A VENUE AND REGIONAL-CONTEXT STUDY

Brainerd International Raceway

What the place is, how it became so, what its history makes recognizable, and what that opens for the people who work with it.

Sources accessed October 26, 2026 · Publication version 2 · 43 findings, 41 sources

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01

Brainerd International Raceway

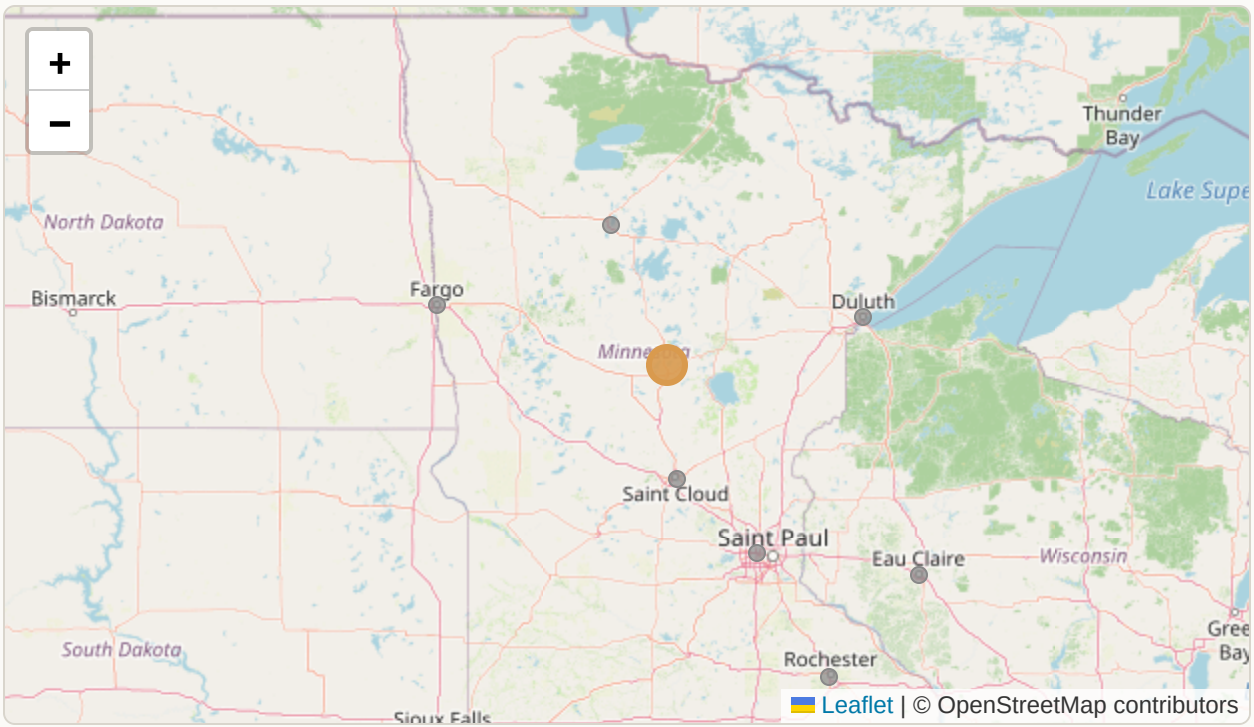
Brainerd International Raceway sits in the pine and lake country of Crow Wing County, north-central Minnesota, a few miles northwest of the city of Brainerd. It is one property holding several places at once: a quarter-mile dragstrip, two road courses that share asphalt with it, hundreds of acres of

camping, grandstands, paddocks, and the roads that bring people in from the cities to the south.

It is easy to describe a raceway by its facilities and its crowd figures. This study tries to describe how this one became what it is — the history built into its pavement, the communities that use it across a season, the way people stay rather than visit, and the lake region it belongs to — and then what that account makes possible to investigate. The research was compiled from sources opened in October 2026. Each finding shows how strong its evidence is.

> The venue presents itself as Brainerd International Raceway & Resort, 5523 Birchdale Rd, Brainerd, MN 56401, in Crow Wing County.
>
> VERIFIED [1] [2] [3]
>
> Limits: A Brainerd mailing address does not establish that the property lies within Brainerd city limits.

WHERE THE RACEWAY IS



Reference point for the facility, with the cities used in the drive-time analysis. No property boundary is drawn; none was obtained. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.

02

How It Became What It Is

The track was not built as a dragstrip. It opened in 1968 as Donnybrooke Speedway to give the Upper Midwest a road course for sports-car racing. Drag racing came onto the long front straight the same summer. The two uses grew from the same ground, and that double character is still the shape of the place.

