



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **November Economic Trends**

**January 4, 2019 – Metro area economic indicators held steady in November as 12 of 23 monthly indicators tracked by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC) improved from year-ago levels. November’s performance matches the revised 12 positives registered in October.**

**“Presently the monthly aggregate of positive indicators remains at the low end of the range registered in the recovery period – with November’s total matching the lowest since January, 2012,” said Bret Mayborne, the MMAC’s economic research director. “Despite the recent slowdown, the majority of indicators remain positive, with employment and unemployment indicators continuing to progress, albeit modestly.”**

Highlights of the report include:

- Job growth continues in the metro area but at a slower pace. Nonfarm employment averaged 879,600 in November, up 0.5% from year-ago levels. November year-over-year rate of growth ranks as the lowest posted over the course of 2018.
- Six of ten major industry sectors registered year-over-year job increases in November. The education & health services sector posted the largest gain – up 3.4% vs. year-ago levels. Job declines were posted in four of ten major industry sectors with November’s steepest decline falling in the professional & business services sector, down 3.6% vs. year-ago levels.
- Air passenger totals using Mitchell International Airport rose a modest 0.2% in November (vs. November, 2017), this indicator’s seventh consecutive year-over-year increase.

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## MMAC Monthly Economic Trends – Page 2

In total, the metro area has not seen a year-over-year increase in the number of unemployed in over five years (since October, 2013). For November, the number of unemployment fell 5.9% from one year ago (to 23,900), a net decline of 1,500. This decline led to a modest fall in the seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate – from 3.1% one year ago to the current 2.9% rate. Metro Milwaukee's November rate ranked higher than the 2.6% rate posted statewide but below the 3.5% figure recorded nationally.

New unemployment compensation claims in the metro area also fell, down 2.8% to 3,205. Claims have risen only once in the past 19 months.

### Indicators: November, 2018 vs. November, 2017

The job trend in the metro area has weakened in recent months. November's 0.5% year-over-year increase is the lowest posted since December, 2017 and ranks below the 0.9% average increase registered over 2018's first 11 months. Nonfarm employment reached 879,600 in November. November's 0.5% gain trails the 0.8% increases registered in each of the previous two months.

Among major industry sectors, six of ten posted year-over-year job growth. The education & health services sector posted the largest November gain in percentage terms, up 3.4% over year-ago levels. The manufacturing (up 3.1%), other services (up 3%), construction & natural resources (up 2.5%), leisure & hospitality (up 1.3%), and government (up 0.9%) sectors also posted employment gains.

Conversely, four of ten major industry sectors posted declines in November. The steepest decline was registered in the professional & business services sector, down 3.6%, followed by the trade, transportation & utilities (down 2%), financial activities (down 1.8%), and information (down 0.8%) sectors.

Manufacturing has now recorded 14 consecutive months of year-over-year job growth. Yet the trend among hours and earnings indicators for manufacturing workers has waned a bit. The length of the average workweek for production workers fell 3.9% from year-ago levels to 41.9 hours, following a 0.9% decline in October. Average weekly earnings for such workers fell 1.1% in November from one year ago (to \$974), this indicator's first decline since April, 2016. On the other hand, average hourly earnings rose 2.9% in November, to \$23.25.

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## MMAC Monthly Economic Trends – Page 3

Both housing and real estate indicators tracked by the MMAC posted November declines. Existing home sales for the metro area fell 2.9%, to 1,254. Mortgages recorded in Milwaukee County fell 20.4% in November, to 1,677, following the 10.8% year-over-year decline in posted in October.

Transportation related indicators were flat in November. New-car registrations in the metro area were unchanged vs. year-ago levels at 1,479. Air passenger usage of Mitchell International Airport reached 560,827 in November, a small 0.2% gain over year-ago levels.

### Other Indicators (latest available)

Consumer prices nationally, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers (CPI-U), rose 2.2% in November (vs. November, 2017) to 252.038 (1981-84=100). The Milwaukee area CPI-U reached 232.718 for the second half of 2017, a 1.8% increase from 2016's second half.

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Statistical table attached.

## Metropolitan Milwaukee Business Indicators

### November, 2018

	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)	Nov-18	879.6	879.4	874.8	0.5%	0.0%	0.9%
Construction, mining & natural res. (000)	Nov-18	32.8	33.8	32.0	2.5%	-3.0%	3.0%
Manufacturing (000)	Nov-18	122.4	121.9	118.7	3.1%	0.4%	2.9%
Trade, transportation, & utilities (000)	Nov-18	145.0	143.3	148.0	-2.0%	1.2%	-1.0%
Information (000)	Nov-18	13.1	13.1	13.2	-0.8%	0.0%	-4.4%
Financial activities (000)	Nov-18	49.8	49.6	50.7	-1.8%	0.4%	-3.0%
Professional & business services (000)	Nov-18	124.8	126.9	129.5	-3.6%	-1.7%	0.6%
Education & health services (000)	Nov-18	176.1	175.6	170.3	3.4%	0.3%	2.3%
Leisure & hospitality (000)	Nov-18	78.1	79.0	77.1	1.3%	-1.1%	0.9%
Other services, exc. public (000)	Nov-18	47.8	47.9	46.4	3.0%	-0.2%	2.4%
Government (000)	Nov-18	89.7	88.3	88.9	0.9%	1.6%	0.5%
<b>LABOR FORCE DATA</b>							
Civilian labor force (000)	Nov-18	819.5	825.3	829.6	-1.2%	-0.7%	0.1%
Employed (000)	Nov-18	795.7	800.9	804.2	-1.1%	-0.6%	0.5%
Unemployed (000)	Nov-18	23.9	24.5	25.4	-5.9%	-2.4%	-12.0%
Unemployment rate							
Metro Milwaukee	Nov-18	2.9%	3.0%	3.1%	-0.2(4)	-0.1(4)	-0.5(4)
Wisconsin	Nov-18	2.6%	2.6%	2.8%	-0.2(4)	0.0(4)	-0.4(4)
United States	Nov-18	3.5%	3.5%	3.9%	-0.4(4)	0.0(4)	-0.5(4)
New unemployment compensation claims	Nov-18	3,205	2,702	3,296	-2.8%	18.6%	-8.3%
<b>HOURS &amp; EARNINGS (mfg. production workers)</b>							
Avg. weekly hours (manuf.)	Nov-18	41.9	42.4	43.6	-3.9%	-1.2%	2.4%
Avg. weekly earnings (2)	Nov-18	\$974.18	\$980.29	\$984.92	-1.1%	-0.6%	6.6%
Avg. hourly earnings (2)	Nov-18	\$23.25	\$23.12	\$22.59	2.9%	0.6%	4.2%
<b>HOUSING &amp; REAL ESTATE</b>							
Existing homes sold	Nov-18	1,254	1,380	1,291	-2.9%	-9.1%	-0.7%
Mortgages (number) (3)	Nov-18	1,677	2,057	2,106	-20.4%	-18.5%	-7.4%
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>							
Airport passengers	Nov-18	560,827	596,415	559,971	0.2%	-6.0%	3.1%
New-car registrations	Nov-18	1,479	1,485	1,479	0.0%	-0.4%	-16.7%
<b>OTHER INDICATORS (latest available)</b>							
Consumer price index (1982-84=100)							
Milwaukee (CPI-U)	2ndH-17	232.718	232.123	228.624	1.8%	0.3%	2.0%
United States (CPI-U)	Nov-18	252.038	252.885	246.669	2.2%	-0.3%	2.5%

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. Bureau of Labor Statistics.