Grand Island, Nebraska Group Tour Planner's Guide Grand Island Tourism





Discover Nebraska's Favorite Island

Whether you're looking for a Mystery Tour location, a bucket list adventure, or a place to stop on your way to your destination, we invite you to discover Grand Island. Our staff is eager to help you find the right mix of things to see and do while you're here. This group planning guide gives you just a few places and events that may be of interest.

To make your stay special, we offer:

- Step on-guides
- · Assistance in planning
- · Listening devices
- Boots-on-the-ground advice
- Connections to attractions, speakers, and presenters

Let us know how we can help.



Program and Outreach 308-382-4400 Dana@VisitGrandIsland.com



VisitGrandIsland.com | 308-382-4400



Transportation & Connectivity

Bosselman Travel Center

3335 W Wood River Rd | 308-382-2288 Truck stop with diesel and motorcoach service

Airports

Central Nebraska Regional Airport (GRI)

Grand Island

Flights to Dallas, Phoenix, and Las Vegas

Lincoln Regional Airport (LNK)

(90 miles east)
Flights to Chicago, Denver, and Houston

Omaha - Eppley Airfield (OMA)

(152 mile east)

Non-stop service to 31 of the nation's busiest airports. 200 arrivals a day.

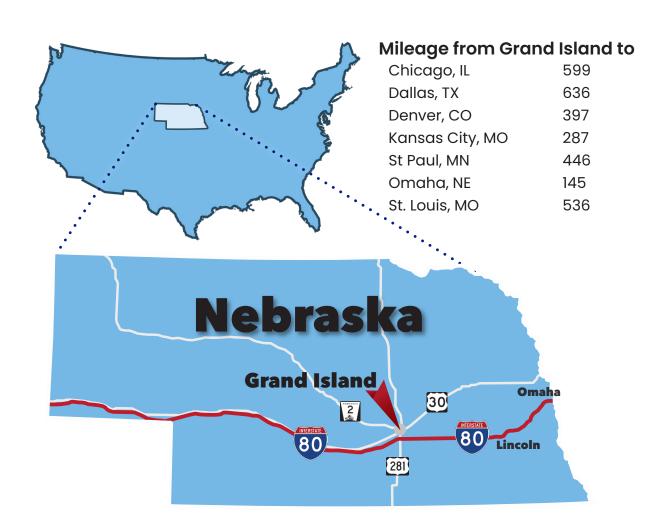
Byways

Lincoln Highway Historic Byway

U.S. Highway 30 LincolnHighwayNebraskaByway.com This historic byway, also known as The Father Road, goes from sea to shining sea across the United States.

Sandhills Journey National Scenic Byway

Nebraska Highway 2 | SandhillsJourney.com This byway rolls 272 miles through the Nebraska Sandhills, the largest area of grass-covered sand dunes in the Western hemisphere. The World Wildlife Fund compares the importance of the Sandhills to pla



Tour: Midwest Ag Showcase

Sample itinerary, with overnight in Grand Island

On this tour, you'll see the progression of agriculture from the 1890s to today's science and technology.

Day 1

Raising Nebraska | 501 E. Fonner Park Road raisingnebraska.net | 308-385-3967

Start your stay off at Raising Nebraska, operated by the University of Nebraska. Make plans to enjoy a farm to table experience and either hands-on activities or a garden tour (seasonal).

Allow 2 hours

Day 2

Breakfast at the hotel, followed by a short drive by historic sites en route to the first tour stop. Case IH Plant Tour | 3445 W. Stolley Park Road 815-507-7283

See what it takes to bring your favorite, red farm equipment to life by visiting one of Case's state-of-the-art manufacturing plants. Advanced booking is required. For more information, visit caseih.com/enus/unitedstates/connect-with-us/plant-tours

Allow 2.5 hours (includes security)

Stuhr Museum | 3133 W. US Highway 34 stuhrmuseum.org | 308-385-5316

Visit this living history museum with a typical 1890s prairie town. Here is where the Nebraska State Hand Cornhusking competition is held each September. On the museum campus, you may also visit a farm implement building, and the impressive main building with static and temporary displays. For behind the scenes tours of the collections building and archives, advanced booking is required.

