

Leisure

Community Strengths:

PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS

There are many opportunities to see and participate in performances and view various exhibitions throughout the year and in many settings. Cultural opportunities for a community of this size are exceptional.

OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

A strong draw to this county is its proximity to many lakes and waterways. Our natural resources provide many high quality, varied, and seasonal sporting and recreational outdoor activities.

VARIETY OF THINGS TO DO

Family activities are in abundance, are widely varied, and are low in cost. Choices include sporting leagues, events and programs, libraries, clubs, and continuing education.

COMMITTMENT AND VALUE TO STRENGTHEN LEISURE ACTIVITIES

The community places a high value on its variety of leisure activities and there is a strong leadership to improve and expand existing opportunities.

Community Challenges:

FINANCIAL CONCERNS

The economic climate may make funding for leisure activities a lower priority in the future. This is compounded because it is difficult to measure the effectiveness and value of leisure activities in improving the quality of life.

DISPOSABLE TIME

People have less time to participate in activities and have to make careful choices about how to spend their time. Identifying what people want and providing opportunities that meet their needs and time constraints are challenges. Gaps may exist for special needs populations.

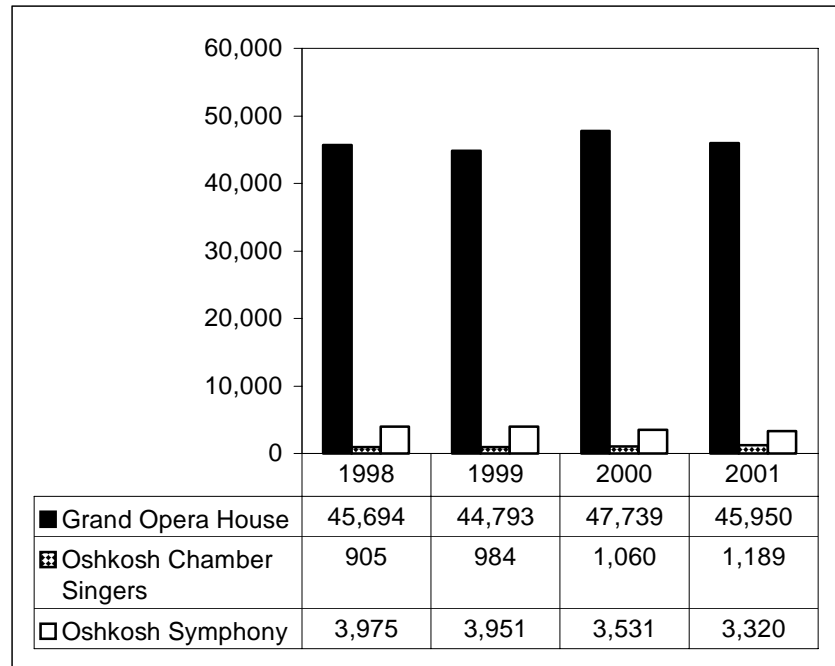
Performing Arts Attendance

Annual attendance at performing arts events in Oshkosh

- The 2001 total attendance at Oshkosh area Performing Arts events declined 4% from 2000, but is about the same as it was in 1998.
- Per capita attendance at performing arts events in 2001 was 1.25 compared to 1.15 in 1998. Patrons of these events come from other communities as well as Oshkosh.

Why Are We Concerned?

Performing arts events (including music, dance and drama) both entertain and broaden our cultural horizons. Healthy attendance at performing arts activities enriches the quality of life of the community. Strong performing arts institutions also contribute to economic development by attracting people from outside the community



and providing a quality of life feature that is attractive to business considering locating in the area.

Performing Arts Attendance

During any given week in Oshkosh and the surrounding area, there are a variety of performing arts events to attend. The community's performing arts organizations present a diverse calendar of events including Broadway hits, ballets, plays, concerts, dance troupes, vocalists, jazz and rock bands, and full-scale orchestras. Many other performing arts events sponsored by schools, colleges, churches, and other organizations are not included in these statistics. The data presented here represents

only the events sponsored by the largest organizations. Other events may be added in future years.

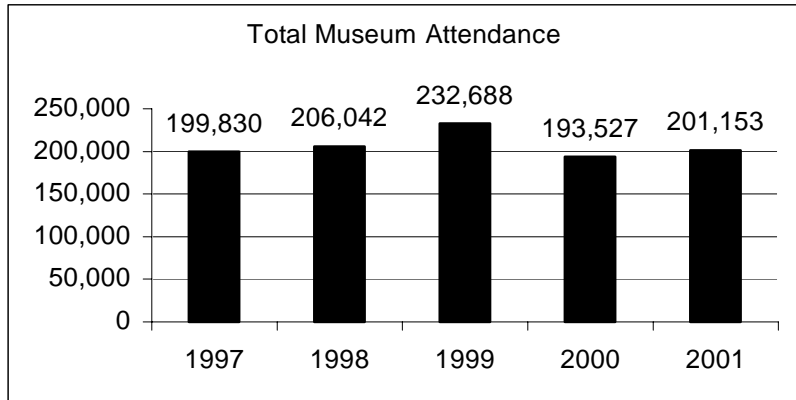
Issues to Watch

Most of these organizations rely on ticket sales and private donor support to survive. With the opening of the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, it will be important to notice whether the audience expands or whether the PAC cuts into the audience and donor base of some of our institutions.

