

City of Racine Background

Located in southeastern Wisconsin on Lake Michigan at the mouth of the Root River, [the City of Racine](#) lies at the heart of the Chicago-Milwaukee corridor, approximately 60 miles north of Chicago and 30 miles south of Milwaukee. The city encompasses 15 square miles; it is bordered by Lake Michigan and the Villages of Caledonia, Wind Point, North Bay, Elmwood Park, and Mount Pleasant. According to the 2013 Census the City is home to 78,199 making it the state's fifth largest City. It also serves as the county seat for Racine County, with a population of nearly 200,000. Racine's population is diverse with African-American, Hispanic/Latino, or multi-racial persons representing approximately 45% of its population in 2010, 15% of the city's population reports speaking a language other than English at home.

Racine has capitalized on its orientation on Lake Michigan. Downtown Racine and the lakefront area, in particular, have undergone substantial private and public investment and development. Festival Park, the Racine Civic Centre, museums, the Laurel Clark Fountain, high-rise condominiums, and town homes symbolize the City's renaissance and its active community life. Architectural highlights include buildings designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and sculptural reliefs on the county courthouse designed by noted sculptor Carl Milles. New developments are also planned along the Root River.

Racine's local economy is also transforming. With its origins as a manufacturing center, Racine is home to companies that make farm machinery, processed foods, floor wax, machine tools, automobile parts, and electrical equipment. Major Racine businesses include S.C. Johnson & Son, Modine Manufacturing, In-Sink-Erator, and Twin Disk. Integrated Manufacturing and Engineering Technology Center reflect ground-breaking developments that will define Racine's future.

Wind Point Lighthouse, located just north of the city, is a celebrated icon of the Racine area reflecting the dominance of Lake Michigan. Residents and visitors enjoy the expanses of shoreline and the multitude of recreational opportunities it offers. The harbor and marinas provide access to boating, kayaking, and sport fishing. Parks line the lakeshore and provide a greenway along the Root River, offering many opportunities for strolls and enjoying the City's natural amenities. The Root River provides yet another venue for fishing and kayaking, complete with a Class III rapids located down river from Quarry Lake Park. The Root River Parkway Plan presents prospects for hiking, walking, jogging, cross-country ski trails and bicycle trails.

Racine has a rich tradition of civic engagement. A 2003 recipient of the National Civic League's All-America City award, Racine and the Greater Racine Area were recognized for their work on three programs: an intergovernmental cooperation agreement that provided the City with funds from outlying communities to redevelop deteriorated areas of the City and to provide funding in accordance with a use-based formula for various public improvements; the West Sixth Street revitalization effort to rebuild City houses, and the Youth as Resources program which provided grants to youth-designed and youth-led community projects.

Racine's residents enjoy a thriving community life filled with ethnic festivals and events and many local cultural attractions. The City annually hosts the Spirit of Racine triathlon and professional beach volleyball events. Racine was named the Corona Light EVP Pro Beach Volleyball Host City of the Year for three consecutive years. Racine's North Beach has earned the national Clean Beaches Council "Blue Wave Beach" certification for water quality and habitat conservation for five years in a row. Plus, you can't find kringles anywhere like you can in Racine. Cultural attractions include the Racine Art Museum and the recently opened Racine Heritage Museum. The Racine Theatre Guild, the Racine Symphony, the Choral Arts Society, and the Wustum Museum of Fine Arts provide an ever-changing array of cultural offerings. Area residents also take advantage of the many cultural, sports, and entertainment opportunities available in Chicago and Milwaukee.