



**AGENDA  
CITY OF CEDAR FALLS, IOWA  
STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 04, 2023  
6:00 PM AT CITY HALL, 220 CLAY STREET**

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*Committee meetings will begin at the time noted above with succeeding Committee meetings starting immediately following the conclusion of the previous meeting. Time periods for individual topics represent an estimate and is based on the time of completion of the previous Committee topic.*

**Call to Order**

**Roll Call**

**Committee of the Whole**

1. Youth Commission Update.  
(5 Minutes, Mr. Keegan Herzmann)

**Finance & Business Operations Committee**

1. Human Rights Commission Annual Report.  
(25 Minutes, HRC Chair Sonja Bock)

**Community Development Committee**

1. Grow Cedar Valley Update.  
(20 Minutes)

**Adjournment**

# CITY OF CEDAR FALLS, IA



## **FY2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

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## **NARRATIVE SUMMARY**

Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023) was a year of rebuilding, response and momentum for the Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission (HRC). There was the challenge of recruitment and filling a total of nine commissioner spots – including the seat of veteran member, Spencer Luvert, who served for 24 years and earned a Distinguished Service Award from Mayor Rob Green in June of 2023. There was also a great amount of effort put into the Commission’s organizational structure as well as an intentional focus on outreach and education, and ways to better support historically marginalized members of the community.

Luvert’s departure from the HRC meant a loss of historical stewardship. Membership was especially important to continuing the mission of the HRC. The addition of commissioners Jennifer Onuigbo, Kyle Wiebers, Donna Mallin, Robert Wright, and Julie Kliegl in 2022 plus Gina Weekley, Madeleine Seymour, Jason Droste and Tyler Ingham in 2023, meant not only a full commission was met at 11 members, but that more diversity was added by way of backgrounds and specialties. The HRC also gained a new liaison – Chelsie Luhring – the City’s DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) specialist.

Updates to the HRC’s webpage also improved structure and responding to human rights issues. A resources page was added as well as an Indigenous land acknowledgement statement and an HRC history tab. The Advocacy Committee also set a response time for human rights complaints received via the online concern form and dedicated HRC email and phone: following up within 24 hours on weekdays, or 48 hours for complaints that came in over the weekend. Setting these standards ensures community members are being heard in a timely manner and commissioners are fulfilling their role. Committee work and duties also shifted with the restructuring of the Outreach and Communication Committee into two separate committees: the Outreach – Communications and Education Committee and the Outreach – Events Committee. This move placed more attention on outreach and events while also better harnessing the skills of committee members.

Proclamations were also a major part of acknowledging historically marginalized populations and educating the public on human rights issues. During this past fiscal year, the HRC issued seven proclamations – the most publicly recognized being the LGBTQIA+ Pride Month which was brought to City Council in May. The response by the community – LGBTQ members and allies alike – was a stark reminder of the need for not tolerance but understanding, acceptance and welcoming of everyone who lives in and visits our community. Individuals publicly sharing their experiences and trauma at the City Council meeting created an impetus for the community and the HRC – to acknowledge the diversity in the Cedar Valley and the necessity of advancing DEI work. The energy created from this proclamation sparked critical human rights conversations and was implemented into the work of the HRC via education, events and wider outreach.

In FY23, the HRC hosted and/or participated in seven events, ranging from their annual Meet and Greet in May to new ventures such as hosting an LGBTQIA+ Pride Recognition Month and marching in the 2023 Sturgis Falls Parade. Building upon the successes of the HRC led to the eventual planning and hosting of the Inaugural Fall Summit this past November. Now in FY24, the HRC plans to take this momentum and continue to build bridges with the public and provide more opportunities for education and conversations on human rights issues facing our community.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission protects human rights and promotes diversity and equity for ALL through advocacy, education and outreach.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission is committed to:

1. Providing guidance and resources on the laws regarding discrimination as provided in the State Code of Iowa and City of Cedar Falls Code of Ordinances.
2. Studying and attempting to eliminate discrimination in Cedar Falls.
3. Cooperating with state and federal agencies in law enforcement activities and developing civil rights educational programs.
4. Providing a proactive approach to the education of the community, employers and employees on human rights issues, including support for local organizations.

