

# State of the County Address

## Jim Kreuser

Kenosha County Executive

April 19, 2016



# Unemployment Rate Drops Across County



Mostly cloudy, snow shower  
High 37 • Low 17 — Details, B6

Check things out, post activities on our community events calendar at [KENOSHANEWS.COM/COMMUNITY](http://KENOSHANEWS.COM/COMMUNITY)



**PRODUCE PRICES SHOOT UP, SOME VARIETIES SCARCE DUE TO WEATHER PROBLEMS**

Local — Page A3

# KENOSHA NEWS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2016

★★★\$1.25

## County beats U.S. on jobless rate

Business growth here leads to lower unemployment

BY JAMES LAWSON  
[jlawson@kenoshanews.com](mailto:jlawson@kenoshanews.com)

A hiring boom by Kenosha County companies has driven the unemployment rate under the national average.

Unemployment in Kenosha County was 4.8 percent in December, below the national average of 5 percent but higher than the state average of 4.3 percent, according to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

Throughout much of 2015, Kenosha County's unemployment rate stayed below 5 percent. It dipped to a low of 4.3 percent in September.

In the city, the unemployment rate was 5.3 percent in December. After registering a 6.6 percent rate in January 2015, the city rate dipped to a low of 4.7 percent in September.

DWD officials said unemployment insurance claims have dropped to their lowest level since 1990, partly due to the formation of new businesses.

The DWD noted that new business formation grew by 3.8 percent in 2015 compared with 2014. As of Dec. 31, 2015, new business filings totaled 40,827, compared with 39,395 in 2014, the state agency reported.

### Kenosha area compares favorably

Kenosha city, county jobless rates and those of other southeastern Wisconsin communities

|                 | Dec. 2015 | Nov. 2015 | Dec. 2014 |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| City of Kenosha | 5.3%      | 5.2%      | 5.8%      |
| Kenosha County  | 4.8%      | 4.7%      | 5.2%      |
| Milwaukee       | 5.8%      | 5.8%      | 6.9%      |
| Milwaukee Co.   | 5.2%      | 5.1%      | 6.0%      |
| Walworth Co.    | 4.4%      | 4.1%      | 4.9%      |
| City of Racine  | 6.0%      | 6.1%      | 7.0%      |
| Racine County   | 5.1%      | 4.9%      | 5.8%      |

### Strong economy

Last week Gov. Scott Walker attributed job growth to a strong economy and increased demand for skilled and technically trained employees.

"As the economy improved, so many positions have opened," he said. "In the past year, our state has seen tremendous growth. More people are working in Wisconsin than at any time in the past 20 years, and we remain committed to creating jobs."

He noted that several industries, especially education and health care, still have a high number of positions that have not been filled.

In Kenosha County, several companies have either relocated here or expanded operations, leading to more jobs.

Last June, Meijer hired more than 200 employees for its new store. Amazon added more than 1,000 jobs at its fulfillment center. Other growing employers include Kenall Manufacturing, Ulma and Rustolone.



KENOSHA NEWS FILE PHOTO BY BILL SHEL

Prospective Amazon employees wait to have their applications processed at the Kenosha County Job Center in April. A hiring spree by Amazon and several other employers expanding in the Kenosha area has reduced unemployment here.



# County Board Supervisor Ron Johnson



- 32 Years on the County Board
- Chairman of the Board, 1998-2000
- Thank you, Ron!





# County Board Supervisor Doug Noble



- 26 Years on the County Board
- Chairman of the Board, 2000 - 2002
- Thank you, Doug!



# County Board Supervisors

- Supervisor Aaron Kohlmeier
  - 6 Years on the County Board!



- Supervisor Anita Johnson
  - 4 years on the County Board!



# Welcome New and Returning Board Members





# Kenosha County's Mission and Vision

## **Mission**

Kenosha County's mission is to enhance the community by providing services our citizens cannot provide for themselves, their families or neighbors and to assist in creating a dynamic, diversified local economy. We seek to deliver our services in a high quality, sustainable, cost-effective and efficient manner, continuously improving and working toward enhancing the health, safety and quality of life in our county.

