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Photos Available at Facebook.com/IowaLeagueofCities

Cedar Falls Named All-Star Community

The City of Cedar Falls was named a 2025 All-Star Community by the Iowa League of Cities for its Cedar River Recreation Project. The city will be recognized at an Awards Banquet at the League's Annual Conference & Exhibit, held in Des Moines from September 17-19.

The All-Star Community Award is the most prestigious honor given by the League to cities. Entries are judged by a panel of former city officials and others familiar with municipal government. Judges determine winners based on innovative efforts in areas such as urban renewal, development, preservation, collaborative efforts or quality of life improvements. Cedar Falls was among three of Iowa's 940 cities to garner such recognition.

Recognizing the community's deep-rooted connection to the river and a growing interest in revitalization, Cedar Falls developed the Riverfront Master Plan, forming the blueprint for what would become the Cedar River Recreation Project. The City envisioned transforming the river from a neglected hazard into a vibrant, accessible, and safe public space—a premier destination for water-based recreation and community enjoyment.

The Cedar River Recreation Project is now a multi-use riverfront area catering to three primary user groups: in-stream users, on-bank users, and anglers. This revitalization effort has transformed the Cedar River from a passive landscape feature into an active, inclusive destination that welcomes people of all ages, abilities, and interests.

Ultimately, the Cedar River Recreation Project exemplifies the power of visionary planning, community collaboration, and strategic investment. By revitalizing a long-overlooked natural resource, Cedar Falls has not only created a vibrant recreational asset, but also strengthened its identity, boosted its economy, and improved the well-being of its residents.

The Iowa League of Cities congratulates the City of Cedar Falls on this remarkable achievement. This year's other All-Star Community Award winners are New Albin and Jefferson.

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The Iowa League of Cities is the oldest, continuously operating municipal league in the country. Founded in 1898, the League is a not-for-profit organization that serves as the unified voice for cities, providing advocacy, training and guidance to the cities of Iowa.