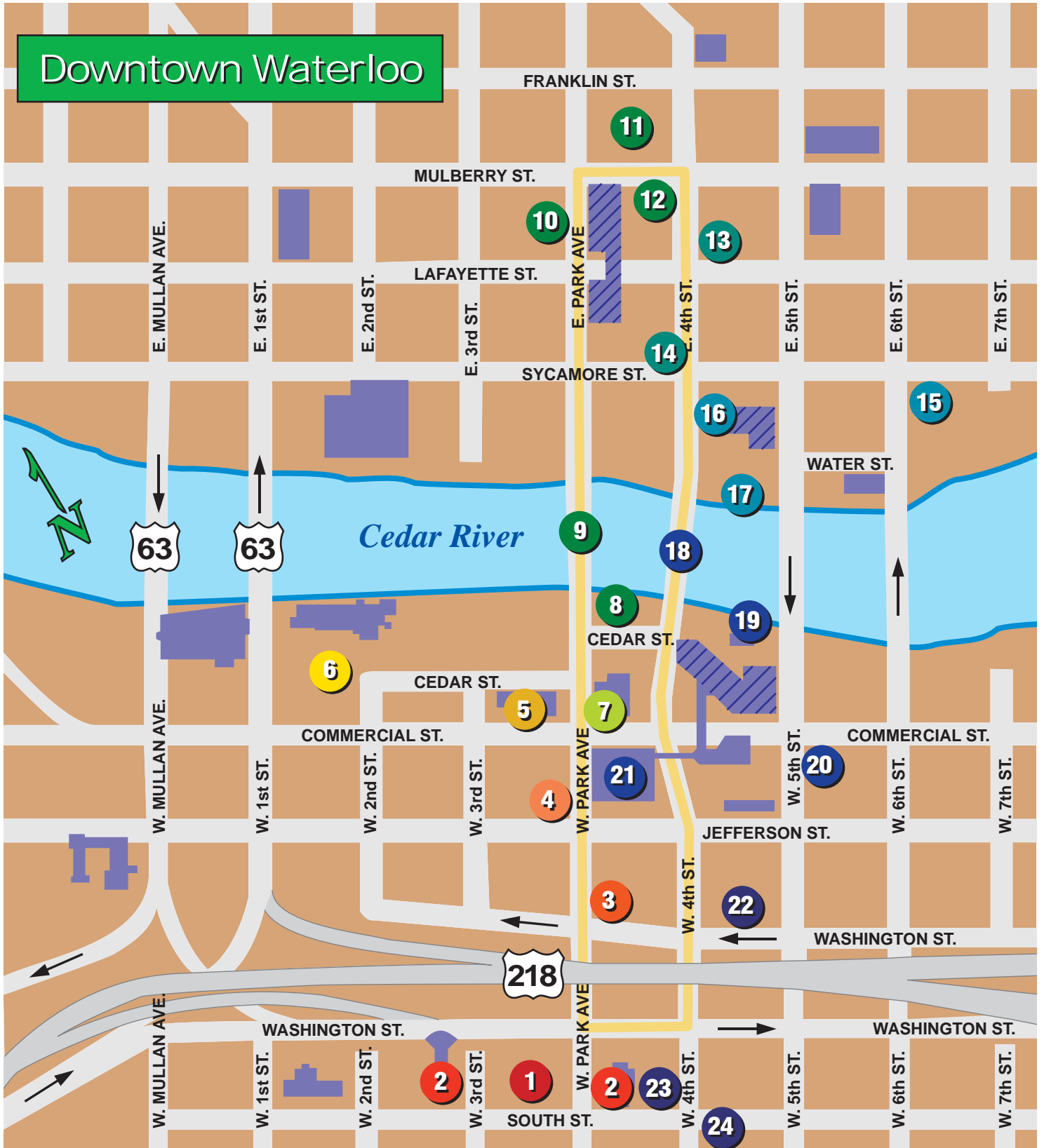


Downtown Waterloo



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Office Hours:
8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Monday - Friday

HEART AND SOLE:

TAKE A WALKING TOUR OF DOWNTOWN WATERLOO

Put on your walking shoes and head for a tour of downtown Waterloo. Here you'll discover the diverse history of a central business district undergoing a major revitalization.

Your tour will take you across the Cedar River which separates Waterloo into the "east" and "west" sides. This division fueled an intense rivalry created a number of controversies and unusual decisions, including a town square on each side of the river and two Carnegie libraries.

