

MCCOOK NEBRASKA

CAPITAL OF THE

Buffalo Commons



ACTIVITY GUIDE

www.VisitMcCook.com

THE HIGH PLAINS ARE A SPECIAL PLACE.

The people who settled here, the people who are still here, have persevered through drought, booms, busts, good times, and hard times. Back in the 80s when times were tough a couple of east coast academics proposed that the entire high plains should be depopulated and given back to the buffalo. They called their idea the "Buffalo Commons." They didn't account for the fierce love that people here have for their land and communities. They didn't account for the resourcefulness of our people. So to those academics we say that we'll still be here, proudly showing visitors the history, outdoor recreation, and rural lifestyle that make McCook such a great place.

*We're proudly standing
as the capital of the
Buffalo Commons*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agritourism	4
Kiplinger Arena/Rodeo	6
Outdoor Recreation	7
Camping	8
Fishing	9
Hunting	10
Golf	11
Historical Attractions	12
Frank Lloyd Wright House	12
Senator Norris Historical Site	12
Museum of the High Plains	14
Carnegie Library	14
Heritage Square Tour	15
Best of McCook	16
Food	16
Lodging	18
Map	20-21
Events	22-23

AGRITOURISM

For birders and people who appreciate nature, the area around McCook is a special place. The rare undisturbed native sand sage prairies of southwest Nebraska attract a remarkable variety of some of North America's most interesting birds. Our region is also on one of the principal routes of the Central Migration Flyway for waterfowl's annual trip between breeding and wintering areas. Thousands of acres of publicly accessible land around the area make McCook a bird watching destination.

Check out some of the highlights:

BARNETT PARK

According to T.J. Walker, Nebraska Game and Parks biologist and an expert birder, Barnett Park, located on Highway 83 south of McCook is "good for water birds when it is not too busy, and the trees along the river are a good place to look for migrating warblers and other songbirds."

PRAIRIE CHICKEN DANCE TOURS

Normally elusive, Southwest Nebraska's Greater Prairie Chickens strut their stuff during mating season each spring. From late March to late April they are booming and birders travel to McCook from all over the world to see the spectacle. For more information and to book your tour, go to www.PrairieChickenDanceTours.com.



4

RED WILLOW STATE RECREATION AREA

11 miles north of McCook, this reservoir as well as the three other reservoirs in the area often hold large concentrations of water birds, such as grebes, ducks, geese, gulls, and others with occasional rarities like Red-necked grebes. With some 4,320 acres of upland area to explore, you'll want to allow extra time for Red Willow's varied habitats. As T.J. Walker writes, "The reservoir and the roads around it can take a day to bird thoroughly due to the diversity of habitats present at the reservoir." Look for burrowing owls in the prairie dog town near Spring Park. A white-faced ibis nests in the wetlands on the west side of the reservoir, and barn owls have been spotted peering out of the holes in the clay banks above the reservoir. For more information consult www.chickendancetrail.com.



5

KIPLINGER RODEO/ARENA

The Kiplinger Arena is southwest Nebraska's premier heated indoor arena. Located at the Red Willow County Fairgrounds, the Kiplinger hosts rodeo, western, and equestrian events throughout the year. The arena attracts over 30,000 participants and spectators each year. If you're looking to experience a little slice of our rural heritage, just head over to the Kiplinger on most weekends and poke your head in to watch riding, roping, auctions, and other fixtures of life on the high plains.

To see what events are coming up check the schedule at www.kiplingerarena.com.



OUTDOOR RECREATION

Outdoor Recreation is woven into the fabric of western Nebraska rural communities like McCook. Out here nature is never more than a few minutes away. Great places for camping, hunting, and fishing are found throughout McCook and Red Willow County. If your idea of outdoor recreation is more manicured greens than tent stakes and tree stands, there are great options here for you as well. There are several great courses in the area, but you won't want to miss Heritage Hills in McCook.

CAMPING

Several great camping areas are close to McCook that feature both modern and rustic sites as well as picnic areas, and in some cases bathrooms and showers. If you're looking for the perfect camping getaway, come out to the high plains; come out to the Buffalo Commons.