## **PRIMARY COMMITMENT**

The Commission is concerned with both short-term and long-term goals and ways by which those goals are to be achieved. The Commission should establish objectives within its areas of responsibility and then focus on the desired results. There are two overriding questions that commission members should continually be asking themselves:

1. Are we working to achieve our mission on behalf of the community?
2. Given new information, new wisdom, and new possibilities, what should we strive to accomplish for whom and at what cost in the next year? The next five years?

## **PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The principal responsibilities of the Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission include the following:

- 1) To advocate for and improve the position of human rights within the community.
- 2) To establish policies that provide direction for the city, reflect the values of the commission, and comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- 3) To establish the long-range vision required to meet local community needs.
- 4) To plan actively for the future of the commission.
- 5) To provide spending suggestions to city personnel.

## **COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Chairperson of the HRC serves as an ex-officio member to all the subcommittees approved by the HRC.

1. Advocacy (members on committee: Bock, Ingham, Kliegl, Wiebers)
  - a. Purpose
    - i. Speak on behalf of the HRC on public concerns/issues

- ii. Recommend appropriate actions to involved parties
    - iii. Be the initial point of contact for the community
  - b. Goals
    - i. Maintain HRC involvement in the local complaint process for those that wish to engage at the city
    - ii. Serve as communication first responders
  - c. Tasks
    - i. Help complainants fill out forms
    - ii. Coordinate Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) cooperation
    - iii. Provide training on the complaint process
    - iv. Work with staff on HRC website page and update the site with statements and proclamations
    - v. Field community concerns
    - vi. Attend City council meetings as needed and work to maintain regular proclamations that are associated with community events
    - vii. Provide first response to concerns and issue general statements regarding community public relations incidents
    - viii. Receive and respond to complaints and concerns
    - ix. Write letters in support of community members surrounding human rights issues
2. Executive (members on committee: Chair-Bock, Vice Chair-Kliegl, Chair Appointee-Wiebers)
- a. Purpose
    - i. Guide and provide structure to regular HRC meetings and serve as experienced group to lead newer members
    - ii. Collaborate with other City groups
    - iii. Recruit new members
  - b. Goals
    - i. Provide institutional knowledge continuity with new members
    - ii. Recruit new members who will add to the Commission in both ideas and diversity of backgrounds.
  - c. Tasks
    - i. Ensure committees hold regular meetings
    - ii. Set the agenda for regular HRC meetings
    - iii. Serve as a liaison with the city
    - iv. Recruit and interview new HRC applicants
    - v. Maintain and revise bylaws
    - vi. Create and manage budget
    - vii. Create and present annual report
3. Outreach – Communications and Education (members on committee: Droste, Kivett, Mallin, Wright)
- a. Purpose
    - i. Conduct intentional listening sessions
    - ii. Promote HRC and our work through communication
    - iii. Educate commission members on topics relevant to its mission
    - iv. Orient new members to the commission

- b. Goals
    - i. Create listening sessions with community organizations
    - ii. Increase awareness of the HRC through communication
    - iii. Use technology to help with communication
    - iv. Help welcome and train new Commission members
  - c. Tasks
    - i. Meet with City Council members/candidates
    - ii. Conduct table talks (members sharing their expertise and experience)
    - iii. Create training events for commission members
4. Outreach – Events (members on committee: Onuigbo, Seymour, Weekley)
- a. Purpose
    - i. Plan HRC events in coordination with proclamations
    - ii. Promote HRC and our work
  - b. Goals
    - i. Increase awareness of HRC and its role in the community
    - ii. Utilize events to listen to the community and learn what the community wants from the HRC
    - iii. Collaborate with organizations and ally groups to co-sponsor events
    - iv. Relationship building
    - v. Increase educational opportunities in the community
  - c. Tasks
    - i. Host public education events
    - ii. Coordinate logistics of public events including venues, food, speakers, giveaways
    - iii. Create schedule and budget in advance
    - iv. Provide materials to provide at public events
    - v. Create materials to market events (posters, social media, etc.)

