



1. Growing Population

The six counties in the Des Moines–West Des Moines MSA are expected to grow 21% overall by 2040. The highest rate of growth is expected in Dallas County, as shown in the following table:


County	Growth/Decline	County	Growth/Decline
Dallas	+32%	Madison	+15%
Warren	+23%	Jasper	+3%
Polk	+21%	Guthrie	-1.3%

Source: Iowa Census Data Tables: Projections, State Data Center of Iowa, accessed 10/7/22




2.

Increasingly Older Population



By 2050, the population aged 65 and older in the Des Moines area is projected to grow by 114,000 (182%), reaching 254,000 residents.

Source: "Forecasting our Growth," Des Moines Area MPO, 2015



3.

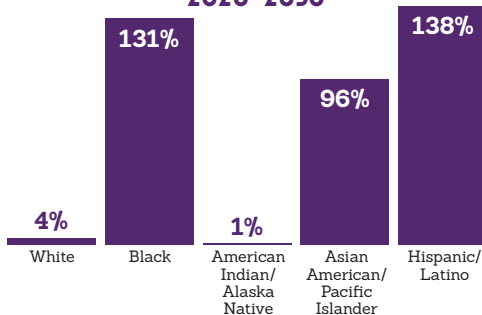
Increasing BIPOC Population



By 2050, nearly 50% percent of metro residents will be BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), up from 19% in 2020. Latinos represent the fastest-growing group by ethnicity, followed by Black residents.

Sources: 2050 Population projections, Des Moines Area MPO, 2015: 2020 – 2050 projections by Woodes and Pool, 2022 Regional Projections and Database

Percent of Population Change 2020-2050



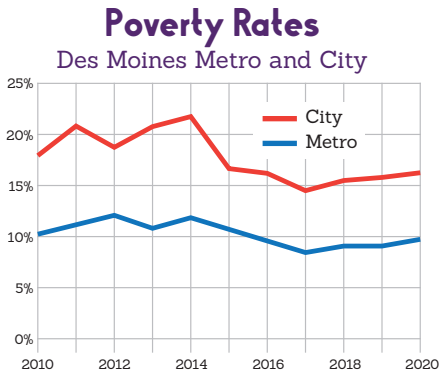
4.

Decreasing Poverty Rates



From 2010-20, the estimated poverty rate in the City of Des Moines decreased from 17.7% to 16.0%, while the metro area's decreased from 10.1% to 9.8%. However, the general pattern persists – the City's poverty rate tops the region's rate.

Sources: MSA Poverty Rate, DSMUSA Data Hub, accessed 10/7/22; Poverty in Des Moines, WelfareInfo.org, 2017; Des Moines city QuickFacts, US Census Bureau, V2021; Des Moines Population, worldpopulationreview.com, accessed 10/7/22





5.

Declining K-12 Enrollment in Polk County

From the 2016-17 school year through 2021-22,

- Enrollment decreased in half of the school districts serving Polk County.
- The Des Moines Public Schools, (DMPS) lost the most – 2,000 students.
- This trend is expected to continue from the 2022-23 school to the 2026-27 school year.
- Polk County school districts, not including DMPS, are expected to lose another 2,000 students.
- DMPS is expected to lose another 2,500 students.

Source: District Enrollment Projections, Iowa DoE, 2022



6.

Enrollment Trends Down

The ongoing enrollment losses that Iowa's public universities are experiencing mirror trends shaping the higher education landscape nationally — with the state Board of Regent campuses losing 7 percent of their total enrollment since fall 2019, compared with a 6.5 percent drop nationally over the two years.

The University of Iowa, Iowa State University and the University of Northern Iowa combined two-year drop is more than double the 3 percent national average for public four-year institutions only.

Source: <https://www.thegazette.com/higher-education/enrollment-losses-at-iowas-public-campuses-mirror-national-downward-trend/>;



7.

Growing BIPOC Student Population

The share of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) students in Des Moines Public Schools has increased 35% over the last 20 years, from 29% in 2000-21 to 64% in 2020-21. This trend is expected to continue. The largest growth has been among students who identify as Hispanic/Latinx (from 8.5% to 21%) or Black/African American (from 14.8% to 20.5%). In part, these changes may be attributed to changes implemented by the U.S. Census for 2009-10 (Hispanic/Latinx was identified as an ethnicity separate from race, and students were able to identify as more than one race).

