

Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce

2023-24 Strategic Plan

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce is an independent and exclusive membership and business advocacy organization in the Oshkosh area. The Oshkosh Chamber actively works to promote and cultivate a thriving business climate while protecting and advancing the interest of its members and the community as a whole. The Oshkosh Chamber represents the Oshkosh area business community and works on its behalf and in conjunction with other community-based partners to provide a positive business environment and improve the community's quality of life. The Oshkosh Chamber is organized to enhance the economic well-being of its members addressed through a compelling strategic plan that is fueled exclusively by our membership. The Oshkosh Chamber's Strategic Plan aligns with its four pillars of Value Creation. They include: Economic Development; Education and Talent Development; Advocacy for Business and Industry; and Member Programs and Services.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide leadership and to serve and represent our members so their businesses and our community will prosper.

VISION STATEMENT

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce is recognized as the premier advocate and guardian for business and industry while respecting our community partners.

Strategic Priorities to Achieve our Mission

Economic Development

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce will be a leader in promoting the area's business attributes. We will ensure that a sound private sector driven economic development effort that works toward building an environment that is conducive to economic growth and expansion of business in Oshkosh is in place.

Economic Development

- **Strategic Objective 1: Accelerate Oshkosh Area Business Investment and Growth**
We will provide financial, consulting and/or data analysis services to advance the sustainability and growth of more than 100 new, existing, and prospective Oshkosh area business clients per year.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Provide direct consultative services including information, resource connections, data and services to 100 businesses annually.
2. Provide market information, data, and services to economic development inquiries.
3. Develop an efficient alternative to the Oshkosh Chamber's web-enabled building and sites database.
4. Provide financial resources to area businesses through the OAEDC Revolving Loan Fund while exploring to further capitalize the fund. Coordinate marketing, assist with loan applications, loan review committee meetings, loan documents, monitoring loan payments, monitor loan recipient financial status, monitor fund balance, and other reporting requirements for OAEDC.
5. Provide ongoing support, guidance, and communication with the OAEDC Revolving Loan Fund clients throughout the entire duration of the loans.
6. Work closely with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), Department of Administration (DOA), and other state and federal sources to provide support for Oshkosh area business projects.
7. Continue leasing open office space in the Chamber building as business incubator space/DAV support.
8. Conduct an annual economic development fund drive with the goal of raising a minimum of \$70,000.

- **Strategic Objective 2: Identify and Drive New Business Opportunities**
We will identify and provide support to key projects, local site opportunities and/or national prospects that further drive business investment and growth (Economic Development Advisory Council).

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Focus efforts of the Economic Development Advisory Council (EDAC) on a minimum of 4 key projects and locations to further position Oshkosh as a desirable place to do business and open opportunities for future business investment.
2. Provide support and assistance to existing and prospective Oshkosh area developers.
3. Organize semi-annual investor relations progress/update events.
4. Attend annual national site selection trade shows including the ICSC Global Real Estate event in May 2024 and the NEWREP Site Selector event in Atlanta in November 2023.
5. Coordinate the activities of the Amplify Oshkosh Digital Technology Consortium
 - Continue to refine and implement a long-term funding plan:

- Continue to implement the annual Investor Engagement Program (Platinum, Gold and Silver levels) and explore potential grant opportunities.
 - Coordinate Amplify IT Conference in April 2024.
 - Coordinate the Ideas Amplified bi-monthly speaker/networking series.
- **Strategic Objective 3: Further the Visibility and Positive Business Image of Oshkosh**
We will engage with local, regional and state economic development stakeholders to further develop the visibility and positive business image of Oshkosh within the State and the Region.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Maintain active membership and engagement in New North (18 County Northeast Wisconsin Economic Development group).
2. Maintain active membership and engagement in Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (NEWREP) (i.e., NEWREP Board membership).
3. Maintain active membership and engagement in the Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA).
4. Provide local and state economic development monthly updates to the Oshkosh Chamber marketing staff to publicize to the Chamber’s members or public.
5. Coordinate economic development activities with GOEDC as needed.
6. Participate in the EAA booth with other local partners.

