



CITY OF OWOSSO

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

March 2026

Presented to the Owosso City Council

Prepared by the Office of the City Manager
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Community Development

Building Permits – Commercial Activity

The following commercial building permits were issued or active during March 2026:

- 117 W Exchange St – Demolition of building. Demolition begins April 7; expected to last approximately one month. W. Exchange St will be partially closed from the east side of the building to Ball St. Sidewalk on the north side remains open.
- 201 W Main – Removal of deteriorated awning.
- 780 McMillan – New recycling center.

Marihuana Licenses

Type	Address	Status
Grow	1370 E South St	Medical/Recreational – Renewed Sept. 2025
Grow	1455 Industrial	Recreational – Renewed Oct. 2025
Grow	1750 E South St	Recreational – Renewed March 2026
Processing	1750 E South St Ste. 1	Recreational – Renewed Jan. 2026
Retail	117 E Main St	Medical & Recreational – Renewed Oct. 2025
Retail	200 E Main	Recreational – Renewed May 2025
Retail	116 N Washington	Recreational – Renewed Jan. 2026

MSHDA / Housing Grants

The City continues to actively leverage state and federal housing grant funding. The following summarizes current and upcoming grant activity:

Program	Grant Amt.	Admin. Reimb.	Scope / Status
NEP Round 8 (2023)	\$70,000	\$5,000	5 homes – Completed
NEP Round 9 (2024)	\$70,000	\$2,500	3 homes – Completed
NEP Round 9 Public Amenity (2024)	\$15,000	\$0	Grand Ave Park Equipment – Completed
MI-HOPE (2024–25)	\$250,000	\$15,000	11 homes, energy efficient – Completed
MI-HOPE Hi-Performer (2024–25)	\$100,000	\$0	5 homes, energy efficient – Completed
MIN 1.0 & 2.0 CDBG (2025–26)	\$785,000	\$141,300	23 homes – Complete by Nov. 2026



CDBG Round 2 (2026–27)	\$400,000	\$72,000	10 homes – Complete 2027
CDBG Round 3 – Residential (2027–28)	\$760,000	\$136,800	19 homes – Complete 2027/28
CDBG Round 3 – Citizens Loft (2026–27)	\$500,000	\$90,000	5 rental units downtown – Complete 2026/27
CDBG Round 4 (2028–29)	\$1,250,000	\$225,000	32 homes – Complete 2028–29
TOTALS	\$4,200,000	\$687,600	Grand Total: \$4,887,600

Parks & Recreation

Curwood Castle Restoration

Bid documents for the Curwood Castle Restoration and Repairs Project were released March 6, 2026, with bids opening April 14. Construction is anticipated to begin in June and continue through the summer. Scope includes repair and replacement of historic stucco; restoration and replacement of the natural slate roof and underlayment; copper flashing, gutters, and downspouts; wood window restoration; interior plaster repair; EIFS repair; painting; minor electrical updates; and stormwater modifications. H2A Architects has been engaged to evaluate the damaged boiler system.

Bentley Park Splash Pad Replacement

The existing splash pad will be removed and replaced. DPW demolition begins in May; contractor installation complete by July. Funded by the Parks and Recreation Millage.

Bentley Park Tennis & Pickleball Courts

Staff submitted applications for both a Michigan DNR Trust Fund Grant and a DNR Recreation Passport Grant, each totaling \$150,000 (only one would be awarded). Funding decisions expected December 2026. If awarded, the project would be further supported by the General Fund and Parks and Recreation Millage.

250 Trees for the 250th Birthday Initiative

Trees ordered for spring planting; arrival expected April 13–23. DPW crews will plant 75 trees in City parks. Grants from the Cook Family Foundation and Owosso Rotary Club secured.

- Wednesday, April 22: 3:00–6:00 p.m. • DPW Garage (522 Milwaukee St) – Public tree giveaway
- Friday, April 24: 1:00–4:00 p.m. • Bentley Park – Arbor Day celebration & tree giveaway

Engineering – Project Status Report

The following summarizes active capital and infrastructure projects as of April 1, 2026.



