

## ◀◀ 5 Positive Stories of 2020 ▶▶



Costco Depot - Owatonna

### ▶ Owatonna Hits New Economic Record

Surpassing 2016's building totals, Owatonna has soared to a new economic development record in 2020. Buoyed by large industrial projects, and three smaller new projects, the city is seeing substantial growth that should continue into 2021. Current numbers show \$91M in new building values, making the former record of \$64M look extremely modest. The year isn't over either, values could top \$100M. *(See Chamber Blog for full story. Owatonna.org)*

### ▶ Top Diversity and Inclusion Resources for Employers

Business leaders are having more open conversations about diversity and inclusion in the workplace. While this isn't novel, the spotlight on racial, gender and other biases has rejuvenated talks about increasing workplace diversity and equal opportunities. This is precisely what chambers of commerce like us, seek to achieve.



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Pearl Apartment Project - Downtown Owatonna

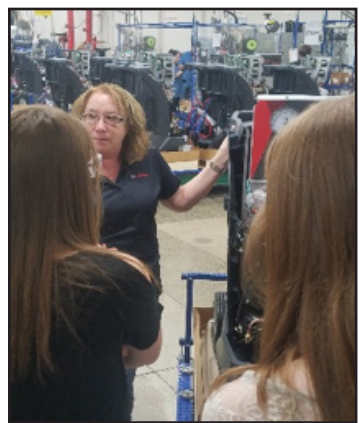
### ▶ \$25M to Downtown Owatonna in 2021

A new hotel and apartment complex will bring a major boost to downtown Owatonna. The projects, both being developed by Hamilton Real Estate, will be built at the same time starting early summer of '21 and will infuse \$25M into a 1 block area of Pearl and Cedar. Shadowed by the big hotel announcement, the apartment building on Pearl Street completes a several year vision started by the city of Owatonna when they purchased and tore down the houses on that block. *(See Chamber Blog for full story. Owatonna.org)*

### ▶ 4 Ways to Showcase Business to Future Workforce

Let's get students into your business to see what a possible job/career looks like. Offer a tour, job shadow, internship or work experience and you'll give students valued experience. You'll also be marketing your business to a new workforce.

*(To sign up, go to [www.Owatonna.org/workforce/](http://www.Owatonna.org/workforce/))*



### ▶ Driven to Help Their Employees

When the Covid-19 Pandemic struck, like a lot of companies, one of the first things Owatonna Motor Company did was check all their expenses. Some cuts were made. One thing they didn't cut was their employee's hours, in fact they guaranteed their full-time employees a 40 hour work week.

They also vowed not to lay off any employees and they kept that promise!



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**2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- ▶ **Nathan Dotson, Chair**  
Dotson Woodworking
- ▶ **Kelly Boomgarden, Incoming Chair/ Tourism Rep**  
Country Inn & Suites-Owatonna
- ▶ **Andy Cowell, Past Chair**  
Profinium, Inc.
- ▶ **Todd Trout, Treasurer**  
US Bank
- ▶ **Paul Smith, At-Large**  
Federated Insurance
- ▶ **Wayne Starman, Ex-Officio**  
Cash Wise Foods
- ▶ **Deb Gillard, At-Large**  
RE/MAX Venture
- ▶ **Doug Betti**  
Viracon
- ▶ **Syd Briggs**  
Steele Waseca-Cooperative Electric
- ▶ **John Champa**  
Cybex
- ▶ **Randy Doyal**  
Al-Corn Clean Fuel
- ▶ **Mike Herman**  
Driessen Water, Inc.
- ▶ **Scott Mohs**  
Mohs Contracting, Inc.
- ▶ **Rich Pettet**  
Rich's Window Cleaning
- ▶ **Luke Schmidt**  
CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP)
- ▶ **Brandon Wayne**  
Ameriprise Financial –Dufresne, Wayne & Associates
- ▶ **Stacy Wilson**  
Old Town Bagels



**November 17  
5:30 – 7:00 PM**

Sponsor: United Way of Steele County  
Location: Torey's Restaurant and Bar



**December 15  
5:30 – 7:00 PM**

Sponsor: KOWZ & KRUE Radio & Sparetime Entertainment  
Location: Sparetime Entertainment



◀◀ **Watch for Updates on Social Media & Owatonna.org** ▶▶

▶ **MAINSTREET** Update | Shirley Schultz, MainStreet Director

**Shop Local, Eat Local, Shop Owatonna!**

“EVERY PURCHASE MATTERS” starting on Black Friday & Shop Small Saturday, thru Dec 20th in Downtown Owatonna in participating businesses. Watch for the poster. **Love Local!**

Promotion being coordinated by the Owatonna Business Partnership.



**Chamber Dollars/Gift Certificates**

With each dollar spent at a local member business, it generates 8x the amount by rolling over in the local economy. With the onset of COVID-19, help support local businesses and keep the spending in Owatonna! All safety precautions are in place to ensure a safe, easy transaction!

