



STEELE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION AGENDA

Administration Center - 630 Florence Avenue – Owatonna, MN 55060

*Steele County's Mission:
Driven to deliver quality services in a respectful and fiscally responsible way.*

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024 AT 4:00 PM
County Boardroom, Steele County Administration Center

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Director of Human Resources position vacancy
3. Other Business

Presentation

Owatonna Tourism Update & Southern MN Tourism Appropriation Request
Owatonna Chamber of Commerce
Glenda Smith, Director of Conventions & Tourism

Adjourn

Disclaimer: This agenda has been prepared to provide information regarding an upcoming meeting of the Steele County Board of Commissioners. This document does not claim to be complete and is subject to change.



OWATONNA
where the extra mile takes you

2024 Tourism Update



Branding

Community Wide Branding Initiative- started January 2023

- January-10 focus groups
- February -April- 2000 community surveys completed
- 300 consumer awareness & perception surveys completed
- May-August- Creative Process
 - June- Community Creative Workshop
- September- Committee makes recommendation
- October- Brand Adopted
- November- Rollout begins

Community Wide Branding Initiative- Complete October 2023



▪ HISTORIC DOWNTOWN ▪
OWATONNA



Community Wide Branding Initiative- Complete October 2023





Billboards



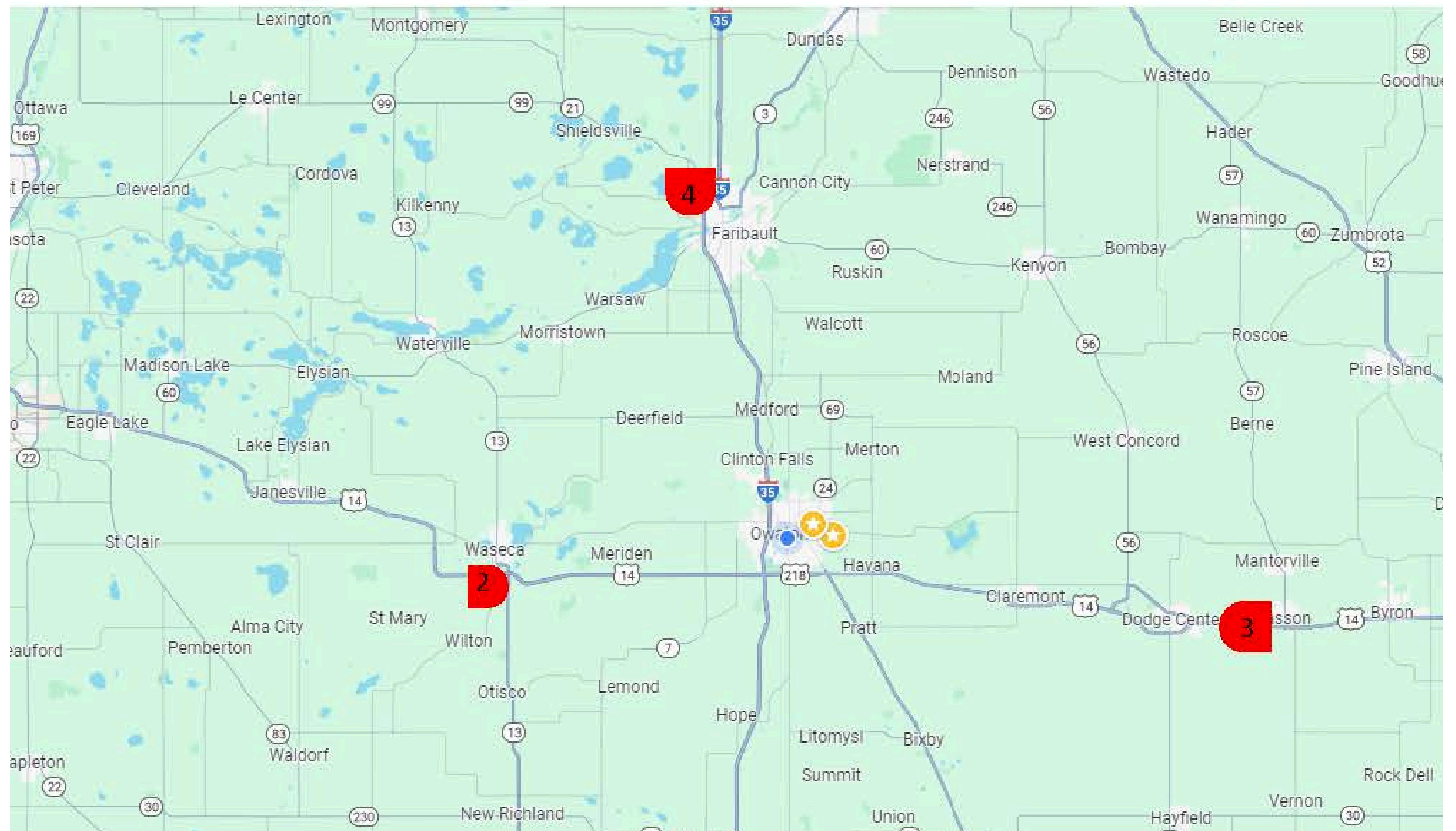
Shop & Dine



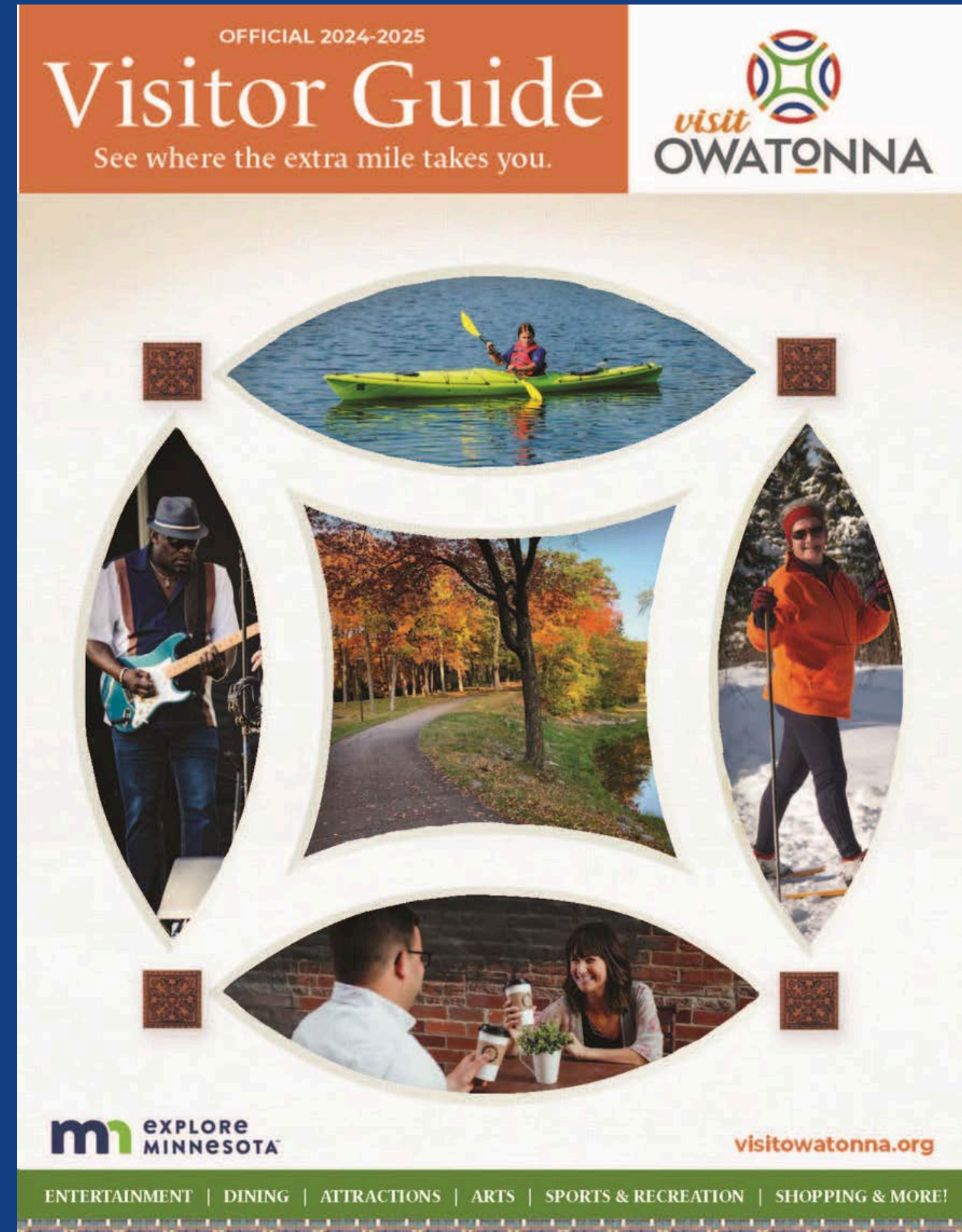
Digital I-35 near
Revol Greens-
North Facing,
viewed traveling south



Digital I-35 near
Faribault; North Facing,
viewed traveling south



Visitor Guide



For a current
**calendar of
events**, see
visitowatonna.org

Annual EVENTS



YEAR-ROUND WAYS TO CONNECT & CELEBRATE THE SEASONS

Bold & Cold Winter Festival & Winter Weekend Out January 20-26, 2025

Owatonna's Winter Bold & Cold Festival is a chance to spend a winter weekend out packed with events, a snow sculpture competition, luminary walks, rock on ice skating to music and other fun activities.

