
WEST UNION, IOWA



2015

Community Profile



West Union is a vibrant community of about 2,500 people. Residents value the small town friendliness, great schools and health services, and exceptional quality of life they enjoy in West Union. Discover our extraordinary opportunities, capitalize on our environment, and collaborate with us as we grow into the future. We welcome you to explore what West Union has to offer.

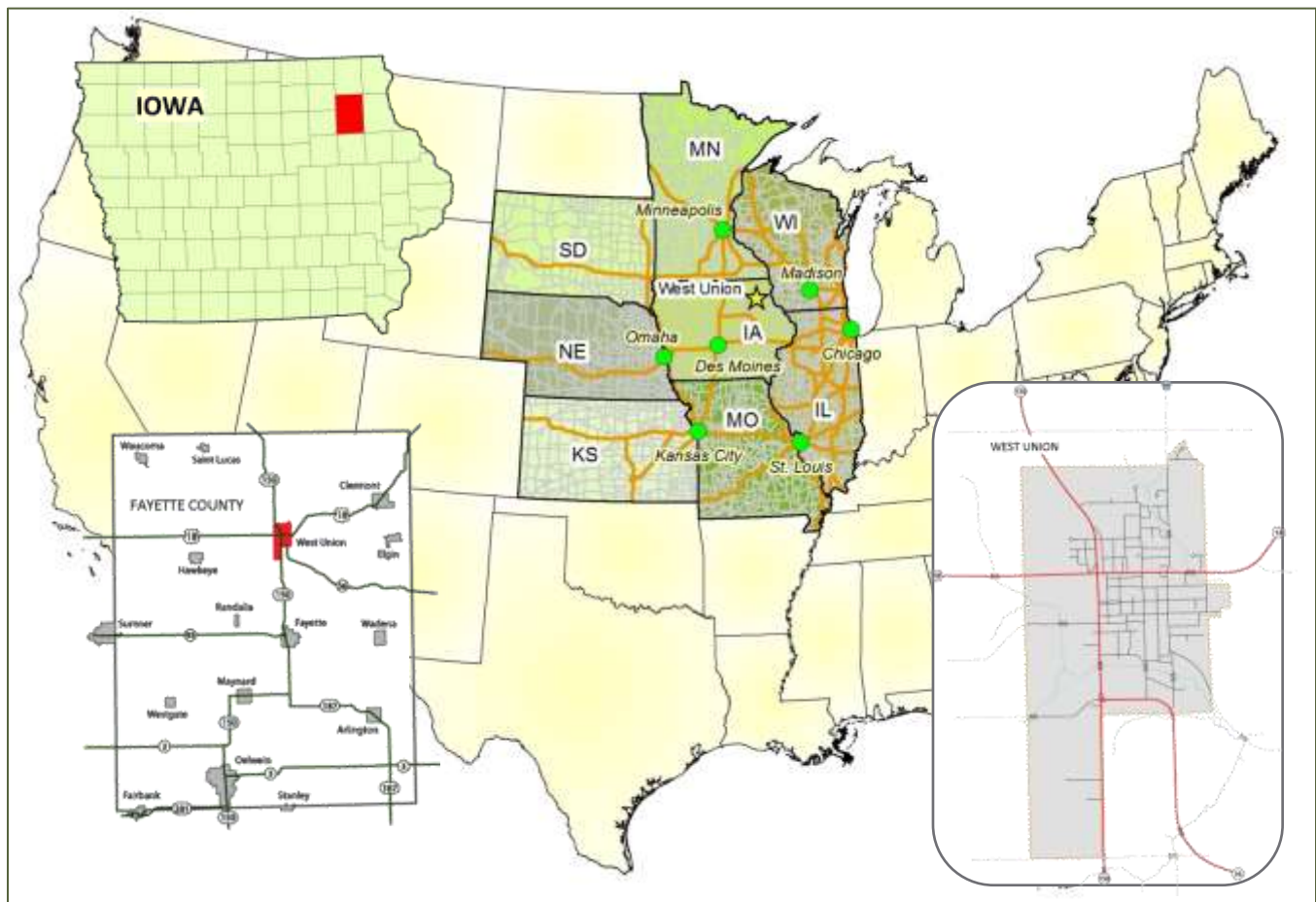
IDEAL LOCATION

West Union is located in the heart of the Upper Midwest, in Fayette County, Iowa. Two state highways, Hwy 18 and Hwy 150 intersect at West Union with significant traffic counts in all directions. U.S. Highway 20 is accessed about 40 miles south of West Union; Interstate 90 is located approximately 90 miles north of West Union; and Interstate 35 is located 90 miles west of West Union. The Mississippi River (with rail and barge access) is 40 miles to the east. The distances to major Midwest metropolitan areas and commercial airports are shown in Table 1. The George L. Scott Municipal Airport is West Union's basic service airport. The local airport offers one 4,248 by 60 ft. concrete runway with hangar and tiedowns for airplane parking.

TABLE 1: DISTANCES FROM WEST UNION – MAJOR CITIES AND AIRPORTS

City:	Miles:	International Airports:	Miles:
Chicago	275	Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport, Minneapolis, MN	178
Des Moines	185	Des Moines International Airport, Des Moines, IA	197
Kansas City	380	Domestic Airports:	
Madison	145	Waterloo Regional Airport, Waterloo, IA	58
Minneapolis	180	The Eastern Iowa Airport, Cedar Rapids, IA	89
Omaha	320	La Crosse Municipal Airport, La Crosse, WI	92
St. Louis	365	Rochester International Airport, Rochester, MN	100
		Dubuque Regional Airport, Dubuque, IA	101

FIGURE 1: LOCATION MAP



DATA SNAPSHOTS

Population			
	2000	2010	2013
West Union	2,537	2,486	2,744
Fayette County	22,008	20,880	20,822
State of Iowa	2,926,324	3,046,355	3,062,553

Property Tax Rates			
	2010/11	2012/13	2014/15