Project	Status
2023 Street Patch Program (extended through this year)	ON TIME
2024 Sidewalk Replacement (Spring ROW Inspection Pending)	COMPLETE
2026 Sidewalk Replacement Program	ON TIME
Washington Park Utility Extension (2025)	ON TIME
2025 Sewer Lining Project	COMPLETE
EGLT TMF Grant – Water Service Line Investigation	ON TIME
2025–27 Water Service Line Replacement (500 locations / \$4M)	EARLY
CIS – James Miner Trail Connection (2026)	UNKNOWN
2026 Sanitary Sewer Manhole Lining Project	UNKNOWN
Dewey Street Water Main & Sewer Replacement (2026)	ON TIME
Woodlawn Ave Rehabilitation (2026)	UNKNOWN
2026 Water Main Replacement Project (2 Contracts)	ON TIME
Storm Manhole Installation – Ament St (\$23,339)	ON TIME

Notable Engineering Updates

- Water Service Line Replacement: 366 lines replaced to date, tracking ahead of schedule. All replacements projected complete by end of July. A second crew is being added mid-April for right-of-way repairs.
- Washington Park Lift Station: Lift station successfully removed and reinstalled 2 feet lower. An extension section has been ordered; delivery date week of April 6.
- 2026 Water Main Replacement: Two engineering contracts (Fleis & Vandenbrink, Fishbeck); preliminary plans reviewed; construction planned for early 2027.
- M-21 Bridge over Shiawassee River: MDOT targeting late spring/early summer for repairs pending EGLT permit. Coordinated to avoid the Curwood Festival (June 1–7).
- 117 W Exchange Street Demolition: Street closure affects W. Exchange between building and Ball St. beginning April 7. Demolition crew will be in hazmat suits; no public concern for passersby.

Department of Public Works

Sewer Jetting Maintenance Program

DPW has taken on expanded sewer maintenance duties. A new 4-year sewer jetting and cleaning plan divides the city into four quadrants; work this year starts in the NE quadrant including the Mallard Circle development area. Maintenance is being tracked by spreadsheet. GIS integration is a future goal.



Spring Leaf Pickup

Spring leaf pickup is progressing well with approximately half of the city completed. Staff has received numerous resident compliments. DPW is managing ongoing calls about revisits to areas where residents placed additional leaves after initial pickup.

Police Department Activity Report

Submitted by: Kevin Lenkart, Public Safety Chief & Eric E. Cherry, Police Captain
Reporting period: January – February 2026 compared to the same period in 2025.

Executive Summary

- Part I Crimes (most serious offenses) decreased year-over-year: January down 3 (23→20), February down 2 (18→16). Combined YTD reduction of 5 incidents (-13%).
- Violent Crimes held steady in January (7 each year) but increased in February (2→7, +5). The February spike warrants continued monitoring.
- Felony Arrests increased notably: January (5→10) and February (5→7), with YTD felony arrests up +7 compared to 2025.
- Total Arrests increased in both months (January: 22→31; February: 20→28), reflecting heightened enforcement activity.
- Mutual Aid to Corunna: The department provided over 320 hours in January and over 300 hours in February — approximately 10 hours per day.

January 2026 – Year-over-Year Comparison

Metric	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Change
Part I Crimes	23	20	-3
Part II Crimes	65	56	-9
Violent Crimes	7	7	---
Total Reports	160	134	-26
Felony Arrests	5	10	+5
Total Arrests	22	31	+9
Traffic Stops	105	62	-43
All Dispatched Events	835	639	-196

January Activities: The Investigative Services Bureau attended the monthly Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting on sexual assault investigations with Shiawassee County Prosecutors, CPS, Voices for Children, and other law enforcement. Police Administration attended the MAGNET board meeting. Administration met with Veridus Advisors and Spicer Group to outline Public Safety Building improvements.



