

## NEWSROOM BRIEFS

### **OU Cancer Institute nears opening - 11/4/2009**

University of Oklahoma officials on Tuesday celebrated the construction mid-point on the \$120 million OU Cancer Institute. The 210,000-square-foot building will include the latest generation of proton radiation therapy and the state's only cancer Phase I Clinical Trials Center.

### **Oklahoma City area's jobless rate lowest among cities - 10/29/2009**

The Oklahoma City metro area's September jobless rate of 5.9 percent was the lowest in the nation for large cities with a population of 1 million or more, preliminary Labor Department numbers released Wednesday showed.

### **BusinessWeek.com ranks Oklahoma City # 3 in the Nation – 10/2009**

A combination of stable home prices and sizable sectors in health care, energy, government, and education keeps Oklahoma City in the Top 10 Best Economies in the US.

### **Oklahoma City ranked #6 in the Nation "Best Places to find a Job"**

It seems there is not a week that goes by without a national publication singing the praises of Oklahoma City. This time it is Yahoo Finance that named Oklahoma City one of the 10 best places to find a job in 2009.

### **Oklahoma City defies recession. USA TODAY 8/11/2009**

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-08-11-oklahoma-jobs\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-08-11-oklahoma-jobs_N.htm)

The current recession has put much of the U.S. on an economic losing streak. But a few places, including Oklahoma City, have missed most of the pain. Construction cranes are busy here. New medical buildings are underway. Buildings are being renovated in the historical Bricktown neighborhood. Oklahoma City's June unemployment rate of 6% was the second-lowest in the nation for metropolitan areas with 1 million or more people, says the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). Its per-capita income grew 6.9% in 2008 to \$40,942, compared with a year earlier, the Commerce Department reported last week. That growth made the city No. 1 in the USA for large metro areas. The area's median housing price is \$129,900, up 4% from a year earlier, according to the National Association of Realtors. Nationally, housing prices were down 14% during that time.

### **Oklahoma City - Top 10 strongest housing markets in the U.S. 8/11/2009 Report finds fewer housing foreclosures than same time last year 7/16/2009**

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — A new report says Oklahoma had significantly fewer foreclosures in the first half of 2009 than it did during the same period last year. The report by RealtyTrac, a California-based real estate data service, says about 5,609 homes faced foreclosure from January through June, down 27 percent from the same period in 2008.

### **International Magazine Recognizes Oklahoma City's Cost of Living Benefit 6/19/2009**

For years, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber has been talking about the benefits of Oklahoma City's low cost of doing business. Now *fDi Magazine*, an international publication, has named Oklahoma City its most cost effective large city in the United States in its annual North American Cities of the Future short list. Oklahoma City also ranks as the third most cost effective city in all of North America. *fDi Magazine* categorizes large cities as those with populations between 500,000 and 1 million. A multitude of data factored into the report including, industrial rental and labor costs. Oklahoma City's office rental cost was one of the biggest positives in its cost effectiveness. For the full North American Cities of the Future 2009/10 shortlists visit [www.fdimagazine.com](http://www.fdimagazine.com).

### **New report ranks Oklahoma City 2<sup>nd</sup> - Tulsa 9<sup>th</sup> - among top performing cities in nation - 6/16/2009**

Oklahoma City is ranked second among the nation's 100 largest metro areas for economic performance since the recession was declared in December, and [Tulsa](#) ranked ninth in the analysis from the [Brookings Institution](#)'s Metropolitan Policy Program. The MetroMonitor report is the first comprehensive analysis of the impact of the recession on metropolitan [America](#), its authors say. The research examines six key indicators — employment, employment change by industry, unemployment rates, wages, gross metropolitan product and housing prices and foreclosure rates — through the first quarter of 2009.

### **New downtown park could shape Oklahoma City image - 6/8/2009**

City leaders are planning a 30-acre park on the south side of downtown. The space would be a public gathering spot and city landmark that would monumentally change the look and feel of Oklahoma City, Cornett said. Unlike most city parks, which are mostly open green spaces, Cornett said the downtown park would have many special features, such as a pond, skate park, dog park, restaurants, public art and water features. Parking for at least 1,000 cars would be needed, and will be one of the most expensive parts of the project, Cornett said.

