

January 2025

Wisconsin Collective Bargaining Ruling

A Dane County judge restored collective bargaining rights for public employees in Wisconsin by overturning portions of 2011 Act 10, a law that reformed public sector collective bargaining laws. Since its enactment, Act 10 has saved taxpayers billions of dollars and provided state and local governments with greater budget flexibility. The ruling is expected to become a focal point of the upcoming Wisconsin Supreme Court election in April. Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce released a statement seeking an appeal of the ruling and a reinstatement of Act 10.

Oshkosh Residential Development

City of Oshkosh Common Council approved the acquisition of an additional 5.5 acres of vacant property in the 3400 Block of North Jackson Street for the development of a new residential subdivision for workforce housing. The city previously purchased an adjacent 5-acre parcel which would connect with the east end of Christian Drive and Farmington Avenue to create 21 single-family lots. While the city's community development department has initiated this development, the city is uncertain how far it will drive the final subdivision in the event a private developer might take over.

New Oshkosh City Manager

City of West Allis Administrator Rebecca Grill was selected as the next Oshkosh City Manager, replacing Mark Rohloff, who retired Jan. 3 following 16 years as chief executive for City of Oshkosh operations. Grill has been city administrator and city clerk in West Allis for the past 10 years. She previously worked for 17 years with the City of Milwaukee in the clerk's office. She has an MBA from Concordia University with an emphasis in finance. Grill expects to relocate to Oshkosh and begin her new position on Feb. 24.

New Restaurant at Oshkosh Marriott Waterfront

Oshkosh Marriott Waterfront Hotel at 1 N. Main St. opened its new restaurant, Anchor & Port, in the newly renovated first floor. The restaurant features an American-style menu with a bar and waterfront views from its dining tables.

Grand Oshkosh Expansion Plans

Oshkosh City Council approved a memorandum of understanding with The Grand Oshkosh Inc. for a potential expansion of the historic theater adding more reception and event space to the historic downtown theater. Known as "One Opera House Square," the proposed \$10 million capital project includes a new 2-story addition and main entrance; renovations to the existing lobby, lounge and restrooms; real estate acquisition and development of a parking lot; among various other infrastructure, façade and decorative improvements. The city, which owns the facility, will provide half of the project cost – or nearly \$5 million – while The Grand Oshkosh Foundation will conduct a fundraising effort seeking \$5 million in pledges. The project could begin by 2026.

February 2025

City Council Approves Residential Lots

City of Oshkosh Common Council approved a plat for 18 single-family residential development lots on the 2.8-acre site of the former Washington Elementary School. The city purchased the defunct property from the school district in September. The lots – which range from 5,500 square feet to nearly 9,800

square feet in size – will be developed by the city with utility laterals. Nine of the parcels will be sold to Habitat for Humanity, while the remaining nine parcels will have homes constructed by a city-contracted builder during 2025 and 2026. Residents must meet certain income qualifications to purchase the owner-occupied homes.

OASD Referendum

Oshkosh Area School District set an April 1 public referendum for \$198 million building plan across the district that would primarily construct a new middle school at the site of the existing Jacob Shapiro Elementary School. The plan also includes additions and renovations at Carl Traeger, Franklin and Oakwood elementary schools; a conversion of Perry Tipler Middle School into a pre-kindergarten center and recreation department offices; an addition and renovations for an auditorium at North High School; and various smaller districtwide site improvements.

Stormwater Utility Rates Increase

Rates for the City of Oshkosh stormwater utility increased by 2.5 percent in January, from \$19.81 for every equivalent run-off unit (ERU) to \$20.32 per ERU. Every property owner in Oshkosh – including those exempt from paying property taxes – are assessed a monthly fee by the city's stormwater utility. For non-residential properties such as commercial and industrial real estate, the number of ERUs on a property is determined by dividing the impervious area of the parcel – most often the building footprint, parking lot and sidewalks – by 2,817 square feet. The increased revenues are expected to fund the current detention basin project for the Sawyer Creek Watershed.

March 2025

Tru by Hilton

Tru by Hilton opened its new 4-story, 90-room hotel at 1810 Oshkosh Avenue. The hotel's list of amenities include a heated indoor pool, fitness center, electric vehicle charging, and its Tru Game Room.

New Restaurant on Oregon Street

ChangMai Thai Deli/BBQ opened for business in the former Red's Pizza location at 1123 Oregon Street. Lee and Mai Vang purchased the property in late 2024 and renovated the interior to reflect a traditional Thai bistro and deli.

Northeast Wisconsin Business Presence at Site Selector Event

Oshkosh Chamber Economic Development Director Sean Fitzgerald joined a Northeast Wisconsin site selector mission trip to Atlanta on February 18th to promote the New North region's attributes to some of the industry's leading professionals identifying locations for their clients to build their next manufacturing facility, office or retail space.

