

THE POINT

GREATER
OKLAHOMA CITY
CHAMBER



January 2019

www.okcchamber.com

OKC receives \$14.3 million grant for bus rapid transit

Last month, Sen. Jim Inhofe announced that Oklahoma City is a recipient of a \$14.3 million federal BUILD grant to implement bus rapid transit (BRT) along Northwest Expressway and North Classen Boulevard. The funds will help connect businesses and residents near the eight-mile segment to the core of Oklahoma City, including other EMBARK routes and the newly opened Oklahoma City Streetcar.

BRT is a fast, comfortable and cost-effective bus-based transit system operating in many major metro areas. By using a dedicated lane and features similar to light rail or metro systems, it can be more reliable, convenient and faster than regular bus services with technologies like traffic signal priority and off-bus fare payment.

According to Inhofe's letter of recommendation to Elaine Chao, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, the BRT project will include multiple stations and expanded infrastructure to increase access between employment centers, neighborhoods, retail areas, medical facilities and more. The proposed BRT corridor includes parts of four Oklahoma City wards and touches about 120,000 jobs and around 75,000 residents.

The project also marks a growing emphasis on and investment in public transit from both residents and city officials alike. Since the 2014 fiscal year, EMBARK has seen a 20 percent increase in total bus system revenue hours, or the time in which a vehicle is available to carry passengers. Residents also recently approved \$20

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Chamber adopts new revenue model for advertising and sponsorships

In 2019, the Chamber is changing the way members access sponsorships, advertising and other partnership opportunities with the Chamber.

The new model will give each member business an assigned staff person to work directly with them to identify their best opportunities. The Total Resource Development Campaign (TRDC) will no longer be implemented.

"We know our members are looking for our organization to quickly respond to trends in the marketplace and offer the best opportunities to Chamber members," said Roy H. Williams, president and CEO of the Chamber. "TRDC served us very well for a long

time, and our volunteers played a large role in making this the best chamber of commerce in the country."

The Chamber is planning some innovative new programming in the year ahead and is anxious to work collaboratively with our members on these projects. New programs will include a new signature "State of Health" event that looks at the region's healthcare industry as well as our health status and rankings; and a new full-day learning conference.

"I look at this transition not as an end, but as the start of something new," Williams said. "We want to give each and every one of our members a chance to be a part of this new era."

Meet the 2019 Chamber Chair Percy Kirk

The POINT!: How many years have you been involved with the Chamber, and how has that time shaped how you view the region?

I've been involved with the Chamber since I moved to the OKC metro in 2009. In fact, as I began working in this city and getting to know the people here, it was easily apparent that being active with the Chamber was a must. This Chamber has a long, strong history of creating an environment where businesses can prosper. And the Chamber does this by not only bringing businesses together for the greater good but also connecting businesses with the government and non-profit sector to create programs and collaborations that lift the entire community up. While OKC gets a lot of accolades for its progress, our Chamber does not rest on its laurels, either. Rather, each year the Chamber is actively searching out best practices through programs like our InterCity Visits where we can learn from other communities on how to continually work to make ours stronger. Through my involvement with this Chamber, I have been able to see firsthand the innovative, collaborative culture in this metro area.

Since you are from outside the market originally, how does Oklahoma City compare to the other communities in which you've worked? What do you think makes Oklahoma City different?

The biggest differentiator for Oklahoma City is how the community works together to get things done. No matter what sector you represent – whether you are a city manager, a nurse, a teacher, a stay-at-home parent, a banker – you are invited to engage in making sure this community progresses. And because of the collaborative culture I mentioned, this Oklahoma Standard as we call it, every sector is represented and at the table. It is a best practice that is actually known by leaders in other parts of the country, some of whom come to OKC to learn about how we do this so they can try to replicate it. I've been in other communities that are fine communities, but they don't have the same cooperation as I have noticed here. It is great to see how the elected leaders work with the philanthropic and business community for the benefit of the city.

So how would you describe the differences between our Chamber and similar organizations in other cities?

One of the differentiators of our Chamber is that it is not solely focused on initiatives that are directly and specifically economic development. We also engage with programs and initiatives that are tied to the success of our community as a whole, which influences economic

development. As an example, our Chamber has direct responsibility for the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Further, we will engage with social issues that have serious implications for economic development if we don't get them right. An example of this is our work on criminal justice reform. Our Chamber is actually larger than the chambers in Denver or Dallas because of this expanded approach to ensure a top-notch community for our businesses to grow.

