

# GROW ASHLAND



SEE OUR PLAN TO  
GROW 2025-2027  
(PAGE 17)

# **OUR STATEMENTS TO THE COMMUNITY**

## **THE MISSION**

To advance economic growth in the Ashland area through the attraction of new businesses, retention of existing businesses, and promotion of the area by providing support for commerce, industry, and housing that enables development and enhances the community region.

## **THE VISION**

A thriving and inclusive Ashland area, where our strategic efforts in economic development lead to a vibrant community where opportunities flourish, businesses prosper, and people are proud to call Ashland home.



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# Meet the Board of Directors

## **PRESIDENT**

TIMOTHY O'BRIEN

## **VICE PRESIDENT**

TERI MIKKELSEN

## **TREASURER**

DAVID LUTTON

## **BOARD SECRETARY**

JOANIE SWANSON



## **BOARD MEMBERS**

JEFF DEWEY

SUSAN THOMAS

JASON LIBAL

CHUCK NIEMEYER

DED PORTZ

## **ADVISORY BOARD**

JIM PINKMAN

## **OUR PERMANENT MEMBERS**

ASHLAND-GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SAUNDERS COUNTY

CITY OF ASHLAND

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Dear Prospective Investors,*

Welcome to the Ashland Community Development Corporation (ACDC)! On behalf of the Board of Directors, we are thrilled to introduce you to the exciting opportunities and community impact you can achieve through our organization. Founded in 2015, the ACDC fosters economic growth, entrepreneurship, and an enhanced quality of life for Ashland and its surrounding areas.

*Why join us?*

**Community Impact:** Collaborate to drive sustainable growth that benefits all.

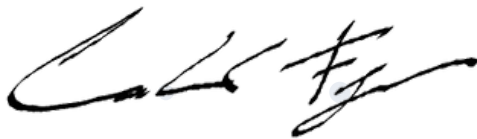
**Networking:** Connect with local leaders, entrepreneurs, and decision-makers.

**Resources:** Access tailored business plans, educational programs, and community data.

**Advocacy:** Be represented at the local, regional, and federal levels.

Whether you're a seasoned investor or a budding entrepreneur, ACDC offers boundless opportunities to make a difference. Let's work together to build a brighter future for Ashland and beyond.  
We look forward to partnering with you!

Warm regards,



Caleb Fjone  
CEO  
Ashland Community Development Corporation



# NOT YOUR **TYPICAL** ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The ACDC is redefining economic development by focusing on quality of life, workforce development, childcare, and fostering strong relationships within the community. We are not simply about “chasing smokestacks” or filling jobs; our mission is to build a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable community where businesses and residents alike can thrive.



## **Why Join the ACDC?**

We prioritize initiatives that truly make a difference:

**Quality of Life:** By improving access to affordable childcare and investing in our workforce, we create an environment where families and businesses can grow together.

**Community Relationships:** Collaboration with local leaders and residents is at the heart of everything we do. Strong partnerships drive innovation and success.

**Catalyzing Community Change:** The ACDC is dedicated to driving impactful transformations that strengthen the fabric of our community. By fostering innovation and supporting bold ideas, we create

opportunities that benefit everyone. When you join the ACDC, you're part of a bold vision. You'll connect with leaders and innovators who are shaping the future of our town, working together to create opportunities for growth, and ensuring a bright future for all. With a focus on equity, collaboration, and shared success, we aim to turn "A small town with BIG Ambitions" into a reality.

By becoming a member, you're not just supporting our efforts—you're joining a movement to build a better community for generations to come. Let's grow together. Join us today!



## THE BARNES BUILDING



Welcome to our newly established economic development office! We are proud to call The Barnes Building (504 US Highway 6) home. Our office serves as the central hub for our community-focused initiatives, providing a welcoming space for collaboration, meetings, and resources for entrepreneurs and businesses looking to thrive in Ashland and the surrounding areas.

Feel free to visit us at this convenient location to explore the opportunities and support we offer for local economic growth and sustainability. We look forward to welcoming you to our vibrant and dynamic space.



# ***BECOME A MEMBER***

## ***Advocate (\$120+)***

- Annual Summit
- Access to data & demographics
- Coffee and Conversation
- Groundbreaking events

## ***Groundbreaker (\$500+)***

Everything in the Advocate Level plus:

- Personal Action Business Planning
- Board of Directors eligibility
- Elected official meet and greet
- Cocktails and Conversation

## ***Investor (\$1000+)***

Everything in the Advocate and Ground Breaker levels plus:

- Business and Logo on website
- Automatic event/program sponsor
- Grill Party



## ***Community Builder (\$2500+)***

Everything in the Advocate, Ground Breaker, and Investor Levels plus:

- Membership appreciation dinner
- Eddie Bauer Zip up
- Cocktails and Conversation Quarterly get together

## ***Visionary (\$5000+)***

Everything in the Advocate, Ground Breaker, Investor, and Community Builder Levels plus:

- Advisory board member status
- Nebraska Economic Development Association Ticket
- Governor's Summit Ticket



# THE VISIONARIES ABOUT TOWN



The city government of Ashland, Nebraska, stands as a beacon of dedication and service to its residents. Committed to fostering a vibrant and thriving community, the city leaders in Ashland consistently demonstrate a deep understanding of the unique needs of their constituents. Their proactive approach to governance, characterized by transparency, accessibility, and a genuine concern for the welfare of the community, has created an environment where residents feel heard and supported. The leadership's strategic vision has played a pivotal role in steering Ashland toward sustainable growth, while their commitment to public services ensures that essential needs are met with efficiency and care. With a strong emphasis on collaboration, the city government invests into ACDC to help guide the growth of town, while ensuring the community is engaged in the decision-making process.



Farmers and Merchants Bank of Ashland stands as a cornerstone of community support, actively contributing to the prosperity and growth of the Ashland area. Renowned for its unwavering commitment to the community, the bank has been a crucial partner in the efforts of the Ashland Community Development Corporation (ACDC). Through a strategic partnership, F&M has allowed the organization to headquarter out of their Barnes Building on Highway 6! The bank has played a pivotal role in empowering local committees, chamber activates, and stimulating economic development initiatives. Their proactive support extends beyond traditional banking services, reflecting a genuine dedication to the well-being of the community. Open an account at Farmer & Merchants Bank today!



