



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **October Economic Trends report for metro Milwaukee**

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MILWAUKEE – Business activity indicators in the metro area remained positive in October as 12 of 23 available indicators improved from year-ago levels, according to a monthly report by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC.) October’s total marks the ninth time in ten months that a majority of local indicators pointed upward.

“While we’re still seeing more positive economic indicators than negative ones, the balance of positive and negative indicators has been relatively close throughout most of 2022. This gives us some pause as to the long-term sustainability of this trend,” said Bret Mayborne, MMAC’s Vice President - Economic Research. “Among October indicators, the leisure and hospitality sector saw its first year-over-year job decline in 19 months as it comes off its pandemic recovery phase. Meanwhile, both earnings indicators for manufacturing production workers posted strong double-digit increases.”

Highlights of the data include:

- The trend in nonfarm jobs for the metro area suggests signs of slowing. October’s 1.3% year-over-year increase (to 849,600) ranked below both September’s 1.8% growth and the year-to-date increase of 1.5%.
- Six of 10 major industry sectors posted year-over-year employment growth in October. The professional & business services (up 6.8%) and construction, mining & natural resources (5.2%) sectors registered the strongest percentage gains.
- The job trend turned negative in the leisure & hospitality sector. After 18 consecutive months of year-over-year job gain, jobs fell 1.8% in October, to 71,800.
- The unemployment rate held steady in October after 18 consecutive months of post-Covid-19, year-over-year improvement. October’s seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate was 3.3%, matching October 2021’s rate. Milwaukee’s current rate was marginally lower than the national rate (3.4%) but higher than Wisconsin’s 2.8%.
- Metro area manufacturing indicators were mostly positive in October. Strong growth continued in a production worker’s average hourly earnings, up 19.9% over year-ago levels, and average weekly earnings, up 16.8%. Manufacturing jobs increased 1.2% over October 2021 while a production worker’s average weekly hours fell 2.6%.

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- Metro area new-car registrations in the metro area rose 10.5% vs. year ago levels (to 845), up from the 7.1% decline registered in September and the first year-over-year increase in 16 months (since June 2021).
- Rising interest rates have led to a strong downward trend in local housing and real estate indicators. Both metro area existing homes sold, down 30.8% vs. one-year ago, and mortgages recorded in Milwaukee County, down 40.8% posted double-digit October declines.

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### **Note**

Seasonally unadjusted data is used in this analysis thus month-over-month job changes may be due to seasonal effects. A truer month-to-month trend is captured in seasonally adjusted data. Unfortunately for most metro areas the breadth of employment and unemployment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics is almost exclusively released in not seasonally adjusted form. Total nonfarm employment is available as a seasonally adjusted series for the metro area.

The seasonally adjusted series showed a loss of 113,800 jobs in April 2020 (vs. March), the beginning of the Covid-19 recession. Since that time, the local economy added back 88,400 jobs cumulatively in the month-over-month record over the May 2020 to October 2022 period or 78% of the initial loss.

Statistical table attached.

## Metropolitan Milwaukee Business Indicators

### October 2022

	Month	Current month	Previous month	Year ago	% chg. from yr. ago	% chg. prev. month	% chg. year to date (1)
<b>ESTABLISHMENT DATA</b>							
Total nonfarm payroll employment (000)	Oct-22	849.6	848.6	838.4	1.3%	0.1%	1.5%
Construction, mining & natural res. (000)	Oct-22	38.1	38.8	36.2	5.2%	-1.8%	4.7%
Manufacturing (000)	Oct-22	113.7	112.8	112.3	1.2%	0.8%	1.9%
Trade, transportation, & utilities (000)	Oct-22	151.3	149.9	144.8	4.5%	0.9%	3.1%
Information (000)	Oct-22	12.4	12.5	12.3	0.8%	-0.8%	0.5%
Financial activities (000)	Oct-22	48.2	48.1	50.1	-3.8%	0.2%	-4.4%
Professional & business services (000)	Oct-22	125.5	125.4	117.5	6.8%	0.1%	3.6%
Education & health services (000)	Oct-22	164.9	164.7	167.9	-1.8%	0.1%	-2.3%
Leisure & hospitality (000)	Oct-22	71.8	73.8	73.1	-1.8%	-2.7%	8.6%
Other services, exc. public (000)	Oct-22	42.1	42.3	42.9	-1.9%	-0.5%	-1.3%
Government (000)	Oct-22	81.6	80.3	81.3	0.4%	1.6%	0.5%
<b>LABOR FORCE DATA</b>							
Civilian labor force (000)	Oct-22	806.9	812.9	824.2	-2.1%	-0.7%	-0.6%
Employed (000)	Oct-22	780.1	783.2	797.0	-2.1%	-0.4%	0.6%
Unemployed (000)	Oct-22	26.8	29.7	27.1	-1.1%	-9.8%	-23.8%
Unemployment rate							
Metro Milwaukee	Oct-22	3.3%	3.6%	3.3%	0.0(4)	-0.3(4)	-1.1(4)
Wisconsin	Oct-22	2.8%	3.2%	2.7%	0.1(4)	-0.4(4)	-0.9(4)
United States	Oct-22	3.4%	3.3%	4.3%	-0.9(4)	0.1(4)	-2.0(4)
New unemployment compensation claims	Oct-22	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
<b>HOURS &amp; EARNINGS (mfg. production workers)</b>							
Avg. weekly hours (manuf.)	Oct-22	37.9	35.5	38.9	-2.6%	6.8%	-11.3%
Avg. weekly earnings (2)	Oct-22	\$1,123.36	\$1,039.44	\$962.00	16.8%	8.1%	3.5%
Avg. hourly earnings (2)	Oct-22	\$29.64	\$29.28	\$24.73	19.9%	1.2%	16.6%
<b>HOUSING &amp; REAL ESTATE</b>							
Existing homes sold	Oct-22	1,218	1,481	1,759	-30.8%	-17.8%	-11.3%
Mortgages (number) (3)	Oct-22	2,092	2,262	3,536	-40.8%	-7.5%	-31.1%
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>							
Airport passengers	Oct-22	481,375	446,738	466,456	3.2%	7.8%	26.2%
New-car registrations	Oct-22	845	841	765	10.5%	0.5%	-18.0%
<b>OTHER INDICATORS (latest available)</b>							
Consumer price index (1982-84=100)							
United States (CPI-U)	Oct-22	298.012	296.808	276.589	7.7%	0.4%	8.3%

**Notes:** (1) The average or cumulative figure year-to-date vs. the same total one year ago. (2) Not adjusted for inflation. (3) Milwaukee County only. (4) Percentage point change.  
 Figures are not seasonally adjusted except where indicated (SA).  
 Figures are for metro Milwaukee (Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington & Waukesha counties) except where indicated.

**Sources:** Wisconsin Dept. of Workforce Development, Multiple Listing Service, Milwaukee County Register of Deeds Office, Mitchell International Airport, Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation, and U.S. Dept. of Labor