Be sure to save some time during the 1.5-mile tour to browse through our wonderful antique stores and specialty shops, or stop for a bite to eat at one of a variety of ethnic restaurants. It's a wonderful way to spend a few hours or an afternoon.

Should you need more information on things to do in Waterloo, stop by Main Street Waterloo while you're on your tour!

So step out and enjoy the "Heart and Sole" of Waterloo by experiencing our history, diversity and culture in downtown.

5 Waterloo Public Library West Park Ave. & Commercial St.

In 1981, the two Carnegie libraries were combined into one at the former Post Office at 415 Commercial Street. The building houses two murals, which were painted in 1940 by Edgar Britton, a student of Grant Wood. "Exposition" and "Holiday" are two of 50 such murals produced in Iowa under the U.S. Treasury Department program before WWII.

6 The Cultural and Recreation District West Park Ave. & Commercial St.

The district extends west of the Library to include the Young Arena, site of fast-action Waterloo Blackhawk's Hockey play, the Waterloo Center for the Arts, which houses the Hope Martin Theatre (home of the Waterloo Community Playhouse/Blackhawk Children's Theatre) and the Waterloo Museum of Art (with temporary and permanent exhibits including the nation's largest Haitian Art collection and a Junior Art Gallery).

7 Waterloo Courier Building West Park Ave. & Commercial St.

The Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier is recognized as the city's oldest business. Since 1923, this paper has been published from 11 different locations within blocks of one another. The Courier absorbed the other three competing papers and moved to its present location in 1923. The building underwent major renovation in 1958. Through the window you will see a Goss Press in operation.

8 River Plaza Building 10 West 4th St.

Waterloo's first YMCA was chartered in 1868, just three months after the incorporation of the city. This art-deco style building, designed by Mortimer Cleveland and constructed in 1932, is now on the National Register of Historic Places. It served as a "Y" until 1982, and now houses business offices and a health club. The "Green Goddesses" are prominently placed on the roof facing the river. The statues representing the values of agriculture, justice, knowledge and science are four of six that originally sat atop the old courthouse.

9 Prairie Rapids Crossing (Park Ave. Bridge)

The spot where the trail crossed the Cedar River was known by early pioneers as Prairie Rapids Crossing. The natural two-and-a-half-foot drop in the Cedar River near what is now 6th Street and several acres of open prairie gave the area its original name. It is here that Waterloo began with its first homes and businesses. The first log cabin was built by George Hanna in 1852. This was the heart of Waterloo's mill district from the 1850s to the 1920s. The City Mill, Cedar Mill, flour mill, saw mill and woolen mill were among those located here.

10 YWCA, Masonic Temple, Elks Club Corner of Park Ave., Lafayette & Mulberry Sts.

Three private organizations make their home in these historic buildings on adjacent corners. The first "YWCA" was organized in 1884 when three local college girls formed a group and rented rooms on the second floor of a building on 4th Street. They planned social events for girls and mixed groups and held afternoon teas for women. In 1924, a building fund was started, and this building was constructed. The Masonic Temple was built just before the Depression, but the top two floors were never completed. Dedicated in 1925, the Elks Club is used for a number of events, meetings and dinners. The beautiful interior is fashioned of black walnut and native Iowa marble.

1 Washington Park West Park Ave. & South St.

When the plat of Waterloo was filed in 1854, one block on each side of the river was chosen for a town square. Charles and America Mullan, owners of the west side plot, deeded the block to the city as a "public square and pleasure ground for the use and benefit of all the people of Waterloo." The Japanese tea house and waterfall, added in 1962, is a popular site for weddings and events.

2 Grout Museum District South St. flanking Washington Park

The Grout Museum opened in 1956 with funding provided by the estate of local resident Henry W. Grout. The museum displays feature earth science, pioneer history with a general store, old-time drug store, blacksmith shop, and a pioneer cabin. Additionally, a planetarium and one of Iowa's finest genealogical libraries can be found in the museum. The Rensselaer Russell House Museum (Italian-style home), Snowden House (beautiful meeting place listed on the National Register of Historic Places) and Bluedorn Imaginarium (with hands-on science-related exhibits) are a part of the museum district.

3 Waterloo Candy Company Building West Park Ave. & Jefferson St.

Built in 1904 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this is the only remaining structure in Waterloo with the half-elevated first floor once typical in commercial buildings.

4 Klinefelters Livery Stable West Park Ave. & Jefferson St.

The livery was a booming business until after World War I when the motor car made its appearance. Waterloo's two-story horse stable was one of the last to be built. The site is currently the Community National Bank parking lot and there is a memorial wall on the corner of W. Park Ave. & Jefferson St.