Allow 2.5 hours (includes lunch)

Fonner Park | 700 E. Stolley Park Rd. fonnerpark.com *or* statefair.org 308-382-4515 or 308-382-1620 (points of contact will differ depending upon when you want to book)

Grand Island hosts thousands of families a year at various agriculture shows. Tour one of the large agriculture buildings that showcase state fair, regional, as well as national livestock shows. Learn what it takes to change over these massive facilities to accommodate various breed needs, from poultry to long horned cattle.

Allow 1.5 hours

Big Red Treats | 223 W. 3rd Street bigredtreats.com | 308-392-3456

Time for a treat break. At Big Red Treats you can have a little ice cream or some Nebraska grown popcorn. Hear about how a town of 260 people is home to the world's largest popcorn exporter and supplier to four of the top five cinema groups in the country. With advance notice, Big Red Treats can also provide a tour of their popping room.

Allow 1 hour





Tour: Spring Sandhill Crane Migration

Sample itinerary, with overnight in Grand Island

The magnificence of the sandhill crane migration can only be experienced here, in the central Platte River valley.

Day 1

Stuhr Museum | 3133 W. US Hwy 34 stuhrmuseum.org | 308-385-5316

Start your migration experience with a program at Stuhr Museum. While there, you'll see videos and hear a presentation about the crane migration. You'll also get a tour of the museum's architecturally significant main building highlighting history exhibits. Depending on your arrival time and needs, lunch can be available for your group upon arrival or right before you depart.

Allow 2-2.5 hours (depends on your needs)

Driving Tour (mid afternoon)

You'll hit the road with a local guide who will take you through areas where the sandhill cranes feed during the day. You may catch them dancing to impress their future mate.

Allow 1-1.5 hours

Crane Trust Nature and Visitor Center

9325 S. Alda Rd, Wood River cranetrust.org | 308-382-1820

At the Crane Trust, learn how conservation efforts help make this a preferred resting spot for the sandhill crane — as well as their travel mates the whooping crane. At dusk, an up close view of the cranes will be the highlight of your visit. From viewing blinds on the river, you'll see and hear the birds fly in for their overnight stay. Warm clothes, binoculars and a camera should be on your packing list. (booking is required for blind tours)

Allow 3.5 hours

Thunder Road Sports Bar | 1607 S. Locust St. thunderroadsportsbar.com | 308-395-3889

The evening will be capped off with dinner at Thunder Road, with its race car themed decor. The restaurant can accommodate a large group in the main dining room or in a private room.

Allow 2 hours

Day 2

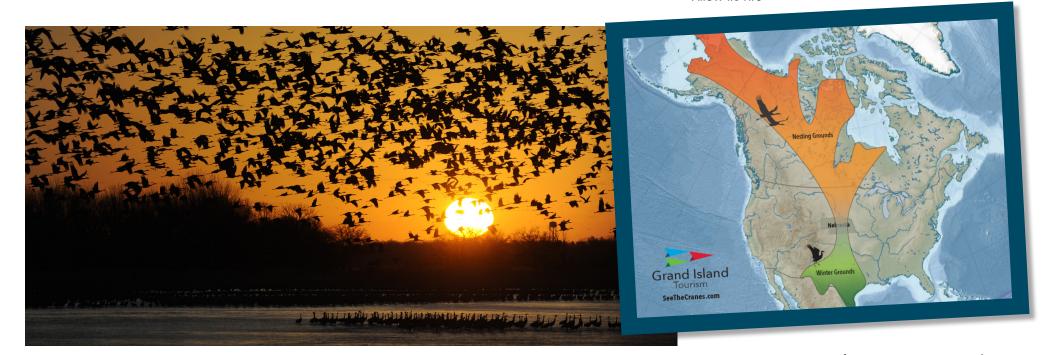
Add a sunrise blind tour to your itinerary and watch the cranes leave the river at dawn. Then stop into the Crane Trust visitors' center for cinnamon rolls and a trip through their gallery and gift shop.

or begin your day at

The Chocolate Bar | 116 W. 3rd St. thechocolatebargi.com | 308-675-0664

A local story teller, photographer or historian may join you for breakfast and one last experience before you set out for your next destination.

Allow 1.5 hrs



Tour: Art & Food

Sample itinerary, with overnight in Grand Island

On this tour, you get to try food and beverages, plus see various art at stops, along the journey.