February 2026 – Year-over-Year Comparison

Metric	Feb 2025	Feb 2026	Change
Part I Crimes	18	16	-2
Part II Crimes	59	70	+11
Violent Crimes	2	7	+5
Total Reports	114	138	+24
Felony Arrests	5	7	+2
Total Arrests	20	28	+8
Traffic Stops	109	120	+11
All Dispatched Events	657	736	+79

February Activities: ISB attended the monthly MDT meeting. Administration met with Spicer Group on Public Safety Building renovations. Administration met with Axon representatives to evaluate upgrades to body-worn cameras, tasers, in-car cameras, and report-writing software. Background investigations begun on two patrol officer applicants. SART met with Administration to discuss victim-friendly interview room improvements.

YTD Summary: January–February 2026 vs. 2025

Metric	YTD 2025	YTD 2026	Change
Part I Crimes	41	36	-5
Part II Crimes	124	126	+2
Violent Crimes	9	14	+5
Total Reports	274	272	-2
Felony Arrests	10	17	+7
Total Arrests	42	59	+17
Traffic Stops	214	182	-32
All Dispatched Events	1492	1375	-117

2025 Full-Year Reference

Metric	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Part I Crimes	23	18	30	18	25	13	26	23	21	32	33	22	284
Part II Crimes	65	59	84	87	97	82	79	80	92	96	77	65	963



Violent Crimes	7	2	10	4	8	4	7	5	6	13	8	10	84
Total Reports	160	114	157	166	168	157	149	150	182	182	158	145	1,888
Felony Arrests	5	5	6	8	8	15	12	7	4	5	7	9	91
Total Arrests	22	20	27	33	35	42	37	28	31	26	26	33	360
Traffic Stops	105	109	43	87	84	35	118	23	40	36	28	66	774
All Dispatched	835	657	730	820	798	787	907	836	792	764	667	717	9,310

Fire Department & EMS Activity Report

Submitted by: Kevin Lenkart, Director of Public Safety

Reporting period: January – February 2026 compared to the same period in 2025.

Executive Summary

- Total incidents increased modestly YTD: 502 in 2026 vs. 494 in 2025 (+8 incidents, +1.6%).
- Fire and rescue call volume up significantly: 42 YTD vs. 30 in 2025 — a 40% increase. February 2026 had 4 building fires within Owosso (vs. 1 in Feb. 2025) and 9 smoke investigations (vs. 5). This trend warrants monitoring heading into spring.
- Gas leak responses elevated: January 2026 had 6 calls vs. 3 in January 2025 — the highest single-month gas leak total in the period reviewed.
- EMS call volume slightly lower YTD: 460 in 2026 vs. 464 in 2025 (-4). City of Owosso EMS responses increased (Jan +16, Feb +26), while Owosso Township responses declined notably.
- In full-year 2025, OFD/EMS responded to 3,160 total incidents — 185 fire/rescue and 2,975 EMS — averaging approximately 263 per month.

January 2026 – Overall Activity

Metric	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Change
Fire / Rescue Calls	15	20	+5
EMS Calls	232	235	+3
Total Incidents	247	255	+8

January 2026 – Fire & Rescue Call Breakdown

Fire Call Type	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Change
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Wires Down	2	0	-2
Rescue	2	3	+1
Car Fire	1	1	---
False Alarm	5	4	-1
Building Fire – Owosso	1	1	---
Building Fire – Mutual Aid	0	2	+2
Gas Leak	3	6	+3
Smoke Investigation	7	3	-4
Total Fire / Rescue Calls	21	20	-1

January 2026 – EMS Responses by Zone

EMS Response Zone	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Change
City of Owosso	159	175	+16
Owosso Township	48	38	-10
Middlebury Twp.	7	6	-1
Fairfield Twp.	6	8	+2
Rush Township	4	0	-4
Corunna EMS	6	3	-3
Perry Area EMS	1	2	+1
Laingsburg	0	1	+1
Out of County	3	2	-1
Total EMS Calls	234	235	+1

February 2026 – Overall Activity

Metric	Feb 2025	Feb 2026	Change
Fire / Rescue Calls	15	22	+7
EMS Calls	232	225	-7
Total Incidents	247	247	---

