

February 26, 2026

**Debi Durham**

Director

Iowa Economic Development Authority

Iowa Finance Authority

***Transportation.  
Infrastructure.  
and Capitals  
Budget  
Subcommittee***





**BUSINESS**

**COMMUNITY**

**PEOPLE**

# Consumers Are Open to Relocating



**64%**

of U.S. adults seriously considered moving to a new place as a result of visiting

*“If we can get them to our location, we have a much better sell. They have to see the place to be convinced.”*

**7 in 10**

people are likely to consider moving for the right opportunity

*Likelihood is highest among*  
**30-somethings**

Top quality of life factors for considering a move:

- **Cost of living**
- **Safety**
- **Culture**

A person with blonde hair in a ponytail is seen from the back, paddling a kayak on a calm body of water. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden-orange light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The text "Quality Of Life" is written in a white, elegant serif font across the center of the image.

# *Quality Of Life*

#1

FOR LOWEST  
COST OF LIVING

CNBC, 2023

**Top Ten** STATE FOR  
**MILLENNIALS**

BASED ON QUALITY OF LIFE, AFFORDABILITY, SAFETY AND MORE

Real Simple, 2023

NEARLY

**53,000**

ACRES OF IOWA'S LAND ARE FOR  
**RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

IOWA RANKS

#2

**IN THE U.S.**  
FOR OPPORTUNITY

U.S. News & World Report, 2025

IOWA HAS MORE THAN  
**80** STATE  
PARKS

**2,300**  
MILES OF TRAILS

**2,000**  
COUNTY PARKS, CITY PARKS  
**NATURAL AREAS AND TRAILS**

**18,000 MILES**  
OF NAVIGABLE STREAMS



# Destination Iowa

- Provides grants to help communities move forward on transformational, shovel-ready, vertical infrastructure projects that create or expand existing primary destinations
  - Primary destinations are natural, man-made, cultural, recreational or educational attractions that drive visitors to an area
- Projects will attract visitors and new residents to the state, stimulating economic development and bolstering the quality of life in Iowa's communities
- Since the state's Destination Iowa program funding was authorized in FY 2024, IEDA has awarded \$16,055,000 leveraging \$143,211,930 in total investment

North Iowa Trail System, Mason City



Linn Creek District Development, Marshalltown

Lightline Loop, Cedar Rapids



Contact: Alaina Santizo at [alaina.santizo@iowaeda.com](mailto:alaina.santizo@iowaeda.com) or 515.348.6162

**Budget: \$10 million**

# Herbert Hoover Presidential Library & Museum Renovation

## Overview

- Closed for major renovation beginning January 2025
- Reopening planned for Summer 2026
- Project will deliver a more immersive, modern visitor experience



## Project

- Major Renovation: First comprehensive update in 30+ years, including gallery transformations, expanded lobby, and a new exterior façade
- Immersive Experience: Interactive, technology-enhanced exhibits telling the story of Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover
- Expansion: Adding 2,200 sq. ft. for educational programming and larger gathering spaces



**Budget: \$3 million (Governor's Proposal)**

# Community Attraction & Tourism

- Provides grants to assist projects that improve recreational, cultural, entertainment and educational attractions and enhance the vitality of the region and state
  - Projects must be primarily vertical infrastructure – construction, major renovation, site development and recreational trails



