



Grand Island, Nebraska

Meeting Planner's Guide



Grand Island, Nebraska Basics

50,000
city residents

60,000
county residents

1,841
feet above sea level

Climate

Summer	Avg high 87°, low 64°
Autumn	Avg high 64°, low 39°
Winter	Avg high 32°, low 12°
Spring	Avg high 62°, low 38°
Precip	Annual avg 24.9 inches





Dear Meeting Planner:

Grand Island delivers when it comes to lodging and facilities.

We hear it again and again: "These are the best facilities we've been in," visitors to the Fonner Park campus tell us. Along with these world-class meeting facilities, new hotels are in the works adding to our 1,800 existing rooms allowing Grand Island to accommodate almost everyone. This booklet provides a sampling of what we have to offer.

So what are you waiting for? Accessible from anywhere, Grand Island's airport is a stress-free flight from Dallas, Phoenix or Las Vegas. Proximity to Interstate 80 allows for quick access from across the country. A visit to the Railside district shows some of the very best of what we have to offer in nightlife, arts, and dining

This booklet provides just a sampling of what we have to offer, so whether your planning for 10 or 10,000, searching for banquet halls or a board room, Grand Island has a space for you.

Sincerely,

Brad Mellema
Executive Director

Grand Island's strengths in the meetings market

What sets Grand Island apart from the competition, you ask? The following lists just a few of the unique things the city has to offer a meeting planner.

- **When it comes to event venues**, there aren't very many like the Fonner Park campus as you'll learn in the following pages. We hear it again and again, "These are the best facilities we've been in."
- **The Railside District**, Grand Island's historic downtown, has experienced a renaissance over the past decade. Unique shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities are all within a few block stroll when you're Railside.
- **Grand Island has more** baseball/softball fields in a three-mile radius than any other city in Nebraska, concentrated mainly at Ryder Park and the Veterans Athletic Complex. The Veteran's Complex is the only single location in Nebraska with 10 fields.
- **Grand Island is quite unique** with its combination of available commercial resources in a tight radius. You can get almost anything you need within a 15 minute drive (probably less than that).

Transportation and Connectivity

Grand Island is located right in the center of the United States. Major roadways connect the city to Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, Minneapolis-St Paul, Oklahoma City and St. Louis metros in a day's drive.

The airport offers daily flights to Dallas-Fort Worth and weekly flights to Las Vegas and Phoenix.

You can get anywhere in our city of 50,000 in less than 15 minutes.

Other area transportation options include:

- Local cab company, Uber, and Lyft
- Amtrak station in Hastings (30 minutes)
- Local companies offering bus services
- Five car rental services (two at the airport)
- Shuttle to Omaha's Eppley Airport



Introduction to Fonner Park

Fonner Park, a sixty-plus year institution in Grand Island, continues to find new ways to put its 240 acre campus to good use.

While its agricultural beginnings represent the core of its activities, new flexible space and attractions offer groups the ability to set up for almost any trade show, convention or competition. More than 500,000 square feet of flat floor space is under roof. Of that, roughly 250,000 square feet are heated and 150,000 square feet are air conditioned.

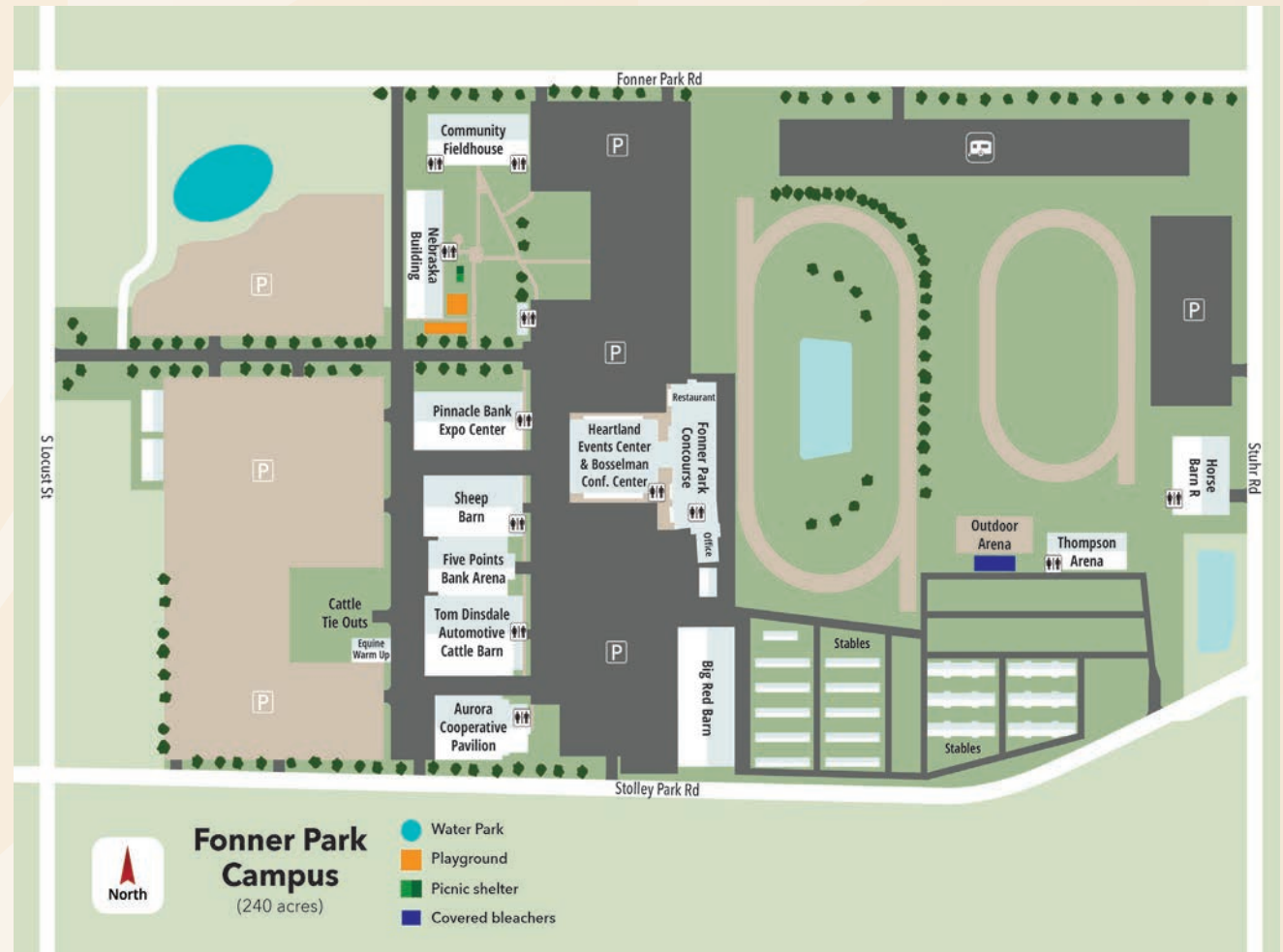
Paved parking is abundant. A large campground is available for group use. Other features include a 25,000 square foot agricultural experience, an educational garden, and playground.

The campus is on the eastern edge of Grand Island but still very much a part of the community. Almost half of the city's 1,800 hotel rooms are within two miles of the Fonner Park campus. Fifty restaurants lie within the same radius, including the Railside district's locally-owned eateries and breweries.



