Omaha, Nebraska’s largest city, is located on the eastern edge of the state along the western bank of the Missouri River. It is named for the Omaha tribe of Native Americans, who reside in northeastern Nebraska and western Iowa.

Omaha’s Neighborhoods

Located along the Missouri River in downtown Omaha, Heartland of America Park features a lake and 2 fountains, one of which shoots water 300 feet into the air. Connected on its western edge with the Heartland of America Park, the Gene Leahy Mall has a lagoon and waterfalls, walking paths, gardens, playground, horseshoe pits, an amphitheater, and sculpture. The nearby Old Market neighborhood is a multi-block collection of renovated brick warehouses and quaint storefronts, which are now home to restaurants, art galleries, shops, and loft-style residential buildings. The Durham Western Heritage Museum, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, and Omaha Children’s Museum are located in the downtown, as are the Holland Performing Arts Center and the Orpheum Theater, which offer musical, dance, and theater performances. Rose Blumkin Performing Arts Center provides theater, dance, and arts education and performances for children and families.

Nearly the entire Midtown neighborhood, situated near downtown, has been developed to some extent. Most of the residential development occurred before World War II, although pockets of post-war housing are scattered across the area. The largest open space within Midtown, Hanscom Park, is located near its southeast corner. Adjacent to the park, the Gerald R. Ford Birth Site and Gardens commemorates the birthplace of our 38th president and the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center houses a regional conservation center for the care of cultural materials. Midtown is also home to the Joslyn Castle, a 35-room Scottish Baronial mansion built in 1903, and the Joslyn Art Museum, which emphasizes 19th- and 20th-century European and American art. The Country Club Historic District, another part of Midtown, is an early 20th century planned residential community with period-revival–style single-family houses on tree-lined streets with decorative streetlights.

Parks and Recreation

Omaha’s 200 parks offer a wide range of activities, including fishing, skateboarding, boating, tennis, swimming, and hiking. The paved trail system stretches for 80 miles. Ice skating is offered at 2 indoor rinks. Golf is available at 9 municipal courses. In addition, Omaha has an off-leash dog park.

The Henry Doorly Zoo, located in Riverview Park, features the world’s largest indoor tropical rainforest and the world’s largest geodesic enclosed arid desert, as well as an aquarium, IMAX Theater, and many conservation programs.

The Lauritzen Gardens–Omaha Botanical Gardens, a 100-acre site, features a rose garden, Victorian garden, children’s garden, and arboretum.

Professional sports include the Omaha Royals Minor League Baseball team, which plays at the historic Rosenblatt Stadium, and the Omaha Beef Arena Football team, which plays at the Civic Auditorium.

Education

Omaha educates 46,000 students in the public schools, which include 60 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, and 7 high schools. Magnet programs are available for students at each level. The school system also offers 5 alternative programs for students with special needs and the Career Center, which provides training in design, culinary skills, automotive repair, health science and other fields. Montessori schools and religious schools constitute the over 50 private schools in the city.

Both the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Creighton University have medical, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, and allied health schools in addition to undergraduate programs. Nebraska Methodist College and Clarkson College also offer nursing and allied health programs. The College of St. Mary, a women’s college, offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Grace University awards associate and bachelor degrees. Metropolitan Community College offers certificates and associate degrees in a variety of fields.

Health Care

Omaha’s 11 hospital facilities provide over 2,600 licensed acute care beds. These facilities include a Veterans Affairs medical center, which also provides substance abuse treatment; a facility devoted to orthopedic care; and 3 facilities dedicated to pediatric care. Nebraska Medical Center is the primary teaching affiliate of the University of Nebraska Medical Center, and Creighton Medical Center–Saint Joseph Hospital is the major teaching affiliate of Creighton University School of Medicine.

Omaha City Stats

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<tr>
<td>City .................................................. 419,545</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Statistical Area .......................... 820,747</td>
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<tr>
<td>Per capita personal income, Omaha-Council Bluffs, IA MSA (2006): ........................................... $40,106</td>
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