## **INQUIRY/CONCERN/COMPLAINT INFORMATION**

The Commission no longer investigates human rights complaints as of a City ordinance change in 2021. However, the HRC remains actively involved via education, advocacy and resourcing when it comes to human rights complaints in the community. Discrimination issues are received through the Advocacy Committee's designated email or phone line, or through the complaint form on the HRC's webpage. The Commission addressed a number of human rights concerns in FY23. Below is a brief summary:

1. The HRC resourced one individual to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) and assisted in filing the complaint based on public accommodations and a protected class: race. The commission also wrote a letter explaining protected classes and education available to the business in question.

2. Two individuals were resourced to the ICRC for a complaint involving race, age, and sex. They filled out an ICRC report.
3. Resourcing, advocacy and/or educational support was also given to an individual reporting an ageism complaint; an individual reporting an ADA complaint; a group of individuals regarding public accommodations; an individual reporting employment discrimination based on race; and an individual voicing housing discrimination.
4. A concern regarding the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office was followed up on; it was deemed a false report.

### **ANNUAL BUDGET**

| Source       | Received    | Dollars Spent | Dollars Unspent |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| General Fund | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 2,977.93   | \$ 22.07        |

### **ACTIVITIES/EVENTS/TRAINING/CONFERENCES**

1. Approval of the FY23 Cooperative Agreement with Iowa Civil Right Commissions
2. Multiple new commissioners completed introductory videos for the Human Rights Commission's Facebook page stating their why for joining
3. Created and presented informative and inclusive proclamations:
  - a. Black History Month (February)
  - b. Women's History Month (March)
  - c. Juneteenth Freedom Day (June)
  - d. LGBTQIA+ Pride Month (June)
  - e. Disability Pride Month (July)
  - f. National Native American Heritage Month and Native American Heritage Day (November)
  - g. International Human Rights Day (December)
4. Issued a signed resolution to the City Council supporting a Housing Needs Assessment
5. Updated the HRC webpage:
  - a. Added a "Resources" tab with helpful community information and resources
  - b. Created an Indigenous land acknowledgement statement to honor and recognize the Indigenous peoples past and present
  - c. Added a "History" tab to document the development of the HRC since its inception
6. Participated in or hosted the following events:
  - a. August of 2022: Vendor at the Cedar Valley Pridefest
  - b. November of 2022: Hosted a Native American Heritage event with the Cedar Falls Public Library
  - c. January of 2023: Supported and attended the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Banquet in Waterloo
  - d. March of 2023: Held a Women's History Month event in partnership with the Cedar Falls Public Library, which included a women's history speaker and the recognition of three local women for their contributions to the Cedar Valley



- e. May of 2023: Met with community members and expanded recruitment during the annual Meet and Greet at the Ragged Edge Art Bar
- f. June of 2023: Hosted an LGBTQIA+ Pride Month Recognition at the Hearst Center including education, speakers, resources and support
- g. June of 2023: Marched in the Sturgis Falls Parade to increase exposure and promote the group as a public resource