### **New Devon Boathouse called 'exciting' - 6/2/2009**

Dignitaries broke ground Monday for a \$10 million boathouse expected to help make Oklahoma City one of the elite international destinations for rowing enthusiasts. The innovative 33,000-square-foot facility will be named the Devon Boathouse in honor of Oklahoma City's Devon Energy Corp., which is contributing \$5 million toward the construction cost of the boathouse on the Oklahoma River.

### **Chesapeake backs \$5 million finish line tower on Oklahoma River - 5/21/2009**

Chesapeake Energy is backing construction of a \$5 million finish line tower as part of a push to turn the Oklahoma River into one of the country's top rowing venues.

### **Oklahoma travel market grows, despite economy - 4/15/2009**

The number of visitors to the state's tourism information centers is up by 12 percent compared to last year. If the number of travelers hitting the state's parks and lodges over spring break is any indication, this summer could shape up to be a busy travel season, said Hardy Watkins, executive director of the state Tourism Department.

### **Oklahoma City - 5.6% Jobless Rate - 4/15/2009**

Oklahoma City's unemployment rate, 5.6 percent, is the second-lowest of any U.S. metropolitan area; median home prices have increased every year since 2004, even as other Sunbelt cities are posting year-over-year declines of 30 percent or more.

### **Conventions are booming downtown 4/2009**

At the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, good news is that convention bookings are up, even in a down economy. But it's even better news seeing the city top the charts in booking activity and having those bragging rights published by **USA Today**. City leaders were celebrating Tuesday's story in **USA Today** that Oklahoma City has seen the highest increase in the nation — about 80 percent — in the number of planners' requests for convention and meeting proposals here.

## **Oklahoma City gets top credit rating from AA+ to AAA - 4/2009**

Oklahoma City residents can expect to spend less on building streets and bridges, thanks to receiving the highest debt rating possible from Standard & Poor's. The move from AA+ to AAA puts the city into an elite group of the best municipal credits in the market. "When it comes to economic news, this is as good as it gets," Mayor Mick Cornett said Tuesday in a news conference at City Hall. Oklahoma City is the only city in the state to receive the top rating, which was released Monday.

## **OKC Ranks 6<sup>th</sup> as "Americas Most Livable Cities" behind Tulsa #5 and Portland #1 4/2009**

Selected from metro regions across five data sets: Five-year income growth per household and cost of living from Moody's Economy.com, crime data and leisure index from Sperling's Best Places, and annual unemployment statistics from Bureau Of Labor Statistics

## **OKC Ranks 12<sup>th</sup> from a list of 200 for "Best Places For Business And Careers" 3/2009**

Rankings looked at the 200 largest metropolitan areas in the U.S., which range from the New York metro and its 11.7 million people to Olympia, Wash., with a population of 241,000. We examined each on 11 different criteria. Economic research firm Moody's Economy.com supplied data on job growth over the past five years and projections through 2011. Economy.com also provided business and living cost data as well as income growth and migration trends. We also turned to Bert T. Sperling, city researcher and co-author of *Cities Ranked & Rated* for some labor supply and quality of life information. Sperling furnished data on college attainment, crime rates, local colleges and cultural and recreational opportunities in the area. In a nod to the current economic climate, we added two new categories this year: projected job growth and subprime mortgages as a percentage of total originations over a three-year period.

## **Oklahoma City attractions escape sting of economy - 3/2009**

Good weather and a bad economy are combining into a financial bonanza for area attractions, some of whom are reporting record or near-record business this week. At the Oklahoma City Zoo, extra sheriff's deputies were called in to help navigate long lines of cars. With parking scarce at the zoo and adjoining Science Museum Oklahoma, spaces were filling up fast across the street at Remington Park. In Bricktown, water taxis were carrying passenger counts more typical of a mild-weather Saturday in June.

## **Four Oklahoma companies among Fortune top 100 list - 1/23/2009**

Four Oklahoma companies were included in Fortune magazine's latest list of the top 100 companies to work for. Topping the state list at No. 13 was Oklahoma City-based oil and gas company Devon Energy. Devon jumped up 35 spots from last year, and ranked the highest among energy companies. Tulsa-based QuikTrip was ranked 27th, up one spot from last year. Chesapeake Energy in Oklahoma City is No. 73, down from its 2008 ranking of 61, and American Fidelity Assurance Co. was ranked 45th, dropping from 24th place last year.