Collaborating partners included Envision Greater Fond du Lac, Greater Green Bay Chamber, Sheboygan County Economic Development Corp., Appleton International Airport, Green Bay Austin Straubel International Airport and Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. The group was accompanied by Wendy Harris of Wisconsin BioForward, Inc. and Adam E. Rupp of WiLL | Wisconsin Lighting Lab."

April 2025

Housing Development

Developers for White Label Lofts submitted plans to the city to convert the properties at 913 and 923 South Main Street into a 47-unit apartment complex. The \$15 million project seeks to renovate the 3-story building at 913 S. Main, which was constructed in 1895, and will raze the existing office building at 923 S. Main in order to build a 4-story apartment building with covered parking on the first level. The two buildings will be connected as part of the development proposal. The project is being undertaken by Wisconsin Redevelopment and Titan Properties.

Oshkosh Defense Receives Order from U.S. Army

Oshkosh Defense received a \$95 million order in early April from U.S. Army Contracting Command for its autonomy-ready “Palletized Load System” (PLS) A2. The unique product offers advanced driver assistance and autonomy-ready technologies to improve soldier safety and broaden battlefield awareness. Production launch of the PLS A2 will occur this year.

Housing Development Delayed

A 101-unit multi-family housing proposal on a 1.36-acre site on the 700 Block of South Main Street stalled after the City of Oshkosh Redevelopment Authority denied the developer’s request to extend its option to purchase the property. Known as The Meridian, the estimated \$32 million development from Milwaukee-based Mellenium LLC included 17 townhomes and 82 apartment units in a 5-story building with ground floor commercial space. The project was supposed to begin construction this summer but has been delayed as the developer seeks additional equity investment.

May 2025

Passport Labs Digital Parking System

The City of Oshkosh adopted the Passport Labs digital parking system in April which allows drivers to apply and purchase permits online while linking them virtually to license plates. Business owners can issue parking codes to customers for complimentary short-term parking, while users can pay or appeal citations online at <https://oshkoshwi.rmcpay.com/>. The pricing structure for city-owned parking lots is \$3 for a daily pass, \$30 for a monthly pass, and \$360 for an annual pass. Daily paper permits are no longer being sold but current green daily paper permits remain valid until Aug. 31.

Two New Tommy’s Express Car Wash Facilities

Two new Tommy’s Express Car Wash facilities are under development in the Oshkosh area. The first location under construction is at 2100 Omro Road in the Town of Algoma, on the site of the former Westgate Plaza retail center. That car wash is expected to open in early fall. The second is on the site of the former Applebee’s Grill at 1700 S. Koeller Street. Construction on that car wash will begin later in 2025.

June 2025

Leeco Steel Expansion

Leeco Steel is planning a 78,000-sq. ft. expansion to its existing 75,000-sq. ft. steel cutting facility in Oshkosh's Southwest Industrial Park. The city council approved a purchase offer from Leeco to acquire the 9.5-acre parcel immediately east of its existing facility. The total expansion project includes a more than \$20 million investment in the property, new building construction, the expansion of rail spurs on its property, and new overhead cranes and plasma-cutting equipment. The expansion could provide for an additional 10 to 20 production jobs in Oshkosh. Construction of the expansion is expected to begin in early 2026 and be complete by fall of next year.

2025 Best Cities for New College Grads

Oshkosh ranked #8 on the 2025 Best Cities for New College Grads list released by Checkr, an online data analytics background check platform. The list gathered data from new college graduates ages 20 to 27 years and measures a community's unemployment rate; labor force participation rate; income-to-rent ratio; percent of renters paying less than 30% of income in rent; and real personal income, among a handful of other quality of life metrics. Oshkosh ranked #4 overall for its employment rank. Topping the list was Iowa City at #1; Lincoln, Neb. at #2; Columbia, Mo., at #3; Cape Girardeau, Mo. at #4; and Kalamazoo, Mich. at #5. Other Wisconsin cities to make the list included Madison at #14; La Crosse at #25; Eau Claire at #28; Fond du Lac at #29; Sheboygan at #34; Green Bay at #38; Milwaukee at #52; Appleton at #59; and Racine at #68.

State Highway 91 Updates

State Highway 91 in Winnebago County is closed for six weeks until early July to accommodate a \$9.1 million improvement project. The project scope includes 14.6 miles of roadway from the intersection with State Highway 44 in Oshkosh west to County Road M to replace nearly 30 culverts. Traffic will be re-routed on STH 44 and County M during this time. Additional improvements include new asphalt pavement, widening the paved shoulders, and installing centerline and shoulder rumble strips.