## LUTTON LAW OFFICE

LEGAL • REAL ESTATE • TAX SERVICES

Lutton Law Office stands as a cornerstone of community engagement and a steadfast anchor in the town's fabric since its founding in 1949. Beyond their legal expertise, the team at Lutton Law has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the well-being of Ashland. Actively involved in local initiatives and charitable endeavors, they exemplify a spirit of service that goes beyond the courtroom. From sponsoring community events to providing pro bono services, Lutton Law has woven itself into the social tapestry of Ashland, earning not only legal trust but also community respect. Their dedication to the town's prosperity and their role as a dependable legal resource make Lutton Law Office an integral and valued partner in the vibrant life of Ashland.

## CHUCK AND SHIRLEY NIEMEYER

Chuck and Shirley Niemeyer are pillars of the Ashland community, embodying a steadfast commitment to the town's well-being and economic vitality. Their unwavering dedication to Ashland is exemplified through their active involvement in the Ashland Community Development Corporation (ACDC). As influential community leaders, the Niemeyers have tirelessly worked towards fostering growth, innovation, and prosperity in the region. Their philanthropic endeavors extend beyond financial contributions, as they have consistently volunteered their time and expertise to initiatives that enhance the quality of life for Ashland residents. Chuck and Shirley's collaborative spirit and passion for community development have left an indelible mark on Ashland, creating a legacy of positive change and inspiring others to contribute to the town's enduring success.



## WINDOWS NEAR ME



Windows Near Me is a true community partner. As an Ashland-based window supplier and installation company, they consistently invest in our town’s future—bringing quality craftsmanship to local homes while supporting initiatives that strengthen economic and community development. Whether it’s sponsoring coffee and conversations or lending expertise to ACDC projects, their dedication and “can-do” spirit help make Ashland a more vibrant place to live and grow.

# CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS: MEET OUR COMMUNITY BUILDERS



The Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to economic development, recognizing the pivotal role it plays in the growth and sustainability of the communities it serves. Through strategic initiatives and partnerships, OPPD has actively supported local businesses, fostering an environment conducive to economic prosperity. By investing in infrastructure, promoting energy efficiency, and engaging in collaborative efforts, OPPD has become a catalyst for economic development, contributing significantly to the overall well-being and resilience of the regions under its stewardship.



Lee Sapp Ford in Ashland, Nebraska, stands as a dedicated community partner, exemplifying a strong commitment to the Ashland Community Development Corporation (ACDC). By consistently investing in the local economy, Lee Sapp Ford has not only provided employment opportunities but has also actively participated in initiatives aimed at fostering economic growth within Ashland and its surrounding areas. Their engagement with the ACDC showcases a steadfast commitment to the prosperity and well-being of the community, making Lee Sapp Ford an integral player in the economic development landscape of Ashland.



# THE INVESTORS THAT MAKE IT HAPPEN



**WOODS BROS REALTY**  
SERVING NEBRASKA • SINCE 1889

**WAYNE & JANECE MOLLHOFF**

# **PIONEERS OF PROGRESS: MEET OUR GROUNDBREAKERS**

**JOANIE SWANSON  
TERI MIKKELSEN  
DUE DILIGENCE DEMOLITION  
LUTTON REAL ESTATE  
NATIONAL TITLE COMPANY  
JONES INSURANCE**

# **THE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE: MEET THE ADVOCATES**

**RESOLUTE BUSINESS CONSULTING  
SIMPLIFY LLC  
POSTSCRIPT  
SHARI AND DAVID NYGREN  
BRIAN MIKKELSEN  
CINDY WAGNER  
SUE AND DENNIS THOMAS  
ASHLAND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**



# ASHLAND

## REPRESENTED



We're obsessed with golden shovels and community celebrations. Groundbreaking of the OxBow Crossing Development.









ACDC represents Ashland in and out of the city limits from the halls of Congress to the flight line of Offutt Air Force Base.



# BECOMING LEADERSHIP CERTIFIED



In early 2021, the ACDC applied for the Department of Economic Development's Leadership Certified Community program. To earn this designation, a community must demonstrate leadership collaboration, a strategic plan based on a needs assessment, community planning and zoning, a business retention strategy, effective use of technology, and an understanding of resources. The designation provides bonus points for grant applications, which can determine funding success.

## Program requirements:

- Conduct a community needs assessment and develop a strategic plan, comprehensive plan, and capital improvement plan.
- Implement zoning, subdivision ordinances, building codes, enforcement, and a permit process.
- Maintain an updated online presence, including a website and the LOIS database.
- Establish a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program.
- Include project financing options and create a resource list for business support.



# Ashland Greenwood Area Communities for Kids

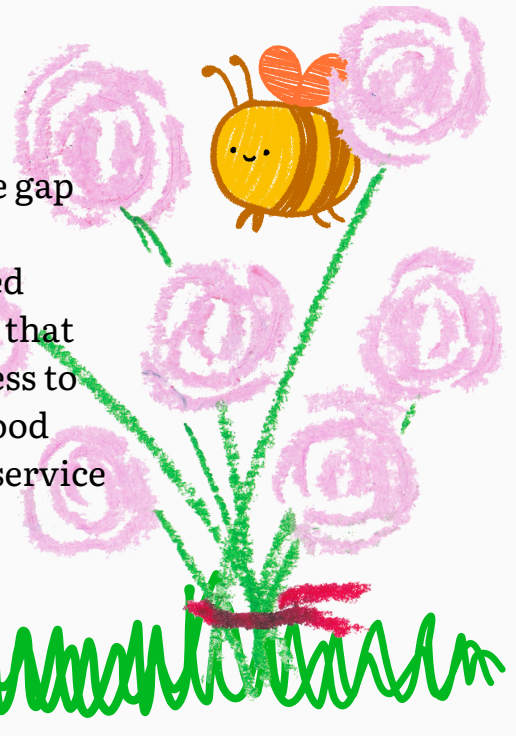
Childcare isn't just about caring for children; it's a cornerstone of economic development. In communities like Ashland-Greenwood, where families are the backbone, access to quality childcare is crucial for both parents and the local economy. Recognizing this, Ashland-Greenwood Area Communities for Kids (AGA-C4K) is spearheading efforts to bridge the childcare gap and foster a thriving community for generations to come.

