

## **Dunlap Prepares to Welcome Thousands for RAGBRAI Stop July 19**

**DUNLAP, Iowa** — With less than two months remaining until thousands of bicyclists roll through town, the Dunlap RAGBRAI Committee continues working to finalize plans for one of the largest single-day events in the community's history.

Committee members estimate approximately 15,000 riders and visitors could pass through Dunlap on Sunday, July 19, as part of the annual Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa, commonly known as RAGBRAI.

Dunlap's theme, "**We Put the AG in RAGBRAI**," celebrates Dunlap's deep agricultural roots and the community's role as a hub of Iowa farm country.

"Hosting RAGBRAI isn't like planning a normal community event," Jill Schaben, RAGBRAI Committee Chair said. "It feels like we're pulling a million levers at once. Between vendors, volunteers, entertainment, signage, sanitation, traffic control and hospitality, there are countless details that have to come together at exactly the right time."

The committee's goal is not to generate profits, but rather to create an opportunity for local businesses, nonprofits and community organizations to benefit from the influx of visitors while introducing thousands of people to Dunlap.

"The committee is operating under a strict budget and our objective is simply to break even," Schaben said. "The real return on investment comes from supporting our local businesses, helping community organizations raise funds and putting Dunlap on display for thousands of people who may be visiting for the first time."

Planning efforts have focused heavily on infrastructure and visitor amenities. Organizers have budgeted for portable restrooms, dumpsters, trash receptacles, picnic tables, signage and other necessities designed to encourage riders to stop, stay and explore the community.

"If visitors can't easily find what they need, they'll simply move on to the next town," Schaben said. "Everything we're doing is intended to create a positive experience that benefits the entire community."

One of the most visible planning decisions has been the selection of the rider route through town.

Committee members emphasized that the route was developed through extensive coordination among RAGBRAI officials, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Iowa State Patrol and local law enforcement agencies. Safety remained the primary consideration throughout the planning process.

Organizers said the chosen route helps keep cyclists off U.S. Highway 30 while safely directing riders into the heart of the community festival area.

"The route wasn't selected arbitrarily," Schaben said. "It was developed through a thoughtful process involving transportation and public safety professionals. The route allows riders to safely enter town while ensuring they experience the community and businesses that have worked so hard to prepare for this event."

The primary festival area will encompass the first two blocks of Iowa Avenue east of Highway 30 and extend one block north and south along Seventh Street.

Visitors can expect numerous food vendors offering both local favorites and cuisines from outside the area. Organizers also anticipate a selection of community organizations and attractions throughout the festival footprint.

A highlight of the day will be Dunlap's Avenue of Tractors, a display celebrating the agricultural heritage that inspired this year's theme. Additional entertainment will include music throughout the day, featuring popular RAGBRAI favorite DJ Dave.

The committee's Hospitality Team also promises several surprises designed specifically for riders and visitors.

"We've got some exciting things planned that we aren't quite ready to reveal yet," Schaben said. "People should keep watching the Dunlap RAGBRAI Facebook page for announcements and updates."

Residents should expect significant traffic impacts throughout the day. Numerous streets will be barricaded and parking restrictions will be implemented in areas surrounding the festival. Additional information regarding road closures, parking and traffic flow will be released as the event approaches.

Organizers encourage residents to plan ahead and allow additional travel time on July 19.

The majority of riders are expected to begin arriving during the mid-morning hours. Activity will remain heavy through early afternoon, with most cyclists expected to depart by approximately 3 p.m.

Official Dunlap RAGBRAI merchandise, including event T-shirts, is currently available for purchase. Information regarding merchandise sales, volunteer opportunities and event updates can be found at Dunlap's website.

Despite months of planning already completed, organizers say volunteers remain one of the community's greatest needs.

Volunteer opportunities include staffing information booths, assisting with setup and cleanup, helping direct visitors and supporting various festival operations throughout the day.

"An event of this size simply doesn't happen without volunteers," Schaben said. "We're incredibly grateful for everyone who has already stepped forward to help, and we're still looking for additional people willing to donate a few hours of their time."

Individuals interested in volunteering or learning more about the event can visit [dunlapia.com](http://dunlapia.com) and click on the RAGBRAI banner for additional information.

Committee members acknowledged that hosting thousands of visitors in a community the size of Dunlap presents challenges, but said the opportunity is well worth the effort.

"This is one of the biggest opportunities our community will ever have to showcase itself," Schaben said. "The planning timeline is short, the undertaking is enormous and the responsibility is significant. But this committee takes that responsibility seriously, and we're excited to welcome riders to Dunlap."

The Dunlap RAGBRAI Committee includes Jill Schaben, Jill Melby, Sam Cogdill, Sue Cogdill, Marti Rose, Treva Block, Sharee Maki, Liberty Monk, Justin Schaben, and Michael Bonsall.