Chris Larsen Park Riverfront Development, Sioux City



Hiawatha Public Library

## Statewide impact of CAT grants

Cities impacted: 300

Grant assistance: \$222.4 million

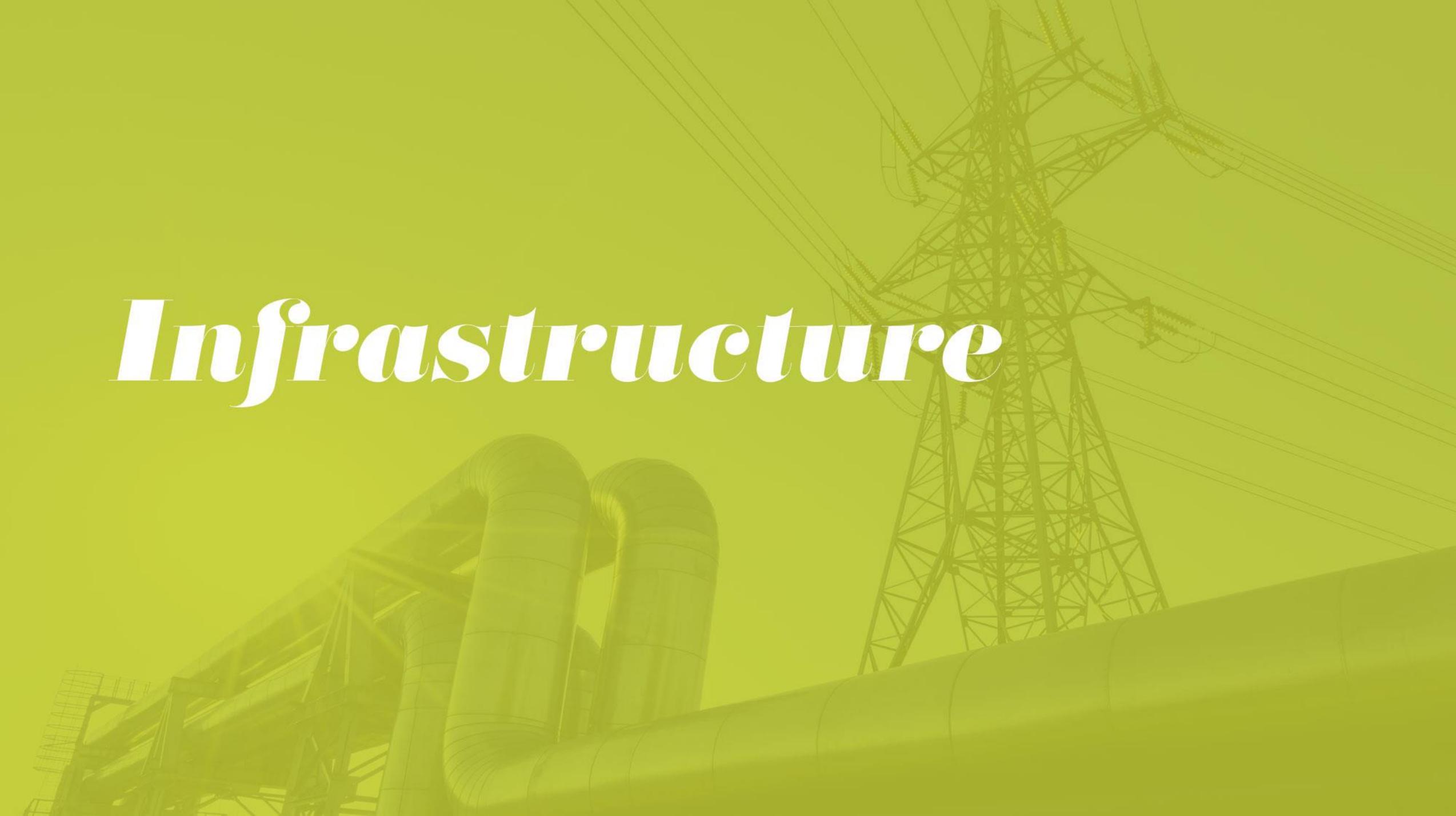
Counties impacted: 98

Leveraged investment: \$1.9 billion

Contact: Alaina Santizo at [alaina.santizo@iowaeda.com](mailto:alaina.santizo@iowaeda.com) or 515.348.6162