## The Economic Impact of Childcare

Accessible childcare isn't just a convenience; it's an economic imperative. For working parents, reliable childcare is essential to maintain employment, pursue education, or start businesses. Without it, families face barriers to economic stability and upward mobility. Moreover, our Ashland businesses rely on a steady workforce, and childcare shortages can lead to absenteeism, turnover, and decreased productivity. In short, childcare is not just a family issue—it's an economic one.

## Addressing the Childcare Gap

AGA-C4K understands that addressing the childcare gap requires a multifaceted approach. From expanding childcare facilities to training and retaining qualified caregivers, AGA-C4K is working tirelessly to ensure that every child in the Ashland-Greenwood area has access to high-quality childcare. By investing in early childhood education and care, AGA-C4K isn't just providing a service—it's laying the foundation for future success.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING

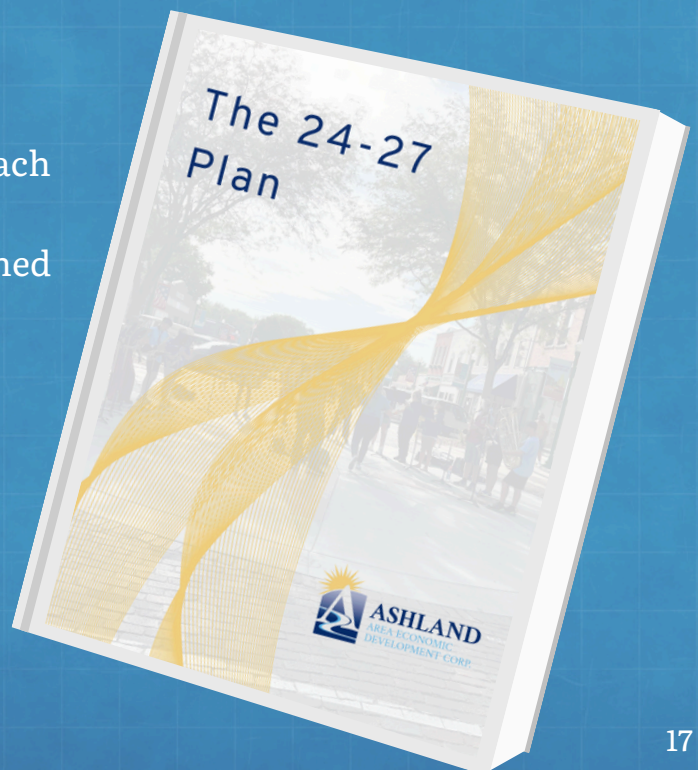
In 2020, the organization embarked on the development of a comprehensive three-year strategic plan (2020-2023), synchronized with the appointment of a new executive director. The plan was structured around three core objectives:

1. Commercial Development and Capital Investment
2. Marketing and Advocacy
3. Structure, Membership, and Organizational Enhancement

Recognizing the dynamic nature of Ashland and the evolving needs of the ACDC, a flexible approach was adopted. Tasks were categorized into three distinct segments: continuous, short-term (6-18 months), and long-term (over 18 months). Unlike the previous 2018-2019 Action plan, it was proposed that the responsibilities and activities outlined in the plan be shared between the board and the executive director.

Looking forward, the 2024-2027 plan aims to build upon the strong foundation laid by the 2023 plan, incorporating ambitious yet attainable goals for significant organizational advancement and community enhancement.

With the invaluable assistance of UNL Extension, the board successfully formulated new organizational pillars. Each pillar is delineated by a defined objective and a set of strategies meticulously designed to execute the overarching plan.







## OBJECTIVE

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In the pursuit of progress, partnerships serve as the cornerstone of success. As the Ashland Community Development Corporation (ACDC) charts its course for the future, it does so with a steadfast commitment to collaboration, innovation, and community engagement. Through strategic alliances and visionary initiatives, ACDC aims to catalyze transformative change, elevate quality of life, and position Ashland as a beacon of opportunity and growth.

## STRATEGIES

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- Create an engagement plan
- Develop strategic partnerships at the city and county levels
- Develop/create a formal partnership agreement between the Ashland Community Development Corporation, the Ashland Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Ashland that clarifies roles, and responsibilities.
- Address opportunities to evaluate merger opportunities with the Ashland Chamber of Commerce
- Leverage partnership opportunities with new and existing community businesses and organizations.
- Work with community and local government partners to address and maintain standards of appearance throughout the community.
- Establish housing committee to address housing solutions
- Establish developer council to address streamlining development through the developers toolkit
- Establish working relationship with AGPS/FBLA to provide workforce exposure for AGPS students





## OBJECTIVE

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As stewards of economic development, we recognize the importance of positioning ACDC for long-term success and sustainability. By establishing a resilient funding strategy and maintaining robust membership structures, we ensure the continued vitality of our organization. Through the pursuit of business retention and expansion initiatives and the exploration of potential mergers with like-minded entities, we chart a course towards a future of growth and resilience.

## STRATEGIES

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- Establish a resilient funding strategy for ACDC that ensures funding opportunities through the City of Ashland, Saunders County, Private Investors, and Grant Opportunities are pursued.
- Evaluate opportunities to seek funding to hire additional support staff.
- Maintain membership according to the newly created/revised membership benefits structure
- Set minimum threshold of 15 Business, Retention, and Expansion (BREs) completed a year
- Formally establish a BRE committee with a board member chair and representative from the Chamber of Commerce (does not need to be Chamber board position)
- Discuss Communities 4 Kids (C4K) being absorbed into EDC



## OBJECTIVE

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Central to our mission is the pursuit of initiatives that enhance quality of life for all residents. From addressing housing solutions to expanding community amenities, we are committed to creating a vibrant, inclusive environment that attracts young professionals, families, and visitors alike. Through the establishment of a tourism office and the development of recreational facilities, we aim to showcase the unique charm and appeal of Ashland to the world.