## **Vision**

To make Kenosha County the premier place to live, work, play, and raise a family.



# Good Infrastructure Leads to Economic Development, Which Leads to Jobs

**Gordon**  
FOOD SERVICE



**KABA**  
KENOSHA AREA BUSINESS ALLIANCE

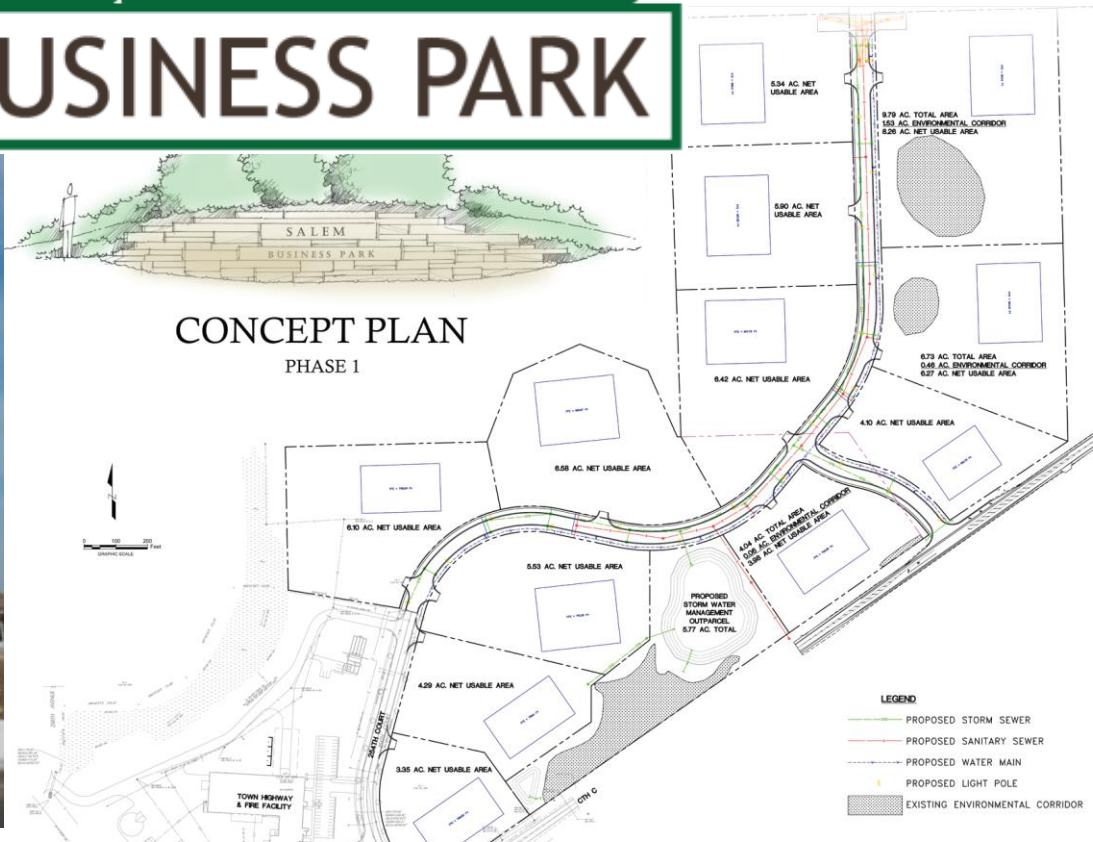




# The Salem Business Park is Attracting New Companies



## SALEM BUSINESS PARK



# The High Impact Fund has been Successful

The Kenosha County High Impact Fund was established in 2011 to help attract high quality economic development projects and has proved invaluable as a flexible deal closing fund. "High impact" developments have been defined as those which create at least 50 new high-paying jobs or involve a capital investment of at least \$3 million. The approximately \$2.6 million appropriated thus far has helped to close six high impact advanced manufacturing projects (detailed above right).