July 2025

Oshkosh Corporation Renamed Defense Segment

Oshkosh Corporation renamed its Defense segment and now identifies as its Transport segment. The company also hired Steve Nordlund as executive vice president and president of the Transport segment. Nordlund has more than 25 years of leadership experience in the aerospace, defense and mobility industries, including senior roles at Boeing where he drove cutting-edge R&D initiatives supporting advanced military technologies.

New Construction-OSMS

Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Specialists is constructing a 27,000-sq. ft. acute-care walk-in clinic at 200 South Oakwood Road in Oshkosh. The clinic is scheduled to open in spring 2026, and will offer orthopedic, sports medicine, rheumatology and pain management services. The clinic will feature 20 patient exam rooms, X-ray and MRI technology, an on-site lab, along with infusion suites for treating rheumatic disease and other conditions. The facility will handle simple outpatient procedures and will offer physical and occupational therapy.

Housing Project

The proposed 49-unit housing project White Label Lofts was awarded a federal affordable housing tax credit from Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority valued at \$1,067,948. The proposed project on the 900 Block of South Main Street would be developed by Wisconsin Redevelopment LLC and would include an adaptive re-use of the existing historic structures at 913 S. Main St. and include ground-level commercial space. The development proposal includes razing the existing office building at 923 S. Main and constructing a 4-story apartment building connected to 913 S. Main. The proposal has already received some preliminary approvals from the city's Plan Commission.

August 2025

A study compiled by University of Wisconsin Oshkosh for Experimental Aircraft Association indicated EAA's annual AirVenture Oshkosh fly-in convention contributes an economic impact of \$257 million for the Fox Valley region each year. The figure was based upon AirVenture 2024 totals, which included record attendance of 686,000. The study identified direct spending of \$95 million just in Oshkosh, reflecting an overall economic impact of \$117 to Oshkosh. The larger figure for the five-county region composed of Winnebago, Fond du Lac, Outagamie, Calumet and Brown includes a total of \$171 million in direct spending. The study also indicates total spending supports an estimated 2,092 full and part-time jobs in the region.

Two separate residential subdivision proposals for new single-family home development received preliminary plat approval from the City of Oshkosh Plan Commission in July. The first subdivision, Casey's Meadow South addition, includes 91 lots in an agricultural area near the intersection of W. 20th Avenue and Clairville Road on the city's far southwest side. It's an extension of the Casey's Meadow South subdivision which began in 2005 from Oshkosh developer Chet Wesenberg. The second proposal is for an addition to Island View Estates near the intersection Sherman and Sunnyview roads on the city's far northeast corner. This development from Zacher Enterprises of Oshkosh includes 21 single-family parcels, three undeveloped outlots and a larger parcel to be platted with an 18-unit condominium. It's an extension of an existing subdivision originally developed in 1995.

September 2025

Pangaea Development of Delafield received city council approval to construct 24 townhomes on various scattered residential parcels owned by the city's Redevelopment Authority on the 100 block of West Ninth Avenue. The nearly \$8 million project proposes two three-story, 10-unit townhouse structures – one located on W. Eighth Avenue and the other on Ninth Avenue – along with two separate two-unit buildings. Each unit will include two bedrooms, 1.5 bathrooms, and attached garage and a private patio.

The Winnebago County Board of Supervisors shelved conversation on a potential county sales tax after a motion to enact a half-percent tax failed to gain a second from the body, effectively killing the motion for further discussion and consideration. Winnebago remains one of only two of Wisconsin's 72 counties without a countywide sales tax, the other being Waukesha County.

October 2025

The Girbau Board of Directors were in Oshkosh last week to formally celebrate the ribbon cutting of its dryer assembly facility in Oshkosh's Southwest Industrial Park. This is Girbau's first North American manufacturing facility and the Oshkosh Chamber is proud to support the continued growth of Girbau in our community.

November 2025

NA

December 2025

Oshkosh Chamber Hires Josh Koteski as New Economic Development Director

The Oshkosh Chamber has hired Josh Koteski as its Economic Development Director. With 20 years of experience in business operations and management, Josh brings a practical, results-driven perspective to help organizations succeed. A life-long Oshkosh resident with strong ties to the community, he is committed to strengthening the city's economic landscape and fostering opportunities for local employers, residents, and entrepreneurs. In this role, Josh will lead efforts to attract and retain businesses, support workforce and talent initiatives, and champion strategic projects that drive sustainable growth. His collaborative approach and deep understanding of Oshkosh's unique strengths position him to make an immediate and meaningful impact as the Oshkosh Chamber continues its mission to advance economic vitality throughout the region.