## STRATEGIES

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- ACDC will pursue engagements that seek to enhance and/or expand community amenities for all ages
- Pursue opportunities that will continue to make Ashland a lifestyle focused community that is inviting to young adults, and families
- Establish “Welcome to Ashland” signs for aesthetic upgrades to the community with collaborative support from city and stakeholders
- Pursue solutions to community wide issues including but not limited to business and workforce development, increasing the quantity and quality of housing, and increasing the quantity of licensed child care providers
- Explore opportunities to enhance current events and create new events based on local interests and partnerships
- Lead a committee of the different sectors of the community and city through planning process of a community & recreational center
- Increase the housing inventory to reach goals outlined in the Housing Study
- Establish a tourism office
- Update existing tourism videos for the community



## OBJECTIVE

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In our efforts to promote Ashland as a destination for opportunity and innovation, we recognize the importance of effective marketing and advocacy. Through proactive communication and outreach, we will cultivate a regional voice that resonates with stakeholders and inspires confidence in Ashland's future.

## STRATEGIES

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- Establish an events committee with a board member as chair
- Utilize membership magazine as a tool to onboard new members
- Offer snapshot of their business through data analytics software
- Create a branding/marketing template
- Develop and implement a marketing plan that builds alignment with stakeholders and creates a stronger communication channel to share updates on progress and goals
- Frame the organization to the community in a way that clearly markets the message that we are an organization focusing on big goals and that we don't let "speed bumps" slow down the beneficial work
- Develop a strategy to build ACDC's regional voice—therefore giving ACDC the authority to speak on larger community issues and model excellence to other communities around us
- Create or update website to be intuitive to the end user with easier maintenance on backend





## OBJECTIVE

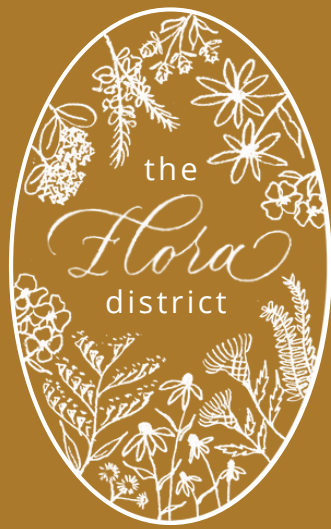
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As advocates for progress, we stand ready to champion initiatives that address key community needs and priorities. By collaborating with local government and stakeholders, we can drive forward projects that stimulate economic growth, and elevate Ashland's profile locally, regionally, and beyond. Through prudent fiscal management and strategic investments, we will ensure that our community thrives now and in the years to come.

## STRATEGIES

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- Advocate to the City of Ashland to take initiative in pursuing projects that address key areas of shared interest while also being comfortable to use city resources, and funding sources to do so
- Debt is sometimes necessary and a normal part of large business/government spear-headed projects
- Increase tax base by 2-3% per year
- Create a comprehensive commercial inventory of the community
- Consider name change of ACDC for clarity/conciseness
- Has effect on future marketing and advocacy
- Utilize full taxing authority of the city to implement LB840 for economic and community development purposes
- Explore other funding opportunities that originate from the City beyond implementing LB840, i.e) special projects, budget expansion.
- Consider opportunities to establish policies and enforcement agreements that ensure zoning /planning standards are adhered to



a nebraska  
creative district  
•  
est. 2022

The Nebraska Creative Districts program is an innovative initiative aimed at fostering economic development, cultural vitality, and community engagement through the promotion of arts and creativity. These districts serve as hubs that leverage the power of the arts to drive local economies, enhance quality of life, and celebrate unique cultural identities.

Ashland's journey to becoming the first Nebraska Creative District was a collaborative effort led by the Ashland Community Development Corporation, Ashland Arts Council, and City of Ashland. Recognizing the town's untapped creative potential, the ACDC took the initiative to spearhead the application process. A strategic, dynamic partnership was formed with the Ashland Arts Council and the City of Ashland.







# DATA DRIVEN & FUTURE FORWARD

## Saunders County Invests in Data Enhancement: ACDC Awarded \$15,000 for Placer.ai Software

The Ashland Community Development Corporation (ACDC) is poised to embark on a new era of data-driven decision-making thanks to a recent grant of \$15,000 from Saunders County. This funding will enable the ACDC to acquire Placer.ai software, a cutting-edge platform designed to enhance their data analytics capabilities and propel economic development efforts forward.

The decision to award the grant underscores Saunders County's commitment to supporting innovation and growth within its communities. By investing in tools like Placer.ai, local authorities aim to empower organizations like the ACDC with the resources needed to make informed decisions and drive sustainable economic prosperity.

Placer.ai is a state-of-the-art software solution renowned for its ability to provide real-time insights into consumer behavior, foot traffic patterns, and economic trends. Leveraging advanced algorithms and comprehensive data sets, it offers unparalleled visibility into market dynamics, enabling organizations to identify opportunities, mitigate risks, and optimize resource allocation strategies.

For the ACDC, the acquisition of Placer.ai represents a significant step forward in their mission to foster economic development across Ashland. By harnessing the power of this innovative tool, they anticipate a multitude of benefits, including:



**1. Enhanced Data Accuracy:** Placer.ai's robust data analytics capabilities will enable the ACDC to access accurate and reliable information regarding consumer behavior and market trends. This will facilitate more informed decision-making processes and ensure that resources are allocated effectively to initiatives with the highest potential for impact.