### **COMMISSIONERS DURING FY23**

| <b>Name</b>                              | <b>Appointed</b> | <b>Last Re-Appointment</b> | <b>Term Expires</b>                   |
|--|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sonja Bock – Chair                       | 11/16/2021       | 07/01/2022                 | 07/01/2025                            |
| Jason Droste                             | 06/20/2023       |                            | 07/01/2026                            |
| Tyler (TW) Ingham                        | 06/20/2023       |                            | 07/01/2024                            |
| Dave Kivett                              | 02/01/2021       | 07/01/2022                 | 07/01/2025                            |
| Julie Kliegl – Vice Chair                | 09/19/2022       | 06/05/2023                 | 07/01/2026                            |
| Donna Mallin                             | 09/19/2022       | 06/05/2023                 | 07/01/2026                            |
| Jennifer Onuigbo                         | 08/15/2022       |                            | 07/01/2025                            |
| Madeleine (Maddie) Seymour               | 06/20/2023       |                            | 07/01/2024                            |
| Gina Weekley                             | 06/20/2023       |                            | 07/01/2026                            |
| Kyle Wiebers – Executive Chair Appointee | 08/15/2022       |                            | 07/01/2024                            |
| Robert (Bob) Wright                      | 09/19/2022       |                            | 07/01/2024                            |
| Jordyn Beranek                           | 01/19/2021       |                            | Resigned 11/21/2022                   |
| Melissa Heston                           | 01/19/2021       |                            | Resigned 3/31/2023                    |
| Spencer Luvert                           | 07/26/1999       | 07/01/2020                 | Did not seek reappointment 07/01/2023 |

|                    |            |  |                        |
|--------------------|------------|--|------------------------|
| Eashaan<br>Vajpeyi | 04/14/2021 |  | Resigned<br>12/19/2022 |
|--------------------|------------|--|------------------------|

### **SUPPORT STAFF FOR FY23**

Brenda Balvanz, Human Resources Specialist  
 Chelsie Luhring, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist  
 Jennifer Rodenbeck, Director of Finance & Business Operations  
 Kevin Rogers, City Attorney  
 Bailey Schindel, Human Resources Manager

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

MAILING ADDRESS: 220 Clay Street, Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
 LOCATION: City Hall, Finance & Business Operations Department  
 HOURS: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday  
 TELEPHONE: (319) 273-8600  
 FAX: (319) 268-5126  
 REGULAR MEETINGS: Second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m.  
 MEETING LOCATION: Cedar Falls Public Safety Center  
 WEBSITE: <https://www.cedarfalls.com/86/Human-Rights-Commission>  
 SOCIAL MEDIA: <https://www.facebook.com/HumanRightsCF/>  
[https://twitter.com/Human\\_Rights\\_CF](https://twitter.com/Human_Rights_CF)



## **Cedar Falls City Council Work Session – December 4, 2023**

Cary Darrah  
CEO

Mike Mallaro  
Grow Cedar Valley Board Chair

Stephanie Detweiler  
Director of Workforce & Talent

Nicole Sallis  
Director of Communications

Lisa Skubal  
Vice President, Economic Development

### **Agenda**

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Opening Remarks                      | M. Mallaro   |
| 2. External Marketing & Business Growth | L. Skubal    |
| 3. Talent Initiatives                   | S. Detweiler |
| 4. Communications/Marketing Initiatives | N. Sallis    |
| 5. Closing Remarks                      | C. Darrah    |

# CEDAR FALLS

## CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

MAY 2023 - NOVEMBER 2023



**GROW  
CedarValley**  
*Business. Community. Opportunity*

Grow Cedar Valley

Cary Darrah, President & CEO  
[cary@growcedarvalley.com](mailto:cary@growcedarvalley.com)

☎ 319/232.1156

🖱 [www.growcedarvalley.com](http://www.growcedarvalley.com)

📍 360 Westerfield Ave., Ste 300  
Waterloo, IA 50701

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## CEDAR FALLS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

A fundamental part of economic development work is to attract new businesses and support existing businesses to diversify the economy and reduce the region's vulnerability. Grow Cedar Valley (GCV) works very closely with the City's economic development staff and many other public and private partners with these collaborative efforts.

### MARKETING + LEAD GENERATION

Select USA - Foreign Domestic Lead Generation. GCV co-sponsored the State of Iowa Exhibit. Four meetings resulted along with one project having an immediate timeline. Attended an invitation-only reception held by the Deputy Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for networking opportunities with Dutch companies while in Washington DC.

Illinois Lead Gen Trip - In June 2023 visited another 4 Illinois companies with some interest in expansion opportunities outside of Illinois and Chicago.