> The track opened in 1968 as Donnybrooke Speedway, built to give the region an SCCA sports-car road course; an NHRA drag event ran on the main straight in July 1968 and an SCCA road race followed in August.
>
> CORROBORATED [4] [5] [6]
>
> Limits: Exact opening day not found. The reported 25,000 opening crowd is a single retrospective figure.

> Jerry Hansen bought the track in 1973 and renamed it Brainerd International Raceway.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [4]
>
> Limits: The ownership chain between Hansen and 1994 was not established.

Through the late 1970s the track invested in professional drag racing, and in 1982 it joined the NHRA national tour. It has held that place for more than four decades, missing only the pandemic season of 2020. Few relationships between a venue and a national series last that long; the August event has become part of the late-summer rhythm of the sport and of the region.

> The first NHRA national event at Brainerd was the 1982 Quaker State NorthStar Nationals; the operator states more than 50,000 attended.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [4]
>
> Limits: The 50,000 figure is the operator's historical claim with no stated counting method; it describes 1982, not the present.

HOW IT BECAME WHAT IT IS

1968-07
Donnybrooke opens with a drag race on the main straight

1968-08
First SCCA road race at Donnybrooke

1969
NHRA divisional drag racing begins

1973
Jerry Hansen buys the track and renames it Brainerd International Raceway

1982
First NHRA national event: Quaker State NorthStar Nationals

1994
Sports Resorts International (Donald Williamson) acquires the facility

2005-08-13
Tony Schumacher's 337.58 mph Top Fuel run

2006-07
Sold to BIR Holdings LLC (Jed and Kristi Copham)

2008
2.5-mile Competition Road Course added

2018-08
Fiftieth season

2018-11-11
Jed Copham dies

2020 · canceled
National event postponed and not rescheduled; divisional cancelled

2025-08-14 · completed
Lucas Oil NHRA Nationals, August 14–17

2025-12-16
NHRA reports new staffing and brand identity under owner Kristi Copham

2026-08-20 · announced
NHRA Brainerd Nationals, August 20–23

Events in the world, each from a cited source. Reports, our observations and corrections are kept as separate layers in the workspace.

> The national event has carried sponsor titles over time: NorthStar Nationals (1982; VisionAire NorthStar Nationals by 1998), Colonel's Truck Accessories Nationals (2000), and Lucas Oil NHRA Nationals (by 2005, continuing through 2025); NHRA's 2026 billing is the Brainerd Nationals.
>
> CORROBORATED [4] [7] [8] [9] [10]
>
> Limits: The first year of each title was not established in every case.

> Sports Resorts International (Donald Williamson) owned the facility from 1994 and sold it in July 2006 to BIR Holdings LLC, held by Jed and Kristi Copham. Jed Copham died in November 2018; NHRA described Kristi Copham as owner in December 2025.
>
> CORROBORATED [11] [12] [13]
>
> Limits: News and press, not a title search. No later transfer was found as of the access date.

Ownership has passed through documented eras since 1994, most recently a family ownership since 2006. The years between 1973 and 1994 are not yet traced in public sources; that gap is carried into the open questions at the end of the study.

Brainerd's reputation for speed is part of how racers and fans speak about it. Late-summer northern air has produced record runs here, including the fastest speed in the sport in 2005. Speeds reported in the moment are not certified records, and partner sources disagree slightly about 2025, so the figures are shown with their sources.

> Tony Schumacher ran 337.58 mph (4.446 s) in Top Fuel at Brainerd on August 13, 2005, then the fastest speed in the sport.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [9]
>
> Limits: The report notes a backup run was required for national-record certification; certification was not confirmed.

> The operator lists a 341.25 mph Top Fuel track speed and a 6.521 s Pro Stock elapsed-time record from August 2025; a later NHRA article gives 340.82 mph.
>
> SOURCES DISAGREE [14]
>
> Limits: Contemporary reporting suggests 340.82 was a Saturday run and 341.25 came later; not confirmed against official timing sheets.

> The 2020 national event was postponed and then not rescheduled during the pandemic season; the divisional event was cancelled.
>
> VERIFIED [15] [16]
>
> Limits: None material.

03

One Property, Many Communities

Three racing surfaces share one footprint. The Competition Road Course added in 2008 means road racing no longer has to use the drag straight. That physical fact has a human consequence: different racing communities — drag racers, sports-car clubs, motorcycle road racers, drifters, car-culture gatherings — can each make the property theirs on different weekends, and sometimes on the same one.