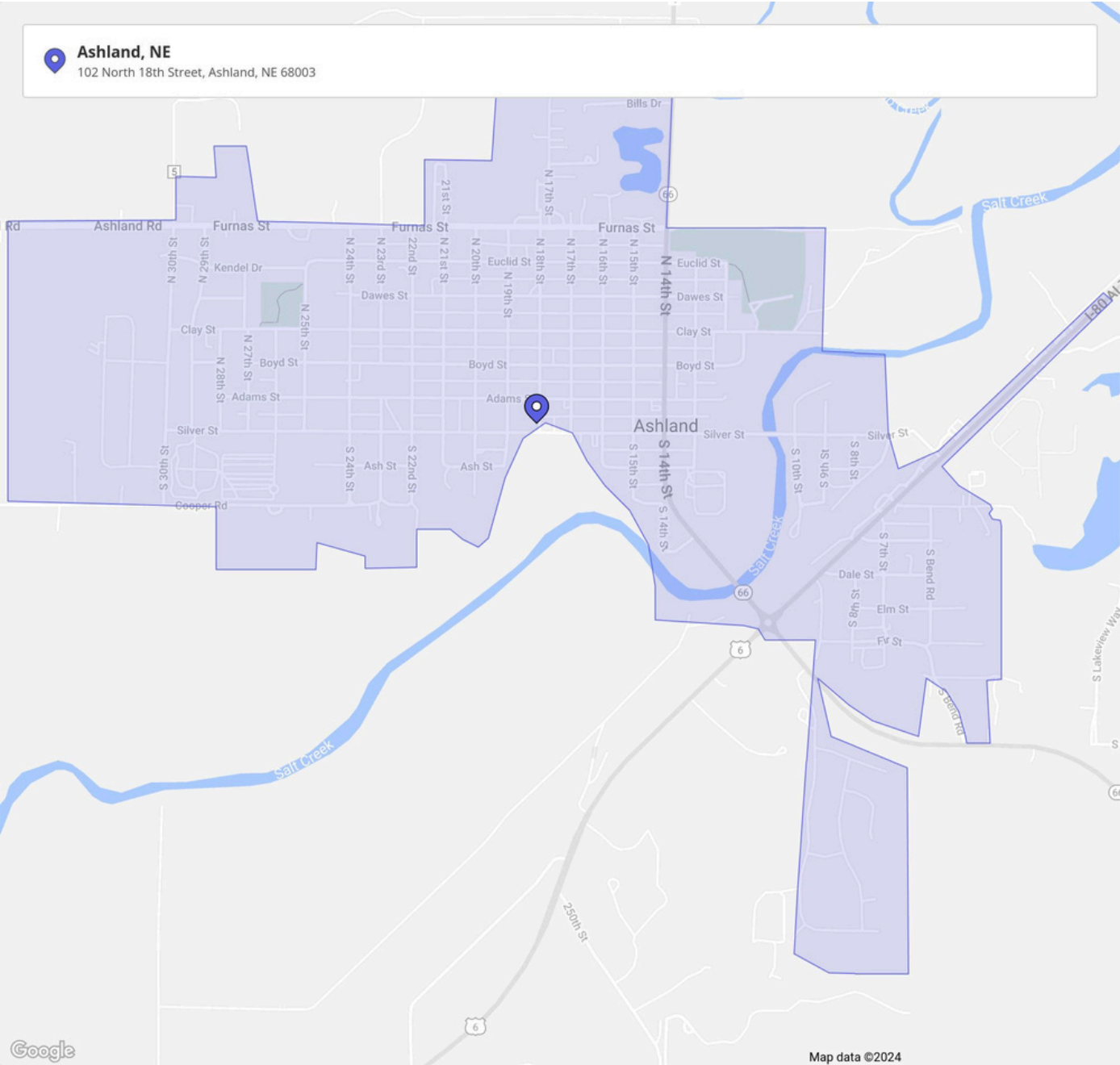
**2. Strategic Insights:** With access to real-time data on foot traffic patterns and consumer demographics, the ACDC will gain valuable insights into the preferences and behaviors of local residents and visitors. Armed with this knowledge, they can tailor their economic development strategies to better meet the needs and expectations of target audiences.

**3. Competitive Advantage:** By leveraging Placer.ai to stay ahead of market trends and identify emerging opportunities, the ACDC can position Saunders County as an attractive destination for businesses, investors, and entrepreneurs. This competitive advantage will not only drive economic growth but also enhance the county's reputation as a hub of innovation and opportunity.

Saunders County officials expressed enthusiasm for the grant award and its potential to catalyze positive change within the region. County Supervisor, David Lutton, highlighted the importance of investing in technology and data-driven solutions to support local economic development efforts.

"We are thrilled to support the ACDC in acquiring the Placer.ai software," Supervisor Lutton remarked. "This investment reflects our commitment to fostering innovation and growth within Saunders County. By equipping organizations like the ACDC with the tools they need to make informed decisions, we can create a more prosperous future for all residents."

Looking ahead, the ACDC is eager to leverage Placer.ai to drive measurable results and create lasting impact within Ashland. With the support of Saunders County and the capabilities of Placer.ai at their disposal, they are poised to unlock new opportunities, overcome challenges, and usher in a new era of economic prosperity for the entire community.



Metrics

Ashland, NE  
102 North 18th Street, Ashland, NE 68003

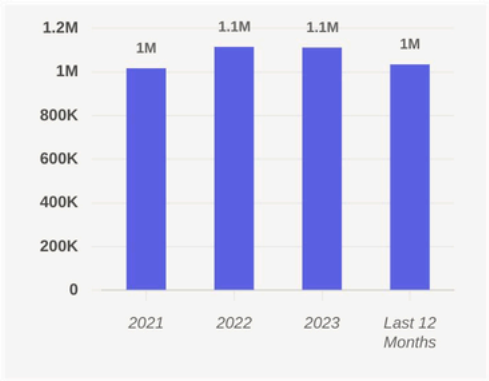
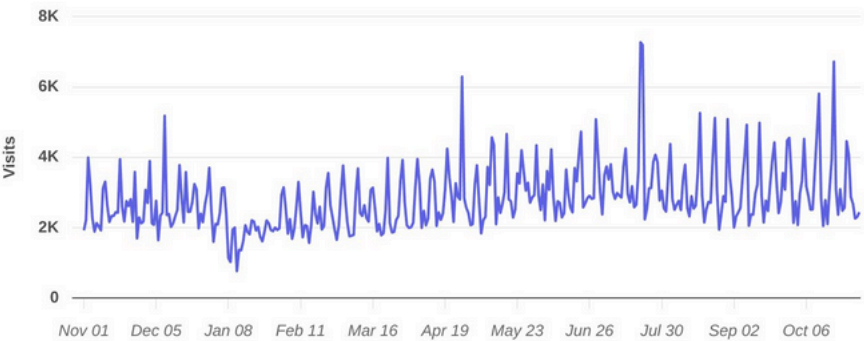
Visits	1M	Panel Visits	75K
Visitors	237.8K	Visits YoY	-7.6%
Visit Frequency	4.17	Visits Yo2Y	-6.3%
Avg. Dwell Time	199 min	Visits Yo3Y	+4%