City	11.33129	15.67831	14.76021
Schools	17.00297	16.75244	15.54542
County	7.5258	7.45782	7.24085
Total	35.86006	39.88857	37.54648

Sales Tax Rates	
State	6%
City	1%
Hotel/Motel	6%

Drive Time Statistics			
	10 minute	20 minute	30 minute
Population	3,384	10,868	29,125
Median Age	42.8	42.8	43.3
Households	1,418	4,408	11,954
Ave HH Income	\$53,920	\$57,060	\$58,766
Ave Home Value	\$123,679	\$138,627	\$141,378
Total Consumer Spending	\$73,697,641	\$246,634,342	\$686,345,488
Traffic Counts – Highways: up to 6,100 vehicles per day at 150/18			

Local Government	
Type of Government	Council/City Administrator
2014 City Budget	\$4,104,481
2014 City 100% Property Valuations	\$120,930,717

School District Population	9,155
City Land Area	2.78 Square Miles

Fayette County Labor Force			
	2000	2010	2014
Civilian Labor Force	11,270	10,940	11,020
Unemployed	450	830	570
Unemployment Rate	4%	7.6%	5.2%

West Union Workforce Education Attainment		
	Count	Share
Less than high school	193	10.5%
High school or equivalent, no college	548	29.9%
Some college or Associate degree	594	32.4%
Bachelor's or advanced degree	497	27.1%

West Union Industry (Ranked by Employment)		
	Count	Share
Education, health care & social assistance	399	30.3%
Manufacturing	178	13.5%
Retail trade	149	11.3%
Professional, scientific & administrative	119	9.0%
Arts, entertainment, food & recreation	119	9.0%
Construction	101	7.7%
Finance, insurance & real estate	63	4.8%
Public administration	52	3.9%
Wholesale trade	42	3.2%
Other services, except public admin.	38	2.9%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining	25	1.9%
Information	18	1.4%
Transportation, warehousing & utilities	16	1.2%

DOING BUSINESS IN WEST UNION

The community is the county seat and serves as the home to several county offices. Over 150 private sector businesses call West Union home, which, along with the hospital, school district and government provide over 1,420 jobs in the community. About 74% of the city's workforce commutes in to the community from the surrounding rural areas and neighboring communities.

