

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Update

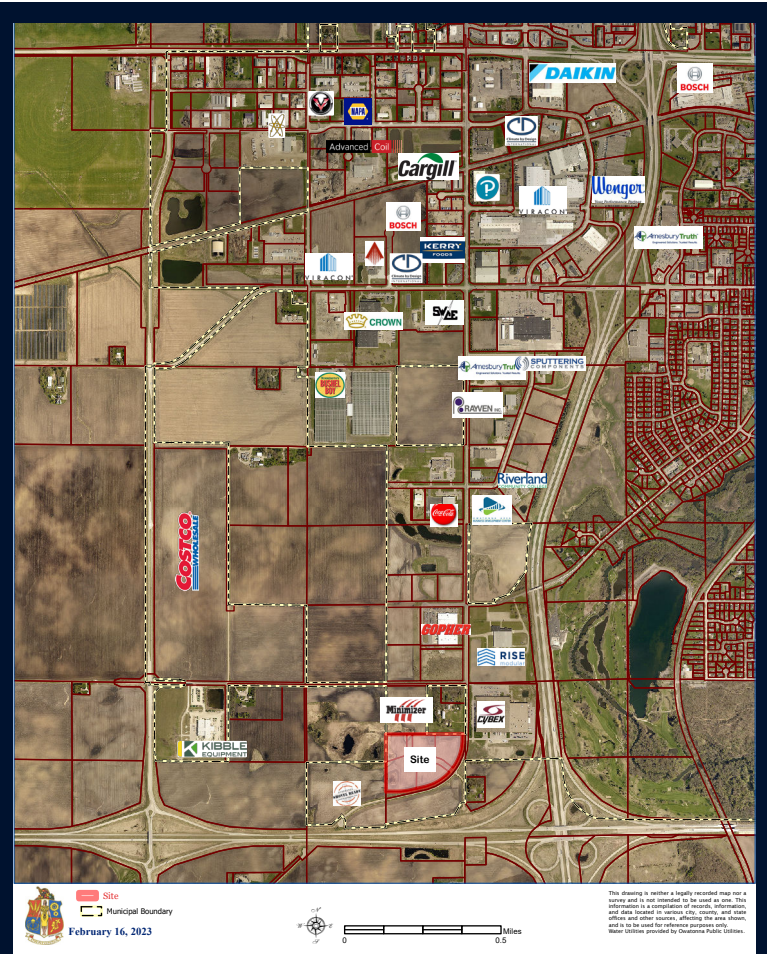
### 16-Year-Olds Working in Manufacturing? YST Makes It Possible



The Youth Skills Training (YST) program is gaining major traction at Owatonna High School this year, and now an \$82,000 grant will expand the program to IT, Agriculture, and Healthcare. The program allows students 16 years and older to work in an industry of interest to them and since getting started, Brian Coleman-OHS Career Navigator has had more than 50 students work in manufacturing. For businesses, there is a process to be a YST site that ensures the safety of the children and an enriching work environment. They are in need of businesses in IT, Agriculture, and Healthcare to participate. Interested in learning more? [BColeman@ISD761.org](mailto:BColeman@ISD761.org).

### Owatonna Awarded Top Micropolitan

For the 3rd time in 4 years, Owatonna is being recognized as a top micropolitan by Site Selection Magazine. Owatonna is not just ranked, but the #1 micropolitan in the state of Minnesota! This recognition is featured in the March issue of the magazine. The micropolitan rankings is for corporate site selection projects. The last time Owatonna was recognized with this award was 2019 and 2020.



### Map Shows Owatonna's Global Marketplace

Did you know that when potential developers come through Owatonna's industrial park that they are blown away by the number of industries here? The manufacturing reach of Owatonna continues to grow as you can see by this marketing map recently put together by the City of Owatonna. The impressive visual allows us to highlight the strength and infrastructure here for industrial growth.

2023

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## ► Chamber Moving Locations Soon

The exact timing of the chamber move from our current location at 320 Hoffman Drive to the new location at 120 S. Oak is still being coordinated, but here is the plan as of writing the newsletter.