> The dragstrip is a quarter mile (1,320 ft) with more than a half-mile of shutdown, laid on the mile-long front straight of the original road course; drag racing there dates to 1968–69.
>
> VERIFIED [17] [6]
>
> Limits: Surface composition is not stated on the official page.

> Two road courses: the original 3.1-mile, 10-turn Donnybrooke course (1968) and the 2.5-mile, 13-turn Competition Road Course (added 2008), which lets road racing run separately from the dragstrip.
>
> VERIFIED [18] [19] (disagrees)
>
> Limits: A tourism page states 12 turns for the Competition course; the operator's figure is used and the conflict is recorded.

The 2026 calendar shows that use. It runs from mid-April drifting to an October drift weekend, with superbike, club road-racing and car-culture weekends between, and peaks in a two-week August stretch: a divisional doubleheader, then the national event.

THE 2026 SEASON BY TYPE OF USE



Announced dates from the operator's live schedule, accessed October 26, 2026. Announced is not the same as held. Track days are not shown.

> Announced for 2026: NHRA Brainerd Nationals August 20–23, preceded by a Lucas Oil divisional doubleheader August 13–16, with 'Mega Week' camping August 12–24.
>
> VERIFIED [10]
>
> Limits: Announced dates as of the access date; whether events ran as scheduled is outside this record.

> The 2026 calendar also lists drifting (April 17–19, October 9–11), CRA Superbike weekends (May 8–10, June 12–14, July 3–5, September 4–6), SCCA road racing (May 22–24, July 17–19, August 29–30), car-culture weekends (Octane Autofest June 5–7 and September 11–13; Street Car Showdown May 22–24; Show-N-Go July 3–5; Street Car Takeover July 10–11; Muscle Car Shootout September 4–6), plus track days.
>
> VERIFIED [10]
>
> Limits: Track-day and test dates were not exhaustively enumerated.

> Because its road courses can run apart from the dragstrip, the property is structured to host several distinct racing communities across a season, not one audience.
>
> INFERRED [10]
>
> Limits: Shows what the venue can hold; how far the communities overlap in people is not measured.

Each of these communities uses the place differently. A club road-race weekend fills the paddock with competitors and crews. A car-culture weekend combines show areas, drag passes and drifting, so spectators and participants overlap. The Nationals fill every part of the property at once. The study does not yet know how far these communities overlap in their people; it does establish that the venue is built to hold all of them.

> Published grandstand seating figures disagree: about 25,000 (local directory) and 20,000 (reference source). No operator-certified figure was found.
>
> SOURCES DISAGREE [20] [3] (disagrees)
>
> Limits: Seats are not attendance; infield, camping and standing areas are excluded.

Seats are not attendance. A seating figure says nothing about how many people are on the property, in the infield, or in the campgrounds.

04

Staying, Not Only Attending

The single most distinctive structural fact about Brainerd is that people stay. The operator opens on-site camping for thirteen nights around the two August events. A reserved campground, more than two hundred acres of open camping and a family area turn a race into a residence of a week or more.

> On-site camping includes a reserved full-service campground (stated as 170 sites on the lodging page and 164 on the facilities page), more than 200 acres of open camping without designated sites, a restricted family area during the Nationals, and 12 condominiums.
>
> SOURCES DISAGREE [21] [22] (disagrees)
>
> Limits: The two pages disagree and neither is dated. No separate site count for the Zoo was found. Capacity is not occupancy.

> The August programme and the open camping together make the national event a stay of up to thirteen nights; the venue is built for extended, not single-day, participation.
>
> INFERRED [10]
>
> Limits: Describes the structure; the share of attendees who camp and their nights stayed are not measured.

The open campground has a name and a culture of its own. The Zoo has been part of the Nationals for more than thirty years. Local reporting describes living-room setups built from garage-sale furniture, homemade vehicles driven between sites, and campers who return to the same spot year after year. The operator's CFO described people lining up at the gate weeks before it opens. Racers speak of going out to the campground to meet the fans, and one champion's supporters have kept a corner of it under his name.

> The Zoo is the venue's named open campground associated with the Nationals and its party culture; the operator's wording sets the 170 reserved sites beside it, while the lodging page assigns 170 to the VIP campground.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [14] [21]
>
> Limits: The Zoo's own capacity is not published; the 170 figure should not be read as the Zoo's size.

> Local reporting from the 2024 Nationals describes The Zoo as a campground community: furniture living rooms, homemade vehicles driven between sites, and a camper who had kept the same spot since 2011.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [23]
>
> Limits: Describes individuals and observed customs; says nothing about how many campers share them.