The city's major employers include:

- Rupp Air Management – a Division of CaptiveAire. CaptiveAire is the nation's leading manufacturer of commercial kitchen ventilation systems. The site in West Union is one of six manufacturing plants and has been operating in the community since 1998.
- Palmer Lutheran Health Center. Palmer Lutheran Health Center (PLHC) is a nonprofit 25-bed Critical Access Hospital that serves a population base of over 15,000. The hospital is affiliated with Gundersen Health System from La Crosse, Wisconsin.
- Good Samaritan Society – Skilled Nursing Facility. The Good Samaritan operates both a skilled care facility, including a memory care unit, and senior apartments in West Union. The nursing facility has the capacity to care for 71 residents.

The City of West Union has several tools and resources available for attracting new businesses and economic development opportunities while retaining and improving the strong businesses and talented labor pool that already exist in our community. The City is an active participant in the pursuit of local economic development and partners with four key community development organizations and two local banks to provide business assistance, market information and guidance through the development process. Key community partners include:

- West Union Community Development
- Fayette County Economic Development
- Main Street West Union
- West Union Chamber of Commerce
- Bank 1st
- Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank

Together, these partners have access to numerous state incentive programs and technical resources. Locally, the City's development tools include economic incentive options in the form of revolving loan funds, Tax Increment Financing, Tax Abatement and utility discounts. The city charges no registration or business license fees. Several designations held by the city offer additional opportunities for potential financial and technical assistance:

- Iowa Green Pilot Community
- Iowa Great Place
- Member of the Turkey River Watershed Management Authority
- Iowa Main Street Community
- Located on the River Bluffs Scenic Byway

UTILITIES

Natural gas and electricity are provided to the community by investor-owned utilities Black Hills Energy and Alliant Energy. Building owners in the downtown energy district can hook into a shared geothermal loop for geothermal heating and cooling. Telephone and high speed internet services are offered by CenturyLink, Mediacom or Alpine Communications. The city operates and provides water and sewer services, as well as community recycling bins.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A comprehensive streetscape project was recently completed that replaced aging water and sewer infrastructure, sidewalks, street and lighting in a four block area downtown. The streetscape is an example of "green" techniques that have attracted national attention to West Union. The reconstruction features permeable pavers, rain gardens and energy efficient lighting, along with the shared geo-thermal loop. Roads and streets are well-maintained and the city has designated significant resources for road repairs and reconstruction over the next decade. Planning will be underway soon for a major water/sewer plant upgrade.

QUALITY OF PLACE

Recreation

West Union is a great place for families and residents of all ages to call home. Play space is important to the community. West Union has four city parks and an outdoor aquatic center that features a nearly 8000 square foot pool, 132 foot water slide, two diving boards, eight competitive swim lanes, in-pool umbrella and full service concessions. A major point of pride for the community is the West Union Recreation Complex. Operated by a private foundation and supported by community member donations, the recreation complex offers many amenities including playground equipment, two ponds, paved walking paths, soccer fields, little-league ball fields and tennis courts.

Fishing in nearby cold water trout streams is a popular past time and the city's commitment to maintaining the quality of these streams is apparent in its streetscape renovation. The permeable pavers were installed to reduce the amount of runoff into the streams, and cleanse and cool that runoff that does make it to the streams. Fishing, trails and camping are accessible at Echo Valley Park, Dutton's Cave and the Volga River Recreation Area, all within a few miles of West Union.

The Fayette County Fairgrounds are located in West Union and offers many activities beyond the annual County Fair. Weekly races and many livestock and ag-related shows are held throughout the summer months. Indoor recreation is offered at the local bowling alley.

Education

The North Fayette Valley Community School District (NFV) is headquartered in the community, along with an elementary school and the high school. The high school and community enjoy a state of the art athletic complex and performing arts center. The high school partners with nearby Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) to provide college-credit courses and career training programs to students enrolled at NFV.

Early childhood care and education is provided by Kaleidoscope Kids Child Care Center. Kaleidoscope Kids is a nonprofit center that recently moved into its new location in a new building on the school campus. The center offers care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and afterschool kindergartners and other latchkey children.