Day 1

The Chocolate Bar | 116 W. 3rd St.

thechocolatebargi.com | 308-675-0664

Have lunch, plus dessert (of course), and hear from someone in the local art community.

Allow 1.5 hours

Railside | Various locations near 3rd and Pine Streets

From near this one corner, you can visit sculptures, painted wings in the alleys, and the beautiful decor of a local Latin restaurant.

Allow 1 hour

Prairie Pride Brewing | 115 E. South Front St. #1 prairiepridebrewery.com | 308-850-5375

With on site brewing, you can sample, as well as see the process it takes to develop new flavors and brews for retail consumption.

Allow 1 hour

Walk along 3rd Street (or use the motorcoach - at your discretion based on abilities of your guests)

The Grand Theater | 316 W. 3rd St. | grandmovietheatre.com | 308-381-2667

The glass tile facade is a restoration of the theater's 1930s facade. Inside you'll see a continuation of the art-deco design which was prevalent at the time of this theater's restoration. You'll also hear about Grand Island's music scene. If desired, we can arrange for a local musician to perform.

Allow 1.5 hour (longer if performance is desired)

Fred's Flying Circus | 503 E. 4th St.

Fred's Flying Circus is a whimsical, 3D art display viewed from across the street.

Allow 20 minutes (includes a documentary short form video on the bus and photo opportunities)

Prairie Creek Winery | 1600 16th St, Central City prairiecreekwine.com | 308-940-3863

You'll have supper at Prairie Creek Vineyard's restaurant, where they can suggest one of their own wines for the perfect pairing.

Allow 1.5-2 hours

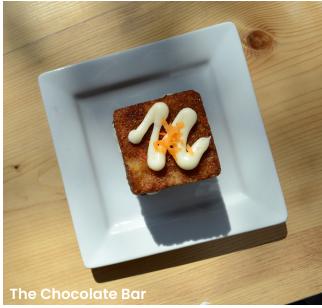
Day 2

Raising Nebraska | 501 E. Fonner Park Rd. raisingnebraska.net | 308-385-3967

Make arrangments to sample local sausage, bacon, eggs, honey, mushrooms or milk. You can also add an art project (such as leather stamping).

Allow 1-1.5 hours







VisitGrandIsland.com | 308-382-4400





Tour: Settlers, Saints, & Sinners

Sample itinerary, with overnight in Grand Island (schedule can be easily altered)

Tales from the plains include stories of bravery, intrigue and fortitude.

Day 1

Liederkranz | 401 W. 1st St. giliederkranz.org | 308-382-9337

Step back in time. Check out the original 1890s bar, retro bowling alley and 1960's lounge. Have supper (American or German cuisine) and get a tour while hearing interesting stories from the past.

Allow 2 hours

Day 2

Breakfast at the hotel

Burlington Station | 603 N. Plum St. hallnehistory.com | 308-385-1545

In this restored train station, members of the Historical Society will tell stories about the people who settled here and how they built a community on the harsh prairie.

Allow 1 hour

The Grand Theater | 316 W. 3rd St. grandmovietheatre.com | 308-381-2667

Stop into this restored early 1900s theater. Hear about the businessman who not only saved the theater from its demise (twice), but also saved the lives of about 200 people from Nazi Germany.

Allow 1 hour

Railside Tour | 201 W. 3rd St. visitgrandisland.com | 308-382-4400

Take a guided walking tour of historic downtown sites. Walk in the footsteps of those who made this prairie town grow and thrive. The Railside district is on the National Register of Historic Places and sits along the first transcontinental railroad and Lincoln Highway.

Allow 1.5 hours (with stops to sit)

Chicken Coop | 120 E. 3rd St. chickencoopsportsbar.com/grand-island | 308-398-2500

Enjoy lunch in this historic building. Many saints and sinners, and those who were both, passed through these doors.

Allow 1.5 hours

Driving Tour with Step On Guide

Driving tours can be catered to your interests. visit areas of early settlement and trails, or stop by two historic homes.

Allow up to 1.5 hr (if including house tours)

Stuhr Museum | 3133 W. US Hwy 34 stuhrmuseum.org | 308-385-5316

The museum's 200 acres include a town with a working planing mill, tinsmith and blacksmith shop. From late spring to early fall, the town is inhabited by historic interpreters. If time allows, we can add behind the scenes tours of the archive and vast collections building.