**Budget: \$10 million**

# *Infrastructure*



# State Housing Trust Fund (SHTF)

Roosevelt  
School  
Apartments,  
Clinton



The SHTF helps ensure decent, safe and affordable housing for lowans

- For every \$1 of the SHTF, \$1.38 in other financing has been leveraged, totaling \$189 million in other investments through FY 2025
- \$136.4 million has been awarded through the SHTF since its inception in FY 2004 through FY 2025



Hilltop II Apartments,  
Des Moines

North View Apartments,  
Wyoming (Jones County)



501 Project,  
Iowa City

Contact: Terri Rosonke at [terri.rosonke@iowafinance.com](mailto:terri.rosonke@iowafinance.com) or 515.452.0440

**Budget: \$3 million**

# Local Government Shared-Services Grant Program – Governor’s Proposal

- Fund managed by the IEDA
- Eligible entities: counties, cities, townships, special districts
- Supports consolidation of positions and shared-service agreements
- Grants may cover implementation, transition, or service elimination costs
- Unused funds do not revert; interest remains in fund
- IEDA to adopt rules for competitive grant awards
- \$10 million allocation

**Budget: \$10 million (Governor’s Proposal)**

# Strategic Infrastructure Program

Provides assistance for projects that:

- Develop commonly utilized assets that provide an advantage to one or more private sector entities
- Create necessary physical infrastructure in the state, for projects not adequately provided by the public or private sectors

## **BioMADE – *Critical Biomanufacturing Infrastructure***

- U.S. Department of Defense Manufacturing Institute focused on advancing bioindustrial manufacturing
  - \$40M Investment: Public-private partnership between BioMADE, Iowa State University and State of Iowa
  - 15,000 sq. ft. pilot-scale facility at ISU's BioCentury Research Farm
- Advanced Capabilities:
  - Multi-user fermentation systems (5,000L & 10,000L)
  - Wet/dry labs and downstream processing
- National Impact:
  - Addresses critical U.S. scale-up gap
  - Enhances supply chain resilience and national security



