

How Are Workforce Shortages Changing Business Operations?

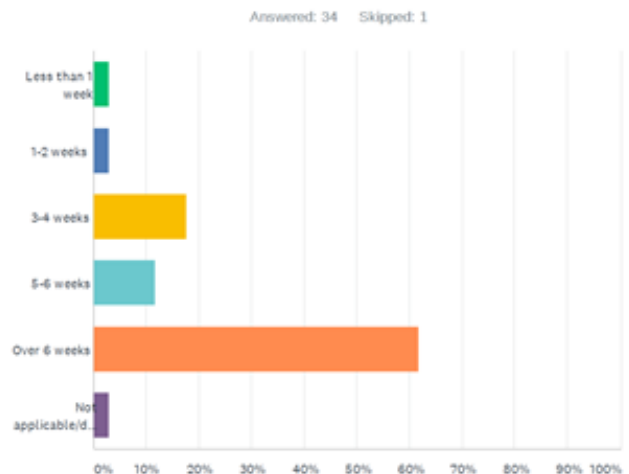
Owatonna area businesses are revamping their operations to address employee shortages and meet demands on their business. A recent survey conducted by the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism (OACCT) of its members indicate that 60% of respondents have increased overtime and 48% have decreased production because of lack of workers.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of survey respondents indicate it takes them over 6 weeks to fill their job openings.

"These survey results reflect back what we hear from our members about the challenges they are facing with the severe workforce shortages happening right now," said Brad Meier, President of the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism. "Many business leaders are making the difficult decisions to turn away work simply because they don't have enough help to get the jobs done."

When asked what is contributing to the current labor shortages, two clear answers emerged: expanded unemployment benefits and a small labor pool. In fact, 83% of respondents believe the expanded unemployment benefits of \$300 per week are a reason for the labor woes. The expanded unemployment

Q8 On average, how long has it taken to fill jobs to date in 2021?



benefits are scheduled to end in September 2021.

"Cannot possibly compete with state and federal handouts," said one of the survey respondents.

Another 60% of businesses believe the small number of available people to work is another part of the workforce challenges. In fact, the unemployment rate in Steele County has dropped down to 3.5% or 697 people in May 2021.

GO FOR THE GOLD

Join us for the Chamber Annual Golf Event on Tuesday, August 3rd starting with registration at 9 am with National Anthem and VFW Color Guard presentation 9:55 am, with a Shot Gun Start time of 10 am at the Owatonna Country Club. Lunches will be ready for pickup at 11 am.

We encourage you to dress up to the "Go for the Gold" theme! Dinner, program and awards will start shortly after 4 pm when golfers return to the clubhouse.

Title Sponsor



2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Kelly Boomgarden, Chair & Tourism Rep**
Country Inn & Suites-Owatonna
- **Nathan Dotson, Past Chair**
Dotson Woodworking
- **Todd Trout, Vice Chair**
US Bank
- **Syd Briggs, Treasurer**
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- **Deb Gillard, At-Large**
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- **Paul Smith**
Federated Insurance
- **Wayne Starman, Ex-Officio**
Cash Wise Foods



Leadership Changes



Nick Longman

► **Nick Longman** was announced as the new president of **Viracon** after Kelly Schuller announced his leaving after 10 years as president.



Dr. Jason
Wray-Raabolle

► **Dr. Jason Wray-Raabolle, M.D.**, has been named site lead physician for **Mayo Clinic Health System** in Owatonna and Faribault, MN. The site lead physician role will combine the responsibilities of Brian Bunkers, M.D., CEO of Mayo Clinic in Owatonna and Faribault, and Diane Wallner, M.D., medical director.



Steve Grams

► **Steve Grams** recently became the President/CEO of **Community Bank Owatonna**. Grams was announced after former President/CEO Tim Kluender took another position in Iowa.



Ed Hoffman

► **Randy Vargason**, President/CEO of **Gandy Company** recently retired his position.

► **Owatonna Fire Department**, welcome **Ed Hoffman** who is the new Owatonna Fire Chief replacing Mike Johnson who retired as Fire Chief a position which he held since 2001.



Todd Trout

► **R & K Electric** owner Kerri Kuhn recently sold her business to **Eric & Lisa Kylo** and also celebrated 50 years in business in Owatonna.

► **Todd Trout** has been promoted to Community Market President for **U.S. Bank, Owatonna**. Former President Corey Mensink has taken a new role with U.S. Bank.



Michael Johnston

► **Adams Publishing Group** (Owatonna People's Press) names **Randy Rickman**, Regional President of APG Media of Southern Minnesota.

► **Michael Johnston** named new President of **Allina Health** for Owatonna and District One Hospitals.