The following parks have campsites:

Karrer Park – East McCook

Red Willow SRA – North of McCook

Medicine Creek SRA – Near Cambridge

Swanson SRA – Trenton

Enders SRA – Enders



FISHING

At the various lakes around McCook you'll find large and smallmouth bass, white bass, northern pike, walleye, and crappie.

These prairie lakes offer you a chance to get away and cast a line whether you're looking for dinner, a trophy or your next tall tale:

Red Willow SRA – North of McCook

Medicine Creek SRA – Near Cambridge

Swanson SRA – Trenton

Enders SRA – Enders

HUNTING

Some of the best hunting ground in the country can be found in southwest Nebraska. It doesn't matter if you're searching for deer, small game, waterfowl, or pheasants, you can find them here. Combine that with our small-town hospitality and you have the perfect destination for your next hunting trip.

Public lands that allow hunting:

Red Willow SRA – North of McCook

Medicine Creek SRA – Near Cambridge

Swanson SRA – Trenton

Enders SRA – Enders

Frenchman WMA – Palisade

Red Willow Diversion Dam WMA – NW of McCook

CRP Management Access Program



GOLF

If you love golf and haven't swung through southwest Nebraska, you are missing out. While there are several good courses in the area, Heritage Hills is the crown jewel. Manicured fairways and greens are set among an amazing landscape that features drastic elevation changes over an 18-hole course that measures out at more than 7,000 yards.

www.HeritageHillsMcCook.com

HISTORICAL ATTRACTIONS

McCook was established in 1882 as the result of an agreement between the Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company and the Lincoln Land Company to form a new railroad center halfway between Denver and Omaha. McCook was named for Alexander McDowell McCook; General McCook served the Union for 43 years.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S SUTTON HOUSE

The Sutton House at 602 Norris Ave. is one of Wright's few homes west of the Mississippi River, and the only one in Nebraska. This architectural marvel showcases Wright's distinctive Prairie Style. This house is currently a private residence.

SENATOR GEORGE W. NORRIS STATE HISTORICAL SITE

Senator Norris referred to the modest house at 706 Norris Ave. as his own "WPA project." It has been beautifully preserved, as it was when Mrs. Norris left it in 1967. Learn about the man that has so strongly impacted all of our lives through his four decades representing Nebraska in the House and Senate, including his efforts in establishing the Tennessee Valley Authority, and Rural Electrification Act.

Open for tours 1-5 p.m.
Tuesday-Friday (308) 345-8484
Tours by appointment: Call (308) 345-7650



12



13

MUSEUM OF THE HIGH PLAINS AND CARNEGIE LIBRARY

Located at 421 Norris Ave., this is where you go to learn “the rest of the story” about McCook and southwest Nebraska’s settlement; the importance of Agriculture and Railroad to our development and future; our significant political heritage in being the home to Senators and Governors; and catch a glimpse of daily life of years gone by. Notable exhibits include Frank Lloyd Wright’s house plans for a home that was never built, D.A.R. display, quilts and the area’s role in WWII by being the location of the McCook Army Air Base, as well as the Indianola German POW camp.

The historic Carnegie Library comprises a portion of the Museum complex. Built in the style of the Spanish Colonial Revival, the library was constructed with a grant from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation, opened to the public in 1908 and served in that capacity for over 60 years. It continues to serve as a place of education with its archives of scrapbooks, yearbooks, and a wealth of genealogical resources.

