

December 2016

Spotlight on the Market

[Tulsa's River Spirit Casino Resort Hotel ready to open New Year's Day](#)

Tulsa World (OK) - December 29, 2016

The 27-story luxury hotel that's a cornerstone of the \$365 million River Spirit Casino Resort expansion is set to open New Year's Day, prompting officials to hold a ceremonial ribbon-cutting on Wednesday afternoon. Mike Neal, president and CEO of the Tulsa Regional Chamber, said the expansion will provide about 1,000 new direct jobs on top of about 1,050 that already exist there. The resort will generate an annual economic impact of about \$135 million, he said.

[Downtown development booms](#)

Tulsa World (OK) - December 25, 2016

Spawning everything from museum plans to hotels to renovations of historic buildings, downtown continued to be ground zero for development in 2016. Downtown projects that have been announced or started total nearly \$500 million, according to the Tulsa Regional Chamber. O.C. Walker, executive director of the Tulsa Development Authority, said the figures suggest a turnaround from the suburban sprawl of the late 1980s into the early 2000s.

[Survey shows significant manufacturing gain in region](#)

Tulsa World (OK) - December 24, 2016

Manufacturing activity in Oklahoma and surrounding states jumped significantly in December, showing improvement for a fourth consecutive month, the Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank reported. Its information tracks with what the leader of Oklahoma's Manufacturing Alliance and economic development experts on the local and state levels are hearing from manufacturers that belong to their groups.

[Oklahoma's steady population growth continues in 2016](#)

Tulsa World (OK) - December 22, 2016

The steady population growth Oklahoma has seen over the past several years continued in 2016, according to U.S. Census Bureau figures released Tuesday. The state's population grew by about 0.41 percent, or 16,147 people, from July 1, 2015, to July 1, 2016, according to the Census Bureau's annual population estimates. During that period, the state saw the 23rd highest percentage growth among the 50 states plus Washington, D.C. The state fell behind the nation's overall population growth of 7 percent in the same period.

[New north Tulsa grocery store will help shrink area's food desert](#)

Tulsa World (OK) - December 18, 2016

North Tulsans will soon have a new grocery store. Experts said the center of the food desert — a term used to describe an area without access to affordable, healthy food options within an easily traveled distance — measures about 6 miles across. The opening of the Supermercado Morelos at the intersection of Pine Street and Harvard Avenue will give some in the area more options.

[NerdWallet ranks BA high for best place for certain homebuyers](#)

Tulsa World (OK) - December 17, 2016

Broken Arrow is the 18th best place in America for first-time homebuyers, according to a new analysis by NerdWallet released recently. The city scored high marks for its affordable homes and low rates of crime and unemployment. NerdWallet analyzed 448 cities for affordability, safety, schools, and—using unique data from Down Payment Resource—the amount of financial assistance available to homebuyers in each area.

[OKPOP museum finally finds home near historic Cain's Ballroom](#)

Tulsa World (OK) - December 15, 2016

After years of searching for a home in Tulsa for Oklahoma's proposed pop culture museum, the facility will soon be built across the street from one of the city's decades-old cultural icons: Cain's Ballroom. The new location for the Oklahoma Historical Society's Oklahoma Museum of Pop Culture, known as the OKPOP, will be just south of Interstate 244 at the corner of West Easton Street and North Main Street, directly across from Cain's, officials plan to announce Thursday.

Research Wizard Tulsa Market Brief

Tulsa City-County Library
400 Civic Center
Tulsa, OK 74103
www.tulsalibrary.org



Phone: 918-549-7431
Fax: 918-549-7433
Email: wizard@tulsalibrary.org

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Oklahoma Awarded National Governors Association assistance

Tulsa World (OK) - December 11, 2016

Governor Mary Fallin announced recently that the National Governors Association (NGA) has chosen Oklahoma as one of two states to receive technical assistance regarding using existing Medicaid funds to meet state workforce requirements in underserved areas of the state. The technical assistance program, "Connecting Medicaid to Health Workforce" will provide expert consultation to assist Oklahoma agency leaders in developing a plan to use Medicaid funds to address state health workforce needs, particularly in rural and medically underserved areas.