Why is it important that the business community stay engaged in the growth and the future development of Oklahoma City and the region?

If you aren't moving forward you decline and move backward. This community is used to winning and accomplishing what we set out to do and, as a result, we strive to do more and take on bigger challenges. If we slow down, we could lose momentum. Further, disengagement could lead to apathy which could really wreak havoc on this culture of collaboration. We've seen this happen in other parts of the country where groups start spending all of their energy fighting about priorities as opposed to figuring out how to work together to solve issues. We have to proactively stay engaged to ensure this doesn't happen here.

What do you think is the biggest opportunity in front of the Chamber right now?

First of all, we have so many projects in progress—building the convention center, finishing the park, reforming the criminal justice system and developing the Innovation District. This is truly enviable progress, but it is a lot. We must work together to execute on all of these things in front of us. Second, we are currently working with Mayor Holt as he is soliciting ideas for MAPS 4 and how that program will play out. MAPS has been instrumental to our city's progress and we'll need all hands on deck to make sure this next round has the right focus and that we are doing what we can to get the community excited about voting in favor of it.

On the flip side of that, what do you think is the Chamber's biggest challenge?

The biggest challenge is we cannot take all of our progress and success for granted. If we do, we lose the momentum that exists today.

What do you hope to bring to your role as Chamber chair?

I just want to do my part to keep things moving forward, as quick as we can!

Leadership Notes

Make a resolution to stay engaged in 2019

The start of the new year often comes with the decision to set (and hopefully stick to) resolutions. Health, finance and hobbies are all fair game for new goals, but I want to offer an idea for a resolution that will benefit the entire community.

I want to encourage every member of our business community to stay engaged in 2019, especially in the political process. Next month, residents of several Oklahoma City Wards will have the opportunity to shape our City's future. Oklahoma City Wards 2, 5, 6 and 8 have candidates who will stand for election on Feb. 12. While municipal elections typically have the lowest voter turnout, the results of those elections have a direct, tangible impact on the path that Oklahoma City will take in the coming years. Make sure you, your family and your colleagues are registered to vote by Jan. 18 in order to participate in this election.

Another important opportunity to stay engaged comes on Feb. 4, when the Oklahoma State Legislature convenes for its first official meeting of the session. The Chamber represents the voice of business in the community, but we rely upon the perspectives of our members to increase our impact. Later this month, we will release our 2019 Public Policy Guide, a publication that acts as our playbook for our advocacy efforts at the State Capitol. Take the time to read that publication, and most importantly, call your elected officials to make your voice heard. As Greater Oklahoma City approaches the new challenges and opportunities of 2018, resolve to stay engaged. The region depends upon your unique perspective.

Sincerely,



Roy H. Williams, CCE
Chamber CEO & President



Roy H. Williams, CCE
President & CEO

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"OKC Streetcar launches"
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THE POINT!

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Opportunity zones create framework for OKC investment

In 2017, updates to the tax code through the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act created new tax benefits for investors called Opportunity Zones, an economically-distressed area where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. Eight areas in Oklahoma City have qualified as Opportunity Zones, offering great development potential in some of the city's key areas.

Oklahoma City's opportunity zones include the Central Business District, the Innovation District, the Northeast 23rd Street Corridor, the I-35 Corridor, the I-35 and I-240 intersection, the I-40 Corridor, the I-44 and I-235 intersection and the Adventure District. Each opportunity zone has a distinct competitive position which will naturally drive investments in certain products.

The timing of an investment in these zones is crucial. Investors can defer tax on any prior gains invested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF) until the date on which the investment in a QOF is sold or exchanged, or

December 31, 2026—whichever comes first. If the QOF investment is held for longer than five years, there is a 10 percent exclusion of the deferred gain. If held for more than seven years, the 10 percent becomes 15 percent. If the investor holds the investment in the Opportunity Fund for at least 10 years, the investor is eligible for an increase in basis of the QOF investment equal to its fair market value on the date that the QOF investment is sold or exchanged.