Welcome to Summer Intern, Kismet Richardson

who is currently

attending Louisiana State University with a major in Marketing and a minor in Management. Kismet will be with the Chamber until September.



Congrats to Shirley Schultz

MainStreet Director who has announced her retirement effective June 30, 2021. For the last 4 years Shirley has led the MainStreet Owatonna initiatives including:

MainStreet America Strategic Plan, Downtown Thursdays, Wayfinding, EDA Façade programs, Streetscape planning, Flower Basket program, Farmers Market, OBP work and much more.

► DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

► Downtown

#BuildingOwatonna

Streetscape Ribbon Cutting event was held on June 3rd with many investors, business owners and community supporters attending.

Work began on June 21st with the 300-block of North Cedar, sidewalks in front of the buildings are intended to remain open for as long as possible. Work on the 200-block is anticipated to begin in late July and are subject to change due to weather conditions. For the latest updates visit Owatonna.org.



Downtown Merchants



Ambassadors



Stakeholders



The Downtown Owatonna cameras are **LIVE!**

You can watch the progress happening downtown anytime by visiting www.owatonna.org/buildingowatonna



► OHS School Construction

Drone footage of the Owatonna New High School construction is available on the Owatonna Public Schools website under New High School – Construction Updates. A ground breaking ceremony was held on May 6th.



► Bridge Street Project

Bridge Street Project began Phase 1 on May 3rd with the first phase to be completed mid July. Detour map and updates on the project are available on the City of Owatonna website, www.ci.owatonna.mn.us along with other projects for 2021.



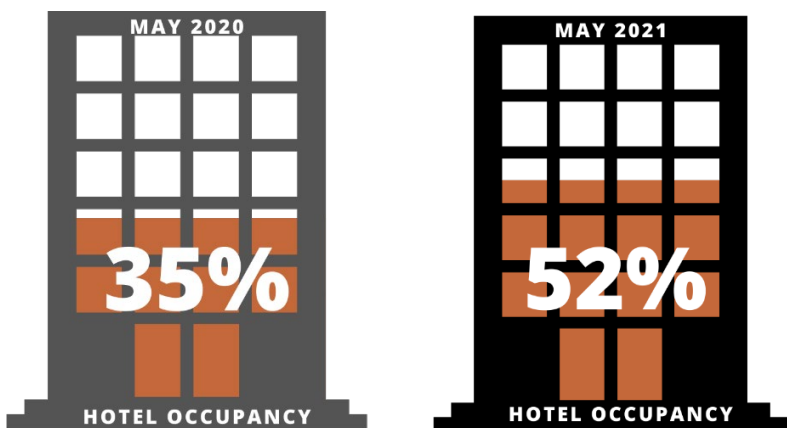
Hotel Uptick = Big Spending in Owatonna

As the pandemic comes to a finish, the craving for people to get out and travel is up and we're seeing that right here in Owatonna! In May of 2021, we saw an increase of 45% in hotel occupancy and a 99% increase in revenue from May of last year. These are very promising numbers while we approach the summer travel season.

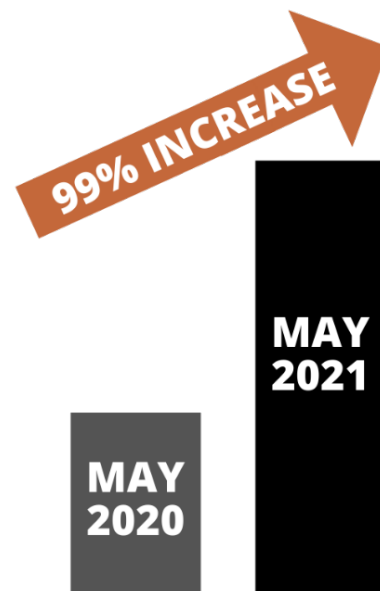
When hotel occupancy and revenue increase so does direct and indirect economic impact. Visitors that come to Owatonna, send money indirectly by filling up for gas, eating, shopping, and attending events in the community. For each \$100 of spending on lodging (room revenue plus taxes on lodging), hotel guests spend another \$222 in our community.

May's occupancy Pre Covid averages around 57%. So, the fact that occupancy is up in the 50 percent is very encouraging considering Corky's Early Bird Softball tournament was pushed to July 2021.

HOTEL OCCUPANCY May 2020 vs May 2021



HOTEL REVENUE May 2020 vs May 2021

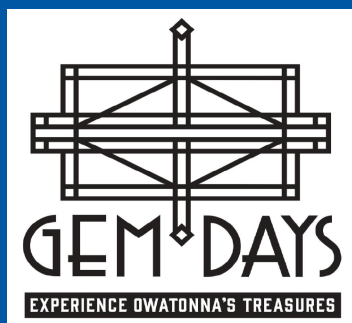


Occupancy rates measure the percentage of available rooms that are occupied in each period.