Allow 2 hours

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Places & Spaces: Crane Trust Nature Center

The Crane Trust is best known as a place to see the sandhill crane migration. But the rest of the year, it is a thriving, working, nature center. Learn about and experience this spot in the Platte River Valley with the help of staff and guides.

Nature

Stretch your legs on one of the many trails at the nature center. Stay close by the visitors' center or take a mile walk. Learn about the various plants and pollinators that make this location so important to the area's ecosystem.

Bison

The Crane Trust plays host to many birds on their migratory paths, but it is also the home to a large herd of bison. Go on a "safari" to see the bison and learn how the behavior of these large animals impacts prairie restoration.

Films

See one or more of the short films which showcases the beauty of the region, the spectacle of the great sandhill crane migration and the work of the Crane Trust. Plus hear from nationally renown photographers and videographers who make this place a must on their travels.

Gallery/Gift Shop

The visitor center's Hornady Art Gallery showcases many beautiful photographs taken on or near this part of the Platte River. Nearby is the Crimson Crown Gift Shop where you can purchase everything from a bird guide to a silk scarf as a reminder of your time here.

9325 S Alda Rd (Interstate 80 exit 305) 308-382-1820 | CraneTrust.org | info@CraneTrust.org









Places & Spaces: Stuhr Museum

Praised as the "best preserved pioneer town" (*True West*), Stuhr Museum tells the story of early pioneers settling on the plains. Its 200 acres offer spectacular architecture, and a recreated railroad town staffed by historic interpreters during the summer and holidays. You can also see Native American displays, vintage vehicles, and much more. Peek behind the curtain at their collections building and archives. Call for hours and admission, which vary with the season and special events.

Railroad Town

This recreated pioneer community features a working planing mill, blacksmith, and tinsmith shop. Businesses and homes are furnished to reflect the 1890s, including the birthplace of Henry Fonda.

The Stuhr Building

The museum's main building was designed by renowned architect Edward Durell Stone, known for designing Radio City Music Hall and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Stuhr Building houses history displays, a rotating art gallery, and special exhibits.

Fonner Rotunda

The Fonner Rotunda houses Native American and cowboy exhibits plus items from the Bartenbach Opera House. The beautiful Arrow Maker statue anchors this round structure. Outside is a sculpture of the Martin Brothers. Learn about their harrowing story of survival.

Farm Implements & Automobiles

Check out steam tractors and a collection of antique cars.

3133 W. Highway 34, Grand Island 308-385-5316 | StuhrMuseum.org info@StuhrMuseum.org





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Places & Spaces: Historic Railside District

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

The Grand Theatre

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 Fri-Sun nights in the 1930s art-deco theater. Schedule a tour.

Railside breweries

Prairie Pride is an award winning brewery and tap room serving pale ales to stouts. Brewhaus tours are available. Nearby, The Chicken Coop restaurant features their own cream soda and root beer, plus brews from their regional brewery.

Railside shopping

Railside has long been known for its antique stores. Recently, a number of independent specialty stores have opened in the district.

Guided Tours

When you stroll Railside you'll see sculptures, murals, and wings painted in alley ways. You can interact with the art by taking photos to help remember your time in Railside. You'll also see historic buildings dating back to the 1880s. Take a guided art or history tour courtesy of Grand Island Tourism.

Treats

If you have a sweet tooth, stop in The Chocolate Bar or Big Red Treats. You can have cake, a truffle, or Nebraska grown popcorn. Big Red Treats popping room tours are available by appointment (not handicapped accessible).

201 W. Third St, Grand Island 308-398-7022 | ArriveRailside.com director@ArriveRailside.com









VisitGrandIsland.com | 308-382-4400





Places & Spaces: Fonner Park Campus

Fonner Park plays host to entertainment throughout the year including concerts at the Heartland Events Center, the Grand Island Casino, the Nebraska State Fair, and thoroughbred horse racing. Contact Fonner Park to get information on events.

Historic site

Fonner Park is where the westward trails came through in the 1800s and the site of the first business in Grand Island's settlement. Ask Grand Island Tourism for a step-on guide to show you the campus, plus explain its history and how this site now hosts people from across the nation and world.

Nebraska State Fair

Entertainment and animals. Concerts and street performers. Barbeque, animals, and foods on a stick. Cotton Candy and The Quilt Room. What are you waiting for? Schedule your trip to include the fair.