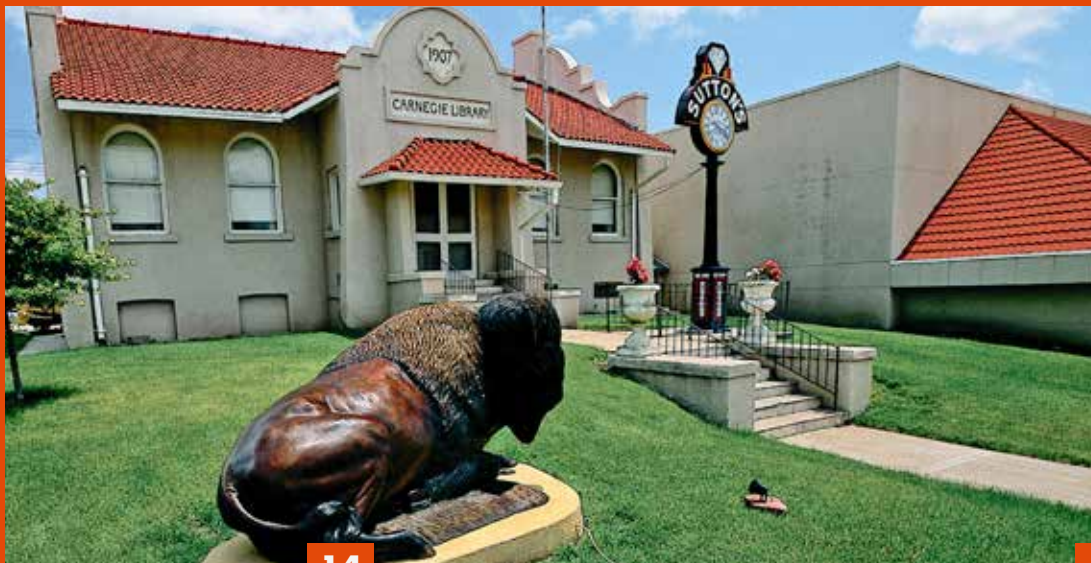
Open 1-5 p.m.
Tuesday-Saturday (308) 345-3661



HERITAGE SQUARE HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR

Discover McCook’s beautiful historic district on this excursion. The tour spans a 10-block area

near downtown displaying a variety of architectural styles from the late 1800s and early 1900s. Start your tour by picking up a Historical Walking Tour brochure at the Keystone Business Center or the Museum of the High Plains. Then continue on to include the boyhood home of Sen. E. Benjamin Nelson, the original YMCA building and other historical landmarks.



BEST OF MCCOOK

Where the locals would take you to eat.



Sehnert's Bakery
& Bieroc Café

312 Norris Ave.
(308) 345-6500



Taste of Texas

112 W 11th St.
(308) 345-1611



Loop Brewing Co.