700 E Stolley Park Rd
Grand Island, Nebraska

FonnerPark.com
308-382-4515



Heartland Events Center

Concerts are just the tip of the iceberg. The Heartland Events Center can do just about anything for your meeting. Yes, it is used as banquet space and a place to hold opening ceremonies for conventions. However, the events center can also feature hardwood for basketball tournaments, turf for indoor football, or truckloads of dirt for monster trucks and rodeo.

30,000 square feet of arena space

- 6,000 permanent seats
- 1,500 portable seats
- Climate controlled
- PA system
- Daktronics scoreboard
- Locker rooms and meeting rooms
- Wi-Fi
- 4-corner digital screens
- Concession stands



HeartlandEventsCenter.com



Bosselman Conference Center

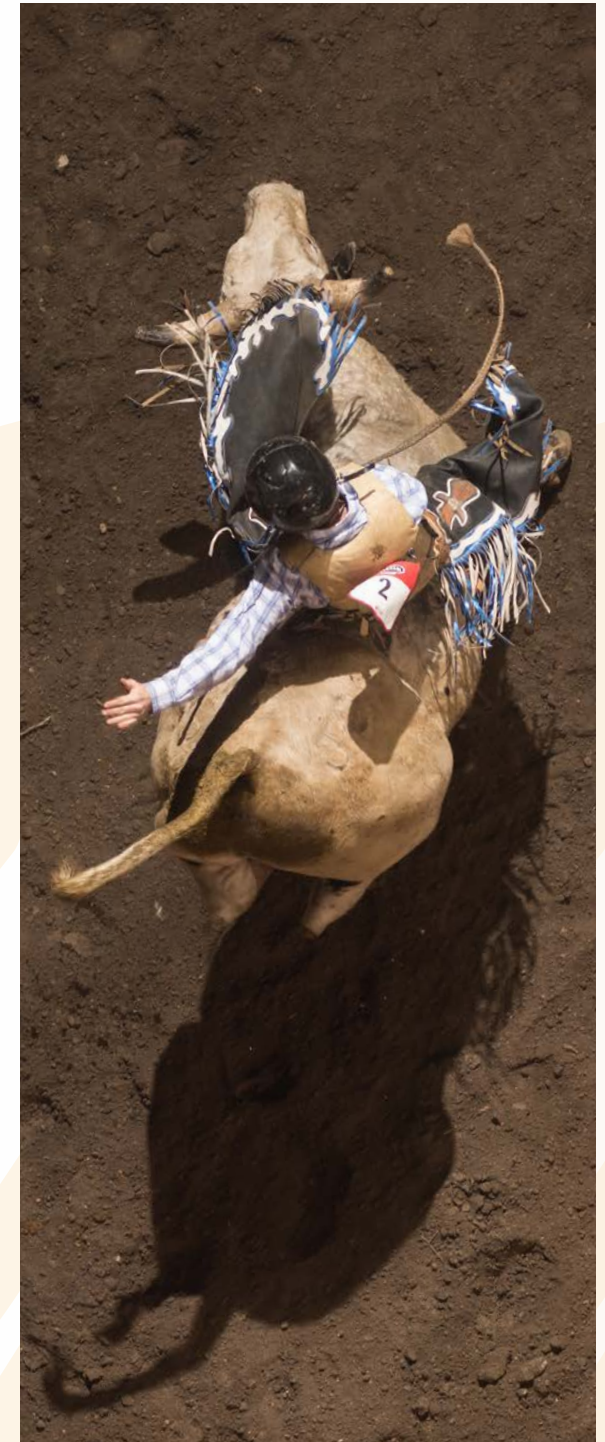
Located inside the Heartland Events Center, this flexible space can be essential to your event.

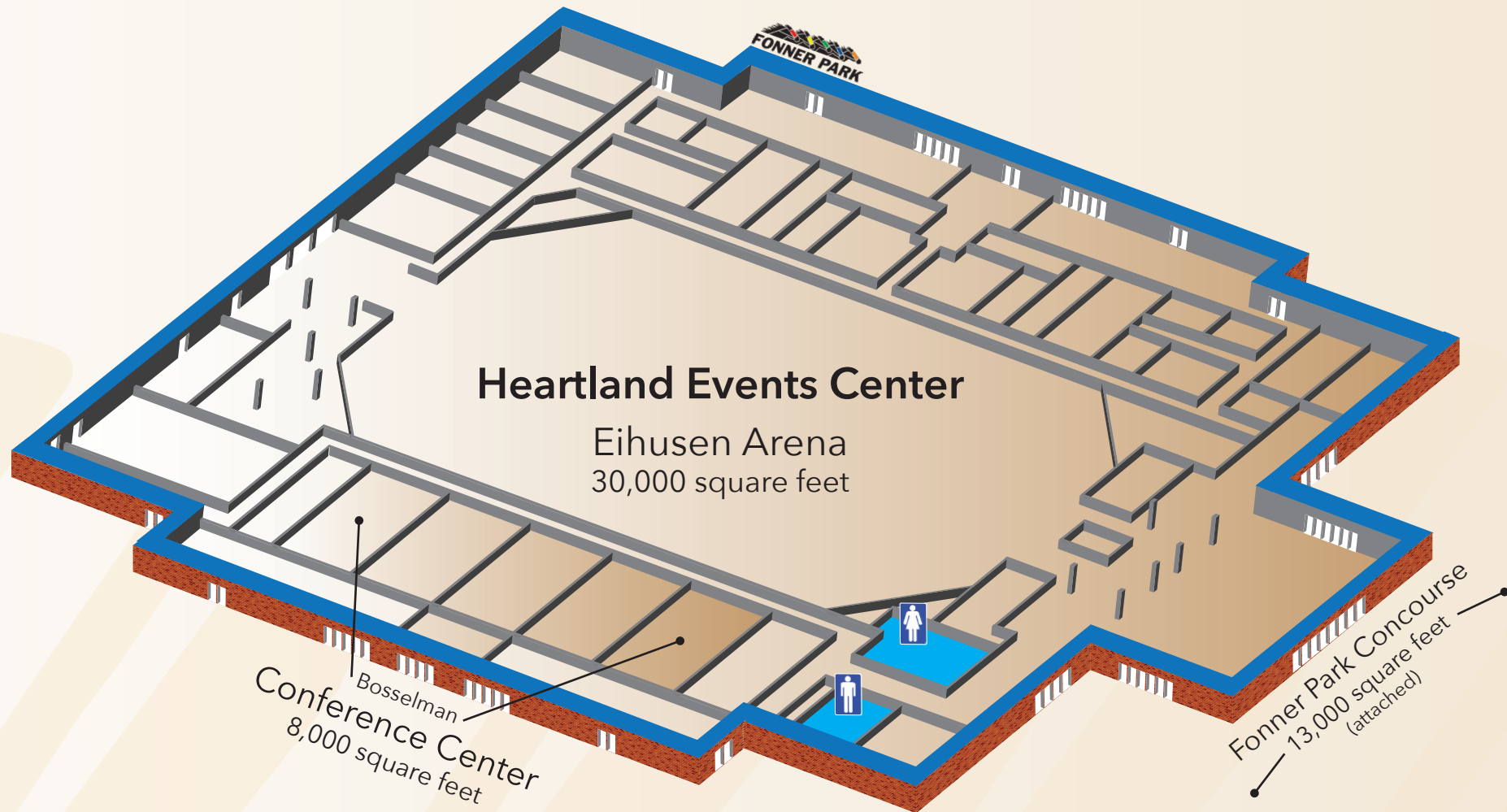
Use all of the space for a small trade show, a wedding, or divide it up into classrooms. A warming kitchen is nearby.