North American Farm and Power Show March 14-16, 2024

Held at the Four Seasons Centre in Owatonna for more than 20 years. This is a great show for farmers and families alike. tradexpos.com

KOWZ & KRUE Home & Recreation Show March 22-24, 2024

Stop by the Four Seasons Centre for all of your home and recreation needs! kowzfm.com



Farmers Market in Central Park Saturdays May-October 7am-12pm

Stop by Central Park every Saturday during the summer to pick up fresh vegetables, flowers and fun hand-crafted items from more than 80 vendors.

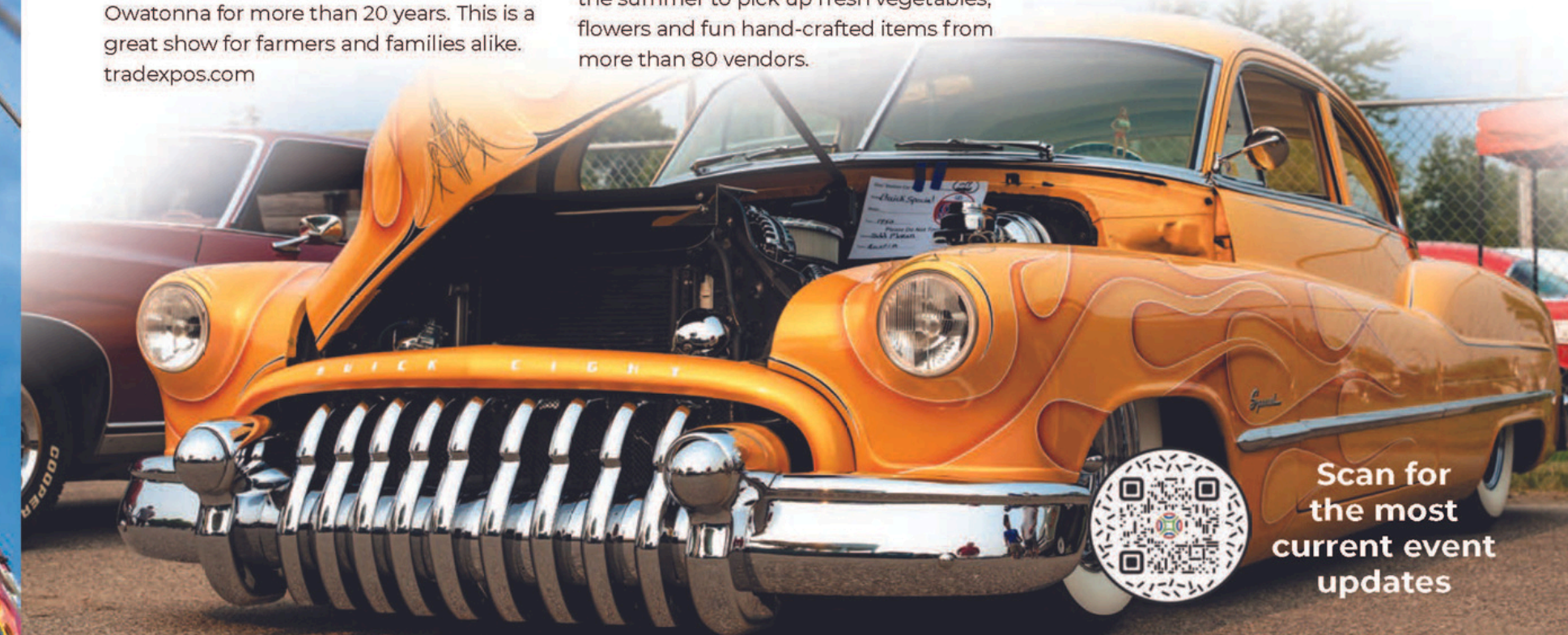
Corky's Early Bird Softball Tournament May 3-5, 2024

This slow-pitch softball tournament is one of the largest and most competitive men's softball tournaments in the country. Held at the Steele County Fairgrounds Softball Complex and various fields throughout Owatonna and Faribault.