Nov 1st, 2023 - Oct 31st, 2024  
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. (www.placer.ai)



Visits Trend

Ashland, NE  
North 18th Street, Ashland, NE

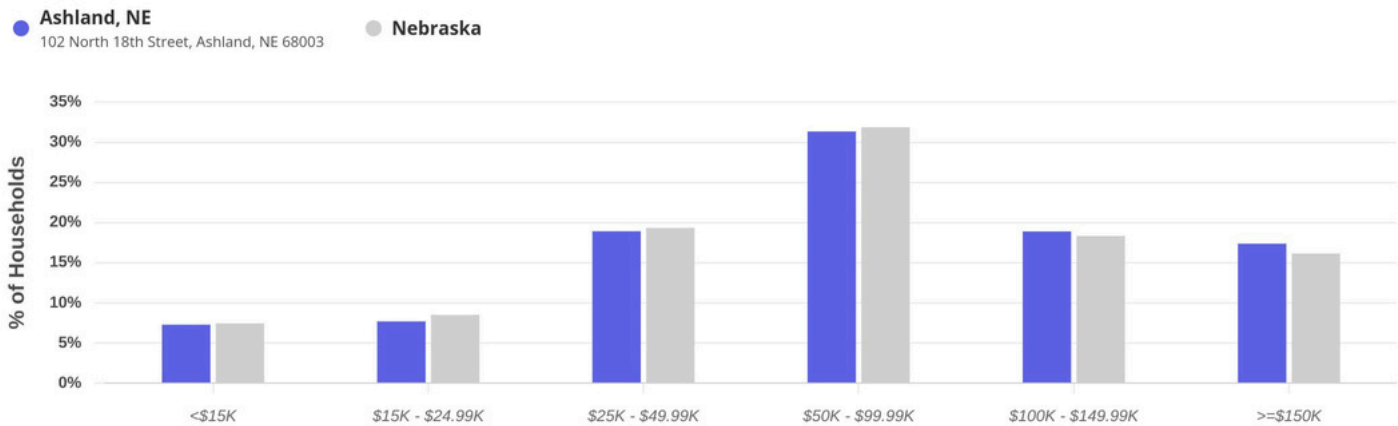


Daily | Visits | Nov 1st, 2023 - Oct 31st, 2024  
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. (www.placer.ai)





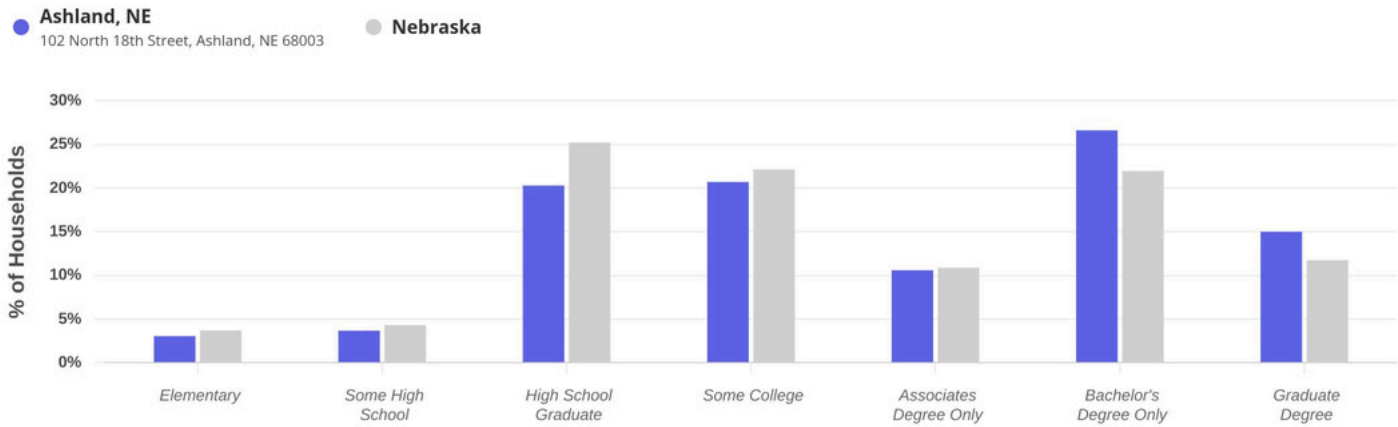
Household Income



Nov 1st, 2023 - Oct 31st, 2024 | Data Source: STI: Popstats  
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. ([www.placer.ai](http://www.placer.ai))