- Can be used at any current Chamber Member business
- Chamber dollars DO NOT expire
- Sold in increments of \$5, \$10, and \$25
- Payment accepted by check, cash, or major credit cards
- OACCT office is open from 8 -5; Monday – Friday
- Please call ahead for larger orders so your WAIT time is limited



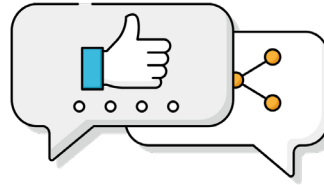
**2020 Holiday Lighted Parade...**

is canceled due to safety concerns and social distancing requirements due to Covid 19 for participants, and the large number of attendees that crowd the sidewalks, park and streets. See you in 2021!



## Increase in social media reach & engagement

A growth in Corona virus cases across Minnesota has brought renewed anxiety among travelers, dampening their travel readiness and trip plans, including the upcoming holidays. Meanwhile niche travel for outdoor actives like hiking, biking and leaf peeping have moved steadily toward recovery. A recent survey taken by Destination Analysts showed that Nearly 40% of likely fall travelers say they will visit a small town or rural area on their Fall trips.



### Insights

[See All](#)

Last 28 days : Aug 25 - Sep 21 ▼

People Reached	<b>49,629</b> ▲94%
Post Engagements	<b>4,952</b> ▲55%
Page Likes	<b>18</b> ▲29%

## ► WHAT MAKES OWATONNA

### What Owatonna Makes...Makes Owatonna

To celebrate Manufacturing week, the Chamber featured a small sampling of the great manufacturers in Owatonna! Many of whom started their business in their garages hoping that their idea would become a reality. Three videos were created featuring the businesses below. Find them at Chamber Facebook page.



#### Climate by Design International (CDI) Dry Air For SpaceX

CDI, an Owatonna based manufacturing facility in for the past 29 years. CDI designs and manufactures desiccant dehumidifiers and critical process air handlers for a wide array of applications including ice arenas, hospital surgical suites, and even SpaceX.



#### Ag Manufacturer Sows Employee Bonds

84 years of manufacturing product for the agriculture industry and Gandy is still family owned. Professional turf equipment, custom manufacturing and seeders are the primary products. The measuring wheel started the company and they still sell it today.

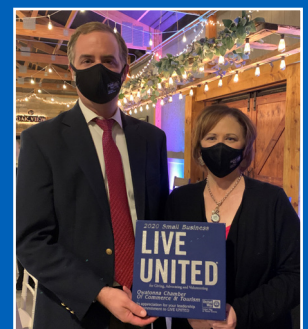


#### Laundry Room to Industrial Park-Husband/Wife Team Manufacture Success

From custom wood packaging to thousands of kinds of foam, co-owners Bob and Donna Ayers show how FoamCraft went from starting in their laundry room to its location on Alexander Drive.

## Business Community Recognized at LIVE UNITED Event

Thank you to Wenger Corporation for stepping up as this year's United Way of Steele County campaign leader. Leading the effort to raise \$800,000 to support the UW mission to change lives by mobilizing and optimizing the caring power of our community.



▶ **Big Dream Organics, LLC**  
 Jerry Collins  
 216 W Bridge ST, Owatonna  
 507-456-9713  
 bigdreamorganics@gmail.com



▶ **Spark Plug Chargers, Inc.**  
 Ethan Cords  
 875 N Elm AVE, #8, Owatonna  
 507-475-0595  
 ethancords@sparkplugchargers.com



▶ **CompCare Clinics**  
 Cooper Rendon  
 1232 S Oak AVE, Owatonna  
 651-508-0936  
 info@compcareclinics.com



▶ **Straight River Coffee, LLC**  
 Scott Haglund  
 435 26<sup>TH</sup> ST NE, STE B, Owatonna  
 507-41-0814  
 straightrivercoffee@gmail.com



**Straight River Coffee**

▶ **Hill Bros. Transportation Inc.**  
 Al Hill  
 7850 I Street, Omaha, NE  
 402-670-9315  
 alhill@hillbros.com



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▶ **The top five merits of diversity and inclusion in the workplace include:**

Variety of perspective - You can benefit from faster decision making from teams comprised of varying backgrounds and work experiences.

Attract skilled candidates - Many people are drawn to businesses that show value for workplace diversity and inclusion.

Increased employee performance - Diversity results in more creativity, happy employees, equal distribution and resources and opportunities, which are vital in workplace performance.

Market expansion - With a diversified workforce, you can target customers from different backgrounds and walks of life.

Increased ROI - Better performance, motivation, reduced employee turnover, extended market, and other workplace diversity outcomes drive sales and return on investment.

*(See Chamber Blog for full story. Owatonna.org)*

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▶ **Driven to Help their Employees**

General Manager Brandon Ratkowski points out that “our employees bring us our success!” Owatonna Motor Company looked out for their employees and has been supporting local businesses during the pandemic. They were one of the biggest financial supporters of the Jumpstart Owatonna Program, helping small businesses that were in need.

Every Saturday at lunch time Owatonna Motor Company provides take-out from a local restaurant for their employees, helping a business sector that has been devastated by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

*(See Chamber Blog for full story. Owatonna.org)*

▶ **The OACCT Office will be closed on Thursday, November 26th and open until Noon on Friday, Novemer 27th for your Gift Certificate Orders!**

▶ **The OACCT Office will be closing at Noon on Thursday, December 24th and all-day Friday, December 25th for the holiday.**



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