8,000 flexible square feet

- Can be divided into as many as five meeting rooms (see chart below)
- Climate controlled
- Multi-screen capabilities
- LCD TVs, overhead projectors, drop-down screens, sound system & Wi-Fi access
- Classroom, round table, or theater setup

Room Size	Classroom	Theater	Rounds
One room	72	100	72
Two rooms	144	200	144
Three rooms	160	300	200
Four rooms	232	400	300
Five rooms	304	500	400+





Tom Dinsdale Automotive Cattle Barn

Much more than just a barn, this space says loudly "Don't limit your plans to cattle." While 1,350 cattle can be housed in the building at a time – with wash bays for up to 140 cattle at a time – the building's 112,000 square feet can be used for almost anything.

The Barn Bar is a large dining room, including a patio area, with a bar, serving counter, and multiple LCD screens. Opposite the Barn Bar is the Milking Parlor, where dairy cows are milked during demonstrations at the Nebraska State Fair. Next to the milking parlor is, of course, a small ice cream parlor.

112,200 square feet (285' x 382')

- Premier ventilation system with Big Ass Fans
- Concrete flooring
- Rock Bottom Tie Stalls for 1,350 cattle
- High definition color video screen
- Wi-Fi
- 1,200 20-amp drop-down electrical outlets
- Drive-through loading/unloading aisle
- Wash racks, two units for 70 head each
- 15 overhead doors for easy access
- Secured outdoor tie-out area

Five Points Bank Arena

Connected to the cattle and sheep barns, the Five Points Bank Arena is the pinnacle of livestock showing convenience. This heated and cooled space has seating for 1,900 along with VIP lounge overlooking the show area.

A 32' x 12' high definition screen is mounted above a large office area, and a concession stand is available near the entrance. Events the arena hosts include livestock shows, draft horse shows, and rodeos but it could be configured for just about anything.

56,800 square feet (312' x 218')

- Show arena measures 115' x 215' with dirt
- Concrete floor
- Concession & ticket area
- Climate controlled
- Seating for 1,900
- 34' x 12' high definition color video screen
- Wi-Fi
- 10,000 watt sound system
- VIP lounge overlooking the arena
- Office space 40' x 70' (four offices with a large common area)

Sheep Barn

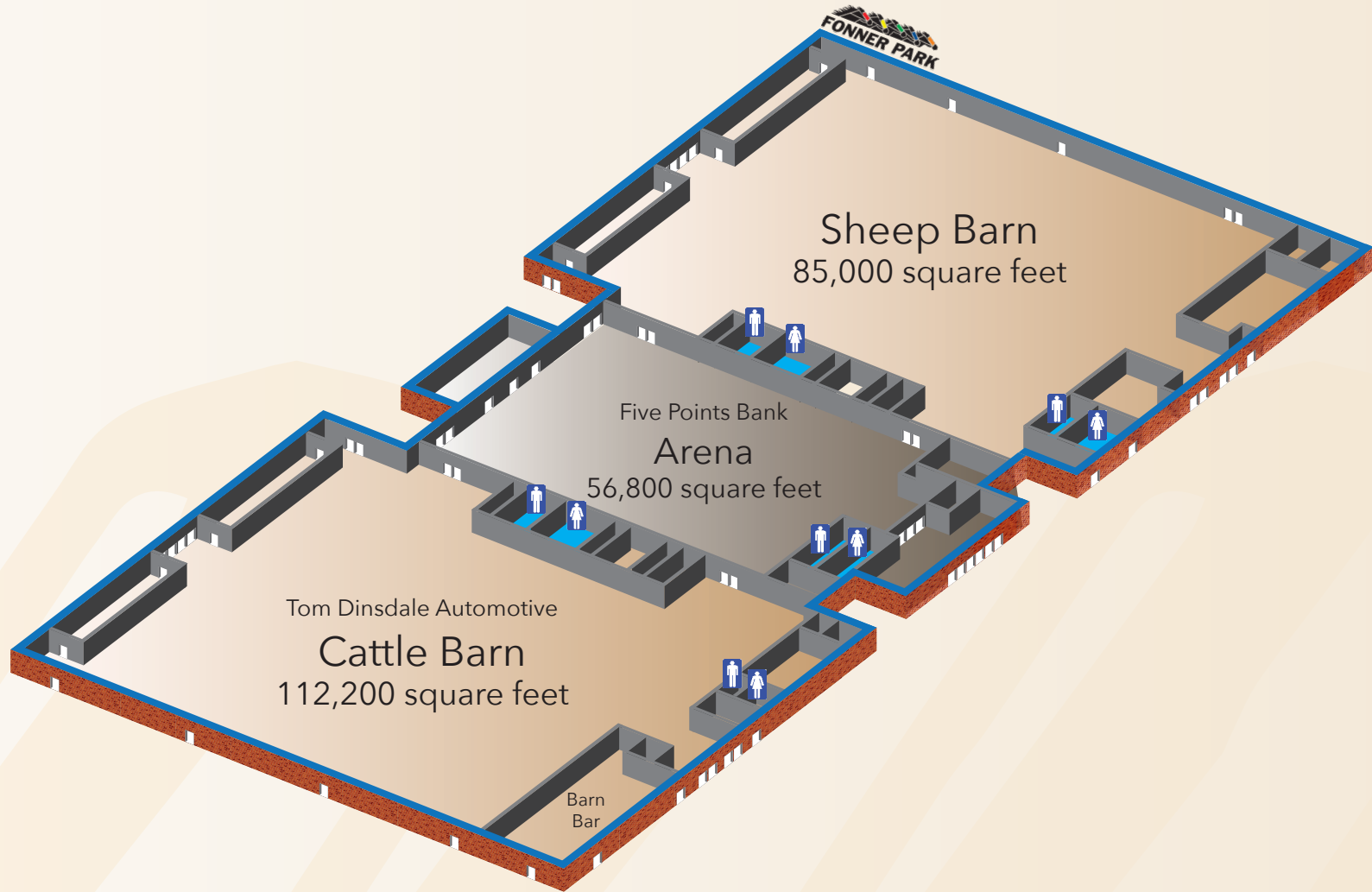
Much more than just a barn, this space says loudly "Don't limit your plans to sheep." The sheep barn is heated and can be used comfortably during the winter months. This space goes way beyond livestock.

A small room at the front of the barn, used as a birthing pavilion during the Nebraska State Fair, is available to groups as flexible meeting space.

85,000 square feet (232' x 382')

- Premier ventilation system with Big Ass Fans and radiant heat
- Concrete flooring
- Portable 6' x 6' pens for 1,600 animals
- High definition color video screen
- Wi-Fi
- 900 20-amp drop-down electrical outlets
- Drive-through loading/unloading aisle
- Wash racks, two units for 60 head each
- 15 overhead doors for easy access
- Four offices
- Birthing Pavillion (2,019 sq. ft.)





