

# Fall 2020 Report: Sustainable Oshkosh Webpage

## Update



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## Introduction

In 2007, the Oshkosh Common Council signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and re-instituted the disbanded Energy & Environmental Advisory Board (now named the Sustainability Advisory Board or SAB) to advise the City Manager and Council on specific energy and environmental issues. In 2008, the board held its first meeting while the City joined the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and began developing the City's first Sustainability Plan. With this commitment to sustainability is impressive, the City of Oshkosh can improve the access to sustainability information by developing a more user friendly website. Website development increases web traffic and will bring more users to the City of Oshkosh website. We analyzed the [Sustainable Oshkosh tab on the City of Oshkosh's website](#) and thus propose ways to update and revamp the website to provide clear and easy access to pivotal information about sustainability.

Why did we choose to edit this section of the city page? Updated information is valuable to local residents, businesses, and more. Regular website improvements provide accurate and easy to access data for individuals. This will increase sustainability in Oshkosh in general. Sustainability information should be easy to read helpful information that encourages residents to visit the website and implement changes in lifestyle. Additionally, by having the UW-Oshkosh students do the labor it does not increase the workload of the city departments. Maintaining the website is something that should be regularly monitored. Data suggest that increased web traffic is a result of user ability and clear concise information displayed in an organized webpage is necessary to reach Oshkosh residents who are searching for sustainable information.

## *Stakeholders*

A plethora of individuals will benefit from these changes. The stakeholders for this project include, but are not limited to the following:

1. City of Oshkosh urban planners will have updated information to share with residents. Updated website links will allow for an easy path to sustainable information for residents.
2. Homeowners will have access to updated information about tax credits, grants and other green incentives. Additionally they will have access to reliable updated information on green options in their city for all aspects of their daily life (food, landscaping, transportation, recreation, etc).
3. Future UW Oshkosh Students will have the opportunity to update information and collaborate with city planners. This will not only help the city, but increase students' networking ability and professional development in working with individuals in their community and potentially their field.
4. This will open a direct line of communication between Environmental Studies students and the City of Oshkosh planners.
5. Oshkosh Departments will not have to use their own time to check links and follow the latest information of sustainability for their department. It is one less thing on their already long lists of required tasks.

## **Methods**

To determine how the City of Oshkosh compared to other cities, we reviewed the City of Oshkosh's website as well as the websites of other cities such as Madison, Wisconsin, Ithaca, New York, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. This was to give a size

range of cities for comparison. We chose to research Madison and Ithaca because these cities are focused on sustainability and sustainable design for the future. By taking these cities' resources and combining it with what Oshkosh already had, we provide comments and recommendations for improvements to the Oshkosh website as well as explanations of the possible improvements. We believe improvement will come by us offering resources and suggesting to reorganize what is already available into a more user-friendly format.

### **General Explanation of Proposed Changes**

The complete comments, new links, and more are available in the appendix at the end of this report, as well as in google document form. These give detailed descriptions of a link's functionality, whether or not it needs to be updated, structure change recommendations, new links, feedback on user friendliness, new resources, and more.

#### [Resources tab](#)

1. Energy: Electric, natural gas, and renewables
  - a. Multiple links don't load or have updated information. See appendix for recommended changes.
2. Waste and Recycling
  - a. Slight updating and reorganizing required to make a more user-friendly and information-rich resource for citizens.
3. Transportation

- a. Slight updating is needed with additional information on bicycles for residents to access.

#### 4. Water

- a. This area does not need major improvements. We recommend that the City check the pamphlets as they seem a bit outdated. Additionally, we recommend including "incentives" as a sub category and put items like the city water credit here.

#### 5. Land Management and Food

- a. The majority of the links here are good and useful. Two major questions we have about this section are: (1) Does the City still have the plant a tree program and do you still do the Urban Tree Canopy Analysis? If so there needs to be updated information put in; If not this project needs to be removed from this section. Overall, we recommend dividing this section into two different areas: one titled Food and one titled Land Management. While they are related, the information can be very different. We have provided an article on food miles for the food section and one on the benefits of planting native landscapes for residents. See the Supporting Articles section below.

#### 6. Recreation

- a. A complete redo and fleshing out of this section is necessary. More municipal trails and parks should be added so new citizens and college students know what is available for them. Additionally linking Menominee

park and zoo to increase more recreational traffic for those established park spaces.