For more information on Opportunity Zones in Oklahoma visit www.okcoppportunityzones.com, or attend the January Chamber Forum on Wednesday, Jan. 23, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Vast, 333 W Sheridan Ave. Individual tickets are \$35 for Chamber members and \$55 for nonmembers. A series ticket package to all 10 luncheons from January through October is available at a discounted rate of \$300. Learn more at www.okcchamber.com/oppzone.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 8

Member Orientation

Time: 8:30 to 10 a.m.
Location: Chamber offices,
123 Park Ave.
[www.okcchamber.com/
orientation](http://www.okcchamber.com/orientation)

Jan. 17

State of the City

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location: Cox Convention
Center, 1 Myriad Gardens
www.okcchamber.com/soc

Jan. 23

Chamber Forum

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location: Vast, 333 W
Sheridan Ave.
[www.okcchamber.com/
opzone](http://www.okcchamber.com/opzone)

Jan. 31

Legislative Breakfast

Time: 8 to 9:30 a.m.
Location: Cox Convention
Center, 1 Myriad Gardens
[www.okcchamber.com/
legislativebreakfast](http://www.okcchamber.com/legislativebreakfast)

Feb. 5

Sunset Reception

Time: 4 to 6 p.m.
Location: SpringHill Suites
Bricktown, 600 E Sheridan
[www.okcchamber.com/
sunset2019](http://www.okcchamber.com/sunset2019)

Feb. 12

Member Orientation

Time: 8:30 to 10 a.m.
Location: Chamber offices,
123 Park Ave.
[www.okcchamber.com/
orientation2](http://www.okcchamber.com/orientation2)

Feb. 13

MegaLunch

Time: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: Oklahoma Credit
Union Association, 631 E
Hill St.
[www.okcchamber.com/
megalunch](http://www.okcchamber.com/megalunch)

Feb. 20

Chamber Forum

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location: Vast, 333 W
Sheridan Ave.
[www.okcchamber.com/
forum](http://www.okcchamber.com/forum)

Get involved with the Chamber in 2019

Whether you are new to the Chamber, a new employee or you just want to get more involved, now is the perfect time to take full advantage of your Chamber membership. Attend these upcoming networking events to learn more about the work of the Chamber while connecting with other business leaders from the metro area.

Member Orientation

Learn more about the Chamber's key initiatives and programs while meeting other members at the Chamber's Member Orientation. Held on the second Tuesday of the month, Member Orientation is the perfect starting point for learning more about the Chamber. Members of the Chamber staff will explain how the Chamber's economic development efforts, government relations activities, community improvement programs and membership involvement opportunities support the Chamber's work as the visionary organization of Oklahoma City.

Attend Member Orientation on Tuesday, Jan. 8, or Tuesday, Feb. 12, from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at the Chamber offices, 123 Park Ave., or visit OKCChamber.com/orientation for more information.

Sunset Reception

To connect with other Chamber members, be sure to attend the monthly Sunset Reception. Hosted by Chamber member businesses, these free after-hours events feature complimentary hors d'oeuvres, one drink ticket and unlimited networking opportunities. Attend the February Sunset Reception on Tuesday, Feb. 5, from 4 to 6 p.m. at SpringHill Suites Bricktown, 600 E Sheridan Ave. Learn more at OKCChamber.com/sunset2019.

MegaLunch

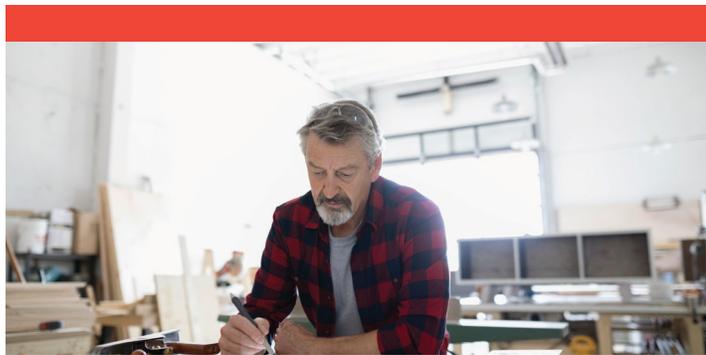
Take a break from sales calls and have fun networking in a unique way at MegaLunch. To help members spread the word about their business, MegaLunch uses a computerized rotation schedule to guide members around tables where they present a 90-second pitch to other attendees.