Thoroughbred horse races

The 60+ year tradition continues in Grand Island when the gates open for thoroughbred horse racing every February through May. In the words of their CEO, "Every 22 minutes the place goes berserk!"

Grand Island Casino Resort

New to Grand Island, you'll find more than meets the eye. From entertainment to food, plus a resort spa, you'll find something to draw you back.

Heartland Events Center

The events center features concerts, sure, but also offers a wide variety of other shows througout the year including a circus and a rodeo!

700 E Stolley Park Rd, Grand Island 308-382-4515 | FonnerPark.com









Grand Island is an event driven community, from small to large events focused on entertainment to agriculture. If you are planning a trip to Grand Island, contact Grand Island Tourism to see what special event might be happening while you're here. We may be able to make special arrangements for your group.

Craft Brew and Sausage Fest

Sample the best beer and sausages in Nebraska every August while enjoying live music in the courtyard of the historic Liederkranz German club. When you go inside, check out the original bar from the 1870s. Pre-arrangement for a group tour of this 150 year old club is possible.

Concerts

Hear GI is a 10 week, summer concert series in Grand Island's historic downtown. This award-winning event showcases diverse music, with a festival vibe while the year-long Grand Island Music Series features a variety of music in traditional outdoor and indoor settings.

Nebraska State Fair, 11 days from late August to Early September

This fair has it all, from entertainment to competitive entries, and fun foods to agricultural shows. Check out the hundreds of quilts in the Expo Center's Quilt Room.

Kite Festival

High-flying fun is the motto of this event which features professional kite flyers. See day and night flights.

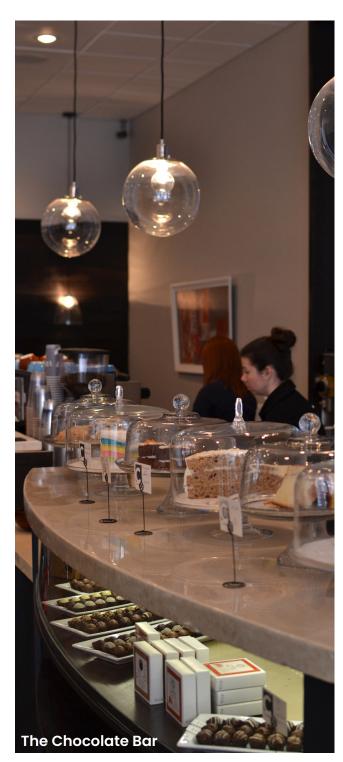
Husker Harvest Days

In September, Husker Harvest Days — the world's largest totally irrigated farm show — takes place at a permanent site west of Grand Island. This three day show features the latest in technology.

Rodeo Grand Island

Rodeo Grand Island is an annual, late winter, PRCA showcase of professional cowboys in the Heartland Events Center.





Restaurants for Groups

Food is an important part of any vacation. A good meal can create a positive memory tied to an experience or place. Grand Island has dining experiences that can accomodate big groups while serving delicious foods in unique atmospheres.

The Chicken Coop

A historic space offering local beer — they brew their own root beer — and great food from pizza to steak.

The Chocolate Bar

This trendy and intimate space brews great coffee, serves breakfast, light lunches, and tasty desserts. Delicious supper is available on the weekends. Groups can reserve one or more private rooms.

Napoli's

Incredible made-from-scratch meals featuring fare from southern Italy.

The Liederkranz

Ask for an old fashioned German or traditional American meal in this 150+ year-old German Club. For something more unique, get a catered meal in the club's Brick Hall or grassy courtyard.

Thunder Road / The Venues on Locust

Groups are welcome in the race car themed restaurant or one of their two private rooms. Serving salads, sandwiches and steaks and everything in between.

There are many more group dining options. Call Grand Island Tourism at 308-382-4400 for a full platter.





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Little Adventures in our Big Backyard

Hastings.

Visit these nearby Nebraska communities to fill out your group itinerary.

Aurora/Central City | 25 minutes east Plan on seeing the Edgerton Exploit Center and Plainsman Museum in Aurora (pop. 4,488). Follow it up with dinner at Prairie Creek Vineyards in (Central City (pop. 2,903). Try their New York Strip or gourmet mac & cheese.