Rustic Mamas' Market Summer Craft Show May 4, 2024

A weekend of new local makers, artisan and craft vendors inside the Four Seasons Centre. Grab your bestie and spend the day shopping while enjoying an adult beverage and music. There will be food trucks on site.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22



**Bold & Cold
Winter Festival**

**North American
Farm and
Power Show**



**Corky's Early
Bird Softball
Tournament**

MORE INFORMATION

For a current calendar of events with event details, see visitowatonna.org or owatonna.gov



**Extravaganza
at the Village of
Yesteryear**



**Harry Wenger
Marching Band
Festival**



**Juneteenth
Celebration**



**Smokin' in
Steele**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

Downtown Thursdays June 6, July 11, August 1 and September 5

There's no better place to be on a Thursday night than Downtown Owatonna. Once a month, June-September a night of music, food, shopping and activities brings the community together, while welcoming visitors to Owatonna. owatonna.org

Smokin' in Steele May 31 - June 1, 2024

A smokin' good time! Kansas City Sanctioned BBQ Competition and Live Blues benefits the local chapter of the Special Olympics. smokininsteele.com



Owatonna Motor Company Summer Series - Cutting Horse Competitions

May 17-19, June 14-16, July 5-7
Enjoy this modern equestrian competition, where a horse and rider are required to separate a single cow from a herd of cattle. The cutting horse has its roots in the historic cattle ranching industry, where horses with specialized cattle-handling skills were crucial for the work of the cowboy. visitowatonna.org

Harry Wenger Marching Band Festival June 15, 2024

This festival showcases competitive high school marching bands and pays homage to the vision and work of the founder of Wenger Corporation, Harry Wenger. owatonnabandfestival.com

Juneteenth Celebration June 22, 2024

Celebrate African American history, culture and progress at Alliance for Greater Equity's Juneteenth Celebration with live music, food and games. allianceforgreaterequity.org

Chuckwagon Supper & Extravaganza

at the Village of Yesteryear

July 13-14, 2024

Enjoy a Sunday afternoon of music, food, historic demonstrations, antique tractor show and more during this family day of historically related fun. All buildings at the Village of Yesteryear will be open to visit. schsmn.org

Gem Days July 18-20, 2024

Celebrate Owatonna and it's natural features, beautiful buildings, history, legends, art, music, food and drink, local shopping, attractions and entertainment during this summer festival. owatonnabusiness.org



Summer Weekend Out July 19-21, 2024

The City commemorates National Parks & Recreation Month with free activities including a movie in the park, boat rentals at Lake Kohlmier and much more!

Steele County Free Fair August 13-18, 2024

Don't miss Owatonna's signature event – the largest county fair in the state of Minnesota! The fair offers a wide variety of events and attractions and admission is free! scff.org

Welcoming Week September 13-22, 2024

Owatonna joins Welcoming America, a nonprofit organization leading a movement of inclusive communities becoming more prosperous by ensuring everyone belongs, in this annual celebration to bring together neighbors of all backgrounds to build strong connections and affirm the importance of creating welcoming and inclusive places in the community. Visit owatonna.gov for

details regarding speakers and exhibits that are part of this informative and engaging event.



Rustic Mama's Fall Craft Show September 14, 2024

Comfy, cozy, spicy, pretty, yummy....all things fall/winter can be found inside. There will be food trucks and, of course, hand-picked talent from area vendors. Grab that flannel, your crew and come say hey!

State School Orphanage Fall Festival September 21, 2024

Celebrate the history of the Minnesota State Public School Orphanage Museum at the West Hills Complex in Owatonna! The annual Fall Celebration includes tours of historic areas, screening of 1930 film, period lawn games and crafts, horse-drawn wagon rides, State School character re-enactors and a variety of other activities for the entire family! orphanagemuseum.com

Oktoberfest Festivities September & October

Celebrate with Mineral Springs Brewery as they kick off the season **September 20 & 21** under the big-top tent with games, competitions, music and entertainment, food and specialty brews highlighting the traditions of the German heritage. Dig out your lederhosen and dirndls, grab your steins and get ready for Oktoberfest! Foremost Brewing Cooperative continues Oktoberfest on **October 5** highlighting specialty brews and music into October.

November Bazaars

Bazaars galore happen during the month of November leading up to the holiday season. You'll find a weekend's-worth of shopping and activities.

Lighted Holiday Parade December 6, 2024

A chance to bundle up and head to Owatonna's renovated historic downtown for an illuminating experience showcasing dozens of floats. Starts at 6 pm and ends with Santa's arrival, carolers, a tree-lighting and hot cider in Central Park.