### DOMESTIC LEAD GENERATION

Illinois Lead Gen Trip (April - June 2023)

- Engagement w/Targeted Companies: 1,300
- Number of Outreach: 8-9 times per company
- Appointments Generated: 4



Site Selectors Guild – GCV staff participated in a virtual table talk with seven site selection consultants providing an overview of the Cedar Valley in August 2023.

In collaboration with the Iowa Economic Development Authority, Grow Cedar Valley was able to advertise through IEDA's LinkedIn social media platform to promote the two State Certified industrial parks in Cedar Falls and Waterloo through video of both parks. Objective: Create Awareness.

- \* The Cedar Valley video campaign effectively reached a broad audience of professionals in surrounding states, with nearly 200,000 video views at a cost per thousand impressions that was 55% more efficient than FY23 campaigns that IEDA has done with similar campaigns having the same objective.
- \* Users identified their job titles as Owner or Director who clicked through the site more frequently and accounted for nearly half of the video completions.
- \* Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota-based users garnered the highest volume of video completions.
- \* Grow Cedar Valley plans to conduct repeat similar marketing with IEDA in FY2024.

## OPPORTUNITIES + PROJECTS

|              | Capital Investment | Job Potential | External Projects | Existing Projects |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| New*         | \$653.3M           | 457           | 8                 | 0                 |
| Total Active | 453.3 M            | 946           | 17                | 1                 |

\*Includes new projects occurring between the months of May 1, 2023 through November 9, 2023; some projects occurring during this timeline minus those that may have eliminated Cedar Falls during that same period.

Note: Job Potential and Capital Investment won't correlate; some projects don't provide both or either figure. Information available depends on the project's stage; some projects are more advanced than others.

8

New Projects

18

Total Active Projects

6

Prospect  
Proposals/Info sent  
to leads(does not represent  
multiple communications)

## EXISTING BUSINESS SERVICES TO CEDAR FALLS COMPANIES

5

Business Services

Information/services provided included discussion on expansion/retention and/or barriers such as workforce; including issues related to managing supply chain and businesses during COVID-19.

## EXTERNAL PROSPECT ENGAGEMENT - CEDAR FALLS

1

External Prospect  
Visits

2

Virtual Prospect  
Meetings

(can include multiple visits/meetings for the same project)

## THE CEDAR VALLEY MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

Cedar Valley Manufacturer's Association (CVMA)

There are about 16 companies that make up the Cedar Valley Manufacturing Association, along with several support partners in the Cedar Valley including Grow Cedar Valley. Dennis Schilling from Power Engineering and Manufacturing is the current President. CVMA meets quarterly to support the below priorities that manufacturers in the Cedar Valley have identified.

Priority Areas Identified by Manufacturers

- Support the alignment of the IGNITE program between lower and higher education.
- Provide educational support for upcoming workforce starting at grade school to ensure the demographics of the manufacturing workforce match the demographics of the community.

The workforce shortage isn't expected to improve over the next several years and is even worse for manufacturers as it is estimated 20% of manufacturing workforce will retire over the next 5-10 years while incoming workforce is short to fill the demand unless CVMA does something about it. CVMA's leadership has developed a plan and will be executing with support from Grow Cedar Valley, Hawkeye Community College, Waterloo Career Center, and University of Northern Iowa. Hawkeye Community College, Waterloo Career Center, University of Northern Iowa, and Iowa State University's Center for Industrial Research and Service.



# DEI SUMMIT

Over 200 professionals attended the Seventh Annual Economic Diversity and Inclusion Summit hosted by Grow Cedar Valley and the University of Northern Iowa that took place on Friday, October 20, 2023, at the Waterloo Convention Center. The summit provided valuable insights and strategies for promoting diversity and inclusion in the Cedar Valley region, fostering a more inclusive and economically vibrant community. It served as a platform for networking, sharing ideas, and celebrating the diverse and inclusive spirit of the community and addressed the importance of tapping into the consumer and workforce potential of the region's diverse population.