Sources: The Changing Make-Up of DMPS in the 21st Century, Des Moines Public Schools, 2021

8.



Individual and Environmental Health Concerns

Central Iowans exceed the State of Iowa benchmark for obesity, alcohol consumption, unintentional drug-related mortality, smoking, HIV/AIDS mortality, and incidences of STD. Residents also pay more for healthcare than the national average. The table illustrates additional environmental factors affecting residents:

	United States Average	DSM Metro
Health Cost Index	100	110.6
Water Quality Index	100	60
Air Quality Index	100	61

Sources: 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment PRC CHNA Report; Health in Des Moines, bestplaces.net, accessed 10/7/22; Obesity, Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal, accessed 10/7/22

9.



Increasingly Automated Trucking

Trucking employs 100,000 Iowans, one out of every 13 jobs. By 2025, experts say semi-trucks will become more autonomous. Adding even \$20,000 of hardware, in the form of additional sensors and computers, to a long-haul truck is quickly offset by the elimination of labor costs, which typically represent 15% to 20% of the cost of operating a truck.

Sources: "Self-driving Big Rigs are Coming," *Wall Street Journal*, 2022; Trucking Moves Iowa Forward, Iowa Motor Trucking Association, accessed 10/7/22



10.

Increasingly Remote, Digital Medicine

Advances in digital technology, imaging, gene sequencing, and artificial intelligence are expected to transform the annual physical into a more virtual experience. In 5-10 years, “I’ll be able to do the same quality of physical exam out of the office as if you were right in front of me in the office.” – Michael Blum, cardiologist and chief digital transformation officer, University of California San Francisco.

Source: “Tech Advances Put the Annual Doctor Visit on the Critical List,” *Wall Street Journal*, 2021



11.

Increasing Application of Synthetic Biology

Synthetic biology is a field of science that involves redesigning organisms for useful purposes. Agricultural states with strong university research capabilities could be deeply impacted – either because plants that were once needed can now be manufactured quickly and cheaply in a lab, or because inventions could make new crops or crop-derivatives more valuable. Examples:

- Microorganisms that clean pollutants from water, soil and air
- Rice modified to produce beta-carotene, a nutrient usually associated with carrots, that prevents vitamin A deficiency, which causes blindness in 250,000 – 500,000 children every year

Sources: National Human Genome Research Foundation, Aug 2019; The Impact of Synthetic Biology for Future Agriculture and Nutrition, *Current Opinion in Biotechnology*, February 2020



12.

Increasing Use of NFTs

Nonfungible tokens (NFTs) are data that certifies original ownership of a digital item or image through blockchain. Nike, Coca Cola, the NBA, and Yum Brands used NFTs. Some companies are exploring NFTs to solve business problems, e.g. resort owners who want to avoid getting stuck with excess inventory when guests cancel at the last minute can convert room nights for sale into NFTs that can be bought or sold by hotel guests, similar to the StubHub market for concert and sporting event tickets.

Sources: Hotels Using NFTs to Create a StubHub for Lodging Reservations, WSJ, 2022; Want to Buy an NFT? Here's What to Know, WSJ, 2021

13.



Increasing Commercial Use of Drones

Commercial drone deliveries are growing. Walmart intends to expand its drone deliveries to four million households across Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Texas, Utah, and Virginia. Recently, Iowa joined a growing number of states allowing the use of small robotic personal delivery devices (PDDs). These PDDs will be used by companies like Amazon or food delivery services to deliver small packages to their final destinations. The devices are allowed to operate on sidewalks at speeds of up to 6 mph or if no sidewalk is present, on streets at speeds up to 20 mph.

Sources: Drone delivery: More lift than you think, McKinsey, 2022; Delivery robots to become legal for use in Iowa, RadioIowa, 2021; House File 304 by Committee On Information Technology, 2021; Walmart Expanding Drone Delivery Network to Six States, WSJ, 2022

14.