7. Engagement/Participation/Community Building

- a. This section is updated with projects and programs as they happen, therefore, we did not need to edit it. It works well and is functional as is.

8. Additional Resources and Organizations

- a. Like the above section, this is updated regularly. We made our additional resource recommendations in each section below to provide sources as reasoning for choosing replacement links. The details can be found in each subject's appendix. However, we do recommend including a general incentives section here, especially those that may not fit in any of the above subjects clearly.

[Municipal Programs tab](#)

1. Mayor's Climate Program

- a. While the statement under this section is still very relevant, we have reached out to the current mayor to try to get an updated statement on their view of the climate and sustainability in the City of Oshkosh.

2. Plan and Code

- a. City of Oshkosh Sustainability Plan
  - i. We recommend marking one as the old plan and one as the new or revised plan.

3. Presentations and Reports

- a. This section looks good, there are no changes needed.

4. Municipal Services and Programs
  - a. There are no changes required of this section.
5. Additional Links
  - a. There are no changes required of this section.

### **Additional incentives**

Incentives motivate and encourage users to implement suggestions and make sustainable choices. Informing people of the cost and benefits of various options is a way to encourage sustainable decision making. Stormwater tax credits, solar federal tax credits, grants that fund native landscapes – these incentives are an essential part of developing sustainability in the community. Under each heading for this section, we provide a link to be added.

1. Search for grants and programs with WDNR
  - a. <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/Grants.html>
2. Solar Wisconsin
  - a. <https://www.energysage.com/local-data/solar-rebates-incentives/wi/>
3. Solar Tax Credit
  - a. <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2020/01/f70/Guide%20to%20Federal%20Tax%20Credit%20for%20Residential%20Solar%20PV.pdf>
4. Landscaping Grants
  - a. <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/Grants.html>
5. Wisconsin Rebates and Programs
  - a. <https://www.wisconsinpublicservice.com/savings/wi-rebates>
6. Energy Grants



- a. <http://www.energy-grants.net/wisconsin-energy-grants-rebates-loans-incentives/>

## Supporting Articles

Below are peer-reviewed articles that support sustainable options in each subject. They give scientific evidence that supports the solutions we provided. Further, the articles serve as a means of research and could be used as references for sourcing information on the city website.

1. Energy: Electric, natural gas, and renewables
  - a. No articles suggested.
2. Waste and Recycling
  - a. Seadon, Jeffrey K. 2010. Sustainable Waste Management Systems. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 18(16-17): 1639–1651, doi:10.1016/j.jclepro.2010.07.009.
3. Transportation
  - a. McAndrews, C., Tabatabaie, S., and Litt, J. 2018. Motivations and Strategies or Bicycle Planning in Rural, Suburban, and Low-Density Communities Need for New Best Practices. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 84(2) 99-111.
4. Water
  - a. Jalava, M., Kummu, M., Porkka, M., Siebert, S., and Varis, O. 2014. Diet Change—a Solution to Reduce Water Use? *Environmental Research Letters*, 9(7) 074016, doi:10.1088/1748-9326/9/7/074016.
5. Land Management and Food

- a. Coley, D., Howard, M., and Winter, M. 2009. Local Food, Food miles and Carbon emissions: A comparison of farm shop and mass distribution approaches. *Food Policy*, 34(2):150–155, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2008.11.001>
  - b. Witzling, Laura, Shaw, B., and Trechter, D. 2019. Which Communication Channels Shape Normative Perceptions About Buying Local Food? An Application of Social Exposure. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 36(3):443–54, doi:10.1007/s10460-019-09926-1.
  - c. Salisbury, A., Armitage, J., Bostock, H., Joe Perry, Tatchell, M., and Thompson, K. 2015. Enhancing Gardens as Habitats for Flower-Visiting Aerial Insects (pollinators): Should We Plant Native or Exotic Species? *The Journal of Applied Ecology*, (525):156–64, doi:10.1111/1365-2664.12499.
6. Recreation
- a. Beery, Thomas. 2019. Exploring the Role of Outdoor Recreation to Contribute to Urban Climate Resilience. *Sustainability*, 11(22):6268., doi:10.3390/su11226268.
  - b. Winter, P. L., Selin, S., Cervený, L., and Bricker, K. 2019. Outdoor Recreation, Nature-Based Tourism, and Sustainability. *Sustainability*, 12(1):81, doi:10.3390/su12010081.
7. Engagement/Participation/Community Building
- a. No articles suggested
8. Additional Resources and Organizations