Pinnacle Bank Expo Center

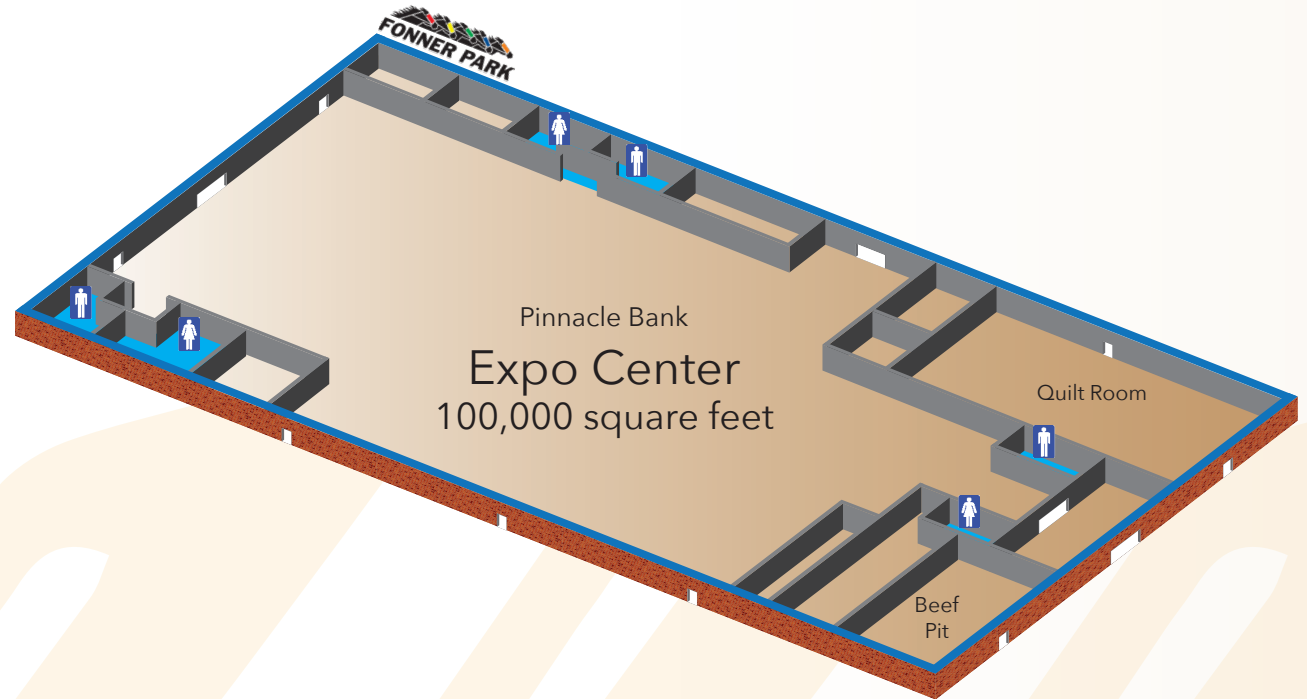
There are very few limits to what can be displayed or acted out in the expanse of flat floor space in the Pinnacle Bank Expo Center.

This 100,000 square foot building is situated on the Fonner Park campus next to the Heartland Events Center and Sheep Barn. The building has hosted the roar of both animatronic dinosaurs and combines thanks to large overhead doors. Sporting events, dog shows, and academic competitions have also made good use of the space.

In addition to the open exposition space, it offers a smaller exhibition room and a dining room with a kitchen. Smaller meeting rooms line outside walls.

100,000 square feet (224' x 450')

- Climate controlled
- Trade show area (350+ booths)
- 270+ 20 amp drop-down electrical outlets plus limited 220v
- 4 overhead doors (largest is 30' x 20')
- Concession area, kitchen & dining area (Beef Pit)
- Office & meeting space



Aurora Cooperative Pavilion

A flexible space, the Aurora Cooperative Pavilion has both a covered area used for livestock pens and a good-sized arena.

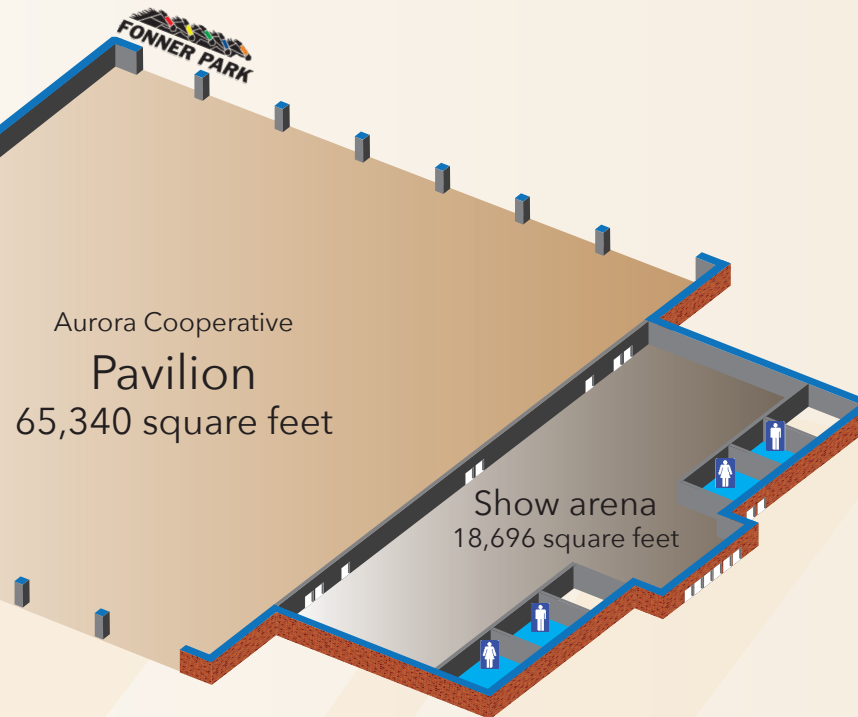
The arena includes a large high definition screen and is used for more than just showing livestock. Weddings aren't uncommon in this space, and it has also been used regularly for roller derby. The arena space – and the pavilion space for that matter – can be set up for just about anything your group needs.

Pavilion: 65,340 square feet (270' x 242')

- Portable 6' x 6' pens for 1,600 livestock
- 330 20 amp drop-down electrical outlets
- Wash pens for 50+ head

Show Arena: 18,696 square feet (170' x 73')

- Climate controlled
- Offices with Wi-Fi capability
- High definition color video screen
- 4 overhead doors for easy access
- Concession area
- Concrete flooring