- Finalizing remodel work plans for new location, mainly the north portion of the building which will be the conference room.
- April/May close on the property sale and purchase of new building.
- May/June relocate office.
- August/September complete work on conference space.

## ► Livability Releases 5 New Articles on Owatonna



The Owatonna Partners for Economic Development has continued its partnership with Livability.com to create a second set of articles that highlight some of Owatonna's greatest attributes. These articles are released and promoted outside of Owatonna through Livability's network. Have you seen them? If not, check out the Chamber Facebook page for links!

- The Cost of Living Diaries: Owatonna, Minnesota
- Why Owatonna, Minnesota, Is a Great Place To Raise a Family
- Why I Built My Business in Owatonna, Minnesota
- 4 Seasons of Outdoor Fun in Owatonna, Minnesota
- Why Owatonna, MN, Is a Mecca for Music Lovers

## ► **ADVOCACY** Update | Brad Meier, President/CEO

### ► Two Leave Bills Stack Burden on Small Business

The legislature is moving a "sick and safe" leave mandate that all employers regardless of size provide up to 80 hours of fully paid time off for every employee, including temporary and part-time workers.

This proposal is in addition to another proposal that would mandate up to 24 weeks of paid family and medical leave on our business community (HF 2) that will stack upon these 80 mandated hours.

The cost, compliance, and operational impacts of these mandates put pressure on employers, especially small employers. Increased costs further limit resources available for employee compensation, job growth, and expansion in Minnesota.





SMTA is a collaborative regional marketing association promoting travel to Steele County, along with 35 other counties across the southern Minnesota region.

## Thirty-five Southern Minnesota counties collaborate in tourism marketing efforts

We are excited to welcome The Southern Minnesota Tourism Association (SMTA) to Owatonna on March 16. Through collaborative marketing efforts of SMTA, along with Explore Minnesota and each community's tourism organization, Southern Minnesota is marketed as a viable and unique travel destination to non-resident, and resident travelers. The organization offers educational and peer networking opportunities to share ideas, hear updates about each community's plans to help generate travel and tourism for their county.



## Over 250 regional and local businesses showcased at upcoming tradeshows

A good indication that spring is on the way is when we welcome The North American Farm and Power Show March 16-18, and the KOWZ/KRUE Home Show March 24-26. Both events are FREE TO ATTENDEES and held at the Four Seasons Centre.

## Home of Minnesota's 2023 Governor's Pheasant Hunting Opener October 13-14

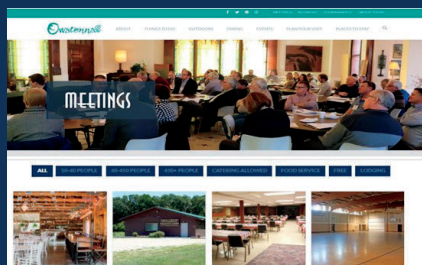
### Calling all Hunters!

As we prepare for the 2023 Governor's Pheasant Hunting Opener, the event committee is seeking hunters who are interested in embracing the role of an ambassador for our community, while at the same time sharing their pheasant hunting skills. We are looking for Hunter Hosts who will demonstrate ethical hunting, patience, and a positive attitude. A key part of the GPHO is to help invited guests experience pheasant hunting in the Owatonna area. These guests have a range of hunting skills; some are proficient hunters while others are novices. As a Hunter Host, you will help your guests have the best hunting experience possible. Your guests could include elected officials, event sponsors, community leaders and/or members of the media. Interested? Contact Glenda Smith at [gsmith@owatonna.org](mailto:gsmith@owatonna.org) to receive the form to fill out online in order to be considered.



## Local events support Owatonna's non-profit organizations

Springtime invites a variety of ways to support our local organizations while enjoying entertainment and connecting to our community—both great reasons to invite your family and friends to Owatonna! Hometown Sampler kicks it all off in March each year, Hops for Habitat is held in April, and Corky's Early Bird Tournament is held in May. Over \$82,000 was donated to local organizations in 2022, raised from these events alone! We are grateful to our event organizers, business partnerships, volunteers and our community who, by working together, gives back to the community and organizations that each event supports. Check our Calendar of Events for a list of all the great events supporting so many important organizations in Owatonna.