## **Strong Oklahoma home values praised - 1/2009**

Oklahoma City and Tulsa remain among the nation's Top 25 strongest housing markets despite the slowdown and recent price weakening, Forbes.com said this week. It's the second time in less than a year Forbes.com has spotlighted Oklahoma for economic strength. In May, Forbes called Oklahoma City the most "recession-proof" city in the country, based on its relatively sturdy housing and energy sectors.

### **Oklahoma among nation's fastest-growing states - 12/23/2008**

OKLAHOMA CITY - Oklahoma is No. 19 on the list of the nation's fastest-growing states. "I think we've been doing a better job of telling our story," he said. "It's a great place to live, to raise a family." State Treasurer Scott Meacham said the state seems to be drawing population from states losing traditional industries. "I see people from all over the country moving in here," Meacham said. "They are coming from areas of the country that are losing population. A lot of the old traditional Rust Belt states have been struggling, losing core manufacturing jobs." Aeronautics and biotech companies have helped diversify Oklahoma's economy beyond its traditional reliance on the energy industry. Oklahoma has become a hub for aircraft maintenance operations, which are required in good times and bad, he said.

### **Oklahoma City #1 in Midwest 11/08**

Oklahoma City was the only city in the Midwest listed as an expanding economy. He cited a federal study showing Oklahoma was a top performer in home value gains and yet more surveys showing salaries up and unemployment down.

### **Homes Values Increase 3% in 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter**

Third quarter MLS statistics show that Oklahoma's real estate market is still going strong during these uncertain times. The average cost of a home in Oklahoma has increased by 3 percent compared to the third quarter of 2007. In the third quarter of 2008 the average cost of a home sold was \$159,729 compared to \$148,169 in the third quarter of 2007. Statewide, 13,811 homes were sold in the third quarter of 2008. This is 7.5 percent less than the number of homes sold in the third quarter of 2007 in which 14,932 homes were sold in the state.

### **US Rowing Training Facility to Open in Oklahoma City**

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) The U.S. Rowing association plans to open a year-round program in Oklahoma City to train the nation's top young rowers. The program will be geared to developing rowers to compete at the Olympic level.

### **Oklahoma is No. 1 in housing game – 8/27/2008**

Oklahoma is No. 1 in home value gains — at a time when homeowners in most of the rest of the country are wondering what hit them in their equity.

The Sooner State led the nation in appreciation, first among the 50 states, for the period ending June 30, the federal government said Tuesday.

With values in a historic general national decline in most of the country — and in a freefall in some places — values in Oklahoma rose 4.9 percent in the second quarter compared with the second quarter of 2007, according to the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight Home Price Index.

### **New AAA call center to bring 1,200 jobs to OKC - 5/19/2008**

OKLAHOMA CITY - AAA will build a 198,000-square-foot customer contact center that will employ more than 1,200 workers in the Quail Springs Office Park of northwest Oklahoma City, AAA officials said Friday. "This site selection is not only good news for Oklahoma, it's good news for members of participating AAA clubs who stand to benefit from Oklahoma's motivated work force, friendly business environment and low cost of operation," said Neal Krueger, president and chief executive officer of AAA Oklahoma, in a prepared statement.

### **Here comes NBA team, Oklahoma City Thunder 7/3/2008**

NBA has come to town. The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina created an opportunity for OKC to temporarily host the New Orleans Hornets for 2 consecutive seasons. Oklahoma City rated in the top 10 for attendance during those 2 years - with a last place team. This strong fan appeal prompted a local group to purchase the Seattle Supersonics and relocate them to OKC. Now, the Oklahoma City Thunder. There are only 4 teams in the league that have "Sold Out" of season tickets prior to the season opener in 2008. The Boston Celtics, Los Angeles Lakers, Phoenix Suns and yes, the Oklahoma City Thunder. Well Done Folks! Games are played at the Ford Center, a new, State of the Art - 20,000 seat arena – One mile from our Hotel.

### **U.S. Rowing National High Performance Center unveiled**

Posted: Oct 3, 2008 06:21 PM CDT

OKLAHOMA CITY -- One thing that helps the economy in Oklahoma, and really puts them on the map is the ever increasing number of sporting events. "I'm pleased to announce the formation of the new U.S. Rowing National High Performance Center here in Oklahoma City," U.S. Rowing Executive Director, Glen Merry said. Oklahoma City is now going to be the place where future members of the Olympic Rowing team will come to train. This is just another way Oklahoma is becoming a premiere spot for sporting events. The Oklahoma River is a hot spot for rowing competitions, now it'll be a one-of-a-kind spot for training.