Source: Grand Opera House, Oshkosh Chamber Singers, Oshkosh Symphony

Museum Attendance

While overall museum attendance increased only 2% since 1997—attendance at the Oshkosh Public Museum increased 245%.



Why Are We Concerned?

Oshkosh museums and art galleries perform important functions in our community. They preserve and interpret our history and culture. They provide opportunities to experience the art and culture of other times and places. And they attract visitors to the area, which helps the local economy. Strong attendance is a reflection of interest and pride in our history and culture, and therefore reflects favorably on our quality of life.

Oshkosh Museums

EAA Airventure Museum – is one of the most extensive aviation attractions in the world with a collection of more than 250 historic airplanes and five movie theaters. Vintage airplane rides are available at Pioneer Airport. Visit the Eagle Hangar, a tribute to World War II aviation or Hangar X, an exciting interactive gallery for kids of all ages!

Military Veterans Museum - opened its doors in Park Plaza (now City Center), Oshkosh in 1991. The MVM is not intended to glorify war but rather to remember the price of freedom with historic military displays, guided tours, speakers bureau and a library of information.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
EAA Museum	146,030	148,502	167,910	123,226	126,448
Oshkosh Public Museum	12,106	20,316	26,290	31,384	41,786
Paine Art Center	39,773	35,730	36,997	37,534	31,942
Military Museum	1,921	1,494	1,491	1,383	977
Total	199,830	206,042	232,688	193,527	201,153

Oshkosh Public Museum - has been delighting visitors since 1924 with exhibits created from a collection of more than 250,000 artifacts, images, and documents. The museum tells the rich story of exploration, settlement, and development of the Lake Winnebago Region in Wisconsin. The museum is housed in the 1908 Edwardian mansion of lumber baron Edgar P. Sawyer and the modern William Steiger addition.

Paine Art Center & Gardens The Paine Art Center and Gardens was established in 1948, through the foresight and generosity of Nathan and Jessie Kimberly Paine. The exquisite decorative and fine art collections are housed in a

Tudor Revival mansion, surrounded by botanical gardens.

Issues to Watch

The Public Museum is funded primarily by property tax support from the City of Oshkosh. Any threats to shared revenues at the state level could result in serious cuts in funding for the Museum. All the museums rely heavily on private donations and attendance receipts. The recession has affected private giving which could also have a negative effect on the museums.

Sources: EAA Museum, Military Museum, Oshkosh Public Museum, Paine Art Center

Library Expenditures & Usage

Per capita expenditures and circulation for Oshkosh Public Library (OPL)

- In 2001, 46,650 or 53% of OPL service area residents have library cards.
- OPL had the 4th highest per capita circulation among similar size Wisconsin libraries in 2001.
- There were 171,100 visits to the library's website, www.oshkoshpubliclibrary.org

Why Are We Concerned?

Libraries provide opportunities for people of all ages and financial means to read, learn and access information essential to citizens in a democratic society. Adequate funding enhances the quality of life by ensuring that the library can both meet resident's reading interests and information needs with traditional print resources, new media and electronic resources.

Oshkosh Public Library

Oshkosh Public Library consists of a Main Library, a bookmobile that primarily serves outlying towns and most schools and also provides rotating deposit collections to about 30 senior housing and childcare locations. The number of items circulated

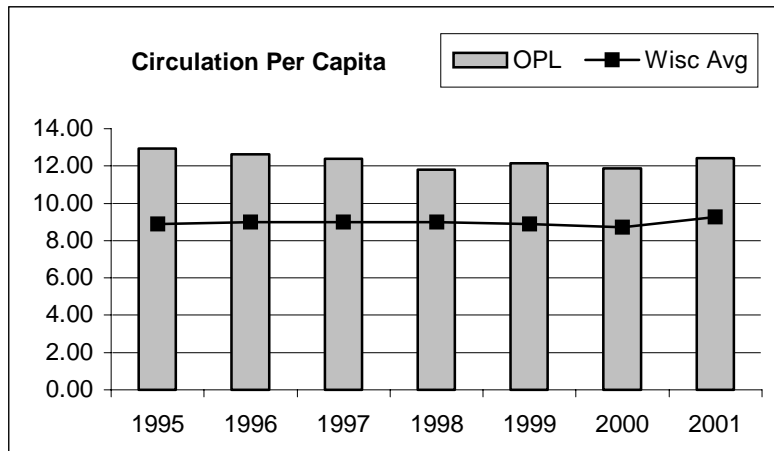
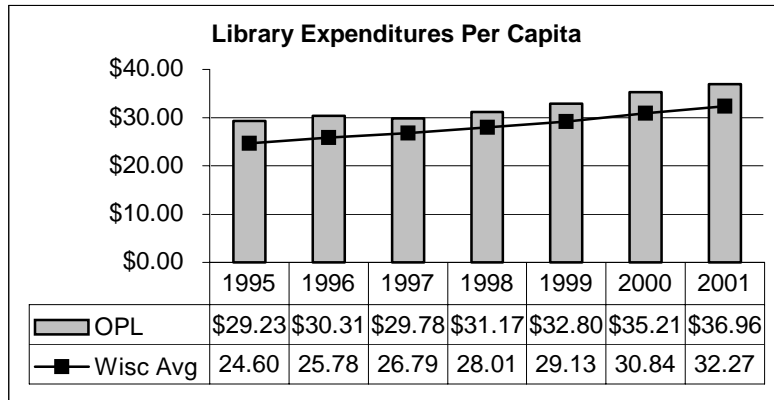
is a good indicator of the community's interest in continuing to read and learn. Use of new electronic full text resources is growing rapidly and will become an ever more important measure of library use.