Waterloo Mayor Quentin Hart and Cedar Falls City Administrator Ron Gaines each gave a welcome speech along with Grow Cedar Valley President/CEO Cary Darrah and UNI Assistant to the President/Chief Diversity Officer Gwenne Berry. ONE Cedar Valley Executive Director Joy Briscoe shared opening remarks about how far the Cedar Valley has come regarding diversity equity and inclusion since the 24/7 Wall Street report in 2018.

Morning keynote speaker Dr. LaDrina Wilson, Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce CEO shared insights and experiences from her role as CEO and founder of Iman Consulting, emphasizing the importance of diversity and equity in inclusive leadership. Lunch keynote speaker Dr. Arvid Osterberg, Iowa State University Professor provided perspectives and findings on the Americans with Disabilities Act accessible design standards and requirements.

The summit included a series of informative breakout sessions covering various aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion. These sessions were led by knowledgeable professionals and experts:

**Allyship: How to be a Strong Ally** - Shelley Price-Williams, Ph.D. (UNI) provided valuable insights into the concept of allyship and offered practical advice on how individuals can be strong allies in promoting diversity and inclusion.

**Current Political Landscape of DEI** - Jayme Renfro (UNI) discussed the ever-evolving political landscape related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, highlighting the significance of understanding its impact on various initiatives.

**Expanding DEI Within Your Company: Improving Company Engagement** - Amanda Nugent (VGM) and Darian Schmit (VGM) shared strategies for enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within corporate settings, emphasizing the importance of engaging employees and stakeholders.

**Mental and Physical Health: Holistic Wellness** - Beauty Fitts (HealthPartners), Nicole Sallis (Grow Cedar Valley), and Shantila Caston (MercyOne) delved into the essential connection between holistic wellness, mental and physical health, and diversity and inclusion, offering guidance on promoting well-being in diverse communities.

To close the event on a musical note, Kevin Burt, an International Blues Challenge Solo/Duo Champion, entertained the attendees during the social hour. His musical performance added a cultural and entertaining dimension to the summit, allowing participants to relax and enjoy the afternoon.





# NETWORKING, EDUCATION & CELEBRATION

400

Investors attended  
two Good Morning  
Cedar Valley events

300

Investors networked  
in two Business After  
Hours events

180

Investors and  
community members  
attended GCV's  
Annual Leadercast

180

Investors & their  
guests participated  
in GCV's Annual Golf  
Classic

550

Investors &  
community members  
attended GCV's  
Annual Strictly  
Business Expo

220

People attended  
GCV's Annual  
Economic, Diversity &  
Inclusion Summit

1

GCV Legislative  
Friday Forum (virtual)



# CEDAR VALLEY LEADERSHIP

The CVLI Class of 2023-2024 is made up of 45 emerging leaders that represent 31 Cedar Valley businesses and organizations listed below. This class meets monthly from October- May for leadership and community development. The 2023-24 class will provide community service projects for several organizations throughout the Cedar Valley.



- Align Architecture & Planning
- Banklowa
- Beecher, Field, Walker, Morris, Hoffman & Johnson, P.C.
- Cardinal Construction, Inc.
- CBE Companies, Inc.
- Cedar Falls Community Schools
- Community Bank & Trust
- CPM Holdings, Inc.
- Dupaco Community Credit Union
- Farmers State Bank
- Financial Architects Financial Strategy Specialist
- First Interstate Bank
- Goodwill Industries of Northeast Iowa, Inc.
- INVISION Architecture
- ISG
- John Deere Waterloo Operations
- Junior Achievement of Eastern Iowa
- Northeast Iowa Food Bank
- Pedersen, Dowie, Clabby & McCausland Insurance
- POS Professional Office Services, Inc.
- Tri-County Child & Family Development Council, Inc.
- TruStage
- United Equipment Accessories, Inc.
- UnityPoint Health - Allen Hospital
- University of Northern Iowa
- Veridian Credit Union
- VGM Forbin
- VGM Group, Inc.
- Western Home Communities
- Woodruff Construction, Inc.