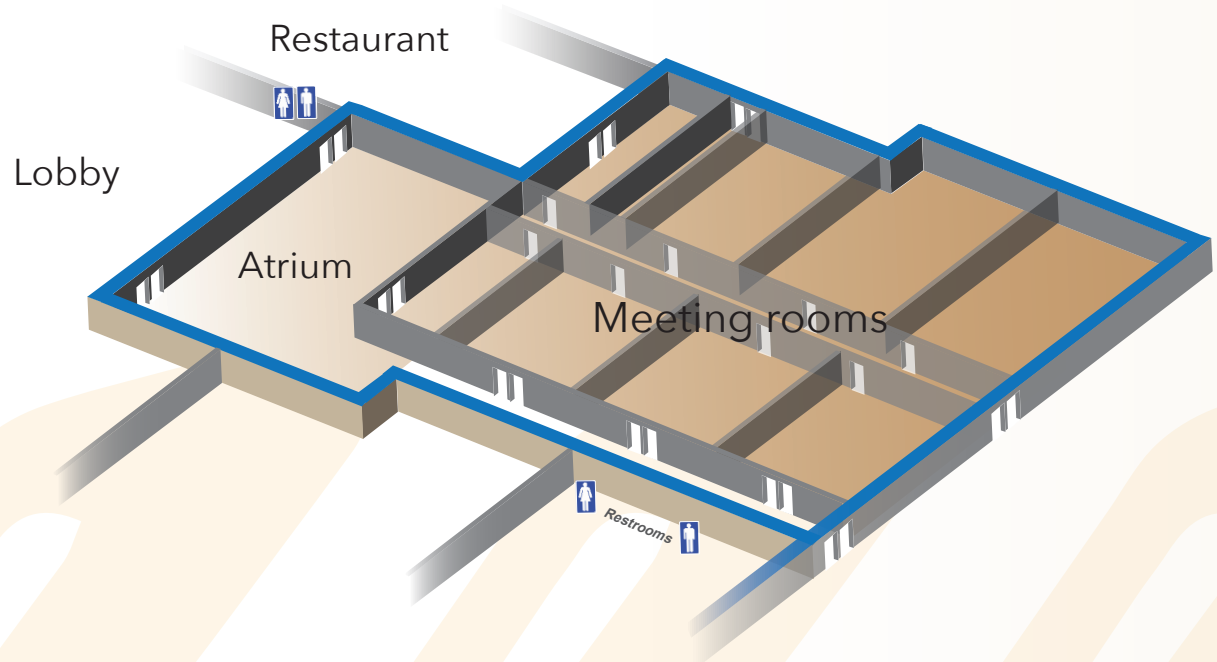


Boarders Inn & Suites

A full-service hotel with a commitment to provide quality accommodations, distinctive service and affordable rates, this modern and updated property is just a five minute drive from the Fonner Park campus.

- 182 guest rooms with 7 deluxe suites
- 7 versatile meeting rooms with 10,000 square feet of combined space
- Business center and fitness center
- Complete hot breakfast buffet
- Guest laundry
- Restaurant and lounge on site
- Indoor pool with hot tub and attached courtyard
- Wi-Fi
- HD flat-screen TVs

3333 Ramada Rd
308-384-5150 | Sales.GI@StayBoarders.com
StayBoarders.com



Seating Capacity

Single Rooms	Classroom	Theater	Rounds
Convention Center	600	1,100	650
Iris	16	35	32
Peony	50	94	64
Majestic	50	94	64
Prestige	75	138	80
Rose	50	105	72
Royal	70	127	72
Orchid	60	116	80

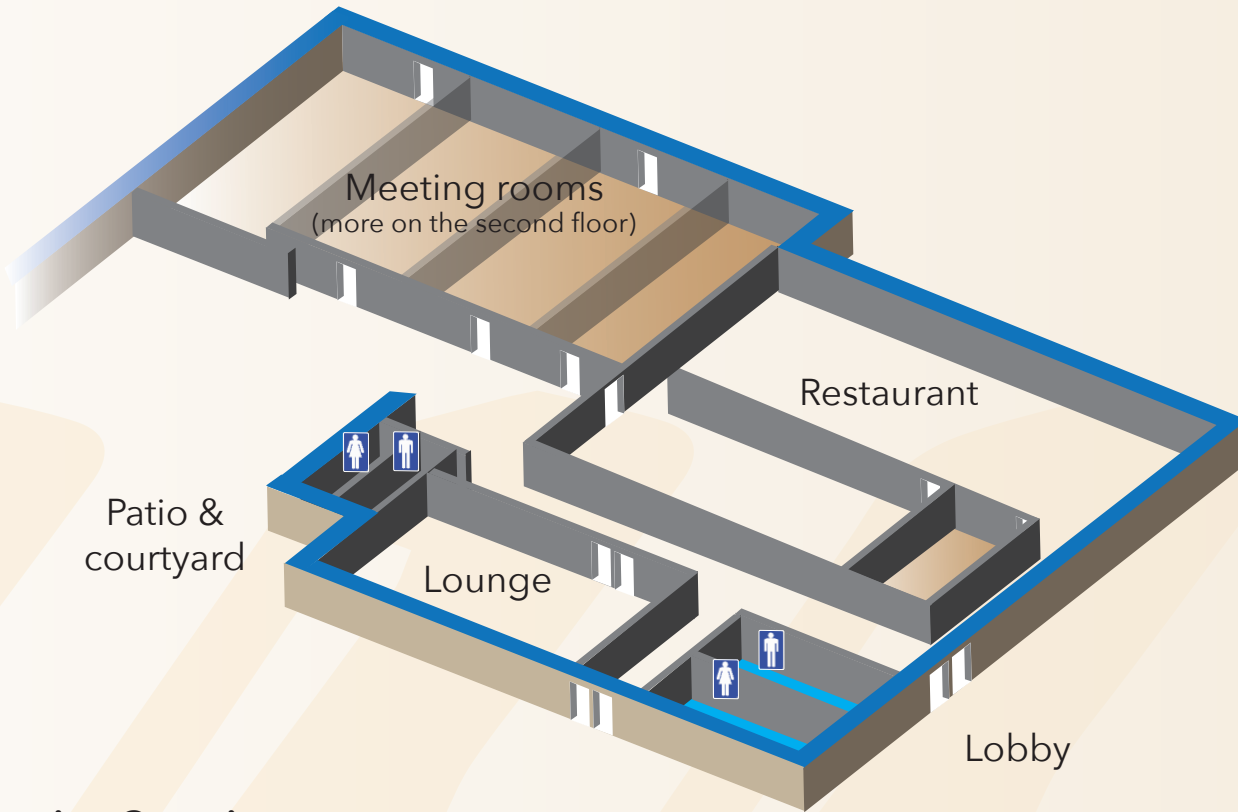
Combined Rooms	Classroom	Theater	Rounds
Iris / Peony	77	104	96
Iris / Peony / Rose	127	245	168
Iris / Peony / Rose / Orchid	187	361	248
Majestic / Prestige	125	370	144
Majestic / Iris / Peony	127	234	160
Royal / Orchid	130	243	152
Royal / Prestige	145	265	152
Royal / Prestige / Majestic	195	359	216
Royal / Prestige / Majestic / Rose	255	486	304
Prestige / Rose	125	243	152
Prestige/ Rose/ Maestic / Peony	225	437	584

Quality Inn & Conference Center

Conveniently located at the intersection of Interstate 80 and Highway 281, Quality Inn & Conference Center is a full-service hotel and convention center. Rooms at the adjacent Suburban Extended Stay (49 rooms) and neighboring Days Inn (47 rooms) are also available for conferences here.

- 100 sleeping rooms
- Meeting room space for large events and small gatherings
- Restaurant and lounge on site, patio and courtyard adjacent to the lounge
- Indoor pool and jacuzzi
- Wi-Fi
- HD flat-screen TVs

7838 S Hwy 281
308-384-7770 | QualityInn@exit312south.com
QualityInnGI.com



Seating Capacity

Single Rooms	Classroom	Theater	Rounds
Convention Center	245	410	350
North Platte	30	200	120
Loup River	40	160	80
Niobrara River	40	160	80
Little Blue	16	60	40
Wood River	12	40	24
Prairie Creek (no ADA)	na	20	na
Silver Creek (no ADA)	16	60	32
Elm Creek (no ADA)	16	60	32

Combined Rooms	Classroom	Theater	Rounds
North Platte / Loup	110	360	200
North Platte / Loup / Niobrara	120	520	280
Loup / Niobrara	80	320	160
Loup / Niobrara / Little Blue	90	380	200
Elm Creek / Silver Creek	32	120	64