Growing Demand and Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles

9,400 electric and hybrid vehicles were registered in Iowa in 2022. By 2030, Iowa anticipates having between 50,572 and 78,197 electric vehicles in the state.

To support such anticipated demand nationally, the recently passed U.S. Bipartisan Infrastructure Law proposes to invest \$7.5 billion for a national network of 500,000 electric vehicle (EV) chargers by 2030 and another \$7+ billion to ensure domestic battery manufacturers have access to critical minerals and other components.

Investments will prioritize charging infrastructure along the National Alternative Fuels Corridor, which includes Interstates 80, 380, 29, and 35 in Iowa.

Sources: Iowa's Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment, Iowa DOT, accessed 10/7/22; President Biden's Economic Plan Drives America's Electric Vehicle Manufacturing Boom, White House, 2022; While Electric Vehicles Proliferate, Charging Stations Lag Behind, WSJ, 2022; https://iowadot.gov/iowaevplan/docs/IowaNEVDI_Final.pdf



15.

Increasing Dual-Use Solar Panels in Agriculture

Dual-use solar panels allow users to adjust the height and space between solar panels. This allows them to accommodate equipment, workers, crops, and grazing animals. They allow light to reach the plants below and shield those crops from extreme heat. The electricity generated gets uploaded to the grid, typically through nearby substations. While some of the electricity may find its way to the host farm, the projects are devised to provide power for general use. These solar installations provide an alternative source of revenue in the form of payments to landowners.

Source: Can Dual-Use Solar Panels Provide Power and Share Space With Crops?, NYT, July 7, 2022



16.

Growing Broadband Demand

By 2030, peak broad band demand for a family of four will exceed 2,000 Mbps up/down, a 16x increase over 2022. Forty percent of homes in Central Iowa (11 counties) have download speeds below the current FCC definition of high-speed broadband . The problem is even more acute in rural communities. The study estimates that if 19% of households received improved broadband access, it could create up to \$1.25 billion in value for the Greater Des Moines region by shaping employment, health and healthcare, education and student outcomes, farming, civic engagement, consumption, and home values.

Sources: New FBA Research Reveals Fiber Can Close the Rural Digital Divide, Fiber Broadband Association, 2022; Iowa's digital divide is undeniable thanks to coronavirus, The Gazette, 2020; Bridging the digital divide: expanding broadband access to rural communities, weareiowa.com, 2022; Central Iowa Broadband Study, Commissioned by Greater Des Moines Partnership, 2021

17.

Growing Jobs



By 2050, jobs in the region are expected to increase by 40% or 143,000 jobs. From 2021-31, the following industries are expected to add the most jobs in the Des Moines metro area:

Industry	New Jobs	Industry	New Jobs	Industry	New Jobs
Entertainment	+8,000	Construction	+2,300	Retail	+1,400
Healthcare	+6,800	Transportation & Logistics	+1,900	Professional Services	+1,200
Education	+3,500	Finance	+1,700	Software/Info. Tech.	+1,100
Back Office	+3,100	Agribusiness & Food	+1,500		

Sources: "Forecasting our Growth," Des Moines Area MPO, 2015; Industry Clusters, DSMUSA Data Hub, accessed 10/10/22



18.

Future Workers Will Earn \$25,000-\$75,000

Through 2038, the region is expected to add more jobs and workers:

- 47.4% of new working households are expected to earn incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999;
- 21.6% of new working households are expected to earn incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999

Source(s): Downtown Workforce Housing Study



19.

Continuing Brain Drain

Most young adults who grow up in the Greater Des Moines area are still living in the area at age 26. However, a recent study suggests that Iowa is the 10th-worst (and behind the six neighboring states) at retaining new college graduates. Local graduates are leaving for states with larger urban centers, including Illinois, Minnesota, Colorado, and California.

Among 2021 graduates, 34% more of Iowa's college-educated workforce left the state after graduation than stayed.

- More likely to stay: if working in education, health care, agriculture, and business
- Less likely to stay: if studied religion, culinary arts, engineering, or journalism

Sources: Young Adult Migration, U.S. Census Bureau and Harvard University, accessed 10/10/22; Iowa's brain drain continues to cost state college-educated adults, Axios Media, 2022



20.