Tulsa joins TechHire initiative to expand technology workforce

Tulsa World (OK) - December 9, 2016

The city of Tulsa has received a national boost to its technology workforce. Tulsa recently was among 20 new communities accepted into TechHire, a 2015 initiative introduced by President Barack Obama that helps underrepresented job seekers begin careers in the technology industry. Tulsa's designation as a TechHire Community was made possible by the efforts of 36 Degrees North, Techlahoma and a network of other workforce and education partners. The city will join a network of 71 TechHire communities that are dedicated to increasing Americans' access to well-paying tech jobs and expanding local tech sectors.

Boxyard to add retail bustle to downtown

Tulsa World (OK) - December 8, 2016

The Boxyard, a \$2.5 million micro mall built with used shipping containers, will hold its grand opening from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday. Mingling with customers will be representatives from the facilities' close to 20 businesses. Located at the southeast corner of Third Street and Frankfort Avenue, the Boxyard is a two-story facility made up of 39 cargo boxes spread over a 14,000-square-foot lot. Tenants include a microcreamery, bank branch, clothing stores and barber shop.

Which Tulsa company made Glassdoor's top 50 best places to work in 2017?

Tulsa World (OK) - December 7, 2016

Tulsa-based QuikTrip came in at number 48 on Glassdoor's list of the 50 best places to work. QT has made the list in 2011, 2015 and 2016 as well. The list is compromised from U.S. employee feedback from Nov. 2, 2015 to Oct. 30, 2016. A few other companies with Tulsa locations on the list include Trader Joe's, Costco Wholesale and lululemon.

Ginnie Graham: Tulsa at forefront of childhood trauma research after OSU lands major grant

Tulsa World (OK) - December 6, 2016

Earlier this year, the National Institutes of Health awarded a five-year, \$11 million grant to establish the Center for Integrative Research on Childhood Adversity (CIRCA) in Tulsa. The grant is administered through the OSU Center for Health Sciences but includes a host of other institutions including the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa and the Laureate Institute for Brain Research.

Expansions, Openings, Relocations, Acquisitions

Hyatt Regency Tulsa getting makeover

Tulsa World (OK) - December 31, 2016

The Hyatt Regency Tulsa, 102 E. Second St., is halfway through an approximately \$8 million renovation that is set to be completed by around mid-April, hotel officials said. The 14-story hotel is refurbishing all 444 of its guest rooms and sprucing up corridors and common areas. Ten new suites will bring its suite total to 15, including a 2,800-square-foot living space with a grand piano, two bedrooms and three bathrooms on the top floor. Part of the makeover was the addition of Ihloff Salon and Day Spa that opened earlier this year.

Teresa Rechter opens Tulsa Artery as resource for local artists

Tulsa World (OK) - December 30, 2016

The Tulsa Artery may have paintings hanging on its walls, shelves laden with creations made of ceramic, glass and wood, and unique handmade jewelry arranged in display cases, but Teresa Rechter doesn't think the word "gallery" describes the place. Rechter has ambitious plans for the Tulsa Artery, a name that plays off the shop's location on the intersection of a busy corner of the Blue Dome District, as well as announcing it as something a bit different from a regular art gallery. Those plans include turning an adjacent room into a demonstration studio, where different artists can show the process by which they make art; a multipurpose area that could be used for small art classes; a live music program; even courses in how artists might better market themselves and their wares through such avenues as websites.

Palace Building moving toward completion of \$13 million historical renovation

Tulsa World (OK) - December 27, 2016

A downtown Palace is getting some long-awaited red-carpet treatment. The Tulsa World and its parent company, Omaha, Neb.-based BH Media Group, is expected to finish around March a \$13 million conversion of the 103-year-old Palace Building into apartments at Fourth and Main streets. The newspaper several years ago had planned to level the building — because of reported structural damage in the basement — and construct a paper-storage facility in its place.

Matrix Service Co. subsidiary acquires Tulsa-based Houston Interests

Tulsa World (OK) - December 15, 2016

Tulsa-based Matrix Service Co. announced this week that its subsidiary Matrix PDM Engineering Inc. has acquired privately held global solutions company Houston Interests LLC. Houston Interests also is based in Tulsa and provides consulting, engineering, design, construction services and systems integration. The all-cash transaction closed Monday and is valued at \$46 million. Houston Interests generates annual average revenue in excess of \$100 million and was ranked 2,205 on the Inc. 5000 list of fastest-growing companies in 2016.