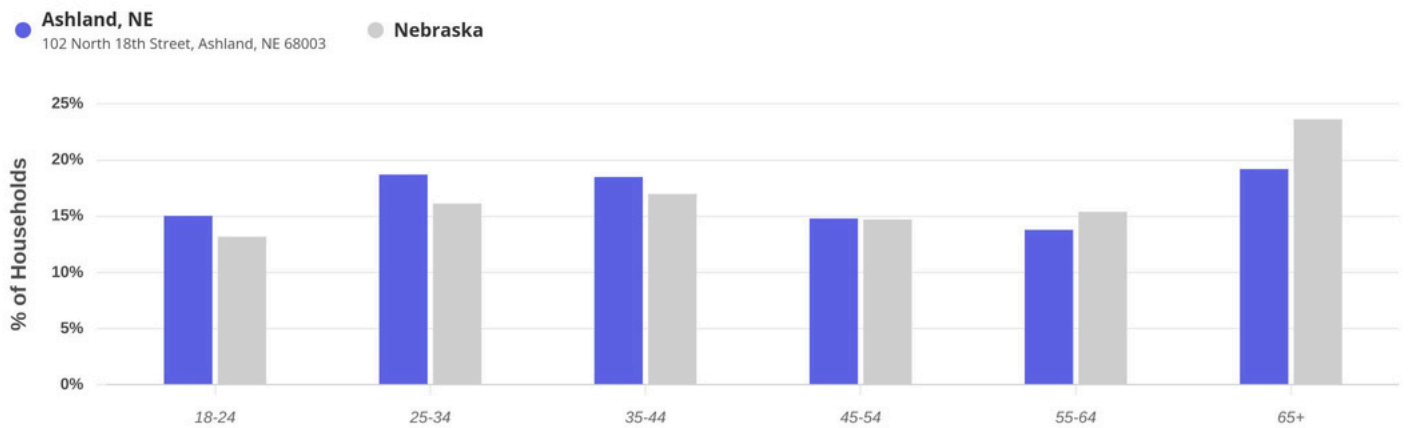
Education



Nov 1st, 2023 - Oct 31st, 2024 | Data Source: STI: Popstats  
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. ([www.placer.ai](http://www.placer.ai))



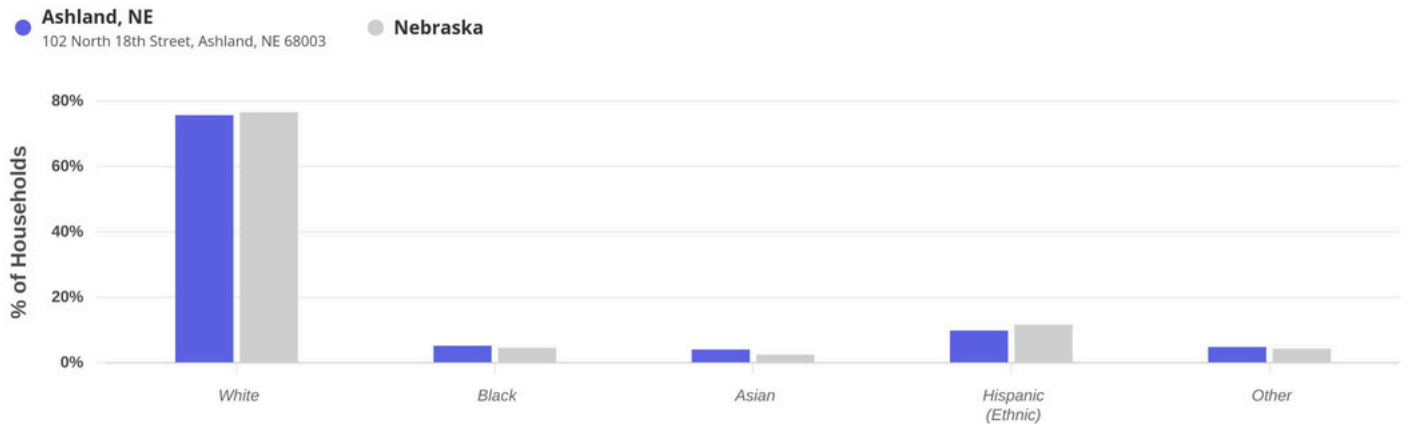
Age



Nov 1st, 2023 - Oct 31st, 2024 | Data Source: STI: Popstats  
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. ([www.placer.ai](http://www.placer.ai))