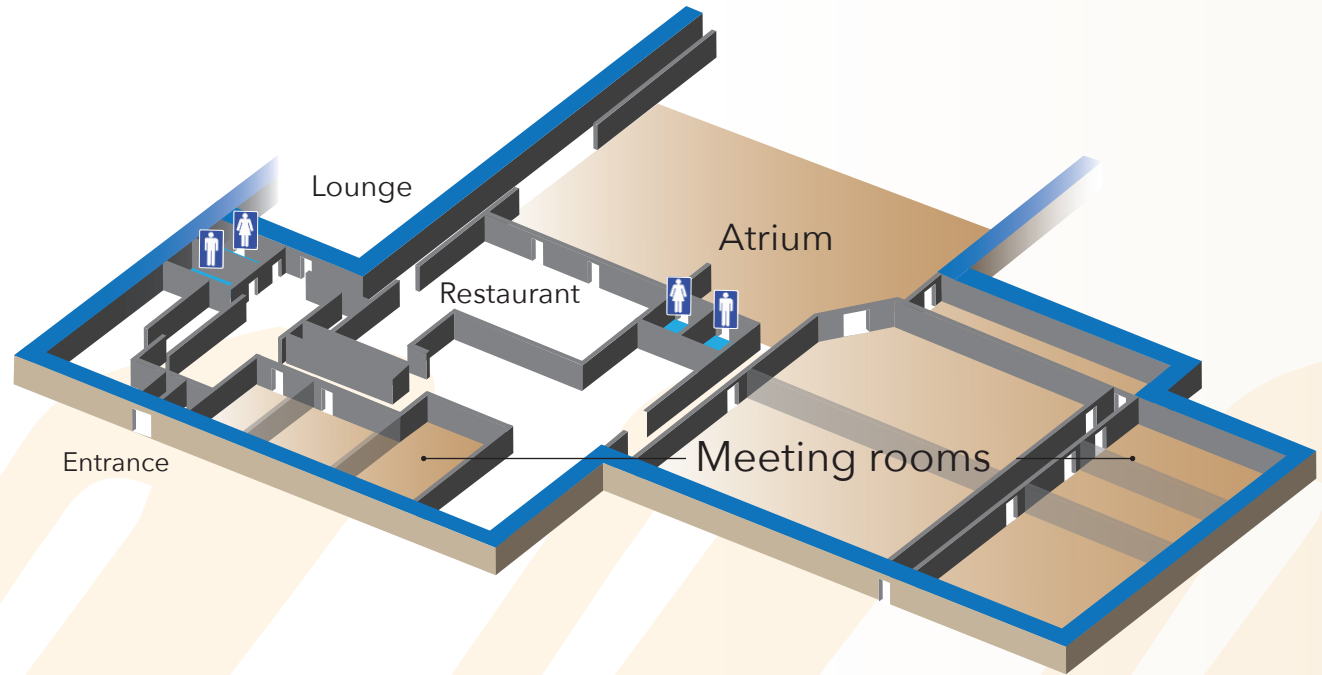


Ramada Midtown

Ramada Midtown offers more than 13,500 square feet of meeting rooms and banquet space, complete with the exceptional service you deserve. The Ramada is located less than three minutes drive from the Fonner Park campus.

- 195 sleeping rooms
- Flat screen TV's with 75+ channels and 25+ HD channels
- Mini refrigerators and microwaves in all rooms
- Indoor pool and hot tub with complimentary mini golf, ping pong, and billiards
- Complimentary full hot breakfast buffet
- Evening dining available at Images Bar & Grille
- Business center and fitness center
- High-speed complimentary Wi-Fi
- Guest laundry
- Complimentary airport and business shuttle

2503 S Locust St
308-385-4587 | Malorie@RamadaMidtown.com
WyndhamHotels.com/hotels/52416



Seating Capacity

Single Rooms	Classroom	Theater	Rounds
Islander I	20	50	24
Islander II	28	66	44
Boardroom	na	na	na
Grand	100	225	112
Royal	100	225	112
Atrium	na	na	300
Ambassador	40	90	40
Executive	40	90	40
Governor	40	90	40

Combined Rooms	Classroom	Theater	Rounds
Islander I / Islander II	48	66	44
Grand / Royal	240	475	300
Ambassador / Executive / Governor	130	270	140

Other larger meeting venues

Grand Island offers many meeting sites beyond the convention hotels and Fonner Park buildings featured on the previous pages. Some of these can accommodate large groups of people. A few of these are listed below.

- Balz Ballroom
- College Park (Grand Island Little Theater)
- Doniphan Community Center
- The Liederkranz
- Riverside Golf Club
- Tommy Gunz Hideout

The Liederkranz



Crane Trust Headquarters



Unique meeting venues

If you're looking for a one-of-a-kind experience or you're just tired of run-of-the-mill conference experiences, the following Grand Island venues have real potential for raising your meeting from obligation to sensation. A few of these are listed below.

- Babel Barn
- Burlington Station
- The Crane Trust
- The Grand Theatre
- Raising Nebraska

The Grand Theatre



Intimate meeting venues

Big ideas can be born in smaller spaces too. They aren't limited to large groups of people or large bank accounts. Maybe you just need a place for a staff retreat; it's amazing what can come from a simple change of scenery. A few of these are listed below.

- Grand Island Public Library
- Harmony Building
- Miletta Vista Winery
- Occasions in Railside
- Stuhr Museum

Stuhr Museum



Athletic events in Grand Island

Grand Island has hosted scores of regional and national competitions including equine, shooting, wrestling, basketball, archery, bowling, cheerleading, soccer, softball, and more. Events regularly return to the city, evidence that Grand Island knows how to help make sporting competitions and tournaments successful.

Grand Island offers a diverse array of top-notch venues including The Heartland Events Center that can seat up to 7,500, a state-

of-the-art shooting park, and a new 10-field softball complex. We're equipped to handle competitions in virtually any sport.

The city is conveniently located right in the middle of the U.S., right off Interstate 80. Central Nebraska Regional Airport airport connects daily with regional jet service to Dallas/Fort Worth – and another regional airport just 40 minutes away serves Denver. Once you're here, getting around is simple; you can get across town in about 10 minutes.



Heartland Public Shooting Park

One of the finest shooting parks in the U.S., the Heartland Public Shooting Park boasts lighted skeet ranges, lighted trap ranges, a 10-station sporting clay range, and complete rifle and pistol ranges from 25 to 600 yards. The 420-acre park hosts regional and national events each year.

You would need to drive almost 1,000 miles in any direction to find a shooting park with as many disciplines as the Heartland Public Shooting Park.

6788 W Husker Hwy
308-385-5048 | BillSt@Grand-Island.com
HeartlandPublicShootingPark.com



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Veterans Athletic Complex

The Veterans Athletic Complex is a newly – developed collection of baseball, softball, and soccer fields on the north side of Grand Island.

The complex features 10 lighted softball fields alongside 11 soccer fields of varying sizes. Other amenities include ample paved parking and shaded bleachers, concessions, a playground (2020) and a splash pad. Ryder park offers another six fields just three miles away (facing page).