Due to the unique format of this event, only one person per member company may attend and cancellations of individual registrations require a written, 72-hour notice to receive a refund. Attend the next MegaLunch on Wednesday, Feb. 13, at Oklahoma Credit Union Association, 631 E Hill St., from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Learn more at OKCChamber.com/megalunch.



Hit the links for the Chamber's spring golf tournament

The Chamber is expanding one of its most popular events, the annual Golf Tournament, to include spring tournament dates at two separate courses! Reserve a spot for the tournament on Monday, April 1, for Gaillardia Country Club or on Monday, April 29 for Twin Hills Golf and Country Club. For \$1,350, a team of four will enjoy 18 holes of golf, and for \$1,750 you get a team of four plus sponsorship of one hole at one of the tournaments. Email register@okcchamber.com to secure your spot today! Special thanks to Signature Sponsor INSURICA.



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Chamber-assisted companies add 7,380 jobs in 2018

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber saw a successful year in 2018 as it continued to pursue economic development opportunities for the region. In 2018, the Chamber worked on 124 successful economic development projects with 7,380 announced jobs and more than \$495 million in capital investment in the Greater Oklahoma City region.

“Oklahoma City is seeing increased momentum in its economic development efforts, as evidenced by the significant number of jobs announced this year by both new and existing companies,” said Jeff Seymour, executive vice president for economic development at the Chamber. “Oklahoma City exemplifies that companies want to locate and grow in communities that invest in their own quality of life.”

The average wage for announced positions is \$47,086, with more than \$347 million in payroll. These new jobs represent both new companies and the growth of existing businesses. Several companies also announced job growth of more than 100 positions during some portion of 2018.



Officials gather to break ground on the new Heartland headquarters in Automobile Alley. Heartland is one of many companies that announced more than 100 new jobs in 2018.

CACI International Inc., a company that provides cyber-security and information services to intelligence, defense and federal civilian customers, centralized some of its business operations in Oklahoma City by opening a shared services center. The center is expected to employ 550 people when fully staffed.



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Oklahoma City was also announced as the location for the state's first Amazon fulfillment center, a 600,000-square-foot facility that will create more than 1,500 full-time jobs by the end of 2019. Employees at the fulfillment center will pick, pack and ship small items to customers.

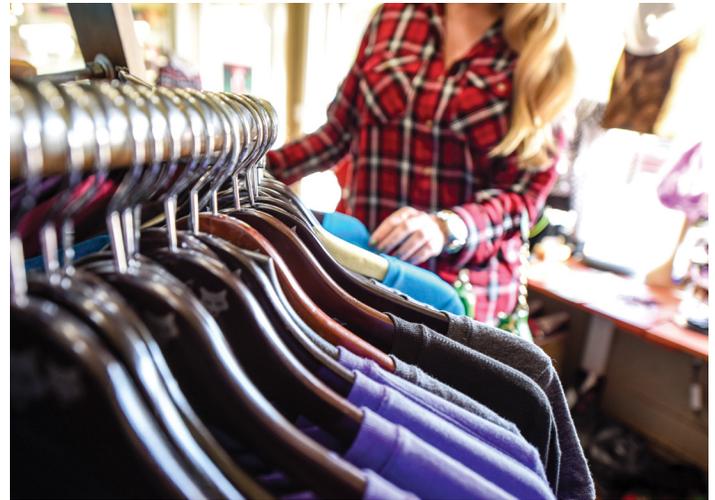
In addition to announcing the creation of more than 100 new jobs, Heartland, global headquarters of parent company Global Payments, started construction on its new headquarters in downtown Oklahoma City. The company will expand its workforce by 375, and its new 100,000-square-foot building in Automobile Alley will help support that growth.

Other companies announcing more than 100 jobs are Del Real Foods, SYNQ3 Restaurant Solutions, Rural Sourcing Inc., Booz Allen Hamilton, Halliburton Energy Services, American Fidelity Assurance Company, Dell Technologies and TriCorps Technologies.