Loup River Scenic Byway

90 minutes northwest

This byway strikes out into the Nebraska Sandhills, an ecological gem covering 25% of Nebraska. On the drive visit, Ord (pop. 2,103), home to Scratchtown Brewing Co. Continue on the byway for folks interested history. Stop at Fort Hartsuff before getting supper in Burwell (pop. 1,190) at the Pizza Palace. Come to Nebrasksa's Junk Jaunt the last weekend in September along this byway.

Hastings | 25 minutes south Hastings (pop. 24,989) Museum features natural and cultural displays as well as an IMAX screen.

St. Paul | 25 minutes north St. Paul (pop. 2,290) features the Nebraska Major

Find English tea at What the Dickens in downtown

League Baseball Museum and Loup Rivers Distilling, followed by a delicious meal at the picturesque Miletta Vista Winery. Drive a few miles west and visit Sandhills Lavender Farm (seasonal).

Dannebrog | 30 minutes northwest Nebraska's Danish Capital is a tiny berg with a big heart. For pizza and baked goods visit the Danish Bakery. To get a little artsy, take in the hand crafted items at the Treasure Trove or visit Libelle's Hope where you can do an art project, eat food from the garden and be rejuvenated.

Pete's Safari | 5 minutes outside Grand Island Have you ever made friends with a kangaroo or fed a camel? When you go to Pete's Safari exotic animal farm, you can. This little zoo was designed to rescue and rehabilitate animals in need, including several endangered species.





VisitGrandIsland.com | 308-382-4400

Hotels		Price Range	Number of Rooms
BW Plus by Best Western	2707 S. Locust St. 308-675-56563 BestWestern.com	\$\$\$\$	80
Boarders Inn & Suites by Cobblestone	3333 Ramada Rd. 308-384-5150 StayBoarders.com	\$\$\$	182
Candlewood Suites	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
Comfort Suites by Choice Hotels	228 Lake St. 308-833-7100 Comfortinn.com	\$\$\$	79
Days Inn by Wyndham	2620 Diers Ave. 308-210-9541 WyndhamHotels.com/days-inn	\$\$\$	61
Days Inn by Wyndham	7800 S. Hwy 281 308-594-1099 WyndhamHotels.com/days-inn	\$\$\$	47
Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott	805 Allen Dr. 308-381-8980 Marriott.com	\$\$\$\$	109
Hampton Inn	504 N. Diers Ave. 308-384-9777 Grandisland.Hamptoninn.com	\$\$\$\$	68
Holiday Inn Express & Suites	3404 W. Faidley Ave. 308-675-1118 HIExpress.com	\$\$\$\$	80
Mainstay Suites by Choice Hotels	3051 S. Locust St. 308-646-2091 MainstaySuites.com	\$\$\$	58

Motel 6 by The Blackstone Group	7301 Bosselman Ave. 308-384-6666 Motel6.com	\$\$	51
Quality Inn & Conference Center by Choice Hotels	7838 S. Hwy 281 308-210-2124 ChoiceHotels.com/quality-inn	\$\$\$	100
Ramada Midtown by Wyndham	2503 S. Locust St. 308-384-1331 WyndhamHotels.com/ramada	\$\$\$	197
Sleep Inn by Choice Hotels	1716 Diers Ave. 308-381-8111 SleepInn.com	\$\$\$	63
Suburban Suites Extended Stay by Choice Hotels	7838 S. Hwy. 281 308-384-7771 ChoiceHotels.com/suburban	\$\$	49
Super 8 by Wyndham	3205 S. Locust St. 308-594-1823 WyndhamHotels.com/super8	\$\$	60
SureStay Plus by Best Western	2603 S. Locust St. 308-384-4380 BestWestern.com	\$\$	79
Travelodge by Wyndham	1311 S. Locust St. 308-382-5003 Travelodge.com	\$\$	40

Coming in the first half of 2025!

Grand Island Casino Resort

This 160 room resort will offer restaurants, pools, a spa, entertainment, and a casino in the heart of the Fonner Park campus.

Springhill Suites by Marriot

Scheduled to open in May, this Marriot property will feature 129 rooms, a pool, and free breakfast right across the highway from Stuhr Museum.



201 W Third St Grand Island, NE 68801 VisitGrandIsland.com | 308-382-4400 sales@VisitGrandIsland.com