February 2026 – Fire & Rescue Call Breakdown

Fire Call Type	Feb 2025	Feb 2026	Change
Illegal Burning	0	2	+2



Wires Down	1	0	-1
Rescue	1	1	---
Car Fire	2	0	-2
False Alarm	2	3	+1
Building Fire – Owosso	1	4	+3
Gas Leak	1	3	+2
Smoke Investigation	5	9	+4
Vehicle Fire	2	0	-2
Total Fire / Rescue Calls	15	22	+7

February 2026 – EMS Responses by Zone

EMS Response Zone	Feb 2025	Feb 2026	Change
City of Owosso	144	170	+26
Owosso Township	46	29	-17
Middlebury Twp.	17	7	-10
Fairfield Twp.	3	3	---
Rush Township	10	0	-10
Corunna EMS	6	5	-1
Perry Area EMS	3	5	+2
Laingsburg	1	0	-1
Out of County	0	6	+6
Total EMS Calls	230	225	-5

YTD Summary: January–February 2026 vs. 2025

Metric	YTD 2025	YTD 2026	Change
Fire / Rescue Calls	30	42	+12
EMS Calls	464	460	-4
Total Incidents	494	502	+8

2025 Full-Year Fire & EMS Reference

Metric	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
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Fire/Rescue Calls	15	15	17	19	20	19	20	10	15	13	12	13	185
EMS Calls	232	232	258	242	240	254	265	253	247	292	264	236	2,975
Total Incidents	247	247	275	261	260	273	285	263	262	305	276	248	3,160
City of Owosso EMS	159	144	180	164	168	160	161	155	171	206	201	161	2,030
Owosso Twp. EMS	48	46	44	35	42	51	66	66	54	51	47	43	593

City Hall Improvements – Construction Update

The City Hall Improvements project (Job #25028, GC: Great Lakes Bay Construction) reached substantial completion on March 12, 2026 — the date the generator was commissioned. The AIA Certificate of Substantial Completion is being routed for signatures.

Completed Work (Week of March 13)

- Generator startup completed and commissioned.
- Final electrical inspection received and approved.
- Final HVAC inspection received and approved.
- Punch list items closed: railing around RTU-2, panel/ATS labeling, building penetration patch, panel cover screws, removal of old Consumers panel, smoke detector annunciator wiring, and remote generator monitor screen installation.

Outstanding Punch List Items

- Fence leveling (Item #1): Completed week of March 16; photos attached to punch list.
- Lawn restoration (Item #2): To be completed in spring/weather permitting. Disturbed areas to receive black dirt, seeding, and straw.

Closeout & Financial Status

Barry LaCross (GLBC) submitted pay application at 100% complete. All parties approved releasing 90% now and holding 10% retainage until lawn seeding is established. Final walk-through tentatively scheduled April 30, 1:00–2:00 PM on site. Standing biweekly project meetings cancelled.

Change orders approved: CO-001 (\$2,685.65), CO-002 (\$7,129.10), CO-003 (\$9,298.40), CO-004 (\$2,036.40). Pay Applications 1–5 (September 2025 – January 2026) all approved.



Information Technology

Server Infrastructure Replacement

Over the weekend of March 22, IT completed migration of all production servers to a new SCALE Computing hypervisor environment, replacing two 2015 HP servers running VMware. The new environment features three redundant servers with three redundant network switches, automatic failover (~10 min), faster SSDs, and greater flexibility.

- Two legacy Windows servers (~10 years old) retired.
- BSA software server and primary password server remain standalone physical servers.
- Two Linux appliances still pending migration; BSA server migration planned for later this summer.
- Network infrastructure updates expected complete within two weeks.

City Hall Generator Repair

The City Hall generator was successfully repaired and tested March 12, 2026. Backup power now covers the entire building including the elevator, with transfer time of approximately 12–15 seconds. Root cause: incorrect 24V relays installed instead of required 12V.