Retail growth in 2018

In addition to recruiting destination retail to Oklahoma City, the Chamber also welcomed several

new names to the market in 2018. Duluth Trading Company, Firebirds Wood Fired Grill, Flix Brewhouse, Life Time Fitness at Quail Springs Mall, Hopdoddy Burger Bar, Costco, Sur La Table, The Container Store and REI all announced or opened Oklahoma City locations during the calendar year.



Increasing the strength of the retail sector directly impacts the City's sales tax collections. In Oklahoma City, sales tax collections fund infrastructure improvements, police and fire departments and more.



CREATING LASTING CHANGE

Julio took a chance on the Y Achievers program, a college readiness and career exploration program of the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City. His experience sparked something in him to want to do more and be more. Following graduation, he attended OU and graduated with two BAs, enlisted in the Army, became a member of the military police and is currently working on obtaining his Master's degree and recently was accepted to the Oklahoma City Police Academy.

“

Y Achievers changed my life for the better. It motivated me to study harder, to be someone in this life and to help out my community and my family.

- JULIO

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Grant for BRT announced (cont'd from page 1)

million in transit capital improvements as part of the Better Streets, Safer Oklahoma City general obligation bond package. According to Inhofe, the BRT project continues in the spirit of those commitments.

The grant will receive matching funds from the City of Oklahoma City from bonds and sales tax proceeds that have already been approved by voters. While the project is still in the planning stages, service could begin in 2023. The announcement is also a major win for ongoing transit improvements in Oklahoma City, which has already seen the grand opening of its streetcar line and additional investments in its bus service. The awarded BUILD funding will make BRT the City's third major transit facility investment in the past five years.

"Coming on the heels of our streetcar and the addition of Sunday bus service, this BRT grant solidifies 2018 as the best year for OKC transit in modern memory," Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt said. "This is a major grant and a major achievement for Oklahoma City."

The addition of BRT in Oklahoma City was one suggestion of the 2005 COTPA Fixed Guideway Study, a plan for updates to Oklahoma City's transit options. The study recommended an improved bus system, a downtown Oklahoma City streetcar system, commuter rail and BRT to help meet the projected needs of Oklahoma City by the year 2030.

Other transit updates

The concept of a downtown streetcar outlined in the Fixed Guideway Study called for frequent, direct service between Oklahoma City's central business district, the convention center, Bricktown and SSM Health St. Anthony's medical center. The modern realization of that plan officially opened on Dec. 14, when hundreds of Oklahoma City residents gathered for the ribbon cutting and subsequent weekend of inaugural rides. In addition to the areas highlighted above, the streetcar also connects to Scissortail Park and the MAPS 3 Convention Center, both of which are currently under construction.

Make your voice heard in upcoming elections

Oklahoma City residents have an opportunity to impact Oklahoma City's future growth on Feb. 12 when they vote in Oklahoma City Council elections.

The nonpartisan election will decide who represents Wards 2, 5, 6 and 8 on the Council for the next four-year term, which begins in April 2019. A total of 12 candidates filed to run for Oklahoma City Council elections, including incumbents David Greenwell (Ward 5) and Mark Stonecipher (Ward 8). Other candidates are James Cooper, Mike Dover, Suzanne Broadbent, Tracey Halley Terrell and Marilyn Davidson for Ward 2; Kristina Hull for Ward 5; Nathaniel Harding, JoBeth Hamon and Jim Holman for Ward 6; and Lauren Durmas for Ward 8. View a Ward map at OKC.gov/WardMap, and learn more about the candidates at VeloCityOKC.com/2019election.

The deadline to register to vote in the election is Jan. 18. Download a voter registration form at OK.gov/elections, where you can also view your polling location, request to vote absentee and view a sample ballot.



Businesses who join the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber are part of the largest coalition of businesses in the state and make the Chamber's work in the community possible. Each member level is identified on the listing below.