- a. No articles suggested

### **Other cities website and how they display data**

We reviewed at Fond du Lac and Appleton, Wisconsin's websites and they did not have a dedicated section for sustainability resources. A common theme when searching for other cities' government websites on sustainability was the presence of error links and scattered information. We did, however, find cities with great sustainability websites. In particular, Madison, WI, Ithaca, NY, and Minneapolis, MN displayed their sustainability information clearly and concisely. Madison's web page consisted of four categories: residents, business, city, and transportation. The information is quick and easy to access. Ithaca had a mix of information about sustainability and also updated news about what is happening in the city with sustainability. Their webpage is regularly updated with information but done so in a way that keeps the page clean and organized. One major theme is the planning for the future and how citizens can participate. Minneapolis is part of the 100 Resilient Cities network giving them access to tools and expertise to build and design a city for the challenges of the 21st century.

### **Conclusion**

A functioning website with easy and efficient access to all information is imperative for a user-friendly experience. Compared to other cities in the Fox Valley, the Oshkosh sustainability web page is quite impressive. Access to sustainable information on the Oshkosh website, however, needs improvement. Updating and maintaining the website will allow Oshkosh residents to have a better understanding about sustainability

and the ability to make sustainable choices within our community. Ultimately The City of Oshkosh and the Oshkosh Sustainability Board could partner with the UW Oshkosh Environmental Studies department and have students monitor the website as a capstone project. This will keep the cost relatively low for city website maintenance and give students an opportunity to research and replace links as new information is released. Access to information is a challenge and the Sustainability board of Oshkosh and City or Oshkosh planning department have an opportunity to develop a user friendly website with relevant information about sustainability.

## **Appendixes:**

- Appendix A: Energy
- Appendix B: Water
- Appendix C: Land Management and Food
- Appendix D: Recreation
- Appendix E: Waste and Recycling
- Appendix F: Transportation

## Appendix A: Energy: electricity, natural gas, and renewables

<https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/SustainableOshkosh/Resources.aspx>

There are many sustainable actions citizens of Oshkosh can take to contribute to i  
below give suggestions of actions and organizations (local and state) which addre

### Energy: electricity, natural gas, and renewables

- Know your home energy use
- Tips to conserve energy in your home
- Learn about renewable energy
- Guide to Green Living
- Making Your Event Sustainable

- [Know your home and energy use.](#) Link works sometimes and takes the user to a website that allows a person to input personal data and calculate energy savings, electrical use, and provide solutions to lower usage.



This site can't be reached

www.wisconsinpublicservice.com took too long to respond.

Try:

- Checking the connection
- [Checking the proxy and the firewall](#)
- [Running Windows Network Diagnostics](#)

Screen Snip of City Website (12/2020)

- ❖ **Replace** with another energy savings calculator or reach out to WPS and tell the IT department that the links cannot be accessed

<https://www.alliantenergy.com/WaysToSave/SavingsTipsandPrograms/EnergySmartCalculatorsRES>

- [Tips to conserve energy in your home.](#) Link to the WPS website works. An update could include more sustainable options that people are using in the community, featuring pictures of solar equipment.

- **Replace** link with this change

<https://www.homeselfe.com/100-ways-to-save-energy/>.

This link provides ways to save energy that are individual based tasks that can transform a household into an energy efficient house. Appeals to the user with figures, images and has passive actions that are user friendly.

- **[Learn more about renewable energy](#)**. Link works; has basic information about sustainable business and becoming a member of the midwestern sustain to learn more about sustainability.

- ❖ **Replace** with community projects that use sustainable energy examples like a local church that implemented solar panels or other residents/businesses that have them.

<https://www.thenorthwestern.com/story/news/local/community/2018/05/04/solar-panels-oshkosh-first-congregational-church/580597002/>

- **[Guide to Green Living](#)**. No information available; website is not in English.