**Budget: \$10 million (Governor's Proposal)**



# *Tourism*

# *Creative*

235+

creative assets, including video, audio, carousel, story, static and native

# *Custom*

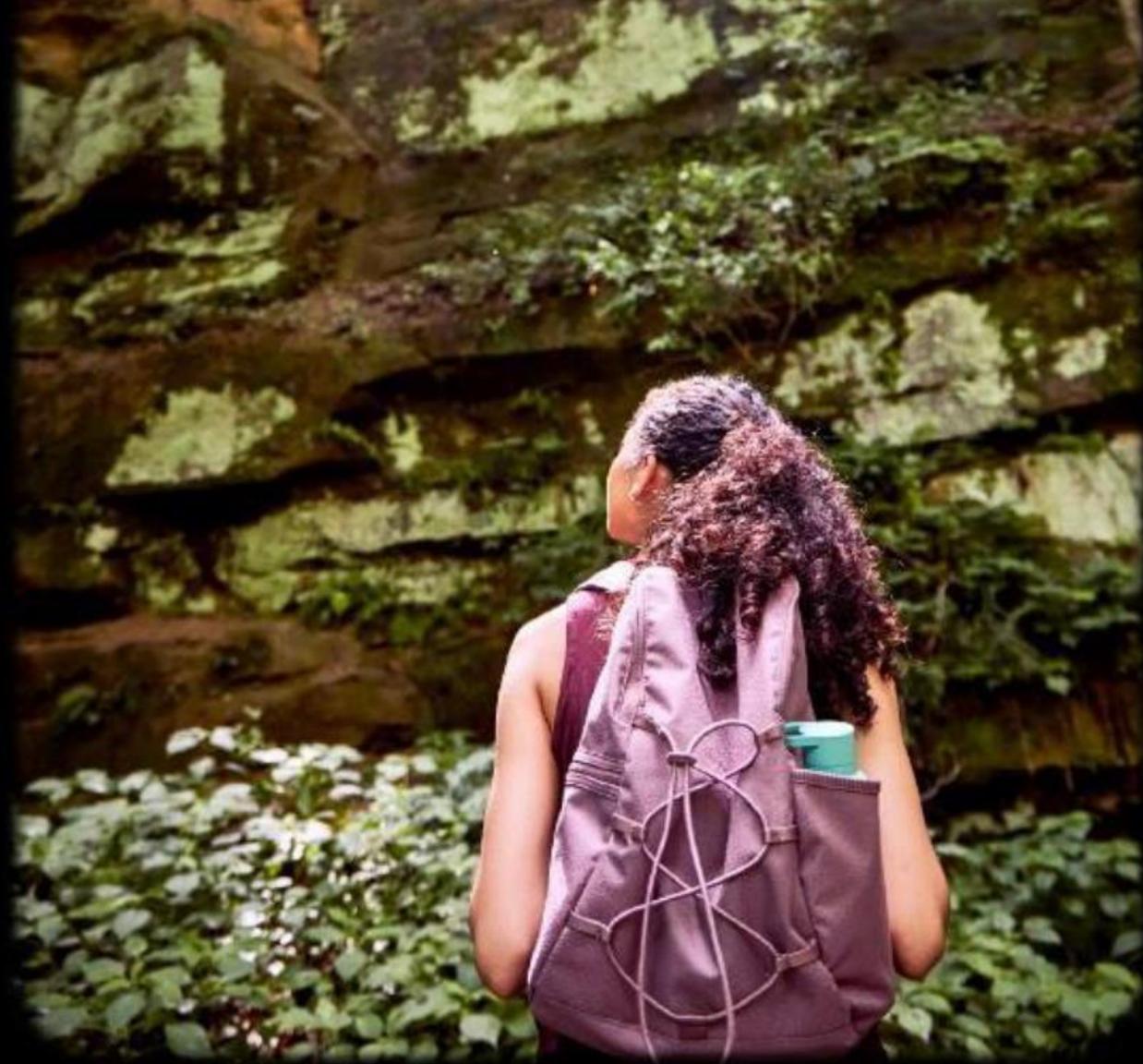
photography captured on-site in Iowa and use repurposed footage/visuals

# *Representation*

across all travel areas

# *Launch*

New Give it Time platform



**GIVE IT** *time*

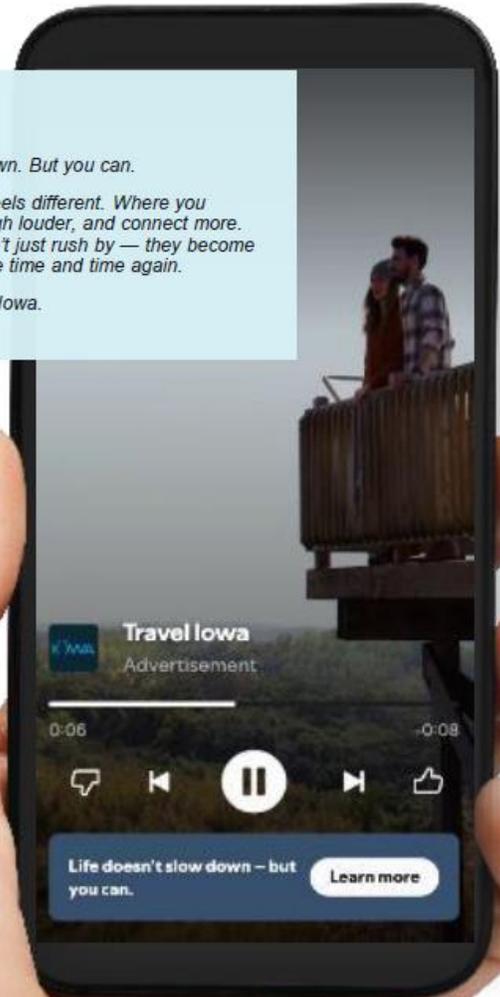
# Summer

**Audio:**

*Life doesn't slow down. But you can.*

*This is where time feels different. Where you breathe deeper, laugh louder, and connect more. These moments don't just rush by — they become the stories you share time and time again.*