## Update your Meeting Spaces Listing at [visitowatonna.org](https://visitowatonna.org)

We continue to see increased interest in organizations holding in-person meetings again. If you are the owner or manager of one of our great meeting venues, please take the time to review your venue listing at: <https://visitowatonna.org/meetings/> and send any changes in amenities, facilities, meeting spaces or updated photos to [gsmith@owatonna.org](mailto:gsmith@owatonna.org)

## ► Coming Soon to an (Owatonna) MainStreet Near YOU!

Planning for upcoming events has begun in full force for Owatonna MainStreet! Take a look at what's coming in the near future!

### 21 Years of Keeping Downtown Clean



*RE/MAX Venture employees take a quick break from serving the participants of the Downtown Clean Up.*

MainStreet loves partnering with the ALC (Alternative Learning Center), the City of Owatonna-Street

Department, RE/MAX Venture, and amazing businesses that donate food, gift cards and supplies to make Downtown Owatonna look great! The day is filled with working, learning, relationship building, and eating. Be watching on the 18th of May for the beautifying to begin. If your business would like to assist email: [lcochran@owatonna.org](mailto:lcochran@owatonna.org).

### How Do We Welcome Visitors to Downtown Owatonna?

In keeping with our annual tradition, the MainStreet District will again be hanging our home-grown Flower Baskets. The baskets go up around Memorial Day, they are planted at Soubas Greenhouse in March and by the time they are on display, the bright and vivid colors create a welcoming scene. Did you know the cost to plant and maintain a single basket is over \$125.00 per season? We will have 130



*A flower basket waiting to be placed on a light pole by Central Park*

baskets this year! Please consider donating to the Flower Basket Fund so we can keep this tradition going. And growing. The form can be found at [Owatonna.org](http://Owatonna.org), Click MainStreet/Community Flower Baskets or pick up at the Chamber office.

### 3 Reasons You Should Apply for \$10,000

1. Your building needs new windows, awning, paint, upgraded lighting, or doors.
2. You want to add a sprinkler system, elevator, or ADA compliant restrooms.

3. You want your building to look updated yet timeless, while being a good steward of the history and uniqueness of Downtown Owatonna while also being able to capitalize on the desirability and usefulness of your building.

MainStreet Owatonna, along with the EDA, have a forgivable loan (yes, forgivable!) for improvements to buildings in the MainStreet District. You can find the application and more information at [www.owatonnabiz.com](http://www.owatonnabiz.com) under Business Support.



*Laura Knopik took advantage of the forgivable loan through MainStreet and EDA.*

### Because People had so Much Fun, Downtown Thursdays are back

There will be FOUR Downtown Thursday events this year – June, July, August and September! This is exciting as it means more entertainment, more food, more shopping and more FUN! All musical entertainment is booked. Check out their websites or Facebook pages and get ready to groove in Downtown Owatonna.

June 1st – Showmobile: Lunar Tunes Music Park Stage: Branded Hot Country

July 6th – Showmobile: The Shifties Park Stage: The Dee Miller Band

August 3rd – Showmobile: GTX Duo Park Stage: The Geoff Elvee Trio

September 7th – Showmobile: Little Chicago Park Stage: Jeremy Poland & Lantz Dale

Check out future Tuesday Talk e-newsletters for updates on vendors and food!





Brad Fischer  
Director of Membership

## Chamber Boasts 5-Star Accreditation and 93% Renewal Rate

The Owatonna Chamber currently has 540 members. For an area our size that is a very large number!

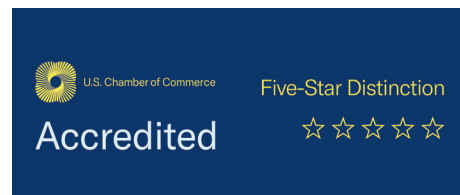
One of the things that I love about my job as Director of Membership is getting out and visiting with our current and future members.