浏览器安全检查通过，请点击进入。

(Screen Snippet 12/2020)

- ❖ **Replace** with incentives tab, solar tax credits, landscape grants, and possible business that are in the solar industry. See incentives tab for incentives resources.
- ❖ <http://www.energy-grants.net/wisconsin-energy-grants-rebates-loans-incentives/>
- ❖ <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2020/01/f70/Guide%20to%20Federal%20Tax%20Credit%20for%20Residential%20Solar%20PV.pdf>

- ❖ <https://www.energysage.com/local-data/solar-rebates-incentives/wi/>
- **Making your event sustainable.** This links to a pamphlet that provides information for reducing waste, creating community by donating food, and cleaning up after your event.  
<https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/SustainableOshkosh/Documents/SABEventPlanner.pdf>
- ❖ **Replace** with updated information; the Sustainability Advisory Board could create a new pamphlet with more information about sustainable events.



## Appendix B: Water

- **Clean Boats, Clean Waters**

- There are no issues with the link, but maybe it should go directly to the Winnebago Watershed/Lake Winnebago or Winnebago County data.

- [Winnebago County Clean Boats, Clean Water Data](#)

- **Using Water Wisely and Responsibly**

- The pamphlet seems to be from 2013, which is a little outdated.
- Addition new links: (recommendations)

- [EPA](#)

- [Water Use Calculator](#)

- Interactive footprint calculator with each area you can reduce water usage and how it would impact you score

- **Protecting Water Quality**

- This is a good pamphlet but it should have a date associated with it. This will help to make sure people are getting up-to-date information.

- **Native plants reduce water use (recommendation)**

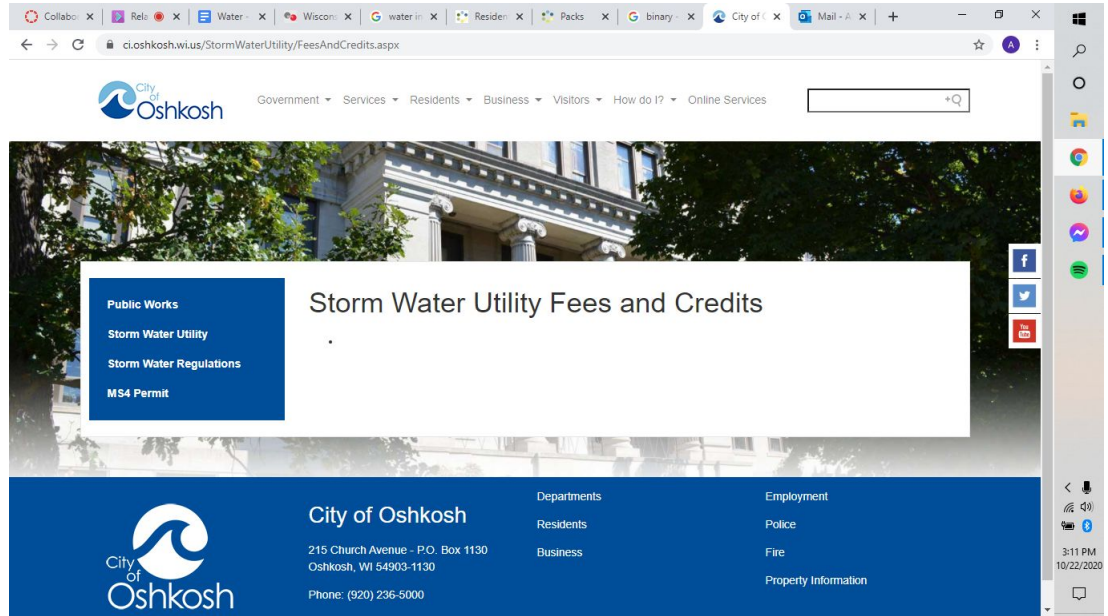
- Additional new link:

- [Native plants reduce water](#)

- **Water Credit**

- The water credit is not on this page, but should be included.

- Also when you go to the credit section the page is blank, see screenshot below.