Library funding comes primarily from city and county property taxes with important supplemental funding coming from private donations.

Issues to Watch

Since the library is primarily funded through local property taxes, the impact of the state

budget deficit on local funding is of concern.

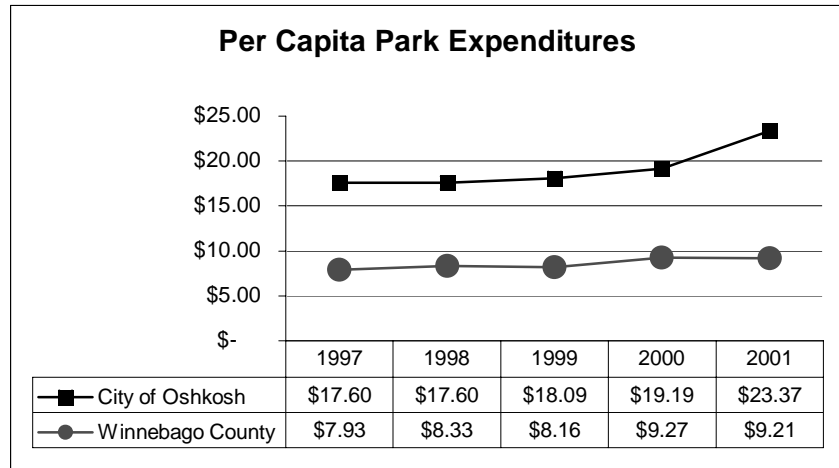


	2001 Per Capita Expenditures
Menasha PL	\$43.96
Neenah PL	\$38.68
Omro PL	\$37.37
Oshkosh PL	\$36.96
Winneconne	\$23.43
WI Average	\$31.36

Sources: Oshkosh Public Library; Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Wisconsin Library Service Record.

Park Expenditures

Per capita expenditures by the Oshkosh and Winnebago County Park Departments



Why Are We Concerned?

City and county parks provide an array of recreational opportunities to all age groups at little or no cost. A well-financed park department assures the continuation of free and low cost recreational opportunities that contribute significantly to the quality of life for all citizens.

Our Park System

The City of Oshkosh and Winnebago County operate two separate park systems. Each operates with its own facilities, objectives and budgets. Both are funded primarily by property tax levies. Winnebago County levies a countywide tax for support of the county park system, which includes Oshkosh taxpayers. The City of Oshkosh levies a tax to support the City park system.

The City of Oshkosh park system includes 37 parks encompassing about 324 acres plus Lakeshore Municipal Golf Course with an additional 98 acres. They range from small neighborhood parks with multi-use facilities and boat launch areas, to larger community parks with a wider range of facilities (ball diamonds, playgrounds, picnic areas and carnival rides). In 2001, the City spent \$1,477,780 to maintain and develop the City Park System. That represents a 42% increase since 1997.

The Winnebago County park system includes 3 parks encompassing about 371.5 acres, 2 Nature Preserves encompassing 119 acres, and the Lasley Point Archeological Site, which is 47.7 acres. Winnebago County Community Park includes 3 fishing lakes, soccer fields, tennis courts, ball diamonds, playgrounds, a swimming lake, picnic shelters and a 9 acre fenced area that

provides dog owners a secure environment to exercise their canine friends off-leash. In 2001, the County spent \$1,573,094 to maintain and develop the County Park System. That represents a 22% increase since 1997.

Issues to Watch

As the population of Oshkosh and Winnebago County continues to grow, the demand for park space and services continues to grow. Since parks are primarily property tax funded, the state budget deficit could impact park system funding if the state chooses to cut shared revenues to local governments and if local governments then choose to cut park spending.

Source: City of Oshkosh Annual Reports, City of Oshkosh Annual Budgets, Winnebago County Annual Budgets and Census Bureau