*Give it Time. Travel Iowa.*



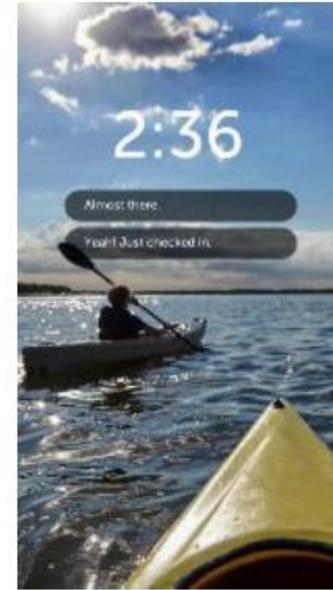
[9:16 – Full Video](#)



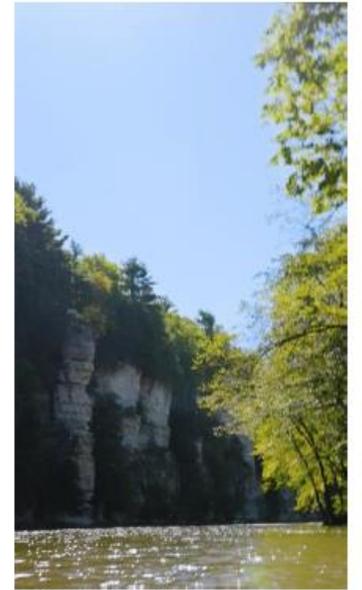
[16:9 – Full :30 Video](#)



[9:16 – Full Video](#)



[9:16 – Full Video](#)



ASMR Sample  
(Embedded)