## Appendix C: Land Management and Food

- **Growing Oshkosh**
  - There are no issues with this link.
- **Oshkosh Food Co-op**
  - This link works well.
- **Garden to Doorstep Organics**
  - This link works well.
- **Visit Oshkosh Saturday Farmers Market**
  - The link works and is regularly updated.
- **Plant a Tree**
  - This link is from 2008. Please update if the program is still going on or remove the link.
- **Grow food in a community garden on Sherman Road**
  - This is not on Sherman road anymore. The new address is 770 E. County Rd Y and needs to be updated in the link title.
  - If there are any other places in Oshkosh for community gardens, please add the link or information.
- Food miles articles (recommendations)
  - Food miles are a real thing and influence many factors including pollution, carbon emissions, and more. Including an article on food miles reminds people that where their food comes from matters.
  - [Harvard Food Miles](#)
  - <https://sustainableamerica.org/blog/what-is-a-food-mile/>

- **Street Tree Benefits**
  - This is both helpful and educational.
- **Urban Tree Canopy Analysis**
  - There is no date associated with this. It should have one so that individuals looking at it can tell how up-to-date it is.
  - Does the City still use UTC?
- [Sustainable Landscaping](#) (recommendation)
  - Sustainable landscaping is helpful for decreasing water usage, supporting native plants and animals, and more. Providing a link associated with or relevant landscaping ordinances will help residents landscape more sustainably.
- Ordinances about animals/insects: (recommendation)
  - These are hard to find on the City site. Additionally, when you type in the name, such as beekeeping, the chicken ordinance comes up, but when you click it, you see the bee ordinance.
  - Beekeeping (attach link to ordinance)
  - Ducks (attach link to ordinance)
  - Chickens (attach link to ordinance)

**General recommendations:**

1. Have separate areas for land management and food
  - a. Food should include: [Growing Oshkosh](#), [Oshkosh Food Co-op](#), [Garden to Doorstep Organics](#), [Visit Oshkosh Saturday Farmers Market](#), [Grow food in](#)

a [community garden on Sherman Road](#), and at least one food miles article (recommended articles above).

- b. Land Management should include: [Plant a Tree](#), [Street Tree Benefits](#), [Urban Tree Canopy Analysis](#), [Sustainable Landscaping](#), and Ordinances such as beekeeping, ducks, and chickens.
2. If there are any additional incentives for either food or landscaping, these should be included in the tabs.

## Appendix D: Recreation

### **Currently Looks like:**

#### **Recreation**

- [Mascoutin Valley State Trail](#)
  - This Link works fine.
- [Wiouwash Recreation Trail](#)
  - This link works fine.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Clarification on what counts as recreation.**
  - Remove Moscotin trail
    - The relevance to The City of Oshkosh is unclear.
- **Needs additions:**
  - Oshkosh Trail map brochure:  
<https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Parks/CityOfOshkoshTrailBrochure.pdf>
  - The River Walk: <https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Parks/RiverwalkMap.pdf>
  - The River Walk brochure:  
<https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Parks/RiverwalkBrochure.pdf>
  - The New Lakeshore Park:  
<https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Parks/LakeshorePark/>
  - Menomonee Park Zoo:  
<https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Parks/MenomineeParkZoo/>
  - All things already available on the website, but should be more accessible

- **Possible roll ins:**

- Menominee Park Shoreline project:

<http://menomineeparkshoreland.blogspot.com/>

- Bird festival <http://www.oshkoshbirdfest.com/>

- Links to information about the community gardens across the city

## Appendix E: Waste and Recycling

### Currently Looks like:

- **Waste and Recycling**
  - [Recycle cell phones](#)
    - This link is good.
  - [Battery recycling and disposal](#)
    - This link is good.
  - [Oshkosh FreeCycle](#)
    - This section needs updating as service for it has ended.
  - [Medication and pharmaceutical disposal](#)
    - This link is good.
  - [Residential recycling](#)
    - This link is good.