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Communication Services
Mr. Chris Lozano 235-2217
115 E. California Ave., Suite 400
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.longwaveinc.com

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Mercy Health Foundation
Foundations
Mrs. Jessica Clayton 486-8994
13321 N. Meridian Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73120
www.mercy.net

ASSOCIATE

Oklahoma ER & Medical Hospital
Medical Clinics
Ms. Makailyn Dillon 818-3202
15103 N. Pennsylvania Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73134
www.okerhospital.com

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RNT Professional Services, LLC
Information Technology
Ms. Teresa Rule 561-4326
330 W. Gray St., Suite 315
Norman, OK 73069
www.rntpros.com

CORE

Red Wing Shoe Store "Red Wing on Reno"
Retail
Ms. Mary Huddleston 789-5599
6300 W. Reno Ave., Suite E
Oklahoma City, OK 73127
www.oklahomacitynorth.
redwingshoestore.com

CORE

Redbud Dental of Edmond
Dentists
Ms. Briana Saunders 562-9550
17900 N. Western Ave., Suite 104
Edmond, OK 73012
www.redbuddentaledmond.com

ADVISOR

Synaptacode
Computer Software Developers
Mr. Chris Lozano 235-2217
115 E. California Ave., Suite 400
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.synaptacode.com

Members Upgrade Their Support of the Chamber

The following member companies increased their investment in the Chamber, demonstrating strong support of the Chamber's efforts to drive the region's economy. To increase your investment, contact the membership division of the Chamber at 405-297-8949 or info@okcchamber.com.

ADVISOR

Lauren Schwartz, Realtor
Real Estate
 Ms. Lauren Schwartz 501-2393
 10 E. Campbell St.
 Edmond, OK 73034-3712
www.kw.com/kw/agent/laurenschwartz

ADVISOR

Turner Construction Company
Contractors - General
 Mr. Steve Whitcraft (214) 721-8400
 10100 N. Central Expressway, Suite 600
 Dallas, TX 75231
www.tcco.com

ASSOCIATE

Four Points by Sheraton Oklahoma City Airport
Hotels & Motels
 Ms. Cyndi Lundy 605-0511
 4708 W I-40 Service Road
 Oklahoma City, OK 73128
www.fourpointsoklahomacityairport.com

ASSOCIATE

NE Property Management, LLC
Apartments
 Ms. Melinda Riggs (972) 833-4350
 116 Hillside Drive
 Lewisville, TX 75067
www.nemanagement.net

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GRAND OPENINGS

Congratulations to Chamber members on their recent Grand Openings! To see the schedule of upcoming Grand Openings or subscribe to the Grand Openings calendar, visit www.okcchamber.com/grandopenings.



CBD Plus USA, Del City
5101 SE 29th St., Suite 105
Del City, OK 73115



Duluth Trading Company
6617 SW 3rd St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73128



Southern Oaks Learning and Wellness Campus
6728 S. Hudson Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73139



Staybridge Suites Bricktown / Downtown
120 S. Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104



Wal-Mart #622
7800 N.W. Expressway
Oklahoma City, OK 73132



BestDrive LLC
400 S. Eagle Lane
Oklahoma City, OK 73128



Sur La Table
5854 N. Classen Blvd., Suite P-01
Oklahoma City, OK 73118



CBD Plus USA, MacArthur
213 S. MacArthur Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73128



CBD Plus USA, Classen
2723 N. Classen Blvd., Suite A
Oklahoma City, OK 73106



INTEGRIS Breast Surgery Clinic
10900 Hefner Pointe Drive, Suite 505
Oklahoma City, OK 73120



OKX Roofing
1 NE 2nd St., Suite 208
Oklahoma City, OK 73104



Lux Haus Salon
9501 N. May Ave., Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73120