> In 2024 the operator's CFO said The Zoo had been a staple for over 30 years, described it as about 300 acres of open camping, and said people line up at the gate up to three weeks before camping opens.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [24]
>
> Limits: An operator statement. The 300-acre figure differs from the operator's 'more than 200 acres' elsewhere; both are kept.

> Racers describe visiting the campground to meet fans; a section of The Zoo known as 'Capps Corner' has been filled with supporters of Funny Car driver Ron Capps.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [25] [24]
>
> Limits: Accounts from drivers and the series; not a measure of how often racers and fans meet.

> The operator states that every Nationals ticket is a pit pass, giving spectators access to the teams' work areas.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [14]
>
> Limits: Describes the offer, not how many use it.

Put together, these accounts describe a relationship that is larger than spectating: a temporary community that re-forms every August around a race,

with its own geography, customs and returning members. The venue's own description — families who plan their year around it, children who grow up inside the gates and come back with their own — is an operator's account, not a measurement, but it agrees with what independent reporters found on the ground.

> The operator describes the Nationals as a tradition to which fans return and around which families plan their year, with children who grow up attending and return as parents.
>
> REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [14] [26]
>
> Limits: An operator's self-description, not a measurement of repeat attendance.

> Independent reporting, racer accounts and the operator's own description agree that the August campground re-forms each year as a community with returning members; its prevalence is not measured.
>
> INFERRED [23] [24] [14]
>
> Limits: Agreement among accounts is not a count of returning people.

What is not yet measured is how widespread these patterns are: how many people camp, how many nights they stay, and how many return. Those are the measurements that would turn a recognizable culture into a known scale. The calculator below shows how to reason about occupancy without inventing it; every input is an assumption you can change, and the result is a scenario, not evidence.

SCENARIO — NOT EVIDENCE

Full-service sites	Assumed occupancy %	Nights

sites (170) × assumed occupancy (50%) × nights (4)

340 occupied campsite-nights, if these assumptions held

A conditional calculation. The default site count is the operator's stated reserved-campground figure (another operator page says 164). Occupancy and nights are assumptions; nothing here says how many sites were used.

05

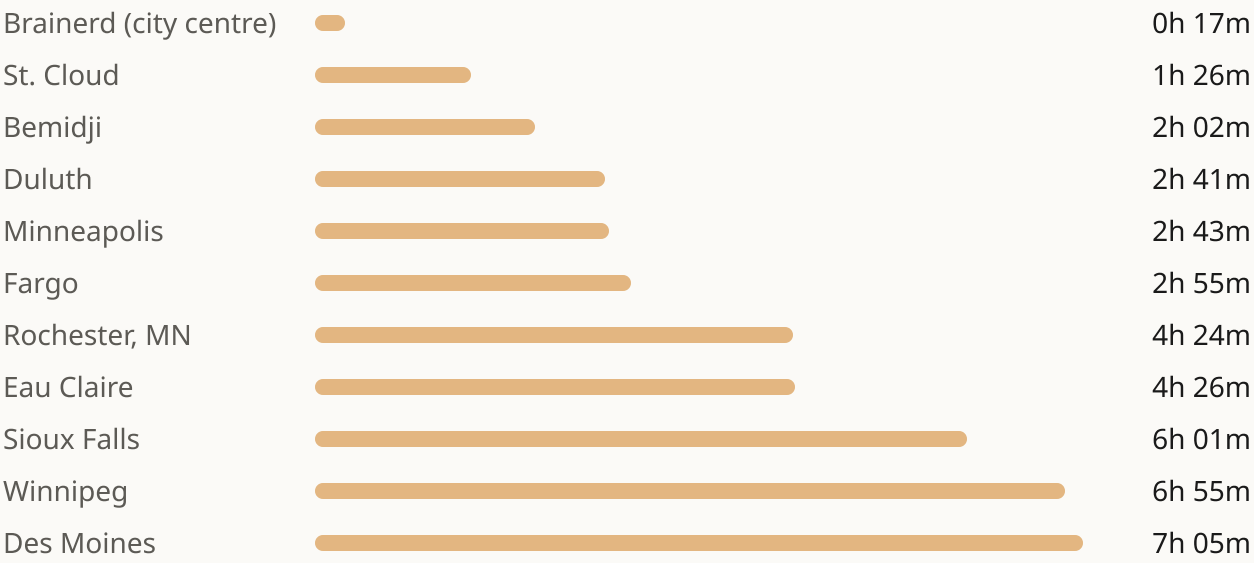
Where It Sits

The raceway belongs to a lake-resort region whose visitor economy runs all year: summer lakes and cabins, winter ice fishing and snowmobiling. The populations nearby are small. The large populations that can reach it live hours away, along a small number of highways that converge on Brainerd–Baxter.