Technology – BS&A Software Cloud Upgrade

BS&A Software submitted proposal Q-03550 (March 24, 2026) for upgrading the City’s BS&A system from .NET to BS&A Cloud (SaaS). Pricing valid through July 20, 2026. **This will be part of the recommended FY 2026-27 City Budget.** All BS&A systems will eventually be moving to the cloud. BSA reports that they are about 40% converted with all of their clients. Owosso is not the first and we cannot remain with the current “.Net” configured system.

Module Group	Annual Fee
Financial Management (GL, AP, PO, CR, AR, IM)	\$28,655
Personnel Management (Payroll, HR, Timesheets)	\$16,520
Community Development (Building Dept.)	\$9,310
Property (Assessing, Tax, DPP, Special Assessments)	\$19,955
Utility Billing	\$10,460
Annual Module Subtotal	\$84,900
Upgrade Implementation Services	\$88,000
TOTAL PROPOSED	\$172,900

Payment Schedule:

- 1st Payment: \$44,000 – Due upon execution of agreement.
- 2nd Payment: \$84,900 – Due upon subscription start date for upgrade modules.
- 3rd Payment: \$44,000 – Due upon completion of upgrade implementation.



Assessing Department

Spring assessing inspection letters mailed March 23, 2026 to the area bounded by Chipman, North, Shiawassee, and King Streets. Additional letters will be sent to sections east of this first segment in coming months. Residents with questions should be directed to the Assessing Department.

Personnel

Staff Promotion

Effective March 15, 2026, Tom Wheeler was promoted to Deputy Director of Public Services. The DPW Superintendent position will be posted in the coming weeks.

City Manager Meeting Summaries – March 2026

The following summarizes key meetings attended by the City Manager during March 2026.

Steam Railroad Institute – Utility Billing Discussion (March 4)

SRI met with the Mayor and City Manager to discuss sewer charges on the account used to fill the steam locomotive. SRI requested removal of sewer charges on the basis that all locomotive water converts to steam and does not enter the sanitary sewer system.

City staff explained that the 8-inch service requires a backflow prevention device (RPZ) connected to the sewer lateral by code, making the property technically connected for billing purposes. Sewer demand charges are flat rates based on meter size. SRI's most recent quarterly bill was approximately \$16,000; a prior quarter was approximately \$9,000. Staff cannot administratively waive sewer charges — only the City Council has that authority. No prior formal council resolution granting SRI relief was found in records. Staff suggested SRI pursue relief through Council with economic impact documentation, letters of support, and a quantified fiscal impact estimate. The 2021 Master Plan (Goal 7) references cooperation with the Steam Railroad Institute, though staff are hesitant to create a precedent by forgiving water and sewer charges for any organization.

Washington Park Lift Station – Design Error Resolution (March 4)

A meeting with Tetra Tech, Rohde Construction, and DPW addressed a design/construction error at the Washington Park lift station. Tetra Tech retained the original incorrect invert elevation in updated plans (design error); Rohde built to the plan without independently verifying depths as required by the contract. The city bears no responsibility or cost. The wet well must be pulled and reset 18–24 inches lower. A 24-inch extension section has been ordered. Tetra Tech and Rohde are negotiating cost-sharing. The developer faces penalties of \$16,414 (May deadline) and \$49,241 (June deadline) if occupancy milestones are missed. As noted in the Engineering section, the lift station was successfully reinstalled in March.



Argus Press – City Manager Column Agreement (March 6)

The City Manager reached an agreement with the Argus Press to write a regular monthly column focusing on current city events and initiatives.

Chipman Drain / M21 Storm Sewer Improvement (March 11)

PEA Group's hydraulic modeling confirms that replacing the existing 10-inch M21 storm pipe with a 24-inch pipe eliminates flooding at Main St./State St. up to the 10-year design storm without overloading the downstream Chipman drain. MDOT expressed willingness to pay ~50% of costs in exchange for design input. A direct cost-sharing agreement between MDOT and the city is the preferred path over the Chapter 20 process. PEA Group will develop a backbone schematic and cost estimate (~1 month).

