and the Iowa City Area Development Group. This joint venture was developed to ensure the Iowa City-Cedar Rapids (ICR) region prospers through community-aligned business attraction and workforce development. Partners include the seven counties of Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington.



State Business Support

Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)

The Iowa Economic Development Authority's (IEDA) mission is to strengthen economic and community vitality by building partnerships and leveraging resources to make Iowa the choice for people and business. Through two main divisions – business development and community development – IEDA administers several state and federal programs to meet its goals of assisting individuals, communities, and businesses.



Main Street Iowa/Main Street America

A division of IEDA, the Main Street Iowa program works with a select group of communities committed to exceptionally high standards for downtown economic development. As a Main Street America Coordinating Program, over 50 communities in Iowa are connected to a network of 40 programs across the country representing over 1,200 communities. Uptown Marion remains an accredited Main Street Iowa and Main Street America program.



U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

The Iowa District of the Small Business Administration is responsible for the delivery of the SBA's many entrepreneurial support programs and services to the 99 counties in Iowa, consisting of 2.9 million Iowans and some 240,000 small businesses.



SCORE East Central Iowa

SCORE is America's economic development engine, with a focus to create, grow, save and assist small business at no cost. SCORE East Central Iowa has 50+ counselors, representing 2,000 years of successful business experience in all disciplines.



The City of Marion



The City of Marion plans for the future by conducting studies and planning exercises. Find more at CityofMarion.com

See below for an example of the Central Corridor Plan.

City Of Marion

City of Marion (319) 743-6300 www.cityofmarion.org
 Community Development (319) 743-6320
 Public Services (319) 377-6367
 Water Department (319) 743-6310
 Police Department – non-emergency ... (319) 377-1511
 Fire Department – non-emergency (319) 377-8237
 Marion Public Library (319)377-3412 marionpubliclibrary.org

Community Partners

Marion Chamber of Commerce (319) 377-6316 www.marioncc.org
 Uptown Marion Main Street District (319) 743-4726 .. www.uptownmarion.com
 MEDCO (319) 743-4724 www.medcoiowa.org

Utilities

Cable/Internet/Phone

Mediacom 1-866-550-8636
 CenturyLink 1-888-618-0678
 ImOn Communications 1-319-298-6484
 Windstream Holdings 1-866-445-5880