> Crow Wing County had about 67,700 residents (ACS 2020–2024; 66,123 at the 2020 Census), the city of Brainerd about 14,500 and Baxter about 9,000. The Minneapolis–St. Paul metro area had about 3.7 million.
>
> VERIFIED [27] [28]
>
> Limits: These are residents. They say nothing about who attends the raceway.

> From the Twin Cities the published route runs I-94 to US-10 and north on MN-371 through Baxter; from Fargo and Duluth, US-10, MN-210 and MN-371 converge on Brainerd–Baxter.
>
> VERIFIED [2] [29]
>
> Limits: Describes routes, not traffic or actual travel.

HOW FAR IT IS — REACH, NOT ATTENDANCE



Free-flow car routes on OpenStreetMap roads to the raceway's reference point, computed October 26, 2026. No traffic, event congestion or gate queues. These times say who could come, not who did.

> By free-flow road routing the raceway is about 1½ hours from St. Cloud, about 2¾ hours from Minneapolis and Duluth, and about 3 hours from Fargo.
>
> OUR CALCULATION [29]
>
> Limits: Reach, not draw: says who could come, not who did. No traffic or event congestion.

> With its largest reachable population hours away and multiday camping on site, attending from beyond the county is structurally a trip, making overnight stays a likely form of participation.
>
> INFERRED [29] [27]
>
> Limits: A structural likelihood, not evidence of visitor origins or nights stayed.

That geography shapes the kind of participation that is possible. For most people outside the county, coming to Brainerd is a trip, not an errand; and a multiday event with on-site camping is built for exactly that kind of trip. Three patterns are possible at once: a regional tradition among people within a few hours, a destination draw from farther away, and local day visits. Measured visitor origins — ticket postcodes or a consented survey — would show which of these patterns actually characterize the crowd, and in what proportion.

> No public evidence of where Brainerd attendees live or travel from was found.
>
> NOT ESTABLISHED
>
> Limits: Ticket ZIP data or surveys may exist privately.

Drive-time reach describes who could come. It is not evidence of who does. The Brainerd Lakes area is also an informal name; the county, the two cities, Explore Minnesota's Central region and the Twin Cities metro are different geographies with different people in them.

WHO LIVES AROUND THE RACEWAY — RESIDENTS, NOT ATTENDEES

	Brainerd city	Baxter city	Crow Wing County	Minneapolis–St. Paul metro	Minnesota
Population	14,468	8,966	67,686	3,713,668	5,739,445
Median age	35.1	43.1	45.7	38	38.8
Median household income	$56,111	$70,688	$72,589	$99,833	$89,062
Bachelor's or higher (25+)	20.3%	38.3%	29.3%	45.4%	39.4%
Average household size	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.5	2.4

American Community Survey 2020–2024 five-year estimates. Each column is a different geography; none of them describes raceway visitors.

These are residents, not attendees. Assigning county or metro demographics to the people at the raceway would be a category error.

06

Counting the Crowd

Brainerd has drawn large crowds since its first national event, which the operator says brought more than 50,000 people. The figures in circulation since then are real statements, but each counts something different: a historical crowd, a four-day total that mixes fans with crews and vendors, gate entries for a weekend, daily counts from an older study. Read together they establish that the Nationals are a large, multiday gathering. They cannot be added, compared, or turned into a count of distinct people.

FOUR CROWD FIGURES, FOUR DIFFERENT THINGS

50,000
REPORTED FIGURE
1982 · people at an event
Operator historical claim; method unstated

30,000–40,000
MODELED ESTIMATE
c. 2005, per day · people at an event
Abstract only; method not inspected

100,000
REPORTED FIGURE
2019 · gate entries
Marketing director's statement; re-entry not specified

Each figure is shown with what it counts. They cannot be added together, averaged or compared as a trend.

> In 2018 a regional broadcaster reported an estimate of more than 100,000 people over four days, counting fans together with officials, vendors and teams.

REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [30]

Limits: Mixes participant types; a four-day total that may count the same person each day; no method published.

> In 2019 the venue's marketing director said about 100,000 came through the gates over the Nationals weekend.

REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [31]

Limits: Gate entries, not unique people; re-entry and multi-day counting not specified.

A 2005 University of Minnesota economic-impact report's abstract gives 30,000–40,000 attendees per day over three days.

REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [32]

Limits: Full method and tables were not readable; daily counts cannot be summed into unique visitors.

No audited, current count of unique attendees, ticket sales, scans, repeat participation or dwell time for any Brainerd event was found in public sources.