Increasing Housing Demand

Housing demand is expected to grow thanks to job growth in Polk County and the broader Des Moines MSA. By 2050, the number of housing units in the Des Moines metro area is forecasted to increase by 35%, adding 82,000 units to the region since 2020. Total housing units are expected to top 315,000.

One study estimates that Polk County will need to add 57,170 net new housing units between 2018-38 to accommodate net new workers in the region. This includes 58% (33,592) owner-occupied units and 23,577 rental units.

Source: Downtown Workforce Housing Study, Home Inc, 2019; "Forecasting our Growth," Des Moines Area MPO, 2015



21.

Shortage of Affordable Housing

While Greater Des Moines has been recognized nationwide for its low cost of living, affordable housing is still in short supply.

Affordable housing efforts can make the biggest difference for residents earning \$15,000-\$34,999, as 74% percent of these households are cost-burdened (paying 30+% of their income toward housing). There are about 39,000 households within this income range, and 21,000 of them (54%) are renters. Another group to target are residents earning \$35,000-\$49,999, who are within striking distance of becoming homeowners but many have to sacrifice quality and location to do so.

Source(s): Des Moines Regional Workforce Housing Strategy, czbLLC, 2019

22.



Rising Performance Gap

BIPOC owned firms and workers are a growing share of U.S. businesses and the workforce. As of 2018, Iowa had more than 19,000 minority-owned firms (7%) that employed over 18,000 people. Their contributions to the economy are expected to increase in both absolute and relative terms. However, a study suggests that the productivity of minority-owned business enterprise (MBEs) firms is lagging. The gap between MBEs and non-MBEs translates to trillions of dollars in lost opportunity and will impact income levels/growth of minority workers and business owners and economic opportunity in minority communities.

Sources: 2018 Iowa State Fact Sheet, Minority Business Development Agency DoC; The Contribution Of Minority Business Enterprises To The U.S. Economy, Minority Business Development Agency DoC, 2021

23.



Growing Latinos' Contributions to Economic Success

About 22,000 Latino workers in the region collectively earn roughly \$1 billion in annual income. More than 1,500 Latino businesses in DSM are generating nearly \$160 million in annual revenue. Their contributions to the economy are expected to increase as the Latinx population grows 128%, comprising more than 13% of the region's population by 2050. In contrast, the rest of the DSM population is expected to grow only 17% through 2050. Yet Latinos rarely see themselves represented at all in the narrative of Iowa's economic success.

Sources: Invisible in Iowa: The Missing Story of Latinos' Contributions to Our Economic Success, DSMUSA, accessed 10/10/22; Nuestro Iowa, Iowa Latinx Project, 2021

24.

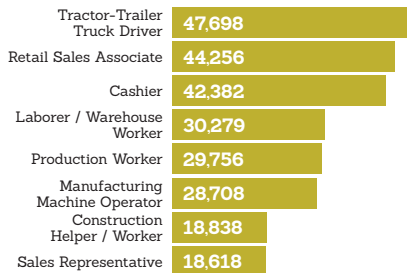
Growing Green Jobs



Employment in Iowa's green jobs is expected to increase 18.8% over the next five years – well-above the national average of 5.7%. A study suggests that reskilling and redeploying workers can offer a faster source of green workers than relying on new postsecondary graduates alone.

Source: Iowa is looking at a hefty hike in green jobs, workingnation.com, 2022

Largest Pools of Potential Green Workers



Source: WorkingNation/Emsi Burning Glass *Green Jobs Now* June 24, 2022

25.



Growing Artificial Intelligence (AI) Industry

The AI industry is expanding rapidly, and Ames and Iowa City have become important federal research and contracting centers for AI research. A 2021 Brookings study adds, “However, these metro areas exhibit below-average commercialization activities in terms of per capita AI companies, job postings, and job profiles,” suggesting an opportunity to use this capability to help spark job growth.

Source: The geography of AI, Brookings Institution, 2021



26.

Growing Impact of Climate Change & Weather Events

Temperature, severe storms and wind, and precipitation are all expected to increase and grow more extreme. One study estimates that in Polk County, the number of days that feel like 100+° will grow from a historical average of 5 days/year (1971-2000) to 33 days/year by midcentury (2036-65). Springtime flooding could threaten Iowa's agricultural economy by delaying planting and reducing yields. Major weather events cascade into economic losses, infrastructure failure, injuries and death, community disruptions, and more.