11 Lincoln Park
East 4th & Mulberry St.

Lincoln Park was designated as the town square on the east side. The ownership was challenged by an heir of the original owner B.M. Cooley, who finally sold it to the city for \$1,000 in 1902. This open space now serves as the site of several community festivals and special events.

12 Main Street (4th Street)

Local revitalization efforts are evident along Waterloo's "official Main Street" where you will find 9,000 people living and working downtown in the service and retail industries. There are many interesting antique stores alongside Bosnian, Chinese, Italian and Mexican restaurants, markets and cultural centers. Plaques with historic information may be found on a number of the renovated buildings.

13 Agriculture Heritage Mural (Oddfellows Building)
310 East 4th St.

The mural on the side of the building facing Lafayette Street portrays the theme "crops from field to table" and represents the interdependency between farm and city. The building has been used for a variety of purposes, from a bakery to a bank to bingo.

14 Black's Building
501 Sycamore St.

In July 1892, James Black opened his dry goods business with barely enough merchandise to fill half the store. Within nine years, he was carrying a stock of \$100,000, employing forty-five clerks and boasting sales of a quarter of a million dollars annually. In 1914, Black's Department Store relocated to this new 10-story building which now houses offices and a coffee shop.

15 Chicago Great Western Freighthouse (Public Market)
East 6th & Sycamore St.

This stone building was once a freight house. The railroad reached Waterloo in 1870. By 1915, 75 trains a day moved in and out of the metro area and the rail yards employed as many as 1,500 men. This building is the new home of the University of Northern Iowa Center for Urban Education (UNI-CUE)

16 Mural - Next to Newton's Jewelry at 128 East 4th St.

Student volunteers designed and created this mural to depict the countryside around the Cedar Valley as part of a downtown beautification project in the early 1980s.

17 Paramount Theatre (site)
90 East 4th St.

In the 1920s, there were at least seven theatres in Waterloo. The grandest of them, with twinkling stars and moving clouds in the ceiling, was the Paramount Theatre. It was demolished in 1972 as part of a downtown flood control project. The international headquarters of Waterloo Industries is now located on the site, along with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

18 Fourth Street Bridge

By 1924, the mills, which were located on both sides of the Cedar River, were closed due to the competing milling industry in Minneapolis. The bridge with a covered walk-way now stands as the "connecting way" between the two sides of the river.

19 Veterans Memorial Hall
104 West 5th St.

Memorial Hall honors all veterans of U.S. military service. The building houses wartime momentos as well as meeting rooms, which are used by military groups. In Soldiers and Sailors Park, you will find a number of memorials paying tribute to veterans.

20 Russell Lamson Hotel
209 West 5th St. (one block east of 4th St.)

In 1914, the Russell Lamson Hotel was built on the west side to compete with the height and grandeur of the Black's building on the east side. The hotel housed the Paul Davis Department Store and now you will find the Brown Bottle restaurant, Captain Max Chocolates as well as offices and apartments.

21 Five Sullivan Brothers Convention Center
West 4th & Commercial St.

This facility opened in 1975 as the Conway Civic Center. In 1988, it was renamed the Five Sullivan brothers Convention Center in remembrance of the five fighting Sullivan Brothers from Waterloo who perished together on the USS Juneau on the South Pacific during World War II. The tragic event has received international attention as the greatest single sacrifice by any one family in American history.

22 Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Depot (Heaton Adams)
West 4th & Bluff Sts.

Railroads played an important part in the early development of Black Hawk County. Industries were founded or relocated here because of the easy access to rail transportation. By 1915, an average of 75 trains moved in and out of the Cedar Valley each day, carrying 70,000 cars of freight annually. This depot was built around 1890 and now houses an accounting business.

23 Carnegie Library (Swisher & Cohrt Law Firm)
528 West 4th St.

In 1905 Andrew Carnegie donated \$30,000 for a library in Waterloo. Residents on both sides of the river wanted the city facility. To satisfy both parties, it was proposed that the library be placed in the middle of the Cedar River. When Carnegie learned of the feud, he increased the amount of his gift to \$40,000, allowing a facility to be built on each side of the river and making Waterloo the only city west of Pittsburgh with two public libraries. You'll find the east side library at 620 Mulberry Street.

24 St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Center
613 West 4th St.

The Greek Orthodox Church is a lasting representation of the thousands of Greeks who immigrated to Waterloo for construction work in the early 1900s. The First Methodist Church, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, First Congregational Church, Waterloo Baptist Temple and Trinity Lutheran Church join St. Demetrios along West 4th Street, known as Church Row.