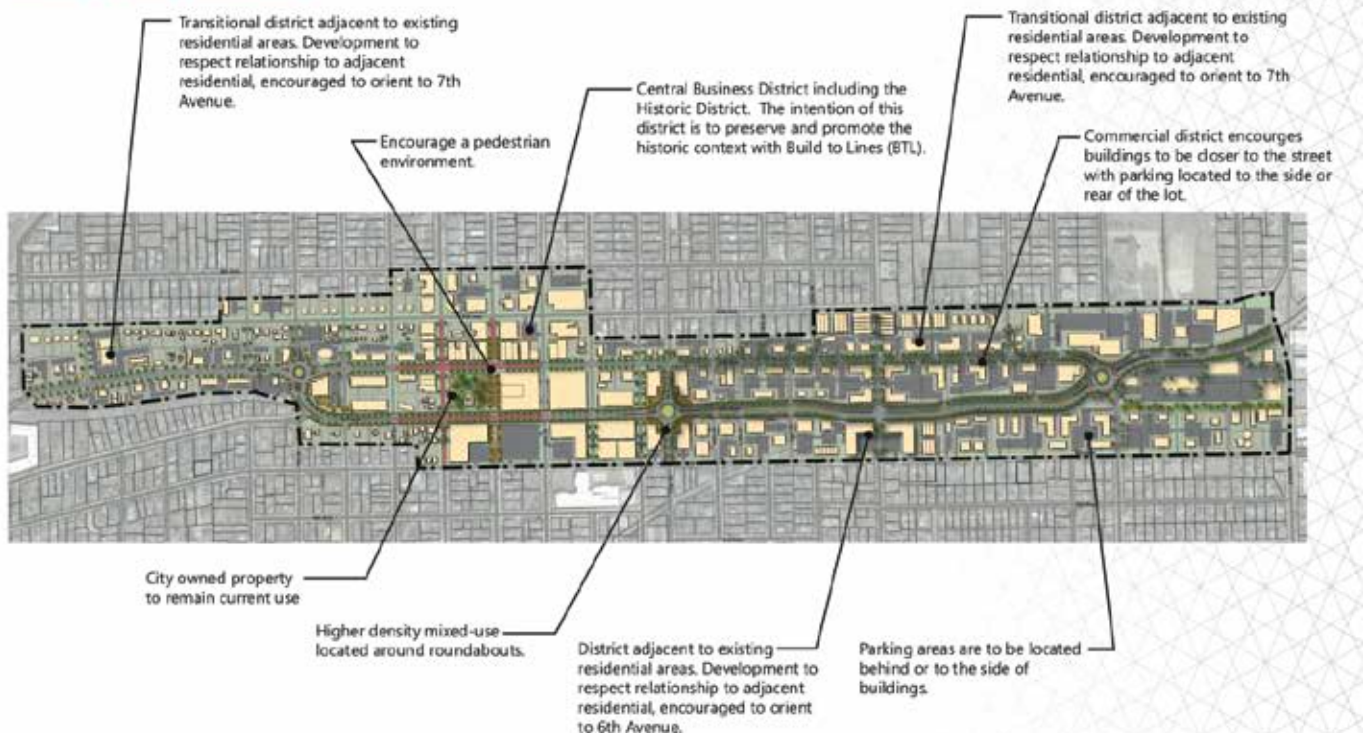
Electric

Alliant Energy 1-800-255-4268
 Linn County REC 1-800-332-5420

Natural Gas

MidAmerican Energy 1-888-427-5632

CENTRAL CORRIDOR ILLUSTRATIVE



City of Marion Vision for the Future

Our Vision

Marion is a forward-thinking city with vibrant neighborhoods and abundant opportunities for all residents, businesses and industries.

Our Promise

Marion is the best place in Iowa to raise a family and grow a business. Here, we reach higher!

Amid unprecedented growth and change, our city government, schools, the business community, non-profit organizations, and residents are collaborating to identify the right opportunities to build the community we all desire. In the coming years you'll hear more and see a renewed focus on:

Creating a Vibrant Community > a community that is accessible, attractive and open to all community members and visitors; one that aligns to having a high quality of life in Marion.

Efficient and Effective Government > a fiscally responsible city government, makes investments in employees, and is accountable and transparent in its practices.

Economic Opportunity > a community that provides for excellent job opportunities, attracts and retains quality businesses, and engages in partnerships and services that allow for ongoing growth in Marion.

Sustainable Infrastructure > a community that invests in roads, water, and sewer facilities and creates a long-term approach to maintaining the physical infrastructure for residents and visitors.

Safe Community > a city that is considered safe for residents and visitors to the community.

To view the complete Strategic Plan including goals, strategies, and completion dates visit CityofMarion.org

Award-Winning Schools

Marion is home to two of the premier public school districts in the State of Iowa. With an average graduation rate of 95%, our schools equip students with an education allowing them to continue on to postsecondary education or enter the workplace with skills to meet the 21st century economy.

For more information on Linn-Mar Community Schools, visit linnmar.k12.ia.us.

For more information on Marion Independent School District, visit marion-isd.org.



Community Promise is a talent retention program based in Marion that is led by Marion Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO). The program connects students to careers in the community. Throughout the school year, MEDCO staff visits with middle and high school students to share opportunities and next steps towards career pursuit. Learn more at communitypromise.org.



Community Events

Spring

Marion Meeple Meetup

@ Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center

What better way to spend winter nights than to play board games?

Be a Force of Nature

@ Lowe Park, Marion Public Library

Learn practical tips for saving money and reducing your carbon footprint in your home, yard, and community.

Coffeehouse Night

@ Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center

Enjoy acoustic performances in a relaxed coffeehouse type atmosphere. Coffee, cocoa and pastries are available for purchase.

City Showcase

@ City Square Park

Big trucks, fun activities, and helpful information to showcase City services.