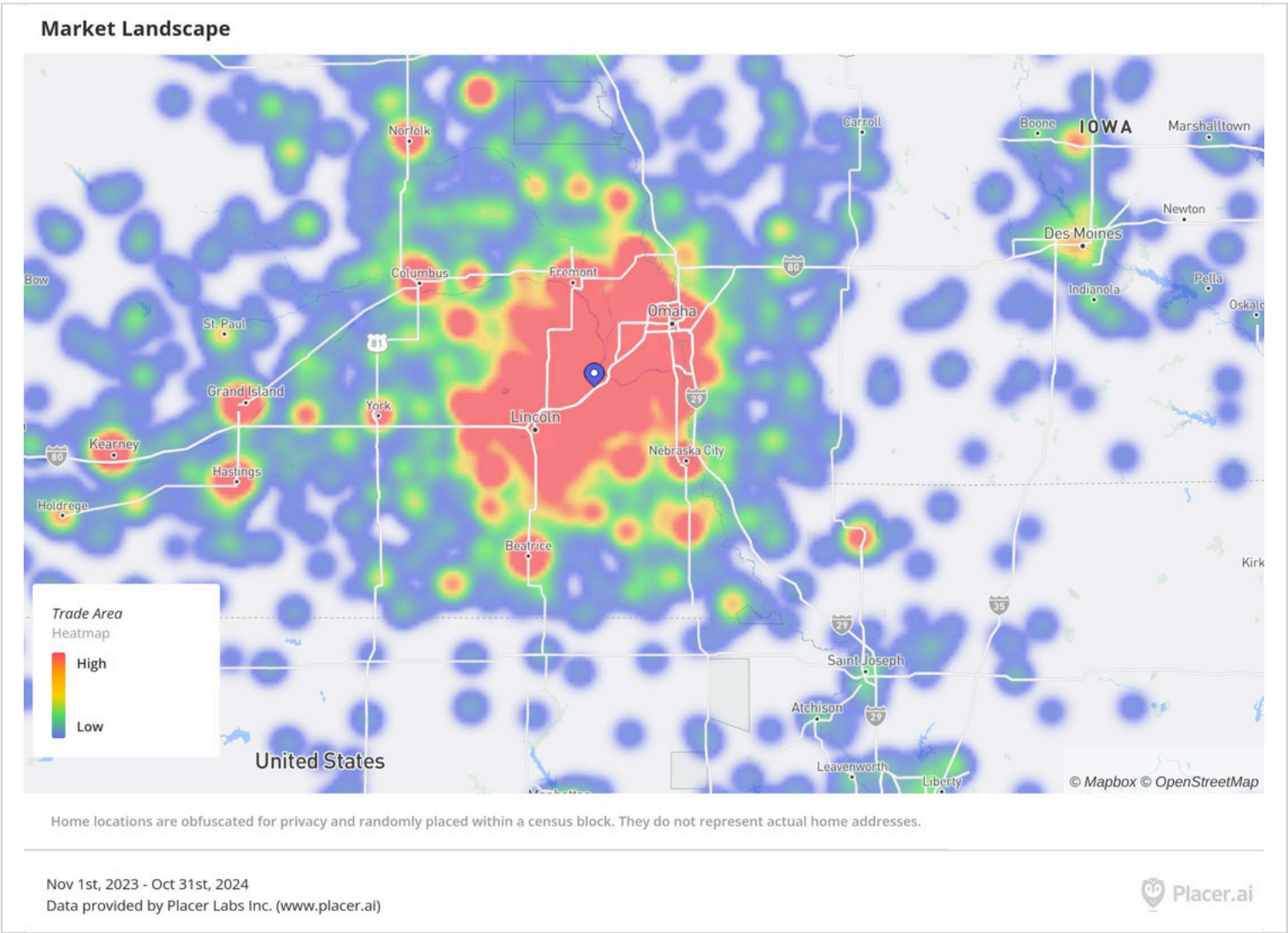


Ethnicity



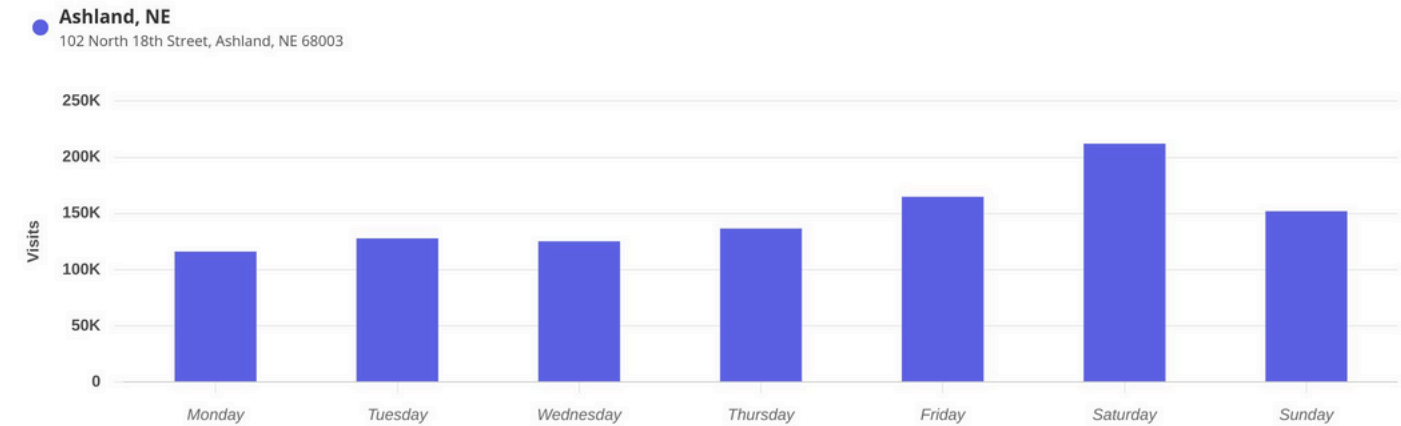
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Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. ([www.placer.ai](http://www.placer.ai))







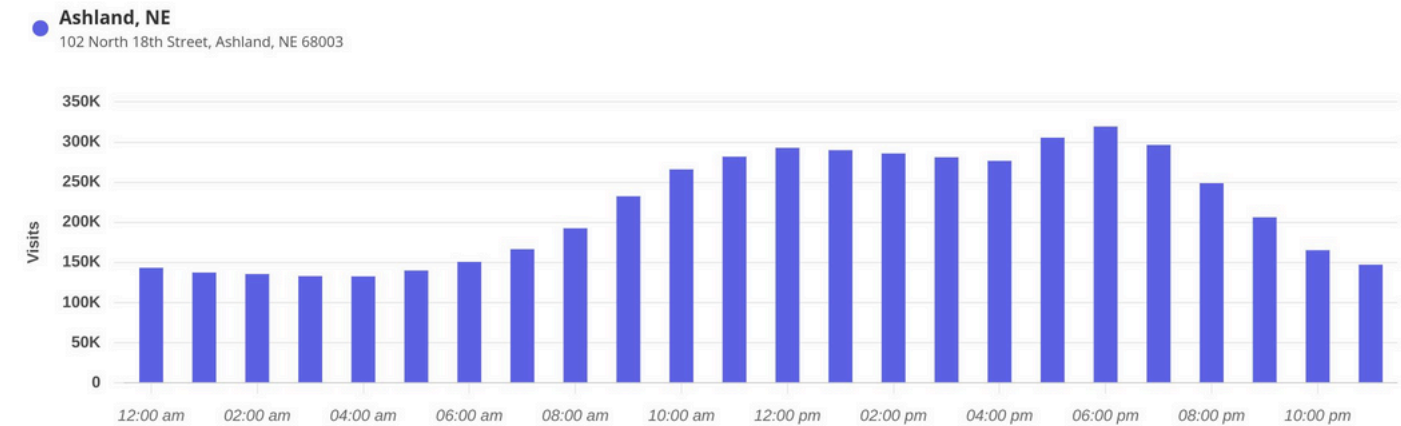
Daily Visits



Visits | Nov 1st, 2023 - Oct 31st, 2024  
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. ([www.placer.ai](http://www.placer.ai))



Hourly Visits



Visits | Nov 1st, 2023 - Oct 31st, 2024  
Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. ([www.placer.ai](http://www.placer.ai))





Small town. BIG ambitions.