



USA Canoe/Kayak plans OKC facility in 2010

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Joe Jacobi, executive director of USA Canoe/Kayak, announced the establishment of a new USA Canoe/Kayak presence in Oklahoma City beginning in 2010 on Dec. 1.

The organization is the governing body for paddle sports in the U.S.

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber released on Dec. 2 a study that analyzes the economic and revenue impacts of the proposed Whitewater Rafting and Kayaking Facility that is part of the river improvements portion of the MAPS 3 package.

The study was prepared by the economic consulting firm, Applied Economics, which is based in Phoenix.

“The results of the study show that the proposed Whitewater Rafting and Kayaking Facility would have significant economic and recreational benefits to the region,” Roy Williams, president and CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, said. “A world-class facility such as this will not only create hundreds of jobs each year, but will also appeal to families, recreational enthusiasts and Olympic caliber athletes.”

Findings include:

- The facility would have an average annual economic impact of \$28.8 million
- The facility would employ a full-time staff of about 48 people, with an average payroll of \$1.9 million annually
- The facility would support more than 230 jobs each year, and \$5.3 million in payroll at other local businesses (this is in addition to the employees and payroll generated by the Whitewater Park directly)
- More than 200 direct construction jobs and 140 additional indirect jobs will be created during the construction of the facility. The construction alone would have an economic impact of \$29.6 million to the Oklahoma City metro area.
- The facility would make direct local purchases with an economic impact