# Fall

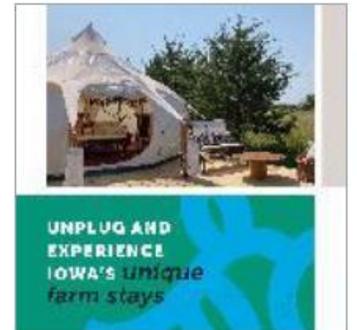
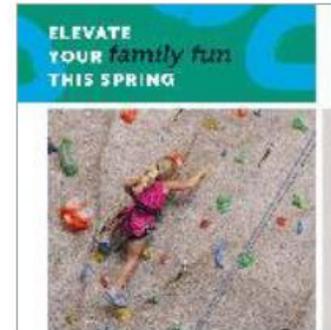
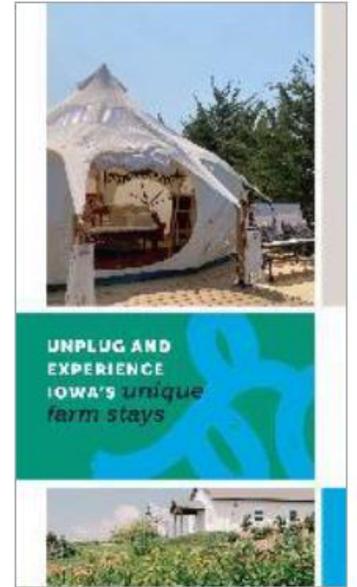
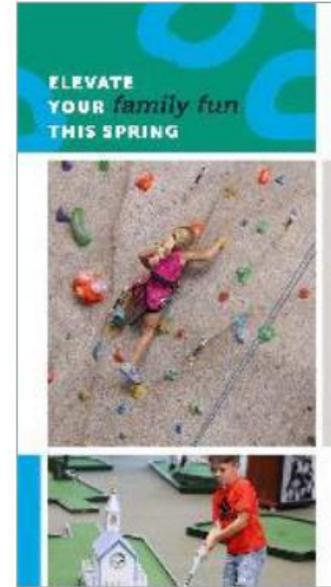
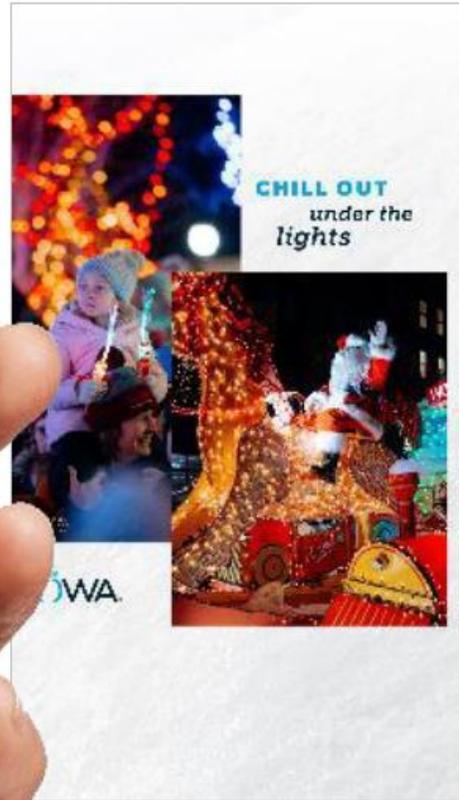
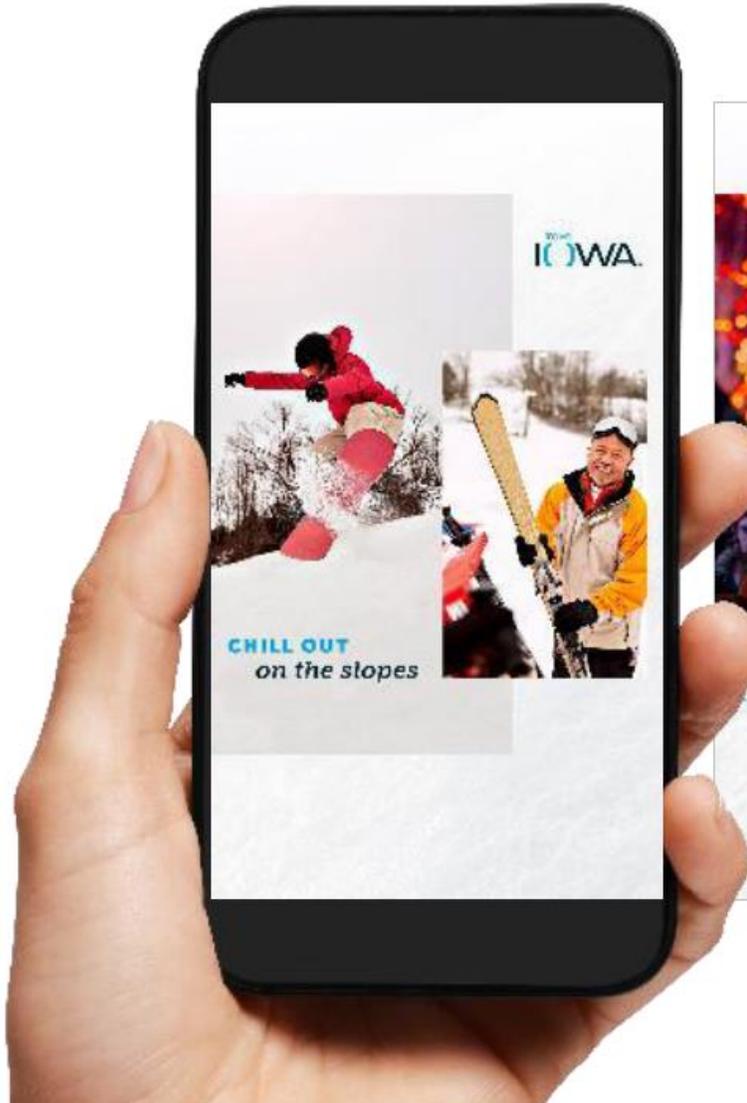
ISU Flythrough Video (Embedded)