### **Recommendations:**

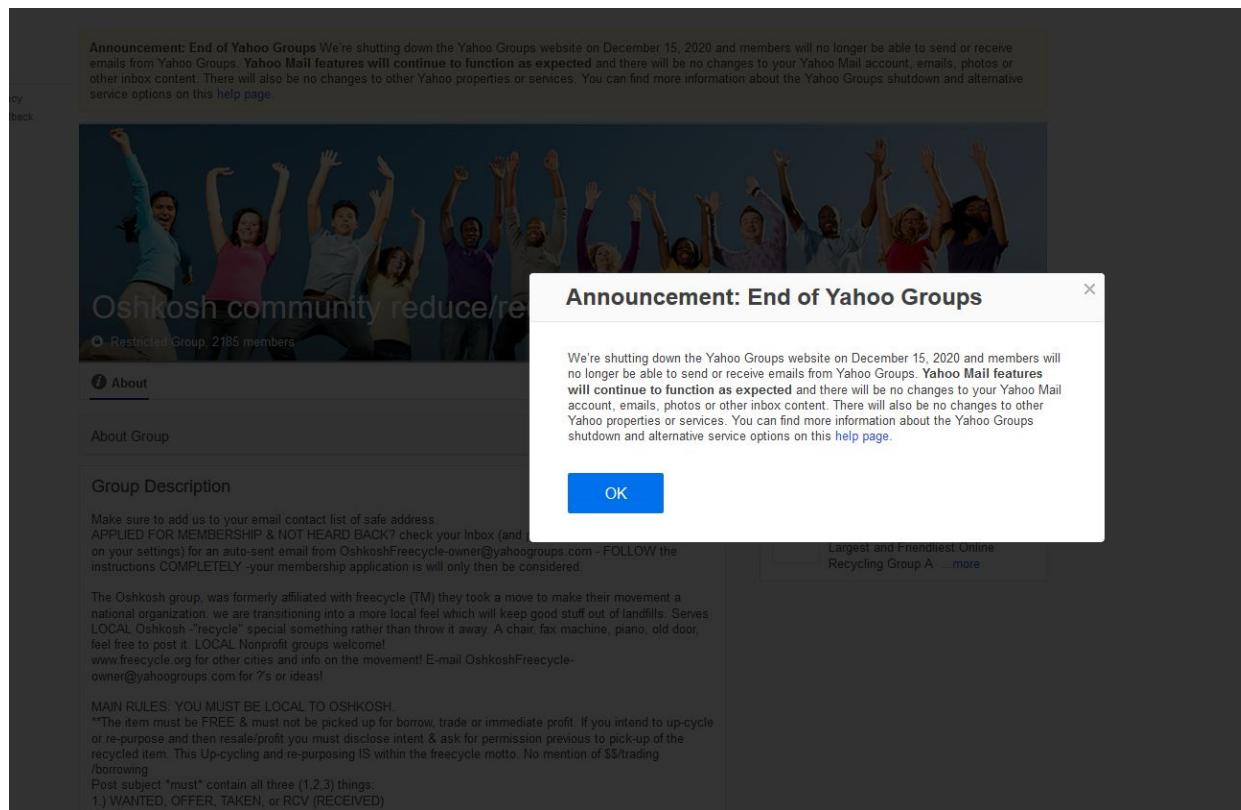
- The link for Recycling cell phones redirects instead to <https://www.winnebago-county-solid-waste.com/>
  - Changing the permalink to say recycling and waste guidelines or something along the lines of that would make more sense
  - Another option is to separate it out:
    - Oshkosh recycling guide:  
<https://www.winnebago-county-solid-waste.com/recycling>



- Odds and ends the “What should I do with...” section should be made easily found because there was information on here that we sure didn't know before:

<https://www.winnebagocountysolidwaste.com/what-do-i-do-with>

- We see no Issues with the battery recycling and disposal section, the DNR link is comprehensive.
- Oshkosh Freecycle
  - Needs to change hosts, is currently on Yahoo groups, but it won't be by the end of the year.



<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/OshkoshFreecycle/info>

- Perhaps using google groups or facebook groups would be a more trafficked alternative.

- Medication and pharmaceutical disposal section remains good
- Residential recycling should be part of the section above where it is listed to ease use.

## Appendix F: Transportation

- [Walk or Bike](#)
- [RIDESHARE carpooling](#)
- [GO Transit - Oshkosh City Bus](#)

- [Walk or Bike](#)
  - Link takes you to WI DOT website library with nothing about walking or Biking.
  - Replace with a link about community walking or biking trails, safety information. <https://wisconsin.gov/Documents/travel/bike/bike-maps/urban/oshkosh.pdf>
  - Adding a tab about bicycle safety could be another option to encourage bicycling.
  - We recommend updating information about bike programs within Oshkosh and directing users to maps for biking options. Including bicycle events that encourage community involvement.
- <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/commuter/index.htm>
  - WI DOT link works is helpful and has adequate information that will help residents plan for transportation.
- [Go Transit-](#)
  - City bus riding information helpful easy to read tells user to download app
  - These links are helpful for Oshkosh Residents to access information about the Rideshare program and Go transit within the community.