Marion Arts Festival

@ City Square Park

The Marion Arts Festival presents 50 artists, offering fine art and fine crafts. Join friends old and new in City Square Park for the free, family-friendly event.

Moonlit Movie Series

presented by GreenState Credit Union
@ Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park

Join the Marion Parks and Recreation Department for free outdoor family fun. Bring your blanket or lawn chair and enjoy kids activities.

Marion by Moonlight

presented by Farmers State Bank
@ City Square Park

Gather your people, a cooler and some lawn chairs and kick back in City Square Park to enjoy live music compliments of Farmers State Bank.

Sunrise Yoga

@ Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park

Enjoy free outdoor yoga each Saturday morning.

Participants should bring a yoga mat or towel and water.

Marion BBQ Rendezvous

@ Lowe Park

Enjoy food and fun hosted by the Marion Metro Kiwanis Club.

Marion Community Band Concerts

@ City Square Park

Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy a nice summer evening listening to our great community band!

Uptown Marion Market

@ City Square Park

This festival-style market features more than 50 vendors of fresh produce, baked goods, and artisan items.

Music Under the Moon

presented by Veridian Credit Union
@ Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park

Enjoy live music at the beautiful Lowe Park amphitheater. Bring a blanket, cooler, and lawn chair.

Messy Art Days

@ City Square Park

Kids get to create fabulous works of art and your kitchen doesn't pay the price! Local artists will host up to five messy art stations.

Picnic on the Prairie

presented by Marion Arts Council
@ Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park

Come be inspired by music, art, and the beautiful outdoors. Bring your picnic basket, blanket and lawn chair.



Summer

Marion Farmers' Market

@ Taube Park

Visit your neighborhood farmers' market each Saturday through the summer. Find produce, baked goods, meats, wine and more.

Music in the Artway

@ Uptown Artway

This unique venue is the perfect place to start the weekend and support local artists and businesses. Relax on a neighboring outdoor patio or bring your own chairs.

Tiny Fair presented by Hills Bank

@ Uptown Artway

Join in family-friendly summer fun in the Artway with this free miniature fair.

Fireworks & Fireflies presented by Hanna Plumbing & Heating

@ Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park

Marion's new patriotic celebration featuring live music, food trucks, and fireworks. Bring a lawn chair, blanket and cooler.

Eat. Drink. & Be Marion. Food & Pub Crawl Fundraiser

@ Uptown Marion

Enjoy a night out on the town sampling drinks, food, and local entertainment all across the Uptown District. Ticket and auction proceeds benefit the ongoing revitalization and beautification of Uptown Marion.

Marion Big Band Concerts

@ City Square Park

Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy classic 30's & 40's Big Band hits!

Great American Kites presented by Summit Pointe

@ Lowe Park

A brand-new event for Marion! Enjoy hands-on activities and impressive overhead displays.

National Night Out

@ Thomas Park

Join in this annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie.

Uptown Getdown

@ City Square Park

The best way to wind down the dog days of summer! Grab your chairs and coolers and meet your neighbors for music and food in the park.



Fall & Winter

Uptown Fall Fest & Dog Fashion Show

@ Uptown Marion

What could be better than shopping and dressed-up dogs? Don't miss the Dog Fashion Show in the Uptown Artway.

Swamp Fox Festival

@ Uptown Marion and Lowe Park

Join in the celebration of Marion's heritage at the Swamp Fox Festival. A pancake breakfast, 5K/10K, parade, the Fall Marion Market, entertainment and more!

Chocolate Walk

@ Uptown Marion

Enjoy strolling historic Uptown Marion at this after-hours shopping event. Visit your favorite stores, discover what's new just around the corner and savor sweet treats along the way.

Small Business Saturday

@ Uptown Marion

The Uptown Marion District invites you to kick-off the holiday shopping season by shopping small!

Christmas in the Park & Peppermint Walk

@ Uptown Marion

Enjoy horse drawn carriage rides, hot cocoa and popcorn, holiday music, and the lighting of the Peace Tree.

Why Marion?



In addition to the thriving business economy, development opportunities, great schools, vibrant historic district, and events, Marion has even more to offer.

