

Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce

2024-25 Strategic Plan

Program of Work

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 interests of its members and the community. 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. 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, monitor loan payments, monitor loan recipient financial status, monitor fund balance, and other reporting requirements for OAEDC.
 4. Provide ongoing support, guidance, and communication with the OAEDC Revolving Loan Fund clients throughout the loan duration.
 5. 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.
 6. Continue leasing open office space in the Chamber building as business incubator space/DAV support.
 7. Conduct an annual economic development fund drive with the goal of raising a minimum of \$65,000.
- **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 2025 and any NEWREP or New North Site Selector events coming in 2025.
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 2025.
- Coordinate the Ideas Amplified bi-monthly speaker/networking series.
- 6. Coordinate the activities of the WSA (Westside Association) Panel Series Program
 - Continue to work on the public image of WSA as a program of the Oshkosh Chamber and establish the program as a desirable platform for all Oshkosh businesses.
 - Establish up to four “Business Panel” events throughout the year with guidance from the WSA Advisory Committee.
 - Continue to work on implementing and refining a long-term sponsorship plan for the WSA program (Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze levels).
- **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) along with its various Committees (WEDA Legislative Committee and WEDA YPN Executive Committee).
4. Provide local and state economic development monthly updates to the Oshkosh Chamber marketing staff to publicize to the Chamber’s members or the 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 businesses 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 addressing 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 lynchpin 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 the Youth Leadership Program.
 3. Continue to work with Propel (YPN) to finalize the development of an implementation plan to administer Propel as an Oshkosh Chamber program.
 4. Re-launch and re-brand Propel.
- **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. Implement and facilitate the Adopt-a-School program by recruiting employer and community partners for public schools.
3. Facilitate community initiatives for the development of middle school and high school students (i.e., career expos, School-to-Work Programs, youth apprenticeships, job shadows/conversations, company tours, soft skills training, and classroom presentations from business leaders).
4. Facilitate Academic and career planning, such as resume building, career round table discussions, and college tours.
5. Partner, recruit, and orchestrate a citywide 8th-grade career exploration fair, Future YOU.

6. Partner, recruit, and orchestrate a Senior Talent Track hiring event in the spring to help graduating seniors with no post-graduation plan find career-worthy employment opportunities.
 7. Partner, recruit and orchestrate career exploration tours, job shadows, and career pathway workshops with area employers.
 8. Partner with businesses/organizations to provide unique, industry-driven learning experiences when possible.
 9. Launch (Link2Learn/Education Connection) networking event series between education and the business community providing opportunities for professional development and collaboration as well as greater community understanding of the current state of educational spaces through tours.
 10. Develop, implement, and facilitate PIE (Partners in Education) program/council with representation from area employers, public, and private education providers.
 11. Market and recruit employers interested in participating in collaborative events such as Interviewthons – where high school students interview for real jobs.
 12. 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. Continue to implement and facilitate the Oshkosh Chamber Concierge Program with local businesses and organizations.
2. 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.
3. Co-sponsor area Job Fair(s).

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 to members to ensure 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
 - The Chamber Happenings
 - 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
 - Chamber Chatter
2. Enhance the image of the Oshkosh Chamber within the community and among the membership:
 - Continue Service Contract with Waterfest, Inc.
 - Develop and implement the Oshkosh Chamber’s public relations/marketing plan.
 - Complete the reconstruction of the Oshkosh Chamber website.
 - Complete the transition of our membership program from SBA to GrowthZone.
 - Develop and implement new advertising strategies with the completion of the reconstructed website and GrowthZone.
 - 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 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 Chatter
 - Continue to “co-link” the Oshkosh Chamber’s website to member sites.
 - Continue to implement and expand the Oshkosh Chamber’s social media strategy.
 - Continue the Oshkosh Chamber page in *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
 - Annual Economic Outlook Breakfast
 - WSA Business Panel Series
 - Sales Webinar Series with Cultivate Advisors
 - Miscellaneous Lunch & Learns & Webinar series with members
 - Develop a model for a “non-member” and “new member” chamber connection series

- **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, WSA Business Panel Series).
2. Facilitate industry gatherings centered on specific business commonalities (i.e., Amplify IT Conference, Amplify Ideas Amplified Educational Events, WSA Business Panel Series).
3. Continue to offer the following events/activities for membership:
 - Monthly Business After Hours
 - May and August Golf Outing
 - Oshkosh Chamber Golf Invitational (May)
 - Oshkosh Chamber Golf Classic (August)
 - Annual Meeting in January 2025
 - Alberta Kimball Community Service Award
 - Ambassador of the Year Award
 - Distinguished Service Award
 - Enterprise of the Year Award
 - Lynne Webster Leadership Award
 - Outstanding Chamber Volunteer Award
 - Propel Young Professional Award
 - Small Business of the Year Award
 - Horizon Award
 - Milestone Awards (Anniversaries, Achievements, etc.)
 - Re-introduce Educator of the Year Award
 - OC Connection
 - Business Expo in March 2025

- AM Oshkosh
- Ribbon Cuttings
- Using Oshkosh Chamber member links to their website as appropriate on the website and social media.
- Oshkosh Chamber Network Builder (Micronet)
- Develop a Chamber ROI series.
- Reestablish and develop Propel as a program of the Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce.

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 levels. 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 businesses 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 ensure 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 (e.g., WMC, WEDA, and US Chamber of Commerce) to further the depth and breadth of the Chamber's advocacy efforts and effectiveness.
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 the State of the Community program
 - Continue to serve on the WMC Future Wisconsin Committee

- **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 (2025-26).
2. Continue proactive advocacy work through the Public Policy Committee.
3. Coordinate bi-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 drive 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, referendums, and regulatory issues.
2. Monitor pending state and federal legislation through the Public Policy Committee.
3. Sponsor informational forums:
 - State Assembly and Senate Forum/Debates
 - Candidate forums for Oshkosh Mayor and City Council
4. Conduct Member Inputs:
 - Candidate questionnaires for City Council, School Board, and County Board elections
5. Develop a monthly Legislative Update column in the Member Matters E-newsletter.
6. Develop and Distribute an 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. Continue negotiations with the WISDOT regarding the relocation of Chamber offices relating to the Jackson Street bridge project.
2. Form an ad hoc Chamber Relocation Committee and identify potential sites for a new office.
3. Provide a first point of contact for the Oshkosh Chamber membership.
4. Manage the front desk, receive visitors and Chamber members by greeting, welcoming, directing and connecting them appropriately to staff.
5. Manage incoming phone calls while maintaining professional composure throughout interactions.
6. Provide quality meeting and conference facilities for events, Board meetings, members, and staff.
7. 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. Complete the conversion to a new membership/association management software system in Q1 Fiscal 2025.
2. Complete the reconstruction of the Oshkosh Chamber website in Q1 of fiscal 2025.
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., Leadership Oshkosh, Youth Leadership Oshkosh, Amplify Oshkosh, Propel – YPN, and WSA to bring future leadership into the Chamber and community).
 6. 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
 - Other programs that provide value for members
- **Strategic Objective 3: Maintain and Manage Timely Financial and Accounting Systems**
We will maintain and enhance financial sustainability and 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 a successful Legacy Fund by Q4 of fiscal 2025.
7. Investigate grant programs to support economic development and education programs.