



TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Common Council
FROM: Mark Rohloff, City Manager
DATE: May 3, 2024
RE: Weekly Newsletter

1. **UPCOMING COMMON COUNCIL HOUSING PRESENTATION:** During the May 14th City of Oshkosh Common Council meeting, the Department of Community Development will be presenting on the City's ongoing housing efforts. The presentation will include an overview of implemented changes, existing housing programs, discussion on the gaps in housing in the city, current housing projects, and ongoing/future housing initiatives. The Department of Community Development continues to support housing of all types as a priority moving forward. If you have any questions or housing topics you would like discussed during the presentation, please contact Planning Services Manager Mark Lyons prior to the meeting so we can try to address as many topics as possible.
2. **BRIDGES CLOSED FOR MAINTENANCE NEXT WEEK:** Next week, weather permitting, the bridges over the Fox River in Oshkosh will be closed from 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for cleaning and maintenance. One (1) bridge will be closed each day, with the remaining bridges open to traffic. The bridges and their planned closure dates are:
 - May 6th – Wisconsin Street Bridge
 - May 7th – Congress Avenue/Oshkosh Avenue Bridge
 - May 8th – Oregon Street/Jackson Street Bridge
 - May 9th – Main Street Bridge

All closures are weather dependent. If weather conditions dictate that a closure must be rescheduled, additional communication will be distributed.

While the Oregon Street/Jackson Street Bridge is closed, the Department of Public Works Street Division will be performing asphalt pavement maintenance on Oregon Street between 6th Avenue and the bridge. If you have any questions about these bridge closures, please contact Director of Public Works James Rabe at (920) 236-5065.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS SOUGHT FOR PROPOSED WISCONSIN STREET BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS:** The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) is developing plans for improvements to the Wisconsin Street Bridge structure. The work is necessary to prevent the deterioration of the structural steel caused by the corrosive effects of the natural

environment. The WDOT is proposing a new paint system that will preserve the structural integrity of the steel members and extend the service life of the bridge. It will also reduce future maintenance costs.

The WDOT has a [Project website available](#) for the public to get information about the Project. This website includes maps of the Project limits and location, scope and schedule, traffic impacts, displays and exhibits, and temporary business signing information. The public is welcome to view the Project website and provide comments before the final design of the Project. There is a comment form on the website with a prepaid mailer to provide comments to the Project team. You can also e-mail the Project team or call them directly with your comments.

The Project work will include removing the deteriorating paint system and re-painting the structural steel members of the bridge. It will also include replacing the existing gate arms of the bridge. Construction is scheduled for the fall of 2026 and completion in the spring of 2027. The bridge will remain open to both marine traffic and motorists during construction. There will be lane and sidewalk closures on the bridge throughout the construction.

WDOT has requested that questions or comments regarding this Project for the Wisconsin Street Bridge be directed to Project Manager Kurt Vogel at kurt.vogel@dot.wi.gov or (920) 362-1732.

4. **“NO MOW MAY” BEGINS:** The City of Oshkosh had over 600 people sign up to participate in “No Mow May,” which allows registered participants to decrease lawn cutting on their property as a way to provide food and nectar for bees and other early season pollinators. Upon registration, participants were provided a number of resources to increase pollinators and pollinator-friendly habitats on their properties that will help the pollinators even more than not mowing their lawn for the month of May. Throughout the month of May, staff will be sending weekly emails to the participants with tips on how to help the pollinators, when they should mow their lawn if their grass is too long to help the pollinators, and how to properly handle the long grass clippings so they don’t end up in the city’s storm sewers. Please see the attachment to this newsletter for the answers to some frequently asked questions, as well as additional resources. If you have any questions about “No Mow May,” please contact Assistant Planner Emma Dziengeleski at (920) 236-5126 or edziengeleski@oshkoshwi.gov.