123 N. Washington (Fifth/Third Building) – MEDC/MSHDA Resolution (March 13 & 23)

A six-year redevelopment project for a prominent downtown corner building reached a breakthrough: MSHDA agreed to allow the project to proceed holistically (not phased) with Davis-Bacon wages applied to the entire project. MEDC leadership also confirmed agreement. Total project cost is \$4+ million with \$1.5M MEDC grant and \$500,000 MSHDA supplemental funding. Critical deadline: all application documents must be submitted by April 23. City staff member Tanya is leading MSHDA compliance work.

Public Safety Building – 60% Design Review (March 17)

USDA's requirement to add ADA-compliant facilities is the biggest development, with a rough budget of \$80,000–\$100,000 for a new bathroom and accessible path. The fire department kitchen renovation was largely confirmed (60-inch commercial range, updated cabinetry). Two plumbing scope items were removed (shower, toilet-to-urinal conversion) due to ADA compliance requirements in tight spaces. The base bid now approximately equals total budget with 10% contingency. Target: 90% drawings by late April, USDA submission shortly after, bid advertisement in late May or early June.

M21 Booster Station – Coordination with Corunna (March 17)

A coordination meeting resolved a communication breakdown affecting pump station testing. All drinking water items will now include DPS Director Ryan (989-666-1919); distribution through Tom; plant matters through Dave. Corunna extended an invitation for Owosso staff to tour their water infrastructure.

Shiawassee County Recycling Work Group (March 19)

Goodwill Greater Detroit's Green Works model was presented (37M+ lbs. processed annually, 85%+ diversion rate). City Manager updated the group on Owosso's hauler decision process: community listening sessions planned April 22 – May 15 (outside facilitator); new online community engagement portal launching; informational video in development for curbside recycling information.



Online Water Portal Development (March 24)

Data integration is ~98% complete. The portal displays real resident data from Aclara (meter/usage) and BS&A (billing). Neither vendor provided API access, so Concourse built automated workaround scripts. BS&A read-only database access established with IT's cooperation. Key open items: BS&A deep-link for payment portal (IT support ticket pending), account classification cleanup (~6,500 accounts), and user acceptance testing with 5–10 residents. Website RFP has been narrowed to 11 finalists; Concourse's water portal proposal is among them.

Owosso Wastewater Authority Board Meeting (March 24)

Plant was in full permit compliance November 2025 – February 2026. Secondary clarifier is temporarily offline for a minor contractor adjustment and expected back online shortly. Phase 1 WWTP renovation is winding down with SCADA implementation continuing over the next couple of months. A Nitrification Tower Project (major upcoming capital) is being bid for this summer with construction beginning in the fall; the city submitted a \$20 million appropriations request for funding. 2025 plant flow was the lowest ever recorded (~1.067 billion gallons). The board voted 3-0 to discontinue virtual public viewing for board meetings. Staff flagged that the Utility Authority's own sewer use ordinance has not been updated as required — an EGLE audit flagged this as a compliance concern that must be corrected before the next audit.

State & Regional Context – Michigan Local Government Fiscal Health

The University of Michigan's Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP) released its March 2026 Fiscal Health Project report analyzing FY 2022–2024 data. Key statewide findings:

- Michigan local governments remain generally fiscally stable, though declining cash reserves, narrowing operating margins, and growing deficits signal emerging pressures as pandemic-era federal aid winds down.
- Long-term solvency improving modestly, but smaller jurisdictions face the heaviest per-capita liability burdens, particularly from debt and underfunded OPEB obligations.
- Cities like Owosso that rely significantly on state revenue sharing face structural funding vulnerability if state distributions are reduced. Just 29% of local officials believe the current system will allow maintaining existing service levels.
- Enterprise fund margins are strong statewide for cities, with median margins around 20%.

Staff will continue to monitor these trends as part of the City's ongoing financial planning. The full CLOSUP report is available at closup.umich.edu.

* This report was prepared with the assistance of generative artificial intelligence.