Display Ad Samples



# Winter / Spring



# High Level Paid Media Results

Hotel revenue  
driven by paid ads

**\$8.1m**

Hotel revenue measured since  
January 2025

Website sessions  
& engagement

**558k** Web  
sessions

**41.8%** Engagement  
rate

Give It Time  
Creative

**9.5x ROI**

statewide hotel revenue /  
media spend

Launch of AI travel  
agent:

**13.6K**

Messages to Goldie  
since launch in May 2025



# Economic Impact of Tourism 2024



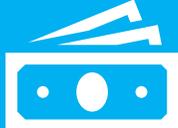
## VISITOR SPENDING

**\$7.5 billion**

direct visitor spending

**\$11.2 billion**

Total economic impact



## TAX REVENUE

**\$1.2 billion**

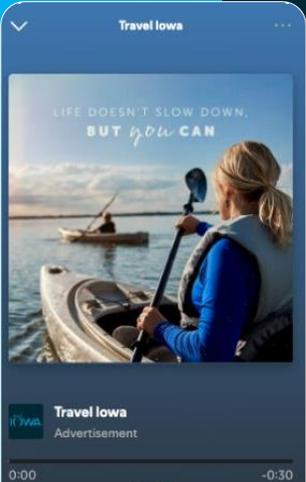
State & local tax revenue

**\$615 million**

State tax

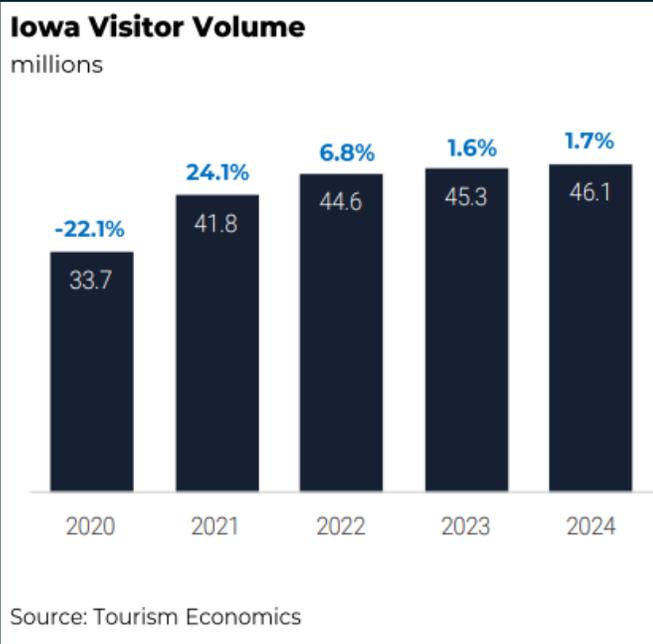
**\$543 million**

Local tax



## VISITOR VOLUME

Iowa welcomed 46.1 million estimated visitors in 2024.



# Film Rebate Program

- Rebates to qualified production facilities creating qualified productions in Iowa that provide:
  - Overall long-term positive impact to the state
  - Education, training and recruitment opportunities to residents
- Production facilities may apply for funding for more than one qualified production
  - Maximum rebate of 30% on eligible expenses
- Awarded funds will be paid as a rebate after the project is completed and all contractual requirements have been met
- Application window is open through March 16, 2026