Downtown Thursday FoodMusicShoppingArt



July's 2021 Downtown Thursday had a total of 13 vendors, 6 food vendors, and 2 fantastic performances, Mainstreet was alive. Watch for information concerning August 5th Downtown Thursday! A big thank you to our sponsor Metronet and all our volunteers.



Gem Days July 18-24

Experience Owatonna's Treasures with GEM DAYS! Historic building, beautiful parks and trails, history, legends, attractions, and distractions. Events include

sidewalk sales, live music, food trucks, outdoor movie, tournaments, parades, tours, contests & more!

► **Box Babes**

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OwatonnaBoxBabes@gmail.com



► **Minimizer**

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www.minimizer.com



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► **REM Woodvale**

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► **Foremost Brewing Cooperative**

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Foremostbrewingcooperative@gmail.com



► **SEMCAC**

Doug Grout
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► **Hat Chic Clothing Co./ Embroider Everything**

Tanya Henson
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507-213-1227
thehatchic@gmail.com



► **Happy Tails Pet Store**

Barry Benjamin
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happytailspetstore@yahoo.com



OCLA Participants Celebrate Delayed Graduation and Ready to Get Involved!

Congratulations to the 2019/2020 Owatonna Community Leadership Academy graduating class: Carissa Oeltjenbruns, Mayo Clinic Health System- Owatonna; Kerri Lynch, JA of the Upper Midwest; Aaron Thompson, Viracon; Bruce Moore, HomeTown Credit Union; Janita

Paulson, RE/MAX Venture; Jessica Abrahams, City of Owatonna-Park & Rec; Robin Spande, Owatonna Public Library, Tess Brown, Federated Insurance and Annie Grimmus, Federated Insurance.

Not pictured: Travis Daniels, Pearson; Anna Wagoner, Einhaus, Mattison, Carver & Haberman, P.A.; Eric Miller, U.S. Bank; Katlin Verlautz, Trinity Lutheran Church and Sheena Gasner.



Thank You!



Senator Jasinski



Representative Petersburg

Key Owatonna Business Priorities Pass MN Legislature

Two of the OACCT's top legislative priorities for the business community survived the legislative process and were signed into law: PPP Tax Conformity and funding to reopen the Owatonna Workforce Center. **PPP Tax Conformity:** the long awaited conformity will eliminate state taxes on the income from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a key lifeline for hundreds of businesses in the Owatonna area during covid shutdowns. This conformity matches Federal tax rules and in most cases will be refunded to businesses automatically by the Dept. of Revenue. **Owatonna Workforce Center:** \$275,000/year for the next 2 years to reopen the Owatonna Workforce Center was approved the Jobs Bill. The center provides job and career training/retraining and counseling services. Details on where the center will locate and specific services will be coming soon. Thank you to Senator Jasinski and Representative Petersburg for their support and leadership on both of these important issues for business!

► Owatonna Job Fair Promises Big Marketing Push

The Chamber is partnering with KOWZ to provide a job fair for businesses and the community with a big regional PR push. The Owatonna Job Fair will be on **Saturday, August 7th from 9 am – 1 pm** at the Four Seasons Centre for full time & part time positions. For more information on how your business can participate, contact mattewh@kowzonline.com.



WWW.OWATONNAJOBFAIR.COM

FULL TIME & PART TIME POSITIONS

OWATONNA JOB FAIR

Health Care, Professional Services, Manufacturing, Customer Service, Food Service, and More!

SATURDAY, AUGUST 7
9 AM - 1 PM
FOUR SEASONS CENTER

CONNECT • LEARN • APPLY • INTERVIEW

► CHAMBER EVENTS Update

BUSINESS after HOURS

July 27
5:30 – 7:00 PM

Sponsor: Bridges Chiropractic Health Clinic
Location: 215 18th ST SE, Owatonna



August 13
5:30 – 7:00 PM

Sponsor: Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices Advantage Real Estate,
Block Plumbing & Heating,
Cash Wise Foods and
Steele County Free Fair



Location: Steele County Free Fair
Beer Gardens

August 24
5:30 – 7:00 PM

Sponsor: Minnesota Secured Title
Location: 245 SE 18th ST, Owatonna



Chamber Golf Tournament August 3rd

Registration: 9:00am
Shot-Gun Start: 10:00am
Social & Evening Meal: 4:00pm
Awards & Program: 5 pm

Location: Owatonna Country Club

Title Sponsor:



Downtown Thursday August 5 5:00 – 8:00 pm

Location: North Cedar
& Central Park

Sponser: **METRONET**
Fiber Optic Internet, TV and Phone

Chamber Pack Deadline

Supply 550 copies of your promotional insert by for September/October mailing; \$150 by August 25th.

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



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