Education and Talent Development

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce is the driver in aligning educational outcomes and workforce readiness of our future labor pool. We will assist area business in retaining, recruiting, and engaging a diverse and talented pool of employees. We understand the needs of the community and then educate and motivate potential leaders to commit themselves to address those needs through a variety of leadership roles. Employers are faced with two critical workforce development issues: the lack of a qualified workforce to meet their existing employment requirements (Skills Gap) and the shortage of people caused by a demographic shift. The education and talent development programs and support done within the Oshkosh Chamber is the lynch pin to creating partnerships and collaborative programming between Oshkosh education communities and area businesses. The Education and Talent Development department collaborates with the Oshkosh Area School District (OASD), Lourdes Academy, Valley Christian, UW-Oshkosh, Fox Valley Technical College, and regional associations and Oshkosh Chamber employers to create education and talent development programs that strengthen the existing workforce development system, open the lines of communication between education and business and address the critical workforce dilemmas faced by our community.

Education and Talent Development

- **Strategic Objective 1: Further Develop Community Leaders**
We will provide structured programs and opportunities to further develop community leaders.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Deliver Leadership Oshkosh Program with the goal of recruiting 40-43 students.
 - Facilitate and continue annual fundraiser and non-profit adjunct board component.
2. Deliver (re-launch) the Youth Leadership Program to begin in the Fall of 2023.
3. Provide support to the Propel Program. Work with Propel to investigate the concept of Propel becoming a program of the Oshkosh Chamber. If there is an agreement between Propel and the Oshkosh Chamber, develop an implementation plan to administer Propel as a Program of the Oshkosh Chamber.

- **Strategic Objective 2: Accelerate the Development of Our Local Workforce**
We will serve as a recognized and valued conduit between business and education in the development of workforce training and skills programs that enhance the quality of the local workforce.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Continue contractual partnership with the Oshkosh Area School District (OASD) to deliver career exploration programs and services.
2. Facilitate community initiatives for the development of middle school and high school students; (i.e., career expos; School-to-Work Program, youth apprenticeship, job shadows/conversations, company tours, soft skills training, and classroom presentations from business leaders).
3. Facilitate Academic and career planning, such as resume building, career round table discussions and college tours.
4. Provide Soft-skill training to all Oshkosh 8th graders.
5. Partner, recruit and orchestrate citywide 8th grade career/high school exploration fair.
6. Partner, recruit and orchestrate juniors in high school personal finance classes and structured career exploration tours with area employers.
7. Seek other funding opportunities from granting organizations and foundations to support talent and workforce development initiatives.

- **Strategic Objective 3: Accelerate the Development of our Existing Workforce and Contribute to the Recruitment, Expansion and Development of our Local Workforce**
We will contribute to and actively participate in local and regional human resource efforts to build and sustain the pipeline of new talent and growth to meet the needs of Oshkosh businesses.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Implement and facilitate the Adopt-a-School program by recruiting employer and community partners for public schools.
2. Develop, implement, and facilitate a Concierge Program with local businesses and organizations.
3. Develop, implement, and facilitate PIE (Partners in Education) program with representation from area employers, public and private education providers.
4. Collaborate with local, regional, and state organizations such as SHRM, Fox Valley Workforce Development Board (FVWDB), NEWMA, New North and others on initiatives designed to grow our existing workforce.
5. Co-sponsor area Job Fair(s).
6. Market and recruit employers interested in participating in fall and spring Interviewthons – where high school students interview for real jobs.

Member Programs and Services - Drive Member Value

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce will create value that will exceed member investment and ensure retention and continued growth through educational programming, networking opportunities and business advocacy & promotion, recognizing that businesses join chambers for a variety of reasons. We will continue to be a leader in economic development, talent and workforce development, and business advocacy. This will enable the Oshkosh Chamber to increase membership through services/programs, benefits, and educational programs.

Member Programs and Services

- **Strategic Objective 1: Build and Maintain Community Awareness of Business and Industry Events, Issues and Successes**

We will provide ongoing communications, relevant updates, and proactive outreach with membership to assure awareness of business and community interests.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Use the following communication tools to convey messaging to our membership and community:
 - Member Matters E-Newsletter
 - Member 2 Member
 - Chamber E-News
 - Oshkosh Chamber website
 - City Maps
 - Annual Report
 - Oshkosh Chamber webpage advertising
 - Social Media