Hometown Holiday Weekend December 6-7, 2024

Owatonna's Hometown Holidays kicks of the season with the lighted parade December 6 & 7, and celebrations at the Steele County History Center and Village of Yesteryear that same weekend. Festivities happen throughout the month celebrating the season.

MORE INFORMATION

For a current calendar of events with event details, see visitowatonna.org or owatonna.gov.

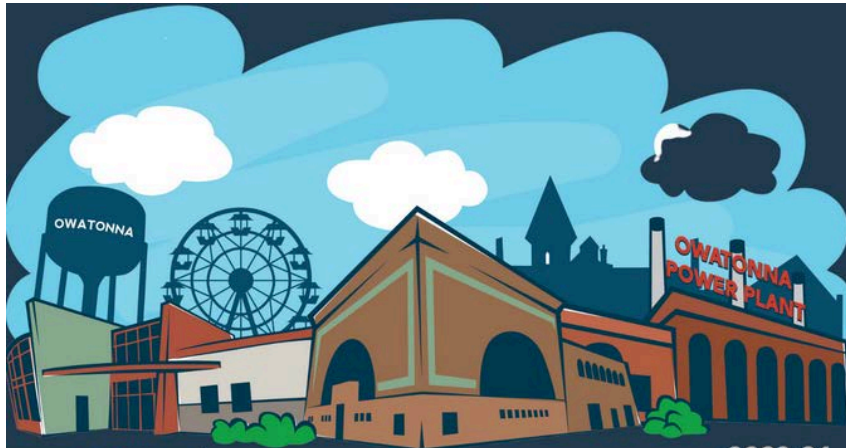


- **Local Hotels & Businesses**
- **Mall of America**
- **Minnesota Tourism Information Centers**
- **Welcome bags for group tours, visitors
and other special requests**



Special Promotions

Foster Community Pride



Celebrate
NTTW
NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM WEEK
May 7-13

2023-24

Visit Owatonna's sites & attractions

Tour our Town

Turn in your completed card between January 1 and April 30, 2024 to pick up your t-shirt! (while supplies last)
Share your photos on social media, using #visitowatonna, to be entered into a monthly drawing for Owatonna Chamber Dollars
Go to visitowatonna.org for details





Mark the date you visited these locations and turn in your completed card between January 1 and April 30, 2024 at the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce & Tourism. You will receive a t-shirt and be entered into a monthly drawing for Owatonna Chamber Dollars.

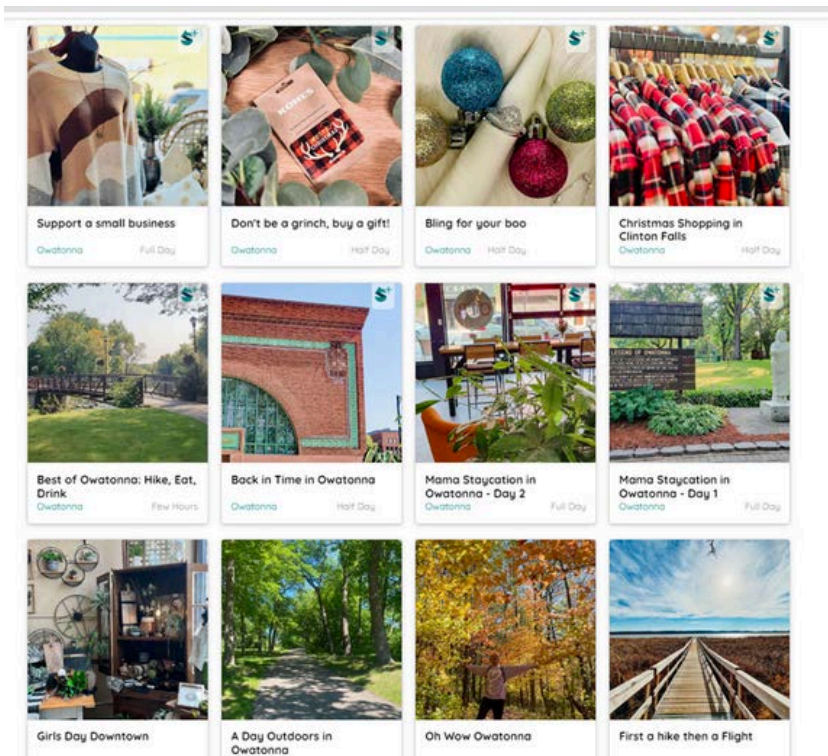
Stay a few days to fit it all in! Our clean, comfortable and affordable hotels will ensure a great experience while you are here! Scan the code to check them out.