NOT ESTABLISHED

Limits: These figures may exist privately with the operator or NHRA.

07

The Raceway and the Region's Economy

Hotels, resorts, restaurants, fuel and retail cluster along MN-371 through Baxter and Brainerd — the same road that leads to the raceway. Crow Wing County's visitor economy is substantial and well measured. The August race fortnight falls inside the lake region's summer season, so the raceway and the wider destination share roads, beds and businesses at the same time of year.

The Brainerd–Baxter tourism bureau lists about ten hotel and motel properties in the two cities, three with waterparks; lakes-area resorts and campgrounds are outside that count.

REPORTED, NOT CONFIRMED [33]

Limits: Direct page blocked; no room counts, occupancy or rates; proximity is not evidence of race-weekend stays.

CROW WING COUNTY'S VISITOR ECONOMY, 2024 — NOT THE RACEWAY'S SHARE

$507.7M Visitor-economy total impact MODELED ESTIMATE	3,952 Jobs supported by visitor economy MODELED ESTIMATE
4,677 Leisure & hospitality employment REPORTED FIGURE	$355.1M Leisure & hospitality gross sales REPORTED FIGURE

Explore Minnesota and state employment data. County-wide, all visitor purposes. None of this is attributable to the raceway from the available evidence.

> Explore Minnesota models Crow Wing County's 2024 visitor economy at about $507.7 million in total impact and 3,952 supported jobs; leisure and hospitality employed 4,677 there in 2024 with $355.1 million in gross sales.
>
> MODELED [34] [35]
>
> Limits: County-wide and all-purpose; none of it is attributable to the raceway from this evidence.

> The August race fortnight falls within the lake region's summer season along the same corridor as its lodging and retail, so raceway activity and the wider destination economy share place and time; their separate sizes are not established.
>
> INFERRED [34]
>
> Limits: Co-location is not attribution; no spending caused by the event is established.

Four different relationships are possible between a race and its region: activity that happens near the venue, activity during event weeks, spending by raceway visitors, and spending that would not have happened without the event. Different forms of participation create different relationships: a camper who stays twelve nights on site, a family in a lake resort, a day visitor from St.

Cloud. The study can describe the setting of those relationships; their size needs lodging, spending and origin evidence matched to event dates.

> A local impact of about $10 million for the Nationals is repeated in regional news, traced to an older University of Minnesota Tourism Center study.
>
> NOT ESTABLISHED [30] [32]
>
> Limits: Method unknown to us; 2005-era dollars; not a current figure.

08

What Makes Brainerd Distinct

Brainerd's distinctiveness is a configuration, not a single feature. It was founded for road racing and grew into a drag venue, and since 2008 its road course can run apart from the dragstrip, so many racing communities share one property across a season. It is one of the longest-running stops on the NHRA national tour. Its August event is wrapped in nearly two weeks of on-site camping with a named culture that racers, reporters and the operator all recognize. And it sits hours from its largest reachable population, inside a lake-resort region, so coming is a trip and staying is natural.

> Brainerd's documented configuration — a road-racing origin, separate road and drag surfaces, four decades on the NHRA tour, a fortnight of on-site camping with a named culture, and a lake-region setting hours from its cities — is distinctive as a combination; no superiority over other venues is claimed.
>
> INFERRED
>
> Limits: Distinctive is not better; a comparison would need evidence from other venues.

Whether this configuration is a competitive advantage over other venues would need comparative attendance, origin and experience evidence. The

study records it as what Brainerd is, and leaves the ranking to evidence that can support one.

09

What the Study Recognizes

Brainerd International Raceway is a place where people stay. Its history made it two kinds of racetrack on one piece of ground; its 2008 road course let many racing communities share it across a season; its August fortnight turns a national race into a temporary community of campers who return year after year; and its distance from the cities, inside a lake region, makes coming here a trip rather than an outing.

The evidence establishes the venue's configuration, its founding and its documented ownership since 1994, more than four decades of national-event history, its 2026 programme, its camping structure and culture, and the populations, routes and visitor economy around it. About 3.7 million metro residents live within roughly three hours' drive.

The next layer of understanding is the scale of the relationships the study can already see: how many distinct people come, from where, for how many nights, how often they return, and what they spend in the region. Each is answerable, and each would change what the place means to the people who work with it.