- “It’s Newsworthy” with Bob Burnell
 - This Is Oshkosh
 - The Business News and Insight Magazine
2. Enhance the image of the Oshkosh Chamber within the community and among the membership:
- Develop and implement the Oshkosh Chamber’s public relations/marketing plan.
 - Hire a Membership Relations Director to oversee & implement the membership development program.
 - Complete the reconstruction of the Oshkosh Chamber website.
 - Complete the development of new sales and marketing material.
 - Publicize Oshkosh Chamber programs and events.
 - Continue to promote, support and/or co-sponsor community events.
 - Continue Service Contract with Waterfest, Inc.
 - Continue to use media avenues to promote the Oshkosh Chamber.
 - i. Oshkosh Herald
 - ii. Chamber Member communications including:
 - iii. Member 2 Member
 - iv. Member Matters
 - v. Chamber Happenings
 - vi. Chamber E-News
 - Continue to “co-link” the Oshkosh Chamber’s website to member’s sites.
 - Continue to implement and expand the Oshkosh Chamber’s social media strategy.
 - Continue Oshkosh Chamber page in the *The Business News*.
- **Strategic Objective 2: Enhance Member Business Knowledge**
We will develop and deliver timely education programs and workshops that meet the needs and interests of member organizations and their employees.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Deliver timely education Programs and Workshops:
 - HR Briefings with von Briesen & Roper s.c.
 - Annual Economic Outlook Breakfast
 - Quick Wins Marketing Workshop Series with Viral Solutions
 - Continue development of financial planning series with AEGIS
 - Complete development of EB-3international employee hiring series with KGreencard.
- **Strategic Objective 3: Foster Valued Connections and Networking Opportunities**
We will provide varied community networking events that create opportunities for relevant and valued connections among member organizations, industry peers and employees.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Provide program support to industry clusters (i.e., coordinate activities of the Amplify Oshkosh Information Technology Consortium, Propel).
2. Facilitate industry gatherings centered on specific business commonalities (i.e., Amplify IT Conference, Amplify Ideas Amplified Educational Events).
3. Continue to offer the following events/activities for membership:
 - Monthly Business After Hours
 - May and August Golf Outings
 - i. Oshkosh Chamber Golf Invitational (May)
 - ii. Oshkosh Chamber Golf Classic (August)
 - Annual Meeting in January 2024
 - i. Alberta Kimball Community Service Award
 - ii. Ambassador of the Year Award
 - iii. Distinguished Service Award
 - iv. Enterprise of the Year Award
 - v. Lynne Webster Leadership Award
 - vi. Outstanding Chamber Volunteer Award
 - vii. Propel Young Professional Award
 - viii. Small Business of the Year Award
 - OC Connection
 - Business Expo in March 2024
 - AM Oshkosh
 - Ribbon Cuttings
 - Using Oshkosh Chamber member links to their website as appropriate on website and social media.
 - Oshkosh Chamber Network Builder (Micronet)
 - Develop a Chamber ROI series.

Advocacy for Business and Industry - Be the Chamber of Influence

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce has a powerful voice that is used to influence both political and economic decisions on the local, state, and federal level. It is critically important for the organization to continue to be the voice of our local businesses to ensure that our local and state policies and regulations are beneficial to business everywhere and our membership base.

Advocacy

- **Strategic Objective 1: Advance Member and Community Business Interests**
We will advocate for the business interests of members and the Oshkosh area business community to assure business perspectives and inputs are represented, heard, and considered regarding current and proposed policies at the local, state, and federal levels.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Provide a unified voice for the interests and concerns of our members to ensure local and state policies and regulations reflect the perspectives of members, the business community, and our local economy.
2. Develop policy summaries, communicate with our members, and provide education on positions and issues that affect the business community and the local economy (i.e., Public Policy Agenda).
3. Serve as a fair and trusted conduit between our members, elected and appointed officials and governmental agencies.
4. Collaborate with other organizations to further the depth and breadth of the Chamber’s advocacy efforts and effectiveness (i.e., WMC, WEDA and US Chamber of Commerce).
5. Engage in business programs and events that provide awareness and education regarding business issues and interests.
 - WMC, WEDA and US Chamber Business Agenda program
 - Support and sponsor the Community Sounding Board
 - Co-Sponsor Business Day in the Capital
 - Coordinate State of the Community program
 - Sponsor Washington Fly-In Program
 - Continue to serve on the WMC Transportation Policy and Future Wisconsin Committees

- **Strategic Objective 2: Explore and Develop Policy Initiatives to Advance Local Business and Industry Investment**

We will identify, develop, and advocate for policy initiatives to advance local business investment.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Develop and promote the Oshkosh Chamber’s Plan for Prosperity (2022-24).
2. Continue proactive advocacy work through the Public Policy committee.
3. Coordinate monthly meetings of the Government Relations committee (members meet with representatives of local, state, and federal units of government).
4. Participate in the development of policy initiatives through WMC, WEDA and the US Chamber that drives business and industry investment.