## THE HIGH IMPACT FUND IS A VITAL PART OF KABA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLBOX

**Bradshaw Medical**  
\$250K for expansion  
> 78 jobs projected  
> \$1.85 million capital expenditure

**Hanna Cylinders**  
\$250K for new location and production facility  
> 135 jobs projected  
> \$3.2 million cap. ex.

**Kenall Manufacturing**  
\$1 MM for new HQs and production facility  
> 621 jobs projected  
> \$25 million cap. ex.

**Niagara Bottling, LLC**  
\$350K for new location and production facility  
> 75 jobs projected  
> \$75 million cap. ex.

**InSinkErator**  
\$625K for new location and production facility  
> 235 jobs projected  
> \$18.5 million cap. ex.

**Gourmet Foods Midwest, Int.**  
\$100K for new location and production facility  
> 50 jobs projected  
> \$4.45 million cap. ex.

Since its inception, the High Impact Fund has contributed to:



**1,200**  
new jobs



w/ average  
annual salary  
of **\$48,000+**



**\$128 million**  
of new  
private  
investment

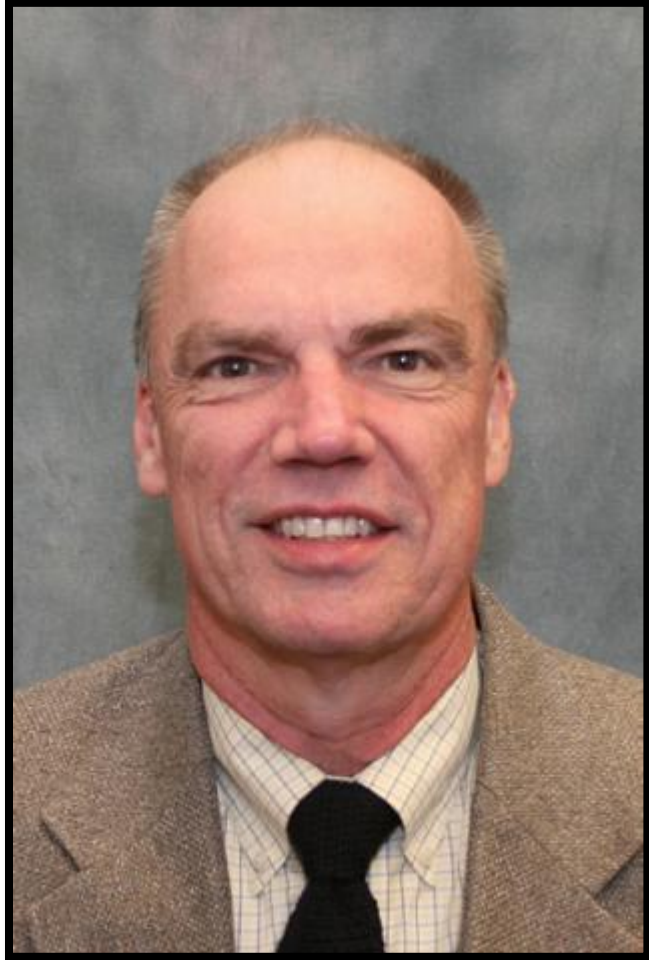


total new  
payroll **\$57+**  
**million** per  
year





# Highway Commissioner Gary Sipsma



- 36 Years with Kenosha County!
- Thank you, Gary!





# Kenosha County Parks Attract New Residents





# Kenosha County Parks Attract New Residents

- Opening and Development of KD Park
- Three dog parks
- Petrifying Springs restoration
- Kemper Center improvements
- 45 holes of Disc Golf
- 8+ miles of mountain bike trails
- Silver Lake Ice House Trail and other trails
- Oktoberfest at Old Settlers Park, Annual Ice Fishing Derby and other new activities