### **City chamber, visitor's bureau outline plans for new downtown headquarters - 6/13/2008**

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber is moving forward with plans to build an \$18 million, four-story headquarters at NW 4 and Broadway - a project chamber officials say will be a gateway to downtown.

### **Expert predicts downtown growth - 5/15/2008**

Watch out Baby Boomers - the millennial are coming of age and they're abandoning their suburban homes and looking for a different American dream - downtown. Cities that embrace the millennial and create a downtown that is both affordable and targeted at the generation born after 1977 will have the best shot at thriving throughout the next decade, advised Laurie Volk, co-managing director of Zimmerman/Volk Associates, the opening speaker Wednesday at the Mayor's Downtown Development Roundtable. Volk said the millennial represent the largest generation since the Baby Boomers. Nationally, she said, 29 percent of homebuyers are younger couples. But in Oklahoma City, the percentage stands at 36 percent, she said. "That is actually very, very positive for the future of Oklahoma City," Volk said. "The ability to attract and retain young people is critical to any city."

### **Survey names Oklahoma among cheapest vacation spots - 5/6/2008**

For a good time that doesn't pinch the pocketbook, head to Oklahoma. Figures released by AAA on Monday show Tulsa to be the cheapest among 49 U.S. cities for food and lodging costs. The results were released after a survey of prices for lodging and food in AAA's travel guides. The same survey also ranked Oklahoma as one of the six cheapest states for food and lodging. "Its good news for Oklahoma," said Chuck Mai, AAA Oklahoma spokesman.

### **Oklahoma City named as 'recession proof' - 5/2/2008**

Oklahoma City's ability to avoid the economic doldrums afflicting much of the rest of the nation has garnered the city a "recession-proof" label from Forbes.com, the Web site of the national business magazine.

The Web site took note of the soaring commodity prices that have caused a boom in the energy and agricultural sectors, helping to keep unemployment in check. And Oklahoma City is home to "one of the country's strongest housing markets," Forbes.com said. "It's wonderful to hear that," said Roy Williams, president of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce. "Over the last five years, everything here has started going up. This economy has just gotten stronger and stronger and stronger and there's nothing on the horizon that says that's going to stop." Oklahoma City was the top-ranked among the 50 largest metro areas based on employment figures, median home prices and data related to the impact of foreclosures and falling home prices on the local productivity.

### **New Edmond forensics center puts state among the nation's best - 5/1/2008**

EDMOND - The state's most sophisticated forensic science crime-fighting work no longer will be done in a cramped, outdated office building in Oklahoma City, but in a state-of-the-art laboratory in Edmond. Dedication ceremonies for the \$30 million Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation Forensic Science Center will be at 2 p.m. today. Some experts in the forensic field are calling this real-life "CSI" laboratory one of the best in the United States.

### **Oklahoma better off than most - 4/20/2008**

Oklahoma is different. Nationally, recession alarm bells ring, home values decline, foreclosures skyrocket and unemployment rates climb.

Not in Oklahoma. The state is holding its own, according to experts, analysts, economic surveys, statistics and national rankings:

- Oklahoma's unemployment rate in February was 3.1 percent. Nationally, it was 4.8 percent.
- Oklahoma home values increased by 4.24 percent in 2007. Nationally, the median home price dropped 1.4 percent that year.
- Oklahoma City is 19th out of the 100 largest metropolitan areas on the Forbes 2008 Best Cities for Jobs list.
- Oklahoma was fourth in 2007 for business startups, according to the Kauffman Index of Entrepreneurial Activity.

The same index has Oklahoma fourth out of 40 real estate markets for corporate expansion or relocation and sixth among the country's best performing markets in terms of retail vacancy, rental rates and development.

### **Penn. firm moves regional office to OKC - 4/2/2008**

OKLAHOMA CITY - A national vegetation-clearing company has moved one of its regional offices to northeast Oklahoma City, officials said. Pennsylvania-based DeAngelo Brothers Inc. moved one of its main regional offices to an 18,000-square-foot, 6-acre site at 10508 N. Coltrane. The office will be responsible for industrial services for nine states.