Sources: Extreme Heat & Climate Change, Union of Concerned Scientists, 2019; ADAPT DSM, City of Des Moines, accessed 10/10/22; The pros and cons of a longer growing season, weareiowa.com, 2022



27.



Increasing Importance of Food Security

Urban farming initiatives, food pantries, and food banks have been growing as food insecurity soared in 2020. In Des Moines, almost 20% of residents were food insecure and 1 in 11 faced hunger in 2021, according to the City. Food insecurity is expected to increase as climate change increasingly impacts food supply and systems. Des Moines officials have formed a food security task force to bolster resources for residents with limited access to healthy diets (FEED DSM). Additionally, zoning, laws, and development are shaping the (re) location and expansion of commercial gardens and urban farming.

Note: Food insecurity refers to lacking reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.

Sources: Des Moines to attempt to combat hunger through sustainable farms, KCCI Des Moines, 2021;

Changing the food insecurity conversation, Iowa Stop Hunger, accessed 10/11/22; Des Moines' Sweet Tooth Farms looking for new land after city forces it to vacate northside lots, Des Moines Register, 2021




28.

Increasing Tree Canopy



Every municipality in Iowa has a tree canopy growth goal of 3% over the next 25 years. To meet the 3% goal, the City of Des Moines needs to plan for an additional 3,800 trees planted every year (95,000 total). When the City meets this growth target, it will have increased tree cover from 29% to 32%. Currently, the City can plant 500-700 trees/year with a budget of \$200,000/year to replant and prune trees. The City also gives away about 10,000 trees every year thanks to the partnership with the Iowa State Nursery.

Sources: Arbor Day plan to increase Des Moines tree canopy, WHO13.com, 2022; Urban Forest Master Plan, City Of Des Moines, IA, 2020



29.



Increasing Wetlands

After bottoming out in the 1970s, wetlands on the Iowa Des Moines Lobe grew from an estimated 30,000 million acres to approximately 119,000 million acres by 2012. As of 2015, Iowa ranked 4th in the country in wetland restoration through the Conservation Reserve Program, behind only Minnesota and the Dakotas. Depending upon their placement on the landscape, restored wetlands can offer benefits for water quality, wildlife habitat, flood storage, and more.

Sources: Restoring Iowa Wetlands, NRCS Iowa, accessed 10/11/22; Wetlands: By the Numbers, Iowa Learning Farms, 2016




30.

Increasingly Carbon-Free Electricity



The City of Des Moines has pledged to reach 24/7 carbon-free electricity by 2035. This will require energy from sources like solar and wind, around-the-clock, rather than the mix of energy from both fossil fuels and renewable sources that is available today. This shift will also require the adoption of technologies to manage, reduce, and store clean energy. As of 2020, 83% of the city's energy came from clean sources. The City's resolution may make Des Moines the first city in the nation to achieve 24/7 clean energy.

Source: Following Google's footsteps, Des Moines pledges 24/7 clean electricity by 2035, Utility Dive, 2021; History made as Des Moines adopts 24/7 carbon-free energy resolution, becoming first in nation, Iowa Environmental Council, 2021





31.

Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

By 2040, Polk County expects to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 90% from county operations. It has committed to a series of actions including:

- Conduct a formal audit of energy consumption and emissions at all county properties and vehicle fleet
- Establish measurable targets for Polk County
- Address the concerns of the underrepresented and vulnerable communities during the climate action planning process
- Develop a Climate Action Plan to meet reduction and renewable energy targets.

Source: Polk County 2050 Comprehensive Plan

32.