# Major Events & Tourism Program Update

- Created to help secure distinctive, tourism-oriented events, including athletics, conventions and cultural events
  - Events must select a location via a competitive bid process
  - Events should promote overnight stays, enhance the state's tourism economy, intend to draw attendees from more than 50 miles away and elevate Iowa's reputation as a desirable destination for future events
- Funds will keep Iowa communities competitive and strengthen offers to major events and meeting hosting requirements laid out in event RFPs
- Timeline
  - Rules approved by IEDA board – February 2026
  - Rolling application period, pre-apps due April 1, 2026
  - Expected first awards made – May 2026

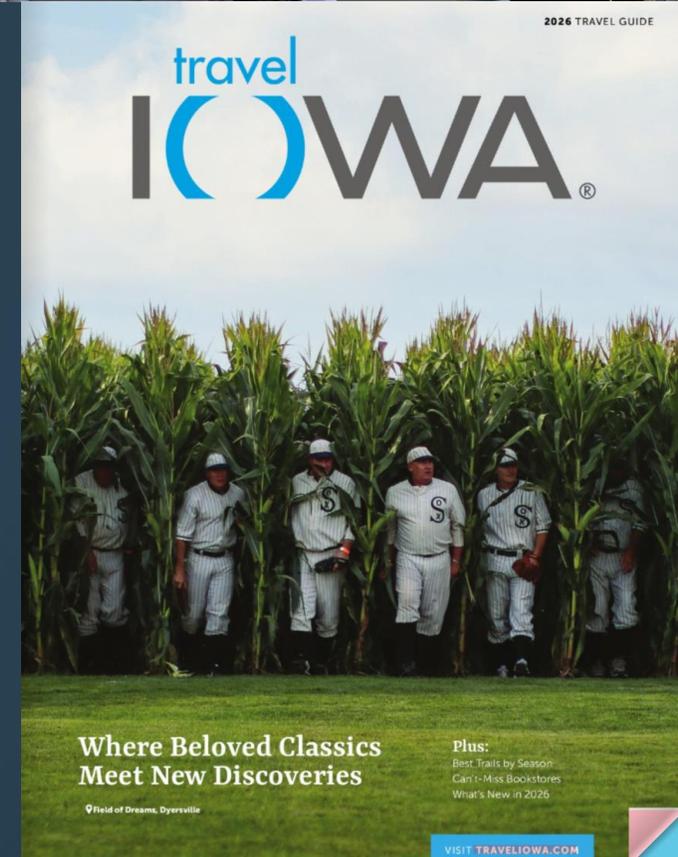
# International Marketing Efforts

- Tradeshow activations for 3 years running at IPW and IITA, developing relationships with inbound tour operators, marketing companies and international journalists.
  - Launched trade hub website in January, [tour.traveliowa.com](http://tour.traveliowa.com)
- Secured contracts for hotel and bus companies in Iowa totaling \$1m+
- Several Iowa placements in UK trade publications.
  - 436% increase in organic search traffic from UK
  - 1016% increase in organic search traffic from Ireland



# Good Morning America Features Iowa

- **50 States in 50 Weeks Activation**
  - Features on Iowa Winter Games and Iowa Raptor Project
  - Iowa in 90 Seconds video
- **Iowa Travel Guide**
  - Available on website, Iowa DOT rest areas and partner welcome centers.
  - Features on Lincoln Highway, cultural destinations, fishing in Iowa, farm stores and more



Where Beloved Classics  
Meet New Discoveries

Plus:  
Best Trails by Season  
Can't-Miss Bookstores  
What's New in 2026

Field of Dreams, Dyersville

VISIT TRAVELIOWA.COM

# Thank You

## Debi Durham

Director  
Iowa Economic Development Authority  
Iowa Finance Authority  
debi.durham@iowaeda.com

## Amy Zeigler

State Tourism Manager  
Iowa Economic Development Authority  
amy.zeigler@iowaeda.com

## Deanna Triplett

Chief Legislative Policy Strategist  
Iowa Economic Development Authority  
deanna.triplett@iowaeda.com



Iowa Economic Development Authority  
Iowa Finance Authority