### **OU boathouse part of bigger vision along Oklahoma River - 3/19/2008**

College rowing teams that will soon make waves on the Oklahoma River are a big part of Oklahoma City's effort to become a one-of-a-kind rowing destination.

The University of Oklahoma on Tuesday became the third state school to formalize an agreement with Oklahoma City to build a boathouse on the river for its rowing team. It's a move that will bring Division I collegiate rowing to the river and positions the city to be on par with places such as Boston, Philadelphia and Washington that have long enjoyed rowing as part of the fabric of urban life.

### **Downtown on verge of moving up - 12/16/2007**

The expected arrival of a MAPS 3 initiative and an NBA team within the next few months is a major part of the future of downtown and the city. How those developments and others play out will dictate how officials use what Mayor Mick Cornett dubbed their "chess pieces." Those pieces are the many elements of a framework plan for Core to Shore - the most ambitious redevelopment project in city history that seeks to turn the land between downtown and the Oklahoma River into a vibrant urban community.

**[America's Cleanest Cities - 3/18/2008](#)**  
**[Oklahoma City ranks # 7 on the Forbes Magazine 'America's Cleanest Cities'](#)**

**[Devon Energy plans city's tallest building - 3/13/2008](#)**

The new Devon Energy Headquarters being constructed downtown at a cost of over \$800 Million Dollars and soaring 75 stories tall will be taller than any building in Dallas/Ft worth – north all the way to Chicago.

**[New boathouses planned for river - 3/12/2008](#)**

OKLAHOMA CITY -The Chesapeake Boathouse on the Oklahoma River is set to have some new neighbors. Mike Knopp, executive director of the Oklahoma City Boathouse Foundation, a non-profit community foundation that operates the Chesapeake Boathouse, said plans are in the works for four new boathouses and numerous improvements in the area. The \$3.5 million Chesapeake Boathouse sits on the north shore of the river just south of Bricktown and opened in 2006. Knopp said a master plan being put together now calls for boathouses for Oklahoma City University, the University of Central Oklahoma and University of Oklahoma. The user for the fourth proposed boathouse has not yet been determined. "These aren't just big ideas," Knopp said. "These are going to happen; we're just looking at the logistics of getting it started." The \$10 million OCU boathouse is set to begin construction by the end of the year. Knopp said he could not attach a specific price tag, or timeline, to the overall project, which is being dubbed Boathouse Row. The area will get national exposure next month, however, when Oklahoma City hosts the 2008 U.S. Olympic trials for canoes and kayaks. Knopp said the event will bring 80 of the top canoe and kayak athletes in the United States along with perhaps thousands of spectators. The increased traffic in the area will likely also benefit Bricktown. "A lot of people don't realize how close we are to Bricktown," Knopp said. "We're just around the corner."

**[Oklahoma companies are thriving and say they could last a recession - 2/27/2008](#)**

This country's manufacturers are one of several industries especially vulnerable to a recession, according to a recent survey from global outplacement consultancy firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas Inc.

Yet Oklahoma is somewhat insulated from other parts of the country that have suffered from more job losses and company downsizings. And two industries - energy and aerospace - are showing solid growth, said the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance, the Tulsa-based industry trade group. "Manufacturers still seem somewhat optimistic, but certainly are more guarded about the near future than they were, say, nine months or a year ago," spokesman Joe Epperley said. Energy companies and those that manufacture and supply oil-field equipment are booming, Epperley said. And smaller firms with little or no ties to the energy sector are seeing record sales, adding employees and expanding operations. "We are very fortunate here in Oklahoma," said Ron Holmes, an extension agent with the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance. "We are currently enjoying a lot of strong growth in manufacturing; it's been contrary to the national circumstance."

**[Center of city will see 1st boost \\$830M for projects was OK'd in December - 2/25/2008](#)**

The building blocks for downtown's next transformation are among the first projects that will be paid for with money from the city's recent bond issue.

Downtown-related bond projects that will be completed in the next few years include securing land for anew downtown park and beginning infrastructure work on the boulevard that will replace Interstate 40 once it is relocated.

City officials have identified about \$211 million worth of projects they hope to complete in the next three years. It's the first round of more than \$830 million in projects approved by voters in December.