404 W A St.
(308) 345-5198



Coppermill Steakhouse

N Hwy 83 & Coppermill St.
(308) 345-2296



Mac's Drive In

809 W B St.
(308) 345-2420



Fuller's Family Restaurant

110 Norris Ave.
(308) 345-7464



Rocket Inn Pizza

117 4th St., Indianola, NE
(308) 364-9906



Citta' Deli

110 West 3rd St.
(308) 345-1515

LODGING GUIDE



Days Inn

901 North Hwy. 83
(308) 345-7115
DaysInn.com



Chief Motel

612 West B St.
(308) 345-3700
TheChiefMotel.com



Horse Creek Inn

1 Bison Holiday Drive
(888) 463-3691
HorseCreekInnMcCook.com



Cobblestone Inn

1301 N Hwy. 83
(308) 777-2000
staycobblestone.com



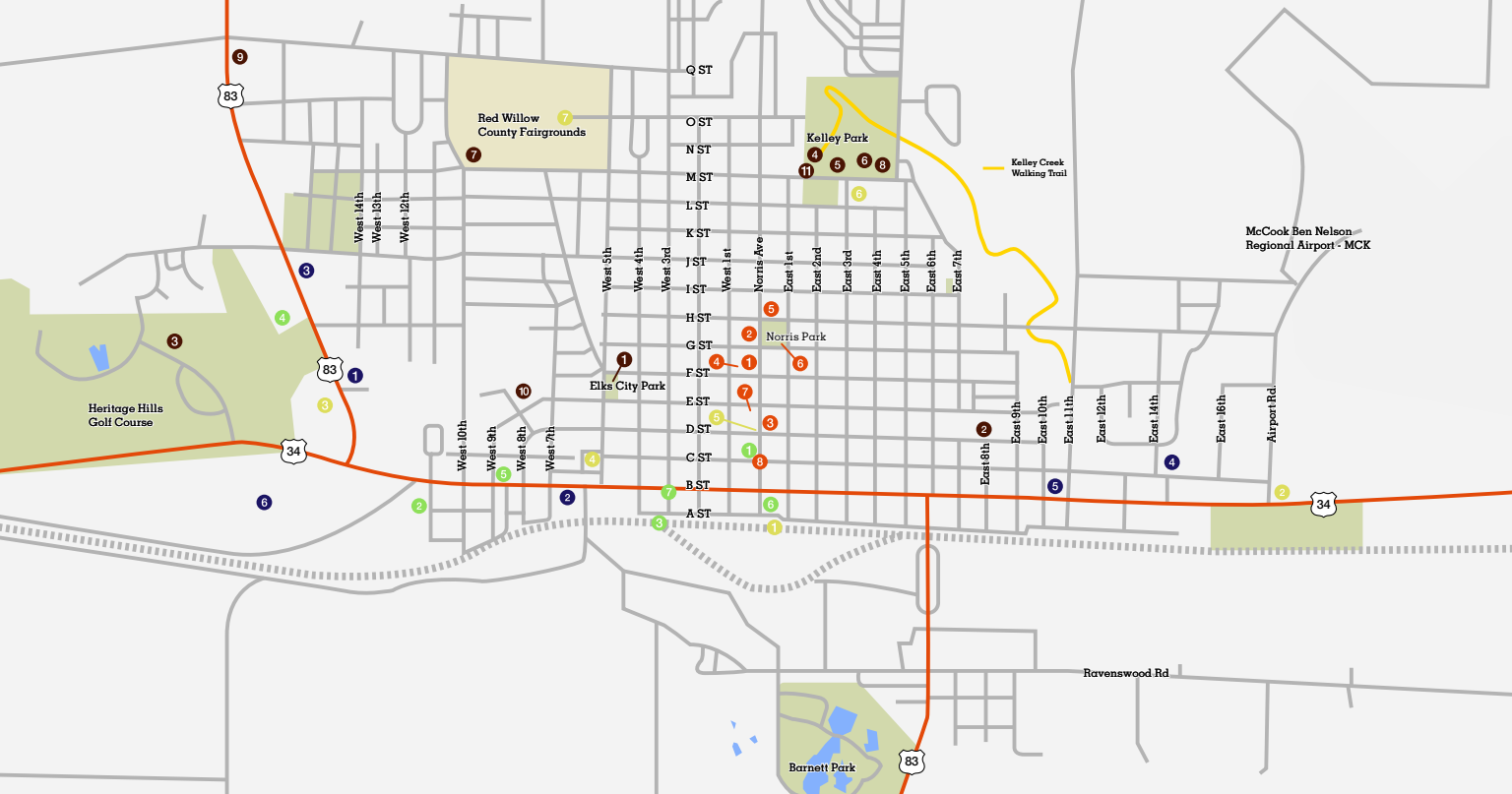
Cedar Inn

1300 E C St.
(308) 345-7091
CedarInn4Less.com



Economy Inn

1103 E B St.
(308) 345-1141
magnusonhotels.com



Historical Attractions

- 1 Frank Lloyd Wright House
- 2 Senator George W. Norris State Historical Site
- 3 Museum of the High Plains and Carnegie Library
- 4 Senator E. Ben Nelson Home
- 5 Governor Frank Morrison Home
- 6 Norris Bandshell
- 7 Historic Fox Theatre
- 8 Historic Downtown McCook

Helpful Info

- 1 Amtrak Train Depot
- 2 McCook Armed Forces Reserve Center
- 3 Cinema 3 Movie Theaters
- 4 City Auditorium
- 5 Keystone Business Center
- 6 McCook Community College
- 7 Kiplinger Arena

Lodging

- 1 Horse Creek Inn
- 2 Chief Motel
- 3 Days Inn
- 4 The Cedar Inn
- 5 Economy Inn
- 6 Cobblestone Inn

Featured Food

- 1 Sehnert's Bakery & Bieroc Café
- 2 Taste of Texas
- 3 Loop Brewing Co.
- 4 Coppermill Steakhouse
- 5 Mac's Drive In
- 6 Fuller's Family Restaurant
- 7 Citta' Deli

Recreational Activities

- 1 Elks Tennis Courts
- 2 Felling Field
- 3 Heritage Hills Golf Course
- 4 Kelley Creek Walking Trail
- 5 Kelley Park Disc Golf Course
- 6 Kelley Park Courts
- 7 Jaycee Ball Park Complex
- 8 Municipal Swimming Pool
- 9 TJ's Family Fun Center
- 10 YMCA
- 11 Bolles Canyon Skate Park

ANNUAL EVENTS

McCook offers a wide range of fun and fascinating events — from award-winning festivals to rough-stock rodeos, live music performances to downtown parades.