I visit a lot of members each week (I'll show you the bottoms of my shoes, they're pretty worn!) and enjoy the impromptu what I call "State of Your Business" meetings.

We have a lot of members, but between the Chamber staff, Chamber Board and the Chamber Ambassadors, we are able to visit with most of our members each year.

I always like to remind our members that our Chamber is a "Five Star Accredited" Chamber, (the highest level from the US Chamber) less than 2% of chambers can make that claim. What does that mean? Well, as I like to say, it means we do a lot of things and we do them very well.

I think our member businesses agree as our renewal rate is approaching 95%. If I haven't been in to see you in a while or if you're reading this and thinking maybe about joining the Chamber, please reach out to me and let's get together.



## NEW MEMBERS

Brad Fischer, Director of Membership

### Birchwood Cottages

Andrea Rupe  
1905 Austin Rd, Owatonna  
507-413-6800  
andrear@birchwoodcottagesmn.com



### Let's Smile, Inc.

Holly Jorgensen  
155 Oakdale ST, Owatonna  
507-455-4063  
letssmile@outlook.com



### Dan Gorman – Associate Member

PO Box 893, Owatonna  
507-456-9070  
nednimble@gmail.com

### Wells Fargo Advisors Financial Network

Paul Enter  
102 N Cedar, Owatonna  
507-414-8001  
paul.enter@wfafinet.com



Chamber Office be closed at noon on  
Friday, April 7th in observation of Good Friday.

## ▶ Want To Keep Your Young Employees?

Get them connected through Y-Pro. Plug into the community with other young professionals with so many opportunities to love where you LIVE, WORK & PLAY! Lunch and Learns, Social events, fitness and outdoor activities, and community engagements.

### Upcoming Events Include:

Y-Pro Social Thursday, March 16th from 5:30 – 7:00 pm  
at Foremost Brewery, 131 W Broadway ST.

### Giving Back to the Community

Saturday Apr 1, 2023  
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM CDT

Y-Pro is partnering with Two Rivers Habitat for Humanity for their Hops for Habitat event coming up on Saturday April 1, 2023. Y-Pro Volunteers will have an opportunity to help in a variety of ways, and will have free access to the event after their allotted volunteer time to sample beers from 30+ breweries and enjoy live music by Paul Hanna. The event is located at the Steele County Four Seasons Centre.



## ▶ **EVENTS** | Julia Seykora, Events Director

## ▶ Memories To Be Made, Golf To Be Played



### MEMBER GOLF EVENT

The Chamber's annual golf event is the CANNOT MISS event of the summer! Each year, teams compete for prizes, and both golfers and sponsors play along with special themes. The 2023 Annual Chamber Golf Event will be held on Tuesday, August 1st, 2023, starting at 10 am at the Owatonna Country Club. Shot Gun Start! Big Cup format!! Registration & check in will start at 9 am with lunch pickup at the turn around 11 am.

The 2023 Theme is 'Show your School Spirit' so dress to the theme! Hole sponsors competed for the coveted traveling trophy for the best display at a hole. Congratulations to Fareway Meat & Grocery on the 2022 Hole Sponsor of the year award!

This annual golf event is the perfect playing field for networking, marketing, and a break from the daily grind. There are many ways your business can be a part of this event, whether it is by becoming a sponsor or getting a team together to hit the course! Thank you to Title Sponsor, Steele Waseca-Cooperative Electric.

Contact the OACCT for event sponsorship and registration information.  
Email: [jseykora@owatonna.org](mailto:jseykora@owatonna.org)



Headline Sponsor





## ► Federated Mutual Insurance Company

For more than 119 years, Federated Insurance® has made its business about people. In 1904, Federated Insurance was founded in Minnesota by an association of business owners seeking more affordable property insurance, tailored to meet the needs of their industry. In the following years, the company continued to grow and diversify its portfolio of business, becoming among the nation's first multi-line insurance companies with its expansion into liability coverage.

