

1. BACKGROUND

My name is Danny Garcia, J.D.; I'm a practicing attorney in the Oshkosh and surrounding areas, specializing in criminal, family, LL/tenant, employment, and discrimination law. I also represent a large percentage of the Spanish-speaking community in the area, since I am fluent in the language. In addition to my work, I serve the city on the Rental Housing Advisory Board, and have also been on the boards of several bar associations and nonprofits. In my spare time, I enjoy running, board games, and playing rugby with the Oshkosh Mighty Pigs.

2. CRITICAL ISSUES

If I had to identify, say, three areas that would benefit from greater consideration, these are the ones I would pick:

1. *Development of the Sawdust/S.Main area.* Honestly, I feel a little like cringing every time I'm headed south over the main street bridge. With the exception of the Menominee Nation arena and a scarce spattering of local businesses, there's very little there. The area is in deep need of economic development. I think it was originally the city's plan to foster such development using the arena, but it's been made clear that such stunts are not the kind of activity that promote investment in the area. And while one of my general policies would be the limitation of TIF districts, I would be in favor of using such districts to support *small, local* businesses that would want to revive the area. There's a lot of potential there; it just has to be carefully cultivated.

2. *The Oshkosh Avenue Area.* We just - more or less - handed over an enormous swath of park to Oshkosh Corp. to set up an office in the Oshkosh Ave. area. At this point, I'm not opposed to it. As my mother once said regarding questionable wallpaper: "you can replace it or embrace it." Oshkosh Corp. is one of Oshkosh's most valuable assets, so that industry isn't going anywhere. So what can we do to ensure that our land giveaway is as successful as possible for growing a diverse, successful Oshkosh? These are the questions that need asking.

3. *Responsible TIF use and development of local business.* This sort of ties into the prior two points, but I believe that the city needs to be more responsible in its use of TIF districts. These designations should not be used on large-scale projects, which could afford the expenditure regardless (and may even abuse the privilege and cost the city [looking at you, arena]). Rather, these districts should be used to support local businesses that will put money directly back into the Oshkosh Area.

Ok, I said three, but:

4. *Social Issues.* When I look over Oshkosh's municipal codes, we're actually surprisingly progressive with many of our policies! Whether it be discrimination, homelessness, etc., Oshkosh is working incredibly hard to ensure that all of its citizens are taken care of. That said, such efforts must be continual, and I think we should always be looking for more ways to promote inclusivity, diversity, and justice.

3. ECONOMIC GROWTH.

I believe I more-or-less covered this in my answer to the previous questions, but just in case, here it is again: I believe that there are several areas in Oshkosh that have the potential for great development. The Oshkosh Ave. area, the Sawdust district, etc. - all of these places are just waiting for the right people to revive the area. That said, I think that the *right* people are not large organizations or projects, but rather small businesses that will keep Oshkosh local, and will ensure that money is being pushed directly back into the Oshkosh economy. Does this mean that I wouldn't consider a large project being placed in either of those areas? Certainly not. But I would prefer Oshkosh to thrive on its own capacities and innovation, which I know it can.

4. TRANSPORTATION FEE

Sigh...

This issue has been talked to *death* amidst the council. And while there are certain proposals that I would favor over the current recommendation, at this point I favor any recommendation that just *gets it done*. And in all honesty, I don't think this kind of assessment is a terrible one. Does it mean that Walmart pays the same fee as the New Moon? Yes, unfortunately, and I wish that wasn't the case. I wish that we could find a way to assess exactly which roads were most traversed by Semis (which are the vehicles that do the real damage) and figure out which businesses should pay more based on that assessment. In fact, I believe this is something that was discussed, but shot down. But the point is, we have a proposed system, and while it may not always be entirely fair, it is very *simple*, and there's something to be said for that. With the low administrative costs of enforcing these fees, perhaps the city can use the money more productively.

5. SAWDUST DISTRICT

The plan at this point is mainly conceptual, so there isn't too much I can say other than the following:

I like that the area is somewhat modeled on Milwaukee's Third Ward. That ward in-and-of itself is a very successful area in Milwaukee, and I think the idea of creating a scenic, green, entertainment-focused area of the city is a wonderful idea (especially since it would be closer to the downtown).

I like that there's more proposed use of the waterfront. Lake Winnebago and Oshkosh Lakefront is a very valuable asset, and should definitely be used in development. I'm *concerned* that a train runs at that lakefront. I do not have a solution for this issue at present, other than rerouting the railway (a proposal which would be littered with complications), but this is something that needs to be considered.

I like the idea of an entertainment-focused district. BUT, as I've stated in my other responses, I think this development needs to be local. Unique. Oshkosh-specific. Otherwise it's bound to be gimmicky, and less likely to succeed.

6. STORM WATER

Obviously these costs are only going to continue rising in the future (this is an environmental problem; one Oshkosh cannot fix on its own). My idea for curtailing such costs then, revolve around careful city planning. Infrastructure needs to be constructed/updated so as to limit runoff. This will of course take a great deal of time, which is unfortunate, but I think it's the best approach to the problem.