Increasing Sustainability Action

Many cities around the metro area and the State of Iowa are adapting to climate change or taking on sustainability issues, e.g.,

- High adoption rate of post-construction stormwater ordinances, cost-share programs for stormwater best management practices and other native landscaping
- Solarize Waukee & Grow Solar Polk County
- Polk County and Des Moines energy resolutions
- Tiny tree programs
- Additional heating and cooling centers
- Using the words 'climate change' and 'sustainability' in governing documents

Sources: Iowa making a drought plan as climate risks increase, *The Gazette*, 2022; Stormwater Ordinance and Why Communities Need Them, Snyder & Associates, accessed 10/11/22; Grow Solar Polk County, An initiative of the Midwest Renewable Energy Association Headquarters; Waukee's solar program extended to all of Dallas County, *Des Moines Register*, 2019

33.



Growing Pressure to Improve Soil Health & Water Quality

The Iowa Environmental Council asserts that the state needs to reassess its current approach to cut nitrogen and phosphorus that leave Iowa state and contribute to the Gulf dead zone, an area the size of Massachusetts that's unable to support marine life. Nitrogen and phosphorous runoff is expected to worsen as more predicted heavy rainfall drives runoff from farm fields. According to one source, at Iowa's current rate of adoption, it could take Iowa hundreds and potentially thousands of years to reach its goal to cut runoff by 45%.

Sources: Iowa could need hundreds, potentially thousands of years to reach nutrient goals under current approach, Des Moines Register, 2019; Despite criticism, water quality bill heads to Governor's desk, Iowa Environmental Focus, 2018; To Save Its Soil and Clean Up Its Water, Iowa Needs to Act Fast(er), Union of Concerned Scientists, 2021

34.

Water Supply Risk



According to a 2020 study, what makes a state vulnerable to drought is driven by more than just a lack of rain: it's a combination of how susceptible a state is to drought and whether it's prepared for impacts. By this scoring system, the most vulnerable states are Oklahoma, Montana, and Iowa.

Source: <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/featured-images/us-drought-vulnerability-rankings-are-how-does-your-state-compare>; <https://www.mdpi.com/2073-4441/12/7/2033>;



35.

Water Quality Challenges

While Des Moines ranked 82nd out of 200 U. S. cities in a 2021 ranking that measured Consumer Satisfaction rank, Compliance rank, and Infrastructure rank, the sources of drinking water, particularly area rivers, continue to be a source of concern for the future. Des Moines Water Works has had to shift water sources in recent years as both the Raccoon and the Des Moines River had spikes in toxic algae that could be related to farm runoff. The rivers also have had high levels of nitrate, largely from farm runoff, which forced the utility to install special equipment decades ago.

Sources: <https://www.lawnstarter.com/blog/studies/best-cities-for-water-quality/#rankings>;
<https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2021/04/19/iowa-faces-catastrophe-as-raccoon-river-ranks-among-nations-most-endangered/>;



36.

Bridges continue to Challenge

There are 23,799 bridges across the state, according to the Iowa DOT; 4,599 are rated by the Federal Highway Administration as being in “poor” condition. Data from the Federal Highway Administration released earlier in 2022 called nearly 1,800 of these bridges “basically intolerable,” including 140 in the Des Moines metro.

While the Iowa DOT’s 2022 annual report states bridges classified as “poor” are not “unsafe,” it recognizes that these bridges “have deterioration or damage that may need repair or replacement in the near future.”

Source: <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2022/10/14/iowa-bridges-still-the-worst-in-the-nation-according-to-new-report/69563284007/>;

37.



Uncertain Political Support for Climate Change Plans

Historically, Iowa has been a beacon for wind energy and the renewable fuels industry, with bipartisan support for measures popular among top Iowa political leaders. But now, differences are beginning to emerge over climate change. Iowa officials are being asked to become more explicit about their plans to address climate change.

Sources: What Iowa's political leaders have said about climate change, The Daily Iowan, 2019; National Environmental Scorecard, League of Conservation Voters, accessed 10/11/22

38.



Rising Farmer Support for State Agency Assistance on Climate Change

The 2020 Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll survey suggests that farmers' climate change beliefs shifted substantially between 2011 and 2020.

- In 2020, 81% of farmers indicated that climate change is occurring, up from 68% in 2011.
- Over half of farmers reported that they are concerned about the potential impacts of climate change on their farm operations; an increase from 35% in 2011.
- Agreement on selected adaptation actions also grew. This was especially the case for "State agencies should do more to help farmers and landlords to prepare for increased precipitation," with agreement growing from 24% to 33%.