LIGHTHOUSE MARINA SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Great summer of music on the deck under the stars at Hugh Butler Lake, 11 miles north of McCook on Highway 83. For more information like the Facebook page Lighthouse Marina. (Saturdays, Memorial Day to Labor Day)

MNB HOT SUMMER NIGHTS

Live summer concert series in the Bandshell at Norris Park.

(June-August)
(308) 345-4240

BUFFALO COMMONS STORYTELLING FESTIVAL

An award-winning festival featuring local and national talent, celebrating the traditional art of storytelling in spoken stories, poetry and song. Includes interactive workshops, cowboy poetry, kid's festival and live performances at the Historic Fox Theatre.

(June)
(800) 657-2179
www.buffalocommons.org

RED WILLOW COUNTY FAIR

Held in July, these five days of traditional county fair fun are sure to please. Animal exhibits, games, carnival rides, a live concert, tractor pull and rodeo are among the highlights.

(308) 345-4650
www.redwillowcountyfair.com

OLD SETTLERS CELEBRATION

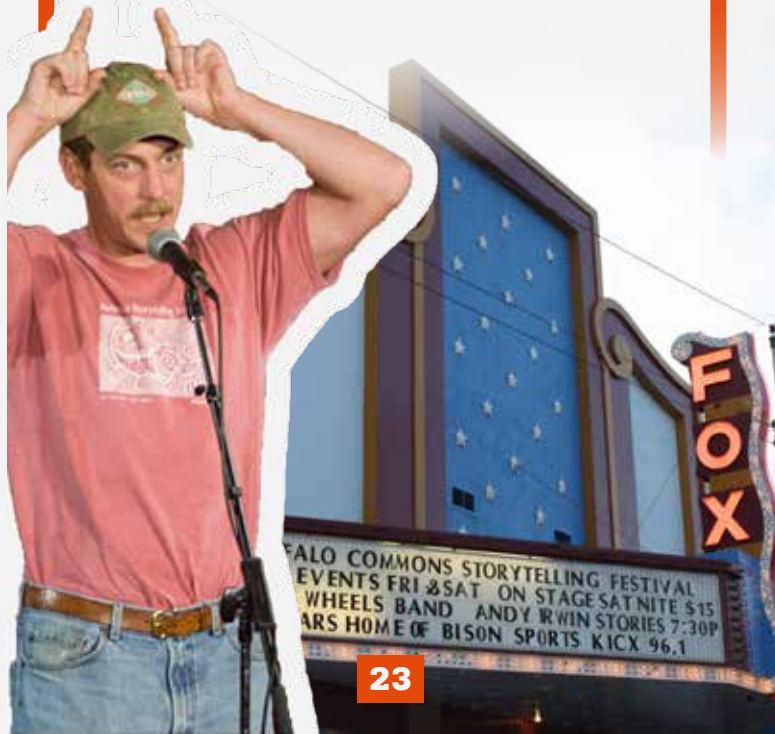
Held the second Saturday in August in Indianola, this family event includes a road race, parade, car show, kiddie carnival, craft fair, soapbox derby, horseshoes and more. (308) 364-9281

HERITAGE DAYS CELEBRATION

Held the last full weekend in September, this is McCook's largest celebration. A full slate of activities for the entire family, great food, live entertainment and an impressive parade. (800) 657-2179
www.McCookChamber.org

LIVE AT THE BIEROC

Regularly scheduled year-round shows feature live folk music and other performances by national artists in the "Listening Room" atmosphere of the Bieroc Café. (308) 345-6500
www.BierocCafe.com





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★
BUFFALO COMMONS

P.O. Box 147 • McCook, NE 69001
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