Upper Iowa University is located just seven miles south in the community of Fayette. UIU is a four-year nonprofit university with an on-campus enrollment of over 1,000 students. The university offers 45 different majors and 4 Master's degree programs. Many students and staff of Upper Iowa University call West Union home.

The Fayette County Historical Society and Museum is located in West Union and offers visitors a learning experience, whether one is seeking specific genealogical information or just wanting to learn more about the history of the area.

The West Union Community Library is open Monday through Friday and offers a large collection of materials, scheduled activities for all ages and internet access for the community. The library staff can provide numerous services, from helping patrons with electronic forms and computer navigation to proctoring exams.

FIGURE 2: WEST UNION RECREATION COMPLEX



Public Transportation

EARL Transit service is provided by Northeast Iowa Community Action-Transit. In addition to the regular demand response service available to residents at any time, EARL offers regular “In-town Services” in West Union from late morning to early afternoon, Monday through Friday. In-town services are economical and very easy to access and are used regularly by West Union residents wishing to travel in town during those hours.

Health and Wellness

Residents are fortunate to be able to access health and wellness locally. The locally-governed Palmer Lutheran Health Center is affiliated with the Gundersen Lutheran Medical system. In addition to hospital services, Palmer Lutheran also operates homecare services and serves as the county public health provider. Gundersen Lutheran operates a clinic that adjoins the hospital and provides basic medical services to the community.

Additional health and wellness services include an in-center hemodialysis at DaVita West Union Dialysis, vision care, hearing care, full service dental care, mental health services and chiropractic care. The community is home to a fitness center and numerous massage therapists for whole body wellness.

Graceful Aging

As our rural population ages, West Union is becoming home to more and more seniors seeking quality living and lifestyles. Seniors can find the level of care they need in West Union, from senior apartments with emergency response systems and a daily meal to full service nursing care. The community has two senior apartment complexes, two assisted living facilities and one nursing home. Seniors who want to stay in their homes can utilize the Palmer Home Health services as needed. For seniors who don't wish to drive anymore, the region's Transit Agency offers in-town rides for \$2 during midday hours. Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging offers noon meals Monday through Friday at the West Union Senior Center.

Social Living

West Union is home to over a dozen churches and numerous civic clubs and organizations. These groups organize a number of social events for people of all ages and interests. Pancake suppers, hot beef dinners and omelet breakfasts are regular occurrences in the community. Residents and visitors enjoy weekly summer performances on the downtown plaza, a weekly farmers market, and special events like “WU-Stock” and “Trick-or-Trunk” or the retail-promoting “Divas & Dining” event and weekend. The annual Community Awards Banquet offers residents the opportunity to recognize and celebrate the volunteer spirit so evident in the successes of the community. West Union's restaurants offer a variety of food and atmosphere choices and its shops offer unique experiences.

CONTACTS

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SITE INFORMATION

The City of West Union is seeking a quality retailer to fill a vacant building at a major gateway into the community. At the intersection of two major highways, this prime spot was capturing about 1.7 million in variety store sales annually. The nearest similar stores to this location are 30+ miles away.

Site Specs			
Total Space Available:	14,560 SF	Address:	307 Hwy 150 N
Storage Space:	Approx. 1,000 - 1,500 SF	Year Built:	1973
Loading Docks:	2	Lot Size:	40,729 SF (.94 acres)
Annual Sales:		Parking Lot:	Paved, 16,120 SF
2009	\$1,773,000	Former Use:	Alco Store, Ben Franklin
2010	unavailable	Rental Rate:	Negotiable
2011	\$1,758,000	Sales Price:	\$269,999
2012	\$1,883,000	Property Type:	Commercial
2013	\$1,763,000	Assessed Value:	\$216,930
2014	\$1,693,000	2013 Property Taxes:	\$6,830

FIGURE 3: SITE MAP



We invite you to visit our community and meet our city leaders, business owners and residents to learn more about this resilient city. West Union was featured in a Larry King segment about building local economic sustainability. For a look at our community, view the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwSrdRU8VhE>