Bank SNB to be acquired by an Arkansas-based bank

Tulsa World (OK) - December 15, 2016

Simmons First National Corp., an Arkansas-based bank holding company, has agreed to acquire Stillwater-based Southwest Bancorp Inc., the parent company of Bank SNB, the two companies announced Thursday. The acquisition would make Simmons an instant player in the Oklahoma market. According to Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation market share data, Bank SNB was the 10th-largest bank in Oklahoma at the end of June. Simmons has assets of about \$8.2 billion and operates in Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Tennessee.

Covanta Tulsa celebrates 30 years of renewable energy

Tulsa World (OK) - December 14, 2016

The west Tulsa facility that converts waste to energy celebrated 30 years of operations Tuesday with an anniversary celebration featuring dignitaries that included U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe. The Covanta Tulsa Renewable Energy facility processes 1,125 tons per day of municipal solid waste, generating up to 265,000 pounds per hour of steam. A portion of the steam powers a turbine and in turn, generates clean, renewable energy that is sold to the Public Service Company of Oklahoma.

Employees Federal Credit Union opening branch at Eastgate

Tulsa World (OK) - December 12, 2016

Employees Federal Credit Union's newest branch is at the Eastgate Metroplex. A grand opening and ribbon cutting for the new facility, 14002 E. 21st St., Suite 1170, is scheduled for 11 a.m. Thursday. The 1,356-square-foot building is EFCU's third branch in the city, a spokeswoman said. Founded in 1954, EFCU serves municipal employees in northeast Oklahoma, most notably those who work for the city of Tulsa and Tulsa County. The former Eastland Mall, Eastgate Metroplex, is home to more than 6,000 employees. About 83 percent of its roughly 900,000 square feet of leasable space is occupied, a development consultant for the facility said this fall.

American Airlines prospering five years after filing for bankruptcy

Tulsa World (OK) - December 11, 2016

American Airlines made a profit of nearly \$2.4 billion during the first nine months of 2016, with CEO Doug Parker reiterating in that most recent earnings report that the air carrier is investing in its people and its product and is well along the path to once again becoming the greatest airline in the world.

Magellan Midstream, joint partner to expand Seabrook's Gulf Coast infrastructure

Tulsa World (OK) - December 7, 2016

Magellan Midstream Partners and LBC Tank Terminals announced Tuesday that they are expanding the infrastructure of Seabrook Logistics by increasing its crude oil and condensate storage as well as pipeline assets in the Houston Gulf Coast area. The expansion consists of constructing an additional 1.7 million barrels of additional crude oil and condensate storage adjacent to LBC's existing terminal in Seabrook, Texas.

QuikTrip expanding in Tulsa, nationwide and helping Amazon customers

Tulsa World (OK) - December 2, 2016

The Tulsa-based convenience store chain has 75 metro-area stores and frequently revamps and renovates its locations to stay current. New stores under construction are the Broken Arrow location, 900 E. Hillside Drive, and one in Sapulpa at 1222 N. Ninth St., near the Turner Turnpike toll booth. The two new stores will bring the metro total to 77.

Layoffs, Closings, Downsizes, Restructures

Sears store at 21st and Yale to close in April

Tulsa World (OK) - December 29, 2016

The Sears store near the corner of 21st Street and Yale Avenue will close in mid-April, a company official confirmed to the Tulsa World Wednesday morning. Until then, the store will remain open to the public with a liquidation sale beginning on Jan. 6. The Sears Auto Center is not closing.

Toys 'R' Us store in east Tulsa to close Jan. 31

Tulsa World (OK) - December 29, 2016

The Toys "R" Us location in east Tulsa will **close** at the end of January, a spokeswoman for the retailer confirmed to the Tulsa World on Wednesday morning. Jessica Offerjost said that the retailer is ending its lease in the Eastland Plaza strip center on Jan. 31.

Comparative Unemployment Rates

Period	County %	MSA %	State %	U.S. %
2016 November	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.4
2015 November	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Rates are not seasonally adjusted.