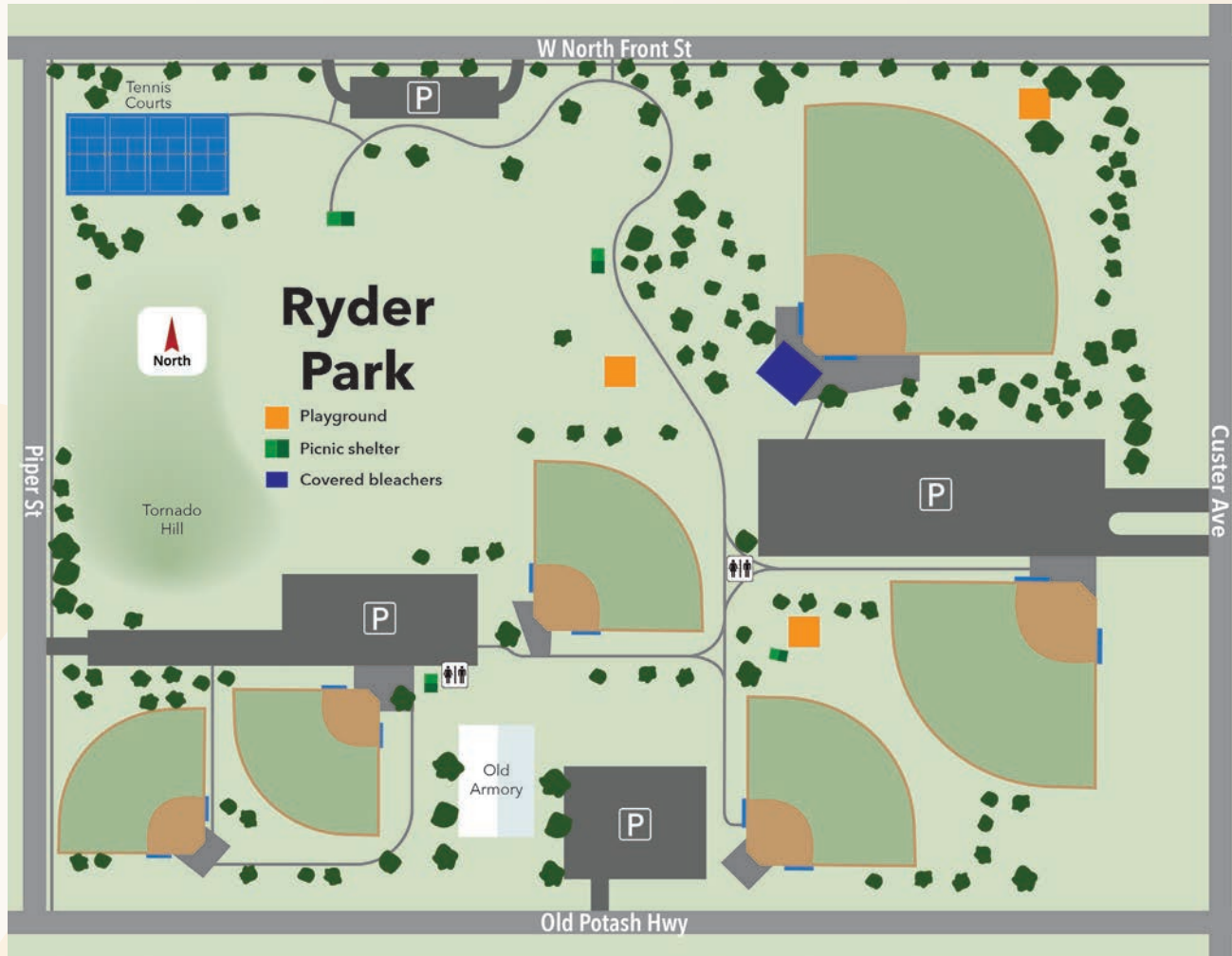
The complex is adjacent to Eagle Scout Park, which offers an additional playground, walking trail, additional restrooms, and handicap accessible fishing dock.

Grand Island Game and Parks
2820 N. Broadwell Ave
308-385-5444 ext 290



Sporting Facilities

Other athletic facilities around Grand Island offer space for indoor competitions and add flexibility to the types of events we're able to host. A lot of the buildings on the Fonner Park campus along with the gyms in four high schools all offer space that can be used for sporting events.



Community Fieldhouse

525 E Fonner Park Rd • 308-384-1999

Heartland Public Shooting Park

6788 W Husker Hwy (Alda) • 308-385-5048

Veterans Athletic Complex

2820 N Broadwell • 308-385-5444

Grand Island Tennis Center

2204 Bellwood Dr • 308-675-1616

YMCA

221 E South Front St • 308-395-9622

Golf Courses

- Centura Hills Golf Club
- Indianhead Golf Club
- Jackrabbit Run Golf Course
- Riverside Golf Club



A few Activities for Groups



Things to do

Fonner Park & Heartland Events Center

700 E Stolley Park Rd • 308-382-4515 • FonnerPark.com, HeartlandEventsCenter.com

The tradition continues in Grand Island when the gates open for live thoroughbred horse racing every February through May at Fonner Park. The adjacent events center hosts concerts, monster trucks, indoor football, trade shows, rodeo, and just about anything else you can think of.

The Grand Theatre

316 W 3rd St • 308-381-2667 • GrandMovieTheatre.com

Railside's lovingly restored movie house offers an experience you won't find at any modern cineplex for less than half the price. Films are shown Friday-Sunday nights in the 1937 art-deco theater that is also available for events during the week.

Island Oasis Water Park

321 E Fonner Park Rd • 308-385-5444 • Grand-Island.com/Oasis

More than 6 acres of refreshing family fun! Brave the wave pool, relax in the lazy river, race down six-story high-speed slides or one of four curvaceous 150-foot slides. Affordable family fun.

Stuhr Museum (facing page)

3133 W Highway 34 • 308-385-5316 • StuhrMuseum.org

Stuhr Museum tells the story of early pioneers settling on the plains. Its 200 acres offer spectacular architecture, a recreated railroad town staffed by historic interpreters during the summer and holidays, Native American displays, and much more. Call for hours and admission, which vary with the season and events.

Raising Nebraska (pictured at left)

501 E Fonner Park Rd • 308-385-3967 • RaisingNebraska.net

Raising Nebraska is a large agriculture display detailing how our food goes from farm to fork. Its ever-changing interactive displays include a walkable map, a touchscreen dining table, a full-size center pivot section, and an adjacent 1-acre educational garden.

Wildlife & Nature

Bader Park

898 Bader Park Rd (Chapman) • 308-986-2522 • BaderPark.com

This 270-acre public park is open year round and offers hiking, biking, and equestrian trails. It includes Platte River and Wood River access, wetlands, a cottonwood forest, and a tall grass prairie all with abundant wildlife viewing opportunities. RV and tent camping are available.

Crane Trust Nature & Visitor Center

9325 S Alda Rd • 308-382-1820 • CraneTrust.org

The Crane Trust Nature & Visitor Center is your gateway to Nebraska's Platte River and your headquarters for the spring migration of the sandhill cranes. Relax in the art gallery, hike, or check out one of the trust's guided excursions. Explore the butterfly garden during the summer months. A genetically pure herd of bison roams their prairies.

Derr House Prairie

13650 S Platte River Dr (Wood River) • 402-694-4191 • Nature.org/Nebraska

The Nature Conservancy's Derr House offers public trails through restored prairies. They host prairie days that offer talks and tours.