## ADDED BENEFITS

Other Services to the City of Cedar Falls

16

Jobs posted by the City of Cedar Falls on the Grow Cedar Valley job board

16

Ribbon Cuttings for Cedar Falls businesses

1509

Job Views City of Cedar Falls on the Grow Cedar Valley website.



# GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS & ADVOCACY

Grow Cedar Valley staff attend City Council Meetings, as needed, to speak on projects relevant to the growth and development of the City of Cedar Falls. The Grow Cedar Valley Government Affairs Committee was convened in early November to identify and discuss the proposed legislative priorities for 2024. The proposed priorities made up the 2024 Legislative Policy Agenda recommended to the GCV Board of Directors for its approval and adoption. The 2024 policy agenda will be released at the Dec . 14th Pre-Session Legislation Reception

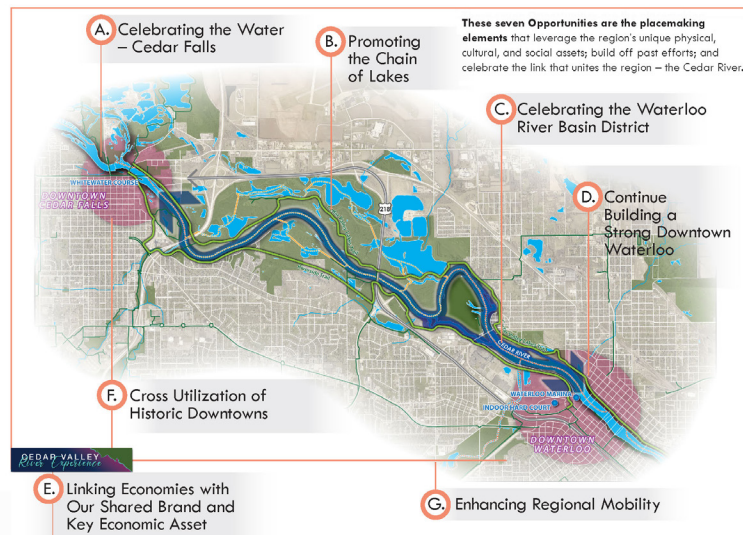


## PLACEMAKING/IMAGE

One of the priority areas from GCV's strategic planning is enhancing the Image of the Cedar Valley, making it a place of choice for individuals/workforce and businesses. In 2022 Grow Cedar Valley partnered with INRCOG and John Deere Waterloo operations to create a scope of work to address vision of enhancing the Cedar River – connecting downtown Cedar Falls and downtown Waterloo. Vandewalle & Associates were hired to assemble Phase One scope of work sponsored by John Deere and INRCOG for this visioning effort.

Phase Two is underwritten by Grow Cedar Valley and approved by the GCV board of directors and is underway. This scope will continue to expand the plan to enhance the Cedar River as a natural resource to use and celebrate. "Placemaking" is designed and needed to distinguish our communities and celebrate their unique features to businesses as well as current and future residents.

What we know is the communities that invest in recreational and experience opportunities for the workforce and their families are going to be the communities that are successful in attracting and retaining talent.



# WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

One of the main goals of Workforce & Talent at Grow Cedar Valley is to be an expert in the workforce space and a resource and connector to HR professionals and business owners throughout the Cedar Valley for all things that have to do with workforce. Here are some ways we have continued to make this a focus in 2023:

- We have positioned ourselves as an expert in workforce data in 2023 by subscribing to Lightcast, which is a data source that is a global leader in labor market analytics. We have been able to use this data for many different things, but one of the most important ways has been defining our 4 key industries in the Cedar Valley and determining the highest-in demand occupations within the next 10 years. We will be utilizing this information to support programs doing work in this space and to support talent pipelines into those industries and roles. We also will ensure ecosystems in the key industries are connecting resources to HR professionals and vice versa.
- Another way we accomplish the goal of being an expert in workforce is to continue to utilize the Workforce Advisory Committee that was created in December 2022. The goal of the committee is to give feedback and input to the Director of Workforce & Talent on ideas and initiatives in regards to attracting and retaining workforce. Currently there are 10 businesses represented on the Workforce Advisory Committee, with 4 of the 10 businesses newly added in mid to late 2023. The current companies represented on the committee are Advanced Heat Treat (NEW), John Deere (NEW), Kryton (NEW), Lincoln Savings Bank, PDCM, Target Food Distribution Center, The Accel Group (NEW), UnityPoint Health, VGM and Western Home Communities.
- To ensure alignment and reduce redundancy with other entities/organizations that are centered around workforce, the Director of Workforce & Talent now sits on several boards/committees in the community and region including: Leader Valley Council, Iowa Workforce Board's Northeast Iowa Planning & Operations Committee and the Cedar Valley SHRM (Society of Human Resource Management) Board as the Work Readiness Chair (beginning in 2024). She also put together a peer group of workforce professionals from all around the state of Iowa who meet on a quarterly basis to share ideas and align where necessary.



## Live the Valley Initiative:

Purpose: Attract and retain quality talent in the Cedar Valley to strengthen our workforce.

Livability Magazine 2024 Collaboration - Grow Cedar Valley has collaborated with Livability Magazine to offer a new tool for businesses to use to promote life in the Cedar Valley to potential workforce. The 2023 version is a 48-page full color Print and Digital publication is free and available at [www.livethevalley.com](http://www.livethevalley.com)

Customized Digital Marketing – Workforce: 594,119 impressions

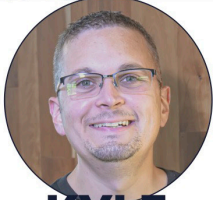






**GINA**  
*Weekley*

Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Belong  
Waterloo Community Schools



**KYLE**  
*Brown*

Human Resources  
VGM Group



**EDITA**  
*Begic*

Owner of Vine Valley  
Real Estate



**RAY**  
*Norman*

Instrumentation Engineer  
John Deere  
U.S. Navy - Veteran



**NILVIA**  
*Reyes-Rodriguez*

Director of Community Impact and  
Engagement at United Way



**JONATHAN**  
*Jones*

Owner of Jonespix  
photography/videography



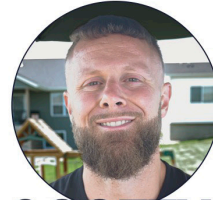
**KATELYN**  
*Tungland*

Regional Director  
Junior Achievement of Eastern Iowa



**AYSHA**  
*Weekley*

Supply Chain Operations Manager  
Target Distribution



**SCOTTY**  
*Russell*

Creative Business Coach,  
NFT Artist and Designer

## Live the Valley Influencers:

Deciding to make a move to a new place can be hard, but that's why Live the Valley is here to help!

We have chosen 9 Live the Valley Influencers, local volunteers who are all about sharing their first-hand experience with people like you. When you connect with an influencer, they'll meet with you one-on-one to answer your questions, introduce you to local resources, and show you what it means to call the Cedar Valley home.

We are using the Power of Storytelling as a Recruitment tools because stories can be relatable, memorable and we are able to see aspects of ourselves in them. We will also launch an Interview Series to highlight real people and real stories of those that not only love but Live, Work and Grow in the Cedar Valley.

# MEET THE GROW CEDAR VALLEY TEAM



Cary Darrah  
President & CEO



Tyler Black  
Marketing Assistant



Bonita Cunningham  
Director of Events and  
Sponsorships



Stephanie Detweiler  
Director of Workforce  
and Talent



Steve Firman  
Director of Government  
Affairs



Barb Leistad  
Office Manager



Nicole Sallis  
Director of  
Communications



Jim Schaefer  
Director of Investor  
Relations



Lisa Rivera Skubal  
VP of Economic  
Development



Sandi Sommerfelt  
VP of Operations