For a list of all events in Owatonna go to: visitowatonna.org/calendar-of-events or scan this code:

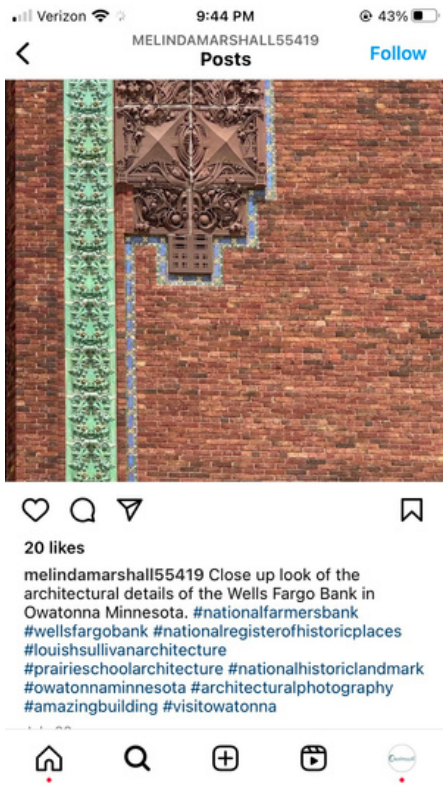


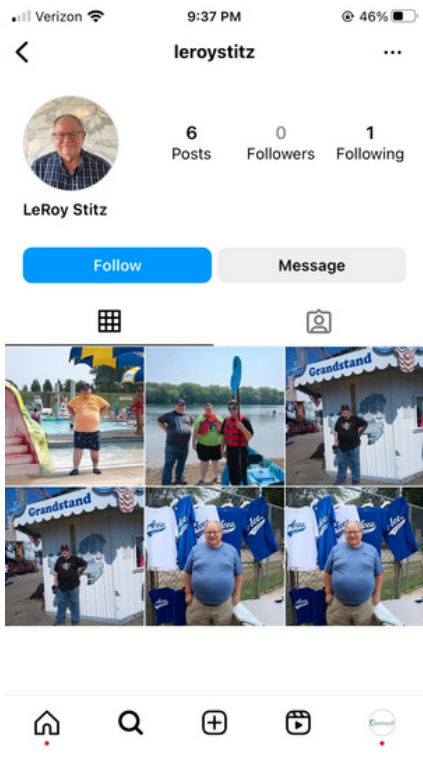
Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
120 South Oak Ave
new address (after May 18, 2023)

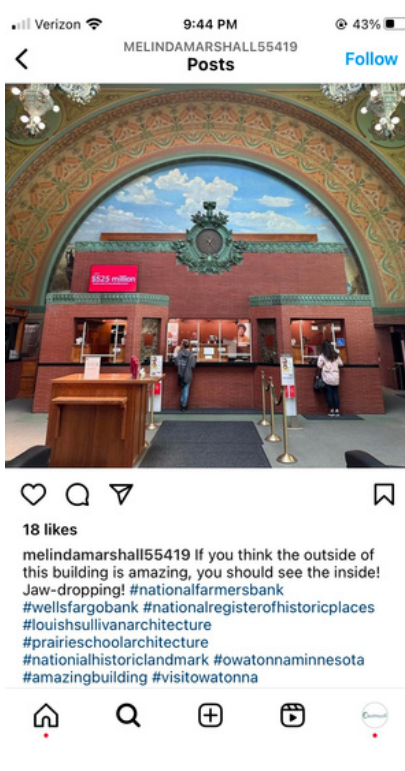
visitowatonna.org 807-451-7970















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MEETINGS MAGS.COM/MINNESOTA

MEETING NOTES Products, Places & Inspiring Ideas

Drinks at Torey's Restaurant & Bar in Owatonna

Owatonna at the Crossroads

The southern Minnesota city embraces its history, exudes friendliness, and offers so many places to gather

BY TODD R. BERGER

The name Owatonna is rooted in the Dakota words for the nearby Straight River, "Wakpá Owóthagna." The Dakota inhabited the region for centuries, traditionally hunting game and harvesting wild rice. European settlers arrived at the town of Owatonna in 1854, and the city was incorporated in 1858. From the late 1800s to 1940, Owatonna was known as the "Butter Capital of the World," and one creamery still operates in Hope, a town to the south of the city.

With a population of a little more than 26,000 people, Owatonna is a midsize city that offers historic buildings, event venues for up to 2,000 people, and welcoming locals who will embrace your event.

VIBE: The city is friendly and casual, and you will see this inherent nature in the staff at the hotels, venues, and restaurants. "It's just a great place for people to gather," says Glenda Smith, director of conventions and tourism for Visit Owatonna.