# Parks Director Jonathan Rudie

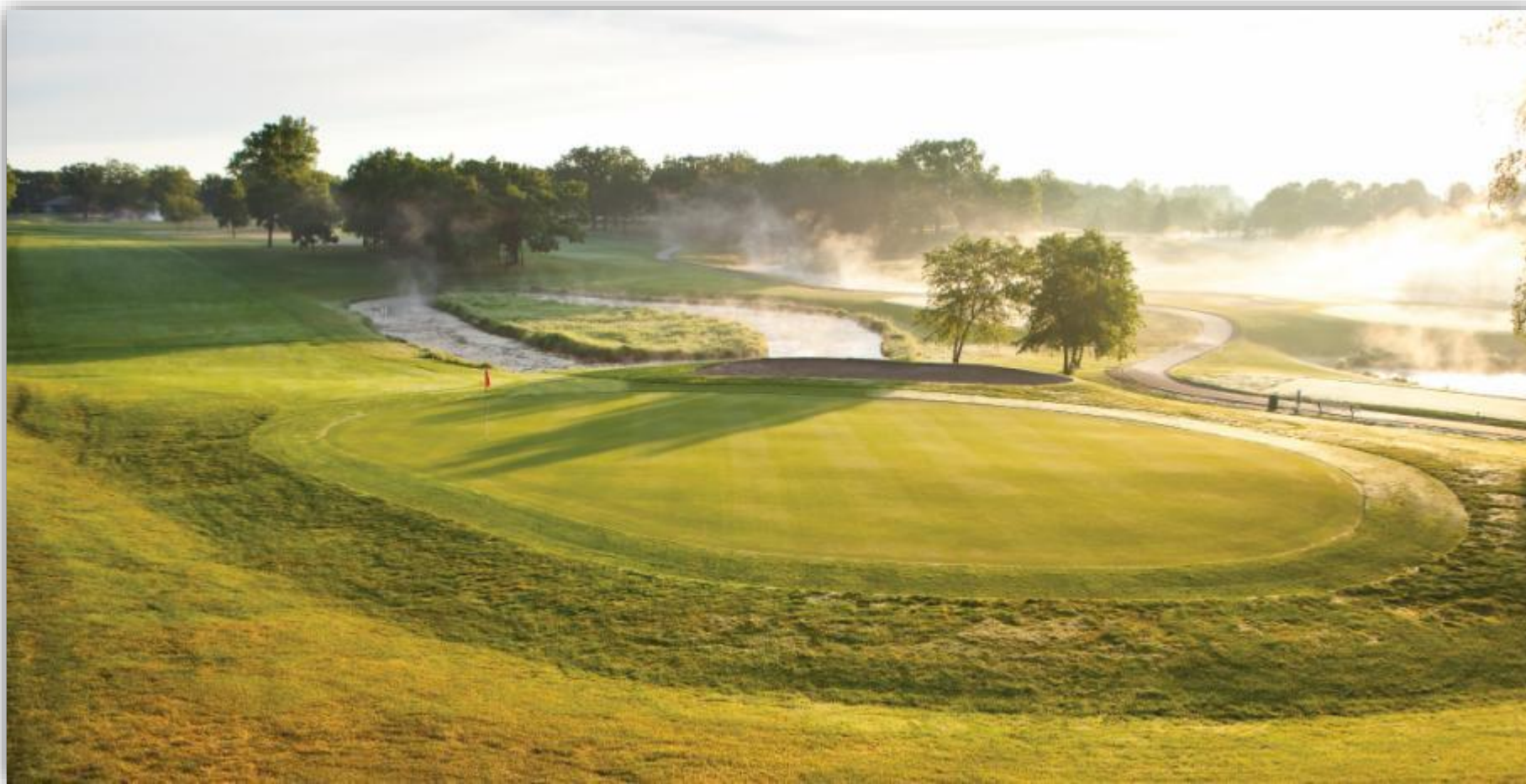


- 41 Years with Kenosha County!
- Thank you, Jon!