WHERE SOURCES DISAGREE

Full-service campsite count open

A	B
A: 170 sites (operator lodging and Nationals pages)	B: 164 sites (operator facilities page)

Competition Road Course turns examined

A	B
A: 13 turns (operator)	B: 12 turns (Visit Brainerd & Baxter, 2025)

Grandstand seating open

A	B
A: About 25,000 (Brainerd.com)	B: 20,000 (Wikipedia)

2025 Top Fuel track speed examined

A	B
A: 341.25 mph (operator)	B: 340.82 mph (NHRA, October 2025)

Who owns the Zoo's 170 resolved with lineage

A	B
A: Preliminary report: the Zoo has 170+ reserved sites	B: Operator lodging page: 170 sites in the VIP campground

Contradictions are kept, not silently reconciled.

FROM UNDERSTANDING TO INQUIRY

What might this mean from your perspective?

The study above is the same for everyone who reads it. People meet it through different responsibilities, histories and authority, so what is worth investigating differs. Choose the perspective closest to yours. The findings do not change; the questions do.

Tourism & Destination Development

Draws on: §4 Staying, Not Only Attending · §5 Where It Sits · §7 The Raceway and the Region's Economy

What the study recognizes. The August fortnight is a multiday event with thirteen nights of on-site camping, held hours from the largest population that can reach it, inside a lake region whose summer season is already the core of its visitor economy. Coming is a trip; staying is built in.

The principal possibility. The raceway may function as an anchor that brings overnight visitors who would not otherwise be in the region that week, or as one more reason for people already coming to the lakes.

The question. What would have to be true for the raceway to be recognized as a meaningful contributor to the region's destination economy?

- A meaningful share of attendees must come from beyond day-trip distance. Ticket postcodes or a survey would show whether Brainerd is a regional tradition, a destination draw, or both.
- Visitors must spend in the region, not only on site. That requires knowing how campers and off-site guests move between the raceway and Baxter, Brainerd and the lakes.

What deeper investigation could establish. Lodging and campground occupancy for the August fortnight against a non-event August week. A consented origin and itinerary survey of campers and day visitors, designed with the operator. The full 2005 University of Minnesota study and its method, as the only raceway-specific economic baseline.

Raceway Operations

Draws on: §3 One Property, Many Communities · §4 Staying, Not Only Attending · §2 How It Became What It Is

What the study recognizes. Since 2008 the property can hold several racing communities on separate surfaces across a season, from April drifting to October. In August a temporary community re-forms in the campground, with returning members, its own customs and racers who come out to meet it.

The principal possibility. The communities that use the venue on different weekends may overlap in their people more, or less, than the calendar suggests; either answer informs programming.

The question. What would have to be true for Brainerd to deepen the relationships participants already sustain with it across different events and seasons?

- The operator would need to know who returns: which communities repeat, across which events, and for how many years.
- What sustains the campground culture would need to be understood from the people inside it before anything around it changes.

What deeper investigation could establish. Repeat-participation records across event types, from ticketing and entry lists. Conversations with long-standing campers, competitors and crews, recorded with their consent. A settled, operator-certified figure for campsites and seating.

This perspective does not assume the operator's objectives. It names questions the operator may recognize as worth examining within its own responsibilities.

Sponsorship & Brand Partnerships

Draws on: §2 How It Became What It Is · §3 One Property, Many Communities · §4 Staying, Not Only Attending · §6 Counting the Crowd

What the study recognizes. Brainerd offers a national NHRA event with more than four decades of history, a ticket that is also a pit pass, a camping community where racers and fans meet, and other racing communities across the season. What it offers in scale is not yet measured: unique attendance, origins and repeat participation are unknown.

The principal possibility. A multiday, camping-based event may allow interaction that unfolds over days rather than a single pass by a display.

The question. What would have to be true for a brand's presence at Brainerd to create a meaningful relationship with participating motorsports audiences, rather than only place products in front of spectators?

- The brand's own objectives, products and audiences for the period must be stated by the brand. They cannot be inferred from this study.
- The relevant commercial rights must exist and be held by someone able to grant them. The study establishes none.

What deeper investigation could establish. Audience evidence the property can share: unique attendance, origins, camping and repeat participation. A rights inventory from the property and its sponsorship representatives. A small, measured activation design with an agreed way to learn from what happens.

Sponsorship expertise — rights, partners, commercial structure and relationships — belongs to the property and its sponsorship professionals. This study contributes research: investigating the place, testing assumptions and keeping what is learned. Activation and follow-through happen only when the relevant participants authorize them. Nothing here represents a brand, the venue or any agency.

Regional Business & Economic Development

Draws on: §7 The Raceway and the Region's Economy · §5 Where It Sits · §4 Staying, Not Only Attending

What the study recognizes. Lodging, food, fuel and retail cluster along MN-371, the road that leads to the raceway. The August fortnight falls within the lake region's summer season. Many campers stay on site for a week or more, while others stay in town or at lake resorts.