TRANSPORTATION: Owatonna sits at the intersection of Interstate 35 and U.S. Route 14. It is 60 miles south of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and 40 miles west of Frederick Douglass Greater Rochester International Airport.

HOTELS: The city has 513 hotel rooms, and a Home2 Suites by Hilton, opening in February, will add 84 rooms. A DoubleTree by Hilton, opening toward the end of this year, will add some 130 rooms. Current hotels include Baymont by Wyndham Owatonna; Country Inn & Suites by Radisson, Owatonna, MN; and Courtyard by Marriott-Downtown Owatonna.

RESTAURANTS: Torey's Restaurant & Bar has space upstairs for gatherings. Other group-friendly eateries include Timber Lodge Steakhouse, Spare Time Restaurant & Bar, and the Owatonna Country Club. Also worth checking out for group dining and catering are Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que, Foremost Brewing Cooperative, and Mineral Springs Brewery, which will add event space late this year.

MUST-SEES AND -DOS: The internationally known National Farmers' Bank of Owatonna building downtown was designed by Louis Sullivan, an influential architect of the Prairie School who was a mentor of Frank Lloyd Wright and later went on to build skyscrapers in Chicago, Illinois, and beyond. "Our downtown has gone through a lot of renovations in the last few years," says Smith. "Downtown has lots of fun boutique shopping and some 100-plus-year-old buildings. One thing that is also unique to our community is the Minnesota State Public School Orphanage Museum. It ran as an orphanage back in the 1800s, and it currently houses the Owatonna Arts Center."

visitowatonna.org/meetings

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE & LEFT): Courtesy, Visit Owatonna; Courtesy, Visit Owatonna; Courtesy, Visit Owatonna; Courtesy, Visit Owatonna; Courtesy, Visit Owatonna; Courtesy, Visit Owatonna

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- Regional airport
- Team-building opportunities
- Networking activities

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Midwest Meetings | Guide Book 2024

52

Bike & Hike Guide, MN Trails, Rova

Planning the perfect long weekend bike trip is a delicate thing. If your destination is too far away, you'll spend the whole trip just getting there; if it's not far enough from home, it barely even feels like a vacation. Here's a list to help make planning your next bike-led escape a little easier.

1. MESABI TRAIL
Built through the heart of the Iron Range, the 120-mile Mesabi Trail is defined by its scenic views of excavated earth and the manmade mountains you'll cycle across.
Speaking of mountains, the Mesabi Trail is a dream come true for cyclists who are inclined toward inclines. The trail is full of short, rolling hills that climb and descend the steep ridges of the region's iconic mining pits, delivering incredible Iron Range vistas at the top of every climb.
The trail starts at Grand Rapids then angles northeast through Colleraine, Keewatin, Chisholm, Mountain Iron and other Iron Range cities.

2. MISSISSIPPI RIVER TRAIL
There's nothing quite like stepping off a train and pedaling toward your next adventure. Bringing your bike on the Empire Builder Amtrak has never been easier. No more cardboard boxes, no more tools – just ride to the station, load your bike into the luggage car and let the train whisk you and your bike off to your next destination.
The Empire Builder has stations in four Mississippi River Trail towns in Minnesota, but only the St. Paul and Winona stops offer bike service to passengers. We recommend boarding in St. Paul and riding the train south to Winona. By starting your ride at the southernmost station, your bike trip back north will be entirely next to the river!
The southern section of Minnesota's MRT is defined by soaring river bluffs, exhilarating descents and spectacular riverfront scenery.

3. SAKATAH SINGING HILLS TRAIL
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Owatonna Area

Clinton Falls
NW 46th St
NW 30th St
NW 26th St
NW 24th St
NW 20th St
NW 18th St
NW 16th St
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New, Improved & Different

Interstate 35 and Highway 14 brings you to new adventures offering a variety of attractions and activities that are perfect for group tours. Here are some must-see places to consider for your itinerary:

- Steele County History Center & the Village of Yesteryear: This museum features exhibits on the history of Steele County, including its early settlers, agriculture and industry. The summer Extravaganza held in July gives an interactive experience of early settlers in the area.
- Owatonna State School Orphanage Museum: This historic orphanage dates back to the 19th century and operated until the 1940s. Visitors can take a guided tour and learn about the history of the facility and the lives of the children who lived there.
- Historic Walking Tour: Take a stroll through Owatonna's historic downtown district and learn about the city's rich history and architecture. Spend a few hours shopping the unique boutiques housed within the

district. The National Farmers Bank, a world-renowned architectural treasure, is a must-see on this tour.

