

What is Initiative 41?

Initiative 41 was formed as a result of large-scale layoffs by Oshkosh Corporation in 2012-13 that impacted much of East Central and Northeast Wisconsin. The layoffs were a result of defense spending cuts which, in turn, created a ripple effect throughout the region as companies supporting Oshkosh Corporation also experienced significant economic hardship. This represented a negative economic impact of more than \$91 million within the region.

It was recognized that to rebuild the economic health of the area, and to prevent a similar situation in the future no matter what industry was affected, there needed to be a formal effort to create greater economic diversity by increasing collaborative efforts among business, governments, community leaders, universities and technical colleges throughout the region.

To launch this effort, a team of community and business leaders from throughout the region applied for and received a grant from the Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment (DoD-OEA) to:

- Identify key industry clusters that pose similar risks
- Align regional and economic workforce development strategies
- Implement strategies that would diversify our economy and reduce the impact of future economic downturns.

The effort is to improve the overall economic 'eco-system' within the region.



What We've Accomplished

A series of **Regional Economic Collaboration Workshops** aimed at creating a more cohesive economic development ecosystem throughout the region was held. Through this process, a collaborative action plan, which included an **industry diversification strategy**, was developed and is now being implemented to achieve regional collaboration.

As a result, **key Aerospace Industry Cluster Initiatives** are being developed, including:

- Alignment with statewide efforts to establish the Wisconsin Aerospace Partners which supports organizations engaged with the aerospace industry in the State of Wisconsin.
- Regional collaboration among public airports in the region.
- City of Oshkosh led initiatives including developing the region as a strong market for aviation maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO), encouraging additive manufacturing for the aerospace and aviation industry and working with the regional aerospace/aviation industry to identify existing and future sector trends, capacity, and workforce development needs as well as developing strategies to ensure future success.

Business Accelerator and Growth Management Programs, targeting start-up companies, and first- and second-stage entrepreneurs, to enhance the business and entrepreneurial ecosystem. Through a partnership with the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, these business development programs were established including **AeroInnovate** - www.aeroinnovate.org, **InventureXcel** - www.inventurexcel.com and **Growth Management Academy (GMA)** - www.uwosh.edu/bsc/growth-management-academy. These programs work with entrepreneurs to develop strategic and operational plans and provide support to help them achieve their goals.

www.initiative41.org



Supply Chain Marketplace www.wisupplychainmarketplace.com, developed by New North, is an on-line company directory that promotes new business opportunities for regional firms in several distinct new markets. Over 300 firms (and growing) are currently listed in this searchable directory.

Another accomplishment was Wisconsin **Manufacturer Extension Partnership (WMEP)** providing **Direct Supplier Assistance** to 31 defense industry suppliers (both public and private).

Initiative 41 is also conducting **outreach to elected, community and business leaders** throughout the region to highlight the importance of regionalism and collaborative relationships to realign strategies identified during the charrette process.

What You Can Do

It's time for a NEWay of Thinking in Northeast Wisconsin! Elected, business and community leaders are being asked to join together in recognizing and understanding the connectivity of the businesses and workforce throughout the I-41 corridor. Through your leadership, the efforts of Initiative 41 can ensure that our region is more resilient and prosperous.