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Say yes to a vision

POINT OF VIEW: MAPS 3 IS INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY

BY TOM MCDANIEL Comments  5

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MAPS 3 is an incredible, once-in-a-generation opportunity. Its projects are defined and it is paid for by simply continuing a tax that is in place. It creates jobs and improves the quality of life in our city. It is another chapter in a history of visionary thinking that brought us from a struggling start to a big-league city in just over 100 years.

Oklahoma City University has been living that history since 1904. We are the beneficiary of the vision of Oklahoma City business leaders like Anton Classen and a group of Methodists who at the turn of the 20th century could see a university in a pasture on the northwest side of a fledgling town. Our graduates perform on Broadway and great stages around the world, sit on the state Supreme Court, fill pulpits, run businesses, provide health care, teach and provide servant leadership all around our city, our state and far beyond.

So as an "experiment of vision" now in our 105th year, we have celebrated with our city the success of MAPS and MAPS for Kids. This generation of city leaders looked at a dilapidated street in an old warehouse district and envisioned a thriving Bricktown with canals, restaurants, hotels and entertainment venues. Some saw a river that we literally mowed for years and envisioned a rowing course that could define our city as the finest in the world for elite racing competition. It is now anchored by private investment like the Devon Boathouse, home of OCU rowing, and the Chesapeake Boathouse and finish tower.

Now, U.S. Rowing is establishing a training center here. High school athletes, corporate employees, collegiate competitors and Olympic hopefuls are all on our river, and opportunities to host events of local, national and world interest are pouring in.

These more recent "experiments in vision" also brought us the Bricktown Ballpark, the Norick Library, state fairground facilities, improved schools all over town and the Ford Center, now the home of the Thunder.

This laid the foundation for the most important vision of all, MAPS 3. Few cities in American history, and none in recent memory, have had the opportunity now before us. The vision includes a magnificent downtown public park, a transit system, new convention center, renovation of the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds, aquatic centers for seniors, river improvements including a unique whitewater rafting facility, and miles of

sidewalks and bicycle trails.

Vision is not about what we are. It is about who we are and who we aspire to be. Vision is limited for those with short-term, selfish goals and naysayers who see every glass half empty.


Vision is about saying yes — yes to momentum, to big ideas, to being all that we can be, and to dreams that reach beyond our own lives to those who will follow. Every generation has an opportunity to say yes to a vision. This is ours. Join me in voting yes on Dec. 8.

McDaniel is president of Oklahoma City University.

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Edmond Community Thanksgiving dinner
Edmond Community Thanksgiving dinner at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, OK,
11 photos



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5 photos



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Photos from the Jesus House Thanksgiving preparation on Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2009.
17 photos



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12 photos