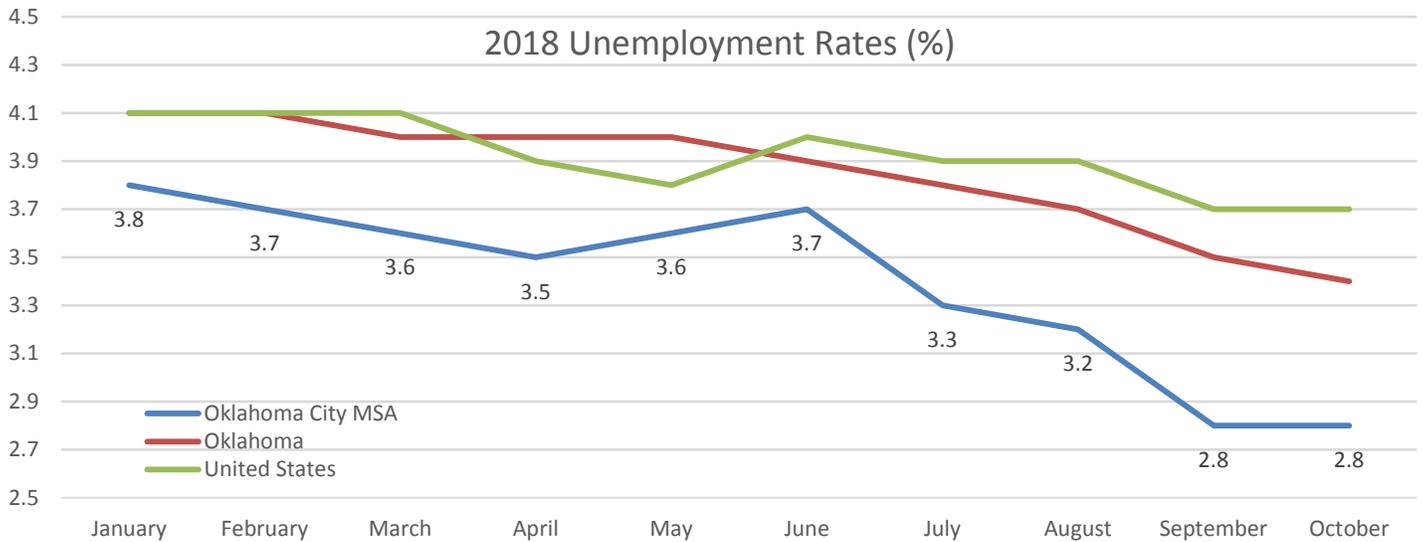
Hopdoddy Burger Bar
1316 W. Memorial Road, Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73114



Stonehorse Crossing Luxury Apartments
14320 Mezzaluna Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73134

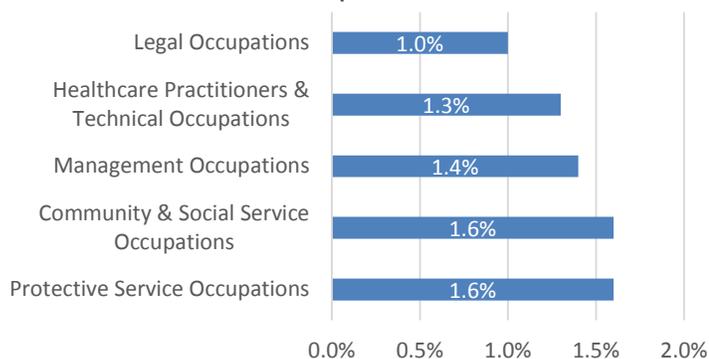
ECONOMIC INDICATORS

OKC Unemployment – Lowest in 17 Years

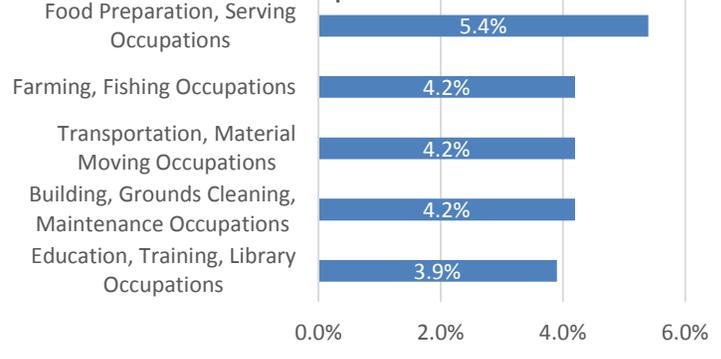


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics; 2018

Lowest Unemployment Rate Occupations



Highest Unemployment Rate Occupations



Source: Chmura, JobsEQ; 2018 Q3

- Oklahoma City MSA is trending slightly lower than the state and the nation as a whole, with a narrowing margin due to national economic strength.
- The unemployment rate chart shows how the OKC MSA unemployment rate has compared to the state and nation in 2018.
- Legal occupations enjoyed the lowest unemployment rate at 1 percent while food preparation and serving occupations had the highest at 5.4 percent.

For comprehensive Economic Indicators and Regional Data, please visit your Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Economic Development Division at www.greateroklahomacity.com/economicindicators or contact Eric Long, Research Economist – 297-8976; elong@okcchamber.com

LOOK INSIDE!

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