Rich in Arts and Culture

Marion is creating a legacy for the future founded in high-quality, relevant and engaging public spaces. Look no further than the Uptown Artway, featuring nine permanent public art installations in a revitalized alley, or the Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park, a functional work of art itself. The City and its community partners host dozens of free concerts and events each year.

Prioritizes Healthy Living

The City of Marion maintains 600 beautiful acres of public green space, with plenty of manicured parks, trails, and athletic complexes to make it easy to get out and get active. Marion also has programming such as yoga in the park and other activities planned throughout the year to get you moving!

Activities for All

From youth to seniors, Marion has something for everyone. Marion has 21 parks, 81 pieces of playground equipment, three splash pads, and an inclusive playground. The Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center is home to free senior activities on a daily basis where senior residents have access to community programming that fits their needs. The Encore Café, a senior meals program, is a one-stop shop for nutrition, health education and socialization time with friends. In addition, the new Marion YMCA will feature electric assisted tricycles for seniors to enjoy the many bike trails in Marion in 2021.

Opportunities to Get Involved

From boards and commissions to leadership training and volunteering with the City of Marion, Chamber and MEDCO, Marion has countless opportunities to get involved, develop new skills, and make your voice heard. Soliciting community feedback and input is vital in shaping the future of the City of Marion.



ImagiNEXT

In 2007, Marion embarked on a community-wide visioning project that developed eight ideas to enhance the quality of life and create a strong identity for Marion. Six of those projects have been completed, and the final two (a new library and YMCA) will be completed in 2020.

In 2017, Marion started a new visioning project, called ImagiNEXT. Out of 3,000 submitted ideas, a resident selection committee chose the Future 4 projects:

- **Just Keep Swimming** - New aquatic options and amenities
- **The Heart of It All** - Enhancements to Marion's historic district
- **Creekside Pride** - Recreation and educational enhancements to Indian Creek
- **It's the Little Things** - Policies and ideas that have a big impact

Marion is Award-Winning

All-Star Community

Marion is a back-to-back All-Star Community! Boasting one of only three Iowa communities recognized by the Iowa League of Cities for its innovative efforts in urban renewal, collaboration or quality of life improvements in 2017, 2018, and 2020. In 2017, the Klopfenstein Amphitheater for the Performing Arts at Lowe Park was recognized. In 2018, the community won the award for the Uptown Artway place-making project. In 2020, the Prospect Meadows Sports Complex was recognized.

One of the Best Small Cities in America

Marion landed in the top 10 percent of Best Small Cities in America according to WalletHub in the fall of 2017 and 2018, and in the top 12 percent in 2019. WalletHub's analysts compared more than 1,200 U.S. cities with populations between 25,000 and 100,000 based on 40 key indicators of livability. They range from housing costs to school-system quality to restaurants per capita. Marion secured the number two spot among all 1,200 communities for lowest housing costs.

An Iowa Great Place

In July 2018, an effort led by the Marion Chamber of Commerce resulted in our community being re-designated as one of Iowa's Great Places. The program celebrates communities with a bold vision for the future and supports the development of new and existing infrastructure.

A Livability Award-winning community

In June 2018, Marion was one of 20 cities to be honored at the City Livability Awards Program. The award recognizes programs that improve the quality of life in America's cities. Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly accepted the award for the Uptown Artway place-making project.

A Healthy Hometown

In November 2016, Marion was presented with a Healthy Hometown powered by Wellmark Award by the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative. The award recognizes Marion for its dedication and accomplishments toward meaningful health improvement initiatives.

A Resilient Community

The City of Marion sustained widespread damage as a result of the severe storms and strong winds, known as a Derecho, that moved through Eastern Iowa on August 10, 2020. Winds were clocked at up to 140 mph causing damage to nearly every structure and tree in Marion and the entire metro area. Community leaders swiftly assessed the damage and orchestrated a response while neighbors banded together to do what they could to help the community recover. The destruction left behind by the Derecho was unfathomable but the true face of Marion shone brightly as the community united around a common purpose and shared humanity. Marion has made significant progress in cleaning up the debris and beginning repairs to structures. Learn more about the response at CityofMarion.org.



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**REACH HIGHER
WITH US!**