- Mineral Springs Brewery and Foremost Brewing Cooperative: Break up your tour day with a local craft brew at one of these local

taprooms. Tours and tastings are available as well as live music, trivia and other events.

- Owatonna Parks and Trails: Enjoy the great outdoors with a visit to one of Owatonna's many parks and trails. From hiking to biking to fishing, there is something for everyone.

From live entertainment, to shopping downtown, or a step back in time, you never know where the extra mile will take you.

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Pike County Historical Society and Museum

Hours: Wed. & Sat.

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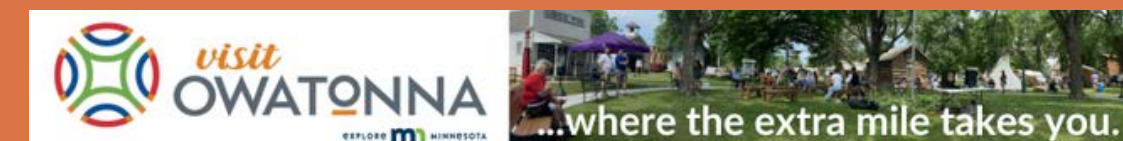
Minnesota Meetings & Events

Custom Eblast (May/June/July) & Featured Vendor (Jan/Feb/Mar)

Minnesota Trails



Retargeting Des Moines & Minneapolis (EMT Coop)



Target Audiences

Young Families (Late 20s to Mid 40s)

Heads of households and spouses, with or without kids, seeking:

- Career advancement in a market with a lower cost of living and/or better quality of life than nearby metros and regions
- A quality place to visit, with or without kids, that could eventually pique interest/consideration in a relocation

Owatonna High School and Steele County High School Graduates

Local graduates who are ideal to fill entry-level positions in key industries

Trailing Grandparents and Empty Nesters (55+)

Seniors who follow their children to:

- Take a new, pre-retirement job in Owatonna
- Live and retire in Owatonna
- Visit Owatonna on a regular basis

Key Messages

- Owatonna possesses a neighborly state of mind that values community contributions, creating a place of opportunity for families and workforce.
- Parks, trails, and outdoor recreation provide an amazing escape in any season.
- Strong sense of community with historical generosity all around.
- Great quality of life with less worry.
- The extra mile leads to your success.
- Your journey here becomes more remarkable thanks to the destination.



Fulfillment Pieces

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Owatonna
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HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

OWATONNA

NATIONAL

Louis H. Sullivan's

FARMERS' BANK

Jewel Box of the Prairie

WORLD-RENOWNED

Prairie School Architecture



OWATONNA | MINNESOTA

Historic

WALKING TOUR

of Owatonna



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HISTORIC WALKING TOUR OF OWATONNA

Past and present come together in Owatonna. On this self-guided walking or biking tour you will encounter and enjoy a blend of architectural styles from the late 1800s to early 1900s.

Highlights:

- The world-famous Louis Sullivan-designed bank
- The State School Historic District and Orphanage Museum
- Murals depicting Owatonna's history
- The beautiful Zamboni Building

YOUR GUIDE TO HISTORIC PLACES IN OWATONNA

4 Historic Downtown District

11 Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic District

12 Minnesota State Public School Historic District

Center Owatonna Map

15 Historic Residential

 **National Register of Historic Places**

 **Guided Tours Available**

Research provided by Nancy Vaillancourt. Photo credit to Greg Helgeson, Sh In The Dark Studio, Sky's the Limit Photography, Betsy Cole Photography, Studio 122 and Paquin Studio. Funding for this brochure provided by the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism. A special thanks to Owatonna residents and businesses for welcoming visitors into our community and neighborhoods.

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MEETING PLANNING GUIDE

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Community Partner Website: www.owatonna.com and www.goanextramile.com

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- New Resident Packets
- HR Recruitment Materials
- Economic Development Packets



OWATONNA
The heart of the heart of Minnesota

ABOUT OWATONNA



Located in Southern Minnesota

Owatonna is centrally and conveniently located at the crossroads of Highway 14 and I-35 in Southern Minnesota.



A community built to connect

In Owatonna, we believe in the power of working together and building strong connections. We're a tight-knit community where neighbors are friends, and friends neighbors.



Future focused with history in mind

Our city is a blend of tradition and progress, where the past echoes through our historic streets and the future beckons with innovation and opportunity.

Owatonna Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
120 South Oak Avenue, Owatonna, Minnesota 56006, United States
507.451.7970

Hours
Open today 08:00 am - 05:00 pm

Stop by our 24-Hour Visitor's Center during non-business hours.