Sources: 2020 Summary Report, Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll; Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll Shows Farmers' Beliefs on Climate Change Are Shifting, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, 2021



39.

Increasing Limits on Local Control

Since 2017, the Iowa legislature has overridden local control 21 times. Such action by the state has impacted communities' ability to set the local minimum wage, use traffic cameras, require masks in schools, and limit gun sales, among other issues. For example in 2017, legislators in Iowa overturned already-enacted minimum wage increases in three counties. As recently as 2021, the legislature passed bills impacting local control as varied as an immigration enforcement law with penalties for local non-compliance, requiring school districts to offer in-person education, and Covid 19 vaccines.

Sources: "Iowa Part of National Trend Placing Limits on Local Control," National League of Cities and Grassroots Change, Des Moines Register, 2018; What happened to local control in Iowa? senate.Iowa.gov.

40.



Increasingly Older, White Eligible Voters

From 2007-14, the share of Republicans in Iowa grew from 34% to 41% while the share of Democrats shrank from 46% to 40%. By 2036, Iowa's eligible voters are expected to be 84% white and older than their counterparts in the South and West. This trend may help the GOP consolidate gains statewide and nationally if white seniors maintain their voting preferences despite generational turnover. Currently, Iowans over 65 are more Republican (25% to 16% Democratic) and Whites make up 95% of the Republican party (v. 86% of the Democratic party.)

Sources: Party Affiliation among adults in Iowa, Pew Research Center; America's Electoral Future, The Center for American Progress in partnership with The States of Change: Demographics and Democracy



41.

Changing Voting Processes

A bill signed in 2021 reduces the time during which Iowans can vote in an election. Changes in the bill include a shorter early voting period, an earlier due date for absentee ballots, restrictions on how many ballot drop boxes a county can have, who can drop off another voter's ballot, and penalties for election misconduct. These changes will begin in the 2022 midterm elections.

Sources: "Iowa's Newest Election Laws, Explained," Politifact, Poynter Institute, 2021; Iowa Early Voting Statistics, U.S. Election Project, 2020



42.

Shifting Balance of Political Power

There is an observable 25-year trend in which rural Iowa counties shrink and urban counties grow. In 2010-20, 71 Iowa counties lost residents while 28 – including Polk County – saw gains. This is expected to shift the balance of political power in several congressional districts. Under proposed new redistricting maps,

- Republicans would gain ground in two of Iowa's four congressional districts, including Polk County in District 2, and Democrats would gain in the other two.
- 64 of the state's 149 current lawmakers would be placed in a district with at least one other incumbent.

Sources: "These 5 Iowa redistricting maps and graphics show how legislative, congressional districts could change," Des Moines Register, 9/17/21

43.



Simpler Tax Code

Iowa is phasing in a flat individual income tax by 2026. Then, Iowa will boast a 3.9% single-rate individual income tax, a 5.5% flat corporate income tax, and no inheritance tax or alternative minimum taxes. The reforms will rank Iowa 15th overall, an improvement of 23 places since 2022, in the Tax Foundation's State Business Tax Climate Index.

Sources: Iowa's New Tax Reform, HBR, 2022

44.

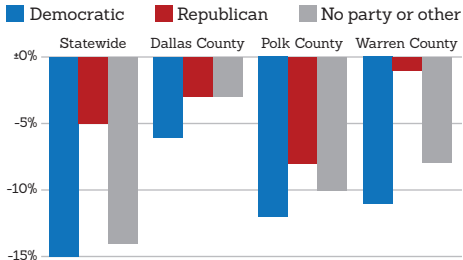


Decreasing Active Voter Registration, Especially Among Democrats

Des Moines tends to be a political battleground based on voting results in recent elections. Across all types of political contests in Des Moines, including state, local and presidential elections, races come within five percentage points 24% of the time. However, this tendency may be changing, given recent trends in voter registrations. Since November 2020, active voter registrations have fallen – particularly among Democrats.

Source: Iowa Democratic voter registrations drop 15%, Axios Media, 2022

Change in Active Registered Voters in Iowa, 2020 to 2022



Data: Iowa Secretary of State's Office; Chart: Kavya Beheraj/Axios