The principal possibility. Different businesses may have very different relationships with race weeks: a fuel stop and a lake resort are not touched the same way.

The question. What would have to be true for local businesses to understand their real relationship with race weeks?

- Businesses would need their own event-week records compared with non-event weeks.
- The movement of visitors between the raceway and town would need to be observed, not assumed.

What deeper investigation could establish. Point-of-sale or footfall comparisons from willing local businesses for event and non-event weeks. A transparent, current impact method, with the 2005 study as a reference point.

Motorsports Participation & Community

Draws on: §2 How It Became What It Is · §3 One Property, Many Communities · §4 Staying, Not Only Attending

What the study recognizes. Brainerd has carried road racing and drag racing since 1968 and the NHRA national event since 1982. Its campground has its own customs and returning members, and racers speak of the place as unusual on the tour for its contact with fans.

The principal possibility. The traditions people describe may be one of the venue's most valuable and most fragile assets.

The question. What would have to be true for the communities that race and camp here to keep what they value as the place changes?

- The accounts of the people who have kept these traditions would need to be heard in their own words, with their consent.
- Changes to the calendar, campground or access would need to be understood in terms of what those communities would lose or gain.

What deeper investigation could establish. An oral history of long-standing campers, racers and workers, kept with their permission. Archival photographs and reporting across the decades, to show how the experience has changed.

Continue the inquiry with your own question at mykairos.one/agency/brainerd#perspectives. This edition is complete without it.

WHAT HOLDS ACROSS EVERY PERSPECTIVE

— The evidence is the same for every reader. No perspective rewrites a finding.

— A claim never says more than its evidence allows.

— Commercial interest gives no one authority over what the place means.

— Being able to do something is not permission to do it. Decisions stay with the people who hold them.

— Every possibility here can be changed by what is found next, and the history of the study stays open to inspection.

— The study carries information about Brainerd; it does not own the place or speak for anyone in it.

10

Sources, Definitions and Method

Every finding links to the sources it rests on, with access dates. The evidence workspace holds the whole ledger: sources, claims with their status and evidence, contradictions, research actions including those that failed, and the history of revisions. Claims cannot be edited or deleted. A change of status is recorded with what was believed and why it changed. Publication version 1 of this study remains in the record unchanged.

Relationships this study recognizes between findings are recorded as their own analytical claims, marked inferred, and linked to the findings they draw on. A later finding can change one of them without erasing the others.

Two supplied documents informed the work. A commercial location-analytics report for a Texas venue was used to understand what kinds of questions venue studies ask; none of its figures appear here, and it is not evidence about Brainerd. A preliminary Brainerd draft was treated as a set of claims to test: its verified statements were kept, its errors superseded with their history, and its illustrative figures withdrawn.

Status words used in this study: verified (confirmed by an authoritative source), corroborated (independent sources agree), reported (stated by a source, not confirmed), calculated (our reproducible computation), modeled (an estimate from a stated model), inferred (a relationship this study draws between findings), contested (sources disagree), unresolved (not established), superseded (replaced, history kept).

No authoritative property boundary was obtained. The 2006 sale announcement describes a facility of about 600 acres; no parcel geometry is drawn in this study.

NOT ESTABLISHED [11]

Limits: A legal parcel, the racing facility, an event access area and an analytics geofence are four different boundaries; none is mapped here.

How many distinct people attend the Nationals?

Why it matters: Every capacity, economic or sponsorship reading depends on it.

What would answer it: Ticket and scan data with de-duplication, from the operator or NHRA.

Where do attendees live?

Why it matters: Separates a regional tradition from a destination draw.

What would answer it: Ticket postcodes or a consented on-site survey.

How many camp, for how many nights, and how many return?

Why it matters: Camping is the venue's most distinctive structure.

What would answer it: Campground reservation and occupancy records across several years.

What share of county lodging in August is raceway-driven?

Why it matters: Distinguishes activity near the event from activity caused by it.

What would answer it: Lodging-tax or occupancy series against event dates, with a comparison year.

What did the 2005 impact study actually measure?

Why it matters: It is the only raceway-specific economic figure in circulation.

What would answer it: The full University of Minnesota report and its method.

Who owned the track between 1973 and 1994?

Why it matters: A gap in the chain of how the place became what it is.

What would answer it: County records or contemporary press.

Where exactly is the property boundary?

Why it matters: A boundary is the frame for every later measurement.

What would answer it: Crow Wing County parcel data.

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Independent research by the Kairos Agency. No endorsement, retention or authorization by the raceway, NHRA, any promoter, sponsor or tourism organization is stated or implied.