- **Strategic Objective 3: Monitor and Respond to Legislative Policy Proposals and Regulatory Issues**

We will actively monitor proposed legislation and regulatory changes to increase awareness, provide communication and shape policy positions that serve the interests of members, the business community, and our local economy.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Maintain ongoing systems and consistent structure to ensure an informed Board of Directors and Membership as it relates to legislative policy proposals and regulatory issues.
2. Monitor pending state and federal legislation through the Public Policy Committee.
3. Sponsor informational forums:
 - State Assembly Forum/Debate District 54
 - Candidate forums for Oshkosh Mayor and City Council
4. Conduct Member Inputs:
 - Candidate questionnaires for City Council, School Board and County Board elections
 - Analysis of the Winnebago County operating budgets
5. Develop a monthly Legislative Update column in the Member Matters E-newsletter.
6. Develop and Distribute Annual Voter's Guide.

Demonstrate Organizational Excellence & Advance Our Community

A Chamber that operates at its maximum potential provides the greatest benefit to its members and employees. The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce will achieve operational excellence through the implementation of best business practices, enhanced financial stability and accountability to ensure future viability and an environment that promotes member engagement. Our community thrives on the success of business. To ensure our business leaders are successful, we will provide a roadmap to the resources available in the community. In addition, having a place to develop relationships is vital to the advancement of business as well as the community. The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce is the navigator and charts the course for developing leaders and connecting them to resources within the community.

Internal Infrastructure and Support

- **Strategic Objective 1: Provide Essential Organizational Infrastructure and Support Services**

We will achieve operational excellence through the implementation of best business practices, professional standards, and event services support for our organization and members.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Provide a first point of contact for the Oshkosh Chamber membership.
2. Manage the front desk, receive visitors and Chamber members by greeting, welcoming, directing and connecting them appropriately to staff.
3. Manage incoming phone calls while maintaining professional composure throughout interactions.
4. Provide quality meeting and conference facilities for events, Board meetings, members, and staff.
5. Provide exceptional support to members with reservations for special events and programs.

- **Strategic Objective 2: Maintain and Manage Member Contact Systems, Services and Inputs**

We will provide a professional infrastructure to manage and maintain member contact systems that provide ongoing updates and coordination of Chamber programs, solicit member input and participation in the development of programs, events and implementation of our Strategic Plans, Priorities and Objectives.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Implement conversion to a new membership/association management software system.
2. Reconstruct Oshkosh Chamber website.
3. Target young professionals to ensure committed and prepared leaders in the future.
4. Develop and enhance Affinity Programs.
5. Develop leadership pipeline through affiliate connections (i.e., Propel – Young Professional Network, West Side Association, Oshkosh Safety Council to bring future leadership into the Chamber and community).
6. Add Member Relations Director position.
7. Enhance membership value by providing programs and services that meet their needs while contributing to non-dues revenue of the Chamber programs:
 - Cellular phone discount program
 - Group Health Insurance
 - Discount Prescription Drug Card – RxCard.
 - Fiber Optic Phone and Internet solutions
 - Natural Gas Program-Constellation
 - Office Supply Program
 - Payroll Services
 - Flex Spending & Healthcare Reimbursement Account Program
 - Chamber Gift Certificate Program

- **Strategic Objective 3: Maintain and Manage Timely Financial and Accounting Systems**

We will maintain and enhance financial sustainability, accounting systems, and provide timely reporting that ensures organizational stability, compliance, and accountability.

Implementation Projects and Initiatives:

1. Provide timely financial reporting.
2. Prepare for successful third-party audit reviews (i.e., annual audits, maintain US Chamber of Commerce 5-Star Accreditation).
3. Expand net membership base by 2.5%.
4. Continue to explore the concept of a Tiered-Dues Membership Plan.
5. Continue membership development and retention (New Member Sales & Member Retention) program.
6. Develop successful Legacy Fund.
7. Investigate grant programs to support economic development and education programs.