By the end of the 20th century, it was among the largest mutual insurance companies in the nation. This mutual structure allowed Federated to base decisions on what's best for clients, not stockholder returns and investments. Since its inception, Federated has differentiated itself by valuing partnerships, and has more than 523 state, regional, and national associations and buying groups recommendations. Federated Insurance is rated A+ (Superior) by industry analyst A.M. Best®.

Headquartered in Owatonna, Minnesota, Federated has nearly a dozen service offices across the country. It's direct distribution model means there are hundreds of marketing representatives working directly with clients and providing the highest level of service.

Federated specializes in business insurance and risk management services for select industries. The multi-line company offers a variety of coverages, including: property and casualty, life and disability, workers compensation, surety and bonding, and business succession and estate planning services.

In addition, Federated has created a robust library of risk management resources and programs. In 2023, Federated will host business owners from across the country in Owatonna for Federated's Risk Management Academy seminars. These seminars feature information on risk management best practices and peer networking.

Federated is proud to have a culture rooted in philanthropy and honoring commitments. In 2022, the company aided numerous local organizations including the Owatonna Foundation, Community Pathways of Steele County, Junior Achievement, and the United Way through corporate contributions and volunteer time. But perhaps its most well-known philanthropic effort is the annual Federated Challenge®. The July 2022 event raised \$3,876,000 for the three Big Brothers Big Sisters® Minnesota agencies and Big Brothers Big Sisters America.

As a mutual insurance company, we believe our value is measured by the success of our clients. It's Our Business To Protect Yours®.



*Federated's iconic Charles I. Buxton Building, located in downtown Owatonna, will be 100 years old in 2023. There will be employee and community celebration to commemorate its impressive history.*



*Federated hosted a Bring Your Little to Work day where Federated employees brought their Big Brothers Big Sisters Little to work for an evening of fun!*

## ► OWATONNA COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The Owatonna Community Leadership Academy is a leadership program designed to enable candidates to learn about Owatonna resources, values, strengths, weaknesses, and challenges. A learning experience providing an in-depth look at eight key elements of our community: education, economic development, government, healthcare, public safety, quality of life, agriculture, and culture & diversity. This program provides opportunities for candidates to exchange ideas, build networks, and begin the process of identifying and solving community issues. View the complete OCLA brochure at [Owatonna.org](http://Owatonna.org) or contact Julia Seykora for questions and to apply.



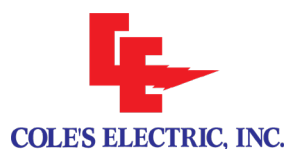
**June 2023 Deadline!!**



### ► CHAMBER GROWTH BREAKFAST SERIES

**March 16 7:30 – 9:00 AM**

Topic: State of the City Address - Special Business Inside Look  
Torey's Restaurant & Bar (upper level), 208 N. Cedar AVE  
Cost is \$20 per event or \$180 for entire series  
Sponsors: Cole's Electric & Fastenal



### ► YOUNG PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL

**March 16**

**5:30 – 7:00 PM**

Location: Foremost Brewery  
Basement Event Space, 131 W Broadway St, Owatonna  
Free to all passholders (advanced registration requested)  
\$10 for all guests

### ► CHAMBER GROWTH AT LUNCH

**April 6 \*\*Note Early Date\*\***

**Noon – 1:30 PM**

Location: Torey's Restaurant & Bar, 208 N. Cedar  
Topic: Conversation with 1st Congressional District,  
Congressman Brad Finstad

### ► BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

**March 28**

**5:30 – 7:00 PM**

Sponsor(s): SpareTime Entertainment  
Location: 333 18th ST SE, Owatonna



### ► BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

**April 25**

**5:30 – 7:00 PM**

Sponsor(s): Souba Greenhouse and Presto Janitorial, a  
division of Service Solutions Center  
Location: 4003 Crane Creek RD, Owatonna



### ► YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

**April 1**

**2:00 – 5:00 PM**

Two Rivers Hops for Habitat for Humanity  
Location: Steele County Four Seasons Centers

## Chamber Pack Deadline

Supply 550 copies of your promotional insert by for May/June mailing; \$150 by **April 27th.**



AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TOURISM

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Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 AM-5 PM

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