

The first plat of the town was started in 1854 by a Dr. Moore and named after his eldest daughter "Cora", but the name was never recorded. In 1855 a Mr. Gibbs arrived from Massachusetts, representing wealthy capitalists in Massachusetts and Connecticut. He prevailed upon Mr. Orrin Sage, a great banker from Ware, MA to invest in this community, and later Mr. Sage gave \$2,000 and 600 acres of land to the Library Building Fund. Because of his benevolence, the town's name was changed to Osage in his honor.

In the winter of 1855-56, Dr. S. B. Chase of Decorah purchased land in the southwest part of the tract and in the spring of 1856 platted the present City of Osage. He named the east-west streets generally for trees and numbered the north-south streets. He was also responsible for setting out maple trees to line the streets. Even today, Osage is referred to as "the City of Maples". Dr. Chase built an elaborate residence and office on Free Street in 1869. That house still stands today and is used as apartments. Ten years after Dr. Chase's death in 1891, Free Street was renamed Chase Street to honor his many contributions to Osage.

Several of the businesses in Osage occupy structures built in the 1870's. City Hall occupies the former Sage Library Building constructed in 1910 after a \$10,000 gift from Andrew Carnegie. The very first library building was built in 1876 one-half block west of the current City Hall/Sage Library building. Subway sandwich shop occupies the ground floor of the building today and the date of 1876 along with "Sage Library" is seen in the concrete and brick work of the second story.

Because of the age and preservation of many of the downtown buildings, the State Historical Society designated a three-block area on Main Street as "Osage Commercial Historic District" in October, 1966.

Osage is the county seat of Mitchell County and boasts the second-oldest courthouse in operation west of the Mississippi River. The courthouse was built in 1858 and has had some updates and additions, but is still used fully for all County business.

The census of 2000 listed a population for Osage of 3,451. In 2005 an area on the east edge of Osage along Main Street was annexed into the City and added 11 new residents to the City of Osage, along with several businesses.

Osage has had many prominent citizens over the years, most whose names could be tied to a business or profession in Osage. But there have been a few who have made a name for themselves beyond their hometown. One of those is Hamlin Garland, an author of the early 1900's who spent his youth in Osage. One of his first books, "Son of the Middle Border", is basically an autobiography of the time he spent growing up in Osage after the Civil War.

Another notable who calls Osage home is former Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns, who grew up on a farm in rural Osage. Prior to his position in Washington, D.C., he was the governor of Nebraska. He still has siblings in Osage.