Gjerloff Prairie & Farm/Sherman Ranch

Platte River Valley • 402-694-5535 • PrairiePlains.org

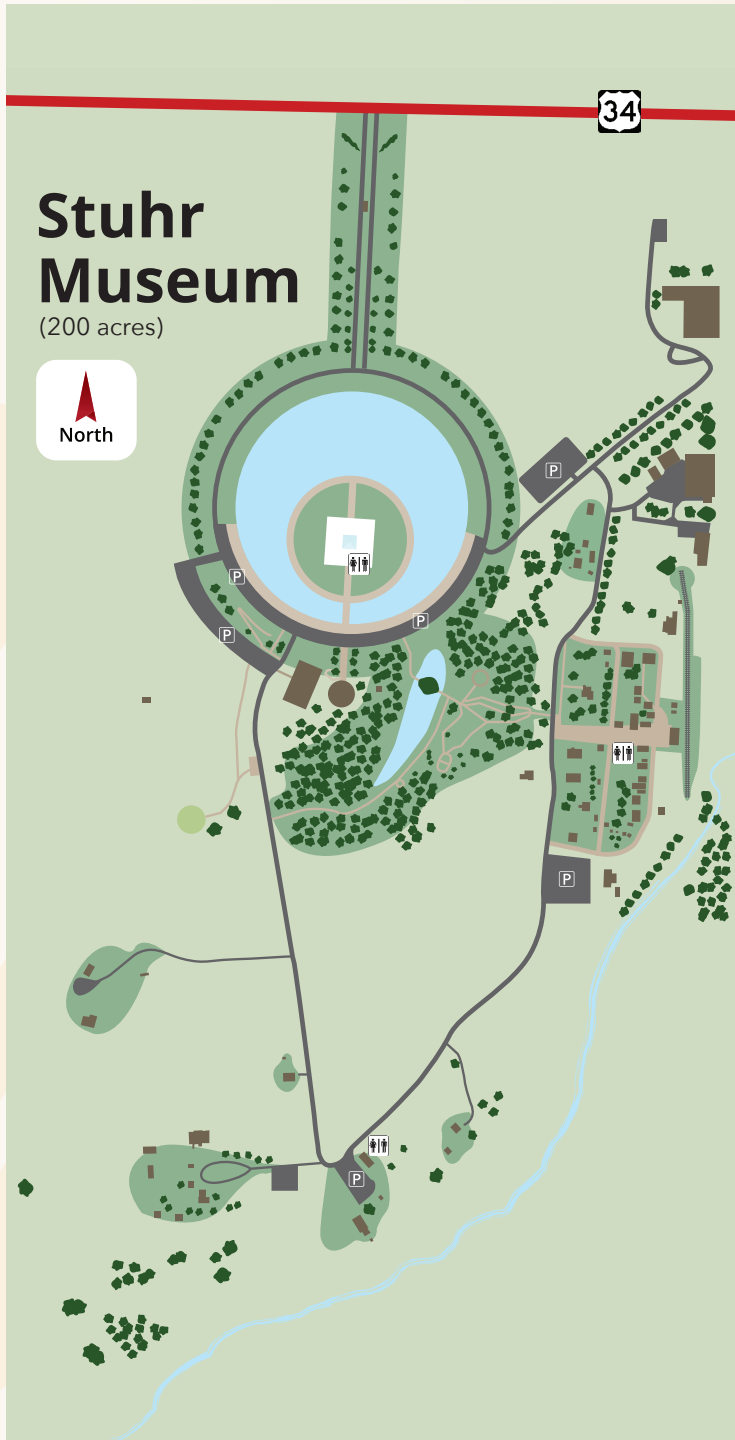
Gjerloff Prairie's 390 acres offer trails on open prairie, gulleys, steep cliffs, and a half mile of riverfront. An education center is being constructed on the property as well. The Prairie Plains Resource Institute completed the purchase of the nearby 650-acre Sherman Ranch in 2016.

Outdoor Learning Center

501 E Fonner Park Rd • 308-382-4400

The Groundwater Guardian's learning center educates the public about water quantity and quality, groundwater stewardship, natural filtration techniques, efficient water use, and the Ogallala Aquifer.

Stuhr Museum's Railroad Town



Railside District

The Railside District, Grand Island's historic downtown, has experienced a renaissance over the past decade. Unique shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities are all within a few block stroll when you're Railside.



Corporate Tours

We work regularly with businesses and organizations that offer tours of their facilities. Grand Island is a center of industry and agriculture, and businesses such as Hornady Manufacturing and Case-New Holland showcase American ingenuity and quality.



Hotels

	Cost	Rooms
BW Plus by Best Western 2707 S Locust St • 877-315-8273 BestWestern.com	\$\$\$\$	80
Boarders Inn & Suites by Cobblestone 3333 Ramada Rd • 308-384-5150 StayBoarders.com	\$\$\$	182
Candlewood Suites by IHG 859 Allen Dr • 308-381-7000 ihg.com/Candlewood	\$\$\$\$	88
Comfort Inn by Choice Hotels 3535 W State St • 308-381-7788 ComfortInn.com	\$\$\$	68
Days Inn by Wyndham 2620 Diers Ave • 308-384-8624 WyndhamHotels.com/days-inn	\$\$\$	61
Days Inn I-80 by Wyndham 7838 S Hwy 281 • 866-384-5006 WyndhamHotels.com/days-inn	\$\$\$	47
Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott 805 Allen Dr • 308-381-8980 Marriott.com	\$\$\$\$	105
Hampton Inn by Hilton 504 N Diers Ave • 800-426-7866 GrandIsland.HamptonInn.com	\$\$\$\$	68
Holiday Inn Express & Suites by IHG 3404 W Faidley Ave • 308-675-1118 HIExpress.com	\$\$\$\$	80
Island Inn Independent hotel 2311 S Locust St • 800-646-6869 IslandInnGI.com	\$\$	44
Mainstay Suites by Choice Hotels 3051 S Locust St • 308-382-9280 MainstaySuites.com	\$\$\$	58
Motel 6 by The Blackstone Group 7301 Bosselman Ave • 308-384-6666 Motel6.com	\$\$	51

Hotels

	Cost	Rooms
Quality Inn & Conference Center by Choice Hotels 7838 S Hwy 281 • 800-658-4092 ChoiceHotels.com/quality-inn	\$\$\$	100
Ramada Midtown by Wyndham 2503 S Locust St • 800-548-5542 Wyndhamhotels.com/ramada	\$\$\$	197
Red Coach Inn Independent hotel 3021 S Locust St • 308-384-4100	\$	104
Relax Inn Independent hotel 507 West 2nd St • 308-384-1000	\$	28
Resident Suites Independent hotel 2114 W 2nd St • 800-285-2240	\$	96
Rodeway Inn by Choice Hotels 3205 S Locust St • 800-766-1706 RodewayInn.com	\$\$	60
Sleep Inn by Choice Hotels 1716 Diers Ave • 308-381-8111 SleepInn.com	\$\$\$	63
Suburban Extended Stay Hotel by Choice Hotels 7838 S Hwy 281 • 800-658-4092 ChoiceHotels.com/suburban	\$\$	49
Super 8 by Wyndham 2603 S Locust St • 308-384-4380 Super8.com	\$\$	79
Travelodge by Wyndham 1311 S Locust St • 877-779-5823 Travelodge.com	\$\$	40
USA Inns of America Independent hotel 7501 S Hwy 281 • 308-381-0111 USAInn.net	\$	61
Wood River Motel Independent hotel I-80 Exit 300, Wood River • 308-583-2256	\$	26



Restaurants for Groups

Your delegates and attendees need space to spread out and refuel. Grand Island has restaurants that can accommodate larger numbers of people, and we'll happily provide you a list of these options.

Sutter Deli



Caterers for Groups

More than 25 caterers are licensed to serve groups in Grand Island. We work with these people on a regular basis, and can gladly provide you with a list that includes a wide variety of cuisines.

Sin City Grill



Hometown Flavors

Themed restaurants, microbrews, and local latino flavors highlight Grand Island's hometown food fare. The largest concentration of these locally-owned restaurants can be found in the Railside district.

Kinkaider Brewing Co



Tommy Gunz Bistro





Grand Island Tourism