# White Birch Course Among the Best in the State





# Brookside Care Center Expansion Begins!



# Kenosha County is Fiscally Strong

## Fitch Rates Kenosha County, WI's \$18.5MM GO Bonds and \$12.4MM GO Notes 'AA'; Outlook Stable



Fitch Ratings  
August 11, 2015 4:14 PM



NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

Fitch Ratings has assigned an 'AA' rating to the following Kenosha County, WI (the county) securities:

--\$18.525 million general obligation (GO) Brookside care center bonds, series 2015B; and

--\$12.485 million GO promissory notes, series 2015C.





# Good News From Fitch Rating Service

**“Solid financial  
performance  
and reserves”**

**“Strong  
management  
practices”**

**Growth in tax  
base**



# General Fund now at AAA-Rated Level

**\$18.25 million,  
up from \$15  
million**

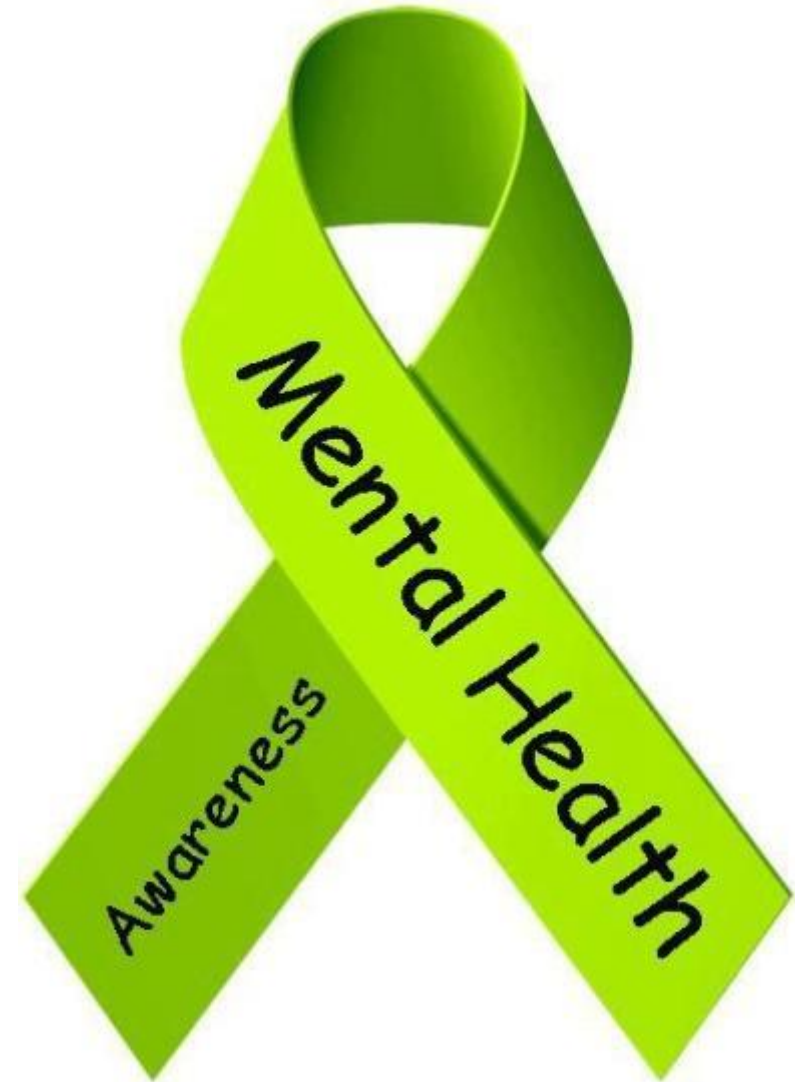
**Reserve Fund  
at 29.9% of  
General Fund**





# Mental Health Report Will be Available

- Community meeting, 6 p.m., Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at the Kenosha County Job Center



# Adelene Greene



- 26 years with Kenosha County!
- Thank you, Adelene!





# Dedicated Employees, Challenging Work

High 52 • Low 33 • Details 50

Search local videos and stories with video at [KENOSHANEWS.COM/NEWS/VIDEOINDEX.PHP](http://KENOSHANEWS.COM/NEWS/VIDEOINDEX.PHP)

**DOWNTOWN RESTAURANT WEEK** Get Out — Inside

**Preview of state swim meets**

## KENOSHA NEWS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2016 ★ ★ ★ \$1.25

### Infant mortality a complex problem

Causes of infant deaths

| Cause of Death  | Count |
|---|-------|
| Newborn affected by maternal complications of pregnancy                 | 14    |
| Newborn affected by complications of placenta, cord, membranes          | 5     |
| Disorders related to short gestation and low birthweight, NEC           | 13    |
| Other conditions originating in the perinatal period                    | 8     |
| Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities    | 16    |
| Sudden infant death syndrome  | 7     |
| Other (including viral infections, lung disorders and stomach ailments) | 16    |

84  
Total number of infant deaths in Kenosha 2005-2014

**Four deaths locally this month shine a light on issue**

BY JANINE ANDERSON  
[janderson@kenoshanews.com](mailto:janderson@kenoshanews.com)

Four babies have died in Kenosha this month. It's a number that has people shocked, and wondering what's happening.

With those four deaths — the only ones so far this year — Kenosha has already seen more than half the total number of infant deaths it recorded in all of 2015. Like many cities, Kenosha has been working to reduce infant deaths and bring down its infant mortality rate.

It's a complicated problem, said one local health official, and one with no easy answer. Most of the infant deaths in Kenosha are due to prematurity or low birth weight, birth defects, illness or complications of pregnancy.

There are people here that work to improve birth outcomes by making sure expectant and new mothers have access to medical care for themselves and their babies, that they have support as they start caring for the babies, and that they have access to healthy food for themselves and their children.

"We have been working on this issue since at least 2005," said Gwen Perry-Roye, clinical services director/assistant health officer for the Kenosha County Health Department.

That was when local officials saw the first spike of infant deaths, she said, particularly in Kenosha's black community. There were problems with low-income women accessing prenatal care, and they created the Black Health Coalition, expanded to the Infant Mortality Delegation and later convened the Kenosha Lifecourse for Healthy Families to look at gaps and needs in the community.

"One thing wasn't going to fix it," she said. "We also needed to focus on strengthening the family structure and strengthening the community's resolve."

They studied the problem and have implemented several evidence-based programs that pair nurses with new moms, and offer education, home visits and other services designed to support moms and their babies in the first years of life.

#### Safe sleep

Giving a baby a safe sleep environment is one way to keep him or her safe.

Babies should be put to sleep alone, on their backs and in a crib. Putting the baby's crib in the same room as his or her parents can reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome and other sleep-related causes of infant death.

Soft objects — including blankets, toys and crib bumpers — should not be in a baby's sleeping space.

Families that need a safe sleeping place for a baby can contact the Health Department at 262-605-6700. Portable cribs are available at no charge to families in need.

— Janine Anderson

#### ABCs of healthy sleep

They also spent a lot of time and effort educating people about safe sleep for babies. That is one cause of an infant

See DEATHS, Back page

# April is Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month





# Chris Hribal Honored for his Service to Kenosha Families



# Downtown WiFi



## Phase I (Complete)

Harbor Market,  
Celebration Point,  
and Museums

Navy Memorial Park,

Kemper Center

Civic Center Park

## Phase II – Summer 2016

Fill in the downtown  
area around key  
areas such as Small  
boat harbor, Yacht  
Club, Frank's Diner,  
and KABA

Art Keller Field at  
Carthage College

## Phase III – Fall 2016

Simmons Island Park

Wolfenbittel and  
Eichelman Park

Pennoyer Park

Promenade

## Phase IV – Late 2016

Expansion of Civic  
Center Park

Expansion of  
downtown areas

Expansion of  
Simmons Island Park

Anderson Arts

## Phase V – Spring 2017

Alford Drive

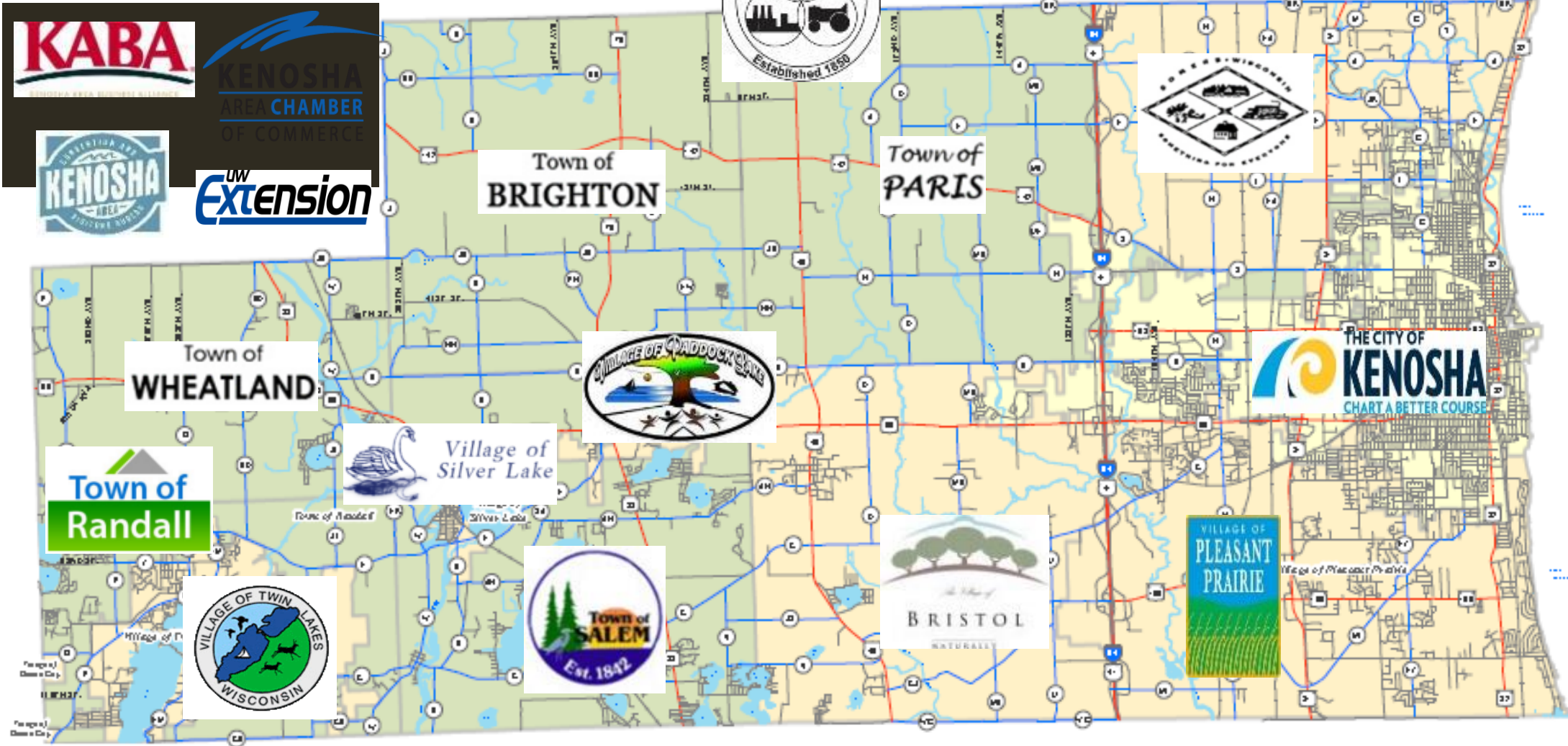
Carthage College

Library Park





# Municipalities Joining in Multi-Jurisdictional Marketing Strategy



# Kenosha County's Future is Bright

**The State of Kenosha County is strong and will be stronger as we continue to work toward our collective vision:**

- To make our infrastructure investments that will lead to more economic development and jobs
- To keep our county's fiscal condition strong
- To continue our efforts to reduce waste and abuse
- And, to deliver our many mandated county services more efficiently and effectively to all of our citizens





# God Bless Kenosha County