5. **STATE OF THE CITY “TOUR” TAKES MESSAGE TO COMMUNITY:** In an effort to engage more members of the community and share the city’s story more widely, staff made several changes to the annual State of the City presentation this spring. One of the new elements of State of the City involves me attending meetings of clubs and service organizations in the city. I made another presentation to Propel Oshkosh this past Tuesday morning, giving an overview of the State of the City message, including accomplishments from this past year and plans for the rest of 2024, and beyond. Propel is a development and networking group for young professionals in Oshkosh. Previously, I made a similar presentation to the Oshkosh Convention and Visitors Bureau, and I will also present at upcoming meetings of Oshkosh Healthy Neighborhoods and the Oshkosh Midmorning Kiwanis Club. The annual State of the City

presentation was produced in a video format this year, [click here to view the video](#). For more information, contact Media Services Coordinator Jake Timm at (920) 236-5261.

6. **OPD HAPPENINGS:** The Oshkosh Police Department recently welcomed the hiring of three new part-time parking control officers. Debra Hernandez started on April 26th, while DuWayne Schwartz and Robert Askins started on April 29th. Congratulations, and welcome to the OPD Team!
 - Debra Hernandez currently resides in Oshkosh, WI. She has extensive work experience in the manufacturing/industrial fields. Prior to becoming a parking control officer, Debra was most recently employed with Kobussen Buses in Oshkosh.
 - DuWayne Schwartz currently resides in Appleton, WI. In addition to becoming a parking control officer, DuWayne is actively employed as a full-time firefighter with the Neenah Fire Department, where he has worked for approximately 24 years.
 - Robert Askins currently resides in Oshkosh, WI. Prior to becoming a parking control officer, Robert worked for the Wisconsin Department of Corrections for over 27 years.

7. **"BIGS WITH BADGES" PROGRAM CELEBRATION:** The Oshkosh Police Department hosted the year-end "Bigs with Badges" ceremony on Thursday, May 2nd. Big Brothers Big Sisters' "Bigs with Badges" is a one-to-one mentoring program, connecting youth with law enforcement officers. It helps children see officers in a positive light, helping to build friendships and lasting relationships. "Bigs with Badges" is a wonderful experience for both the children and officers who are willing to spend the time to enrich the lives of the youth in our community. Nine officers were recognized for their dedication to the program: Officers Andy Baltadano, Phil Steffens, Courtney Scoles, Damita Buss, Jacob Rennie, Caitlyn Tohak, Dellas Vandenberg, Sam Schuldes and Kayla Johnson. In addition to the children, their parents, and officers, the ceremony was attended by directors and facilitators from the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization and staff from Jefferson Elementary School.

8. **GET INVOLVED IN A BOARD OR COMMISSION:** If you are interested in serving your community, please consider becoming a member of one of the City's citizen advisory boards, commissions, or committees. To learn more about the boards and commissions, or to complete an application to serve, follow this link: oshkoshwi.gov/BoardsAndCommissions/

9. **MINUTES FOR BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:** All meeting minutes are uploaded to the website upon approval. Please follow the link below for the most updated information & meeting minutes: onboard.oshkoshwi.gov/

10. **LOOKING AHEAD:** The meetings I have scheduled for the week of May 5th include the following: Sunday afternoon, I will attend the Boys & Girls Club Grand Opening and Open House for their building expansion and new Hyde Family Community Center. On Monday at 10:00 a.m., I will attend the Oshkosh North High School's Hall of Fame ceremony honoring Dr. Sumit Ringwala; at 4:00 p.m., I'll attend Greater Oshkosh Economic Development Corporation's (GO-EDC) Executive Committee meeting. On Wednesday at 1:30 p.m., I'll attend a meeting of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's (ECWRPC)

Nominating Committee. Thursday at 9:00 a.m., I'll meet with staff to discuss special assessments along Clairville Road, and on Friday at 1:30 p.m., I will meet with staff regarding the sanitary district negotiations. If you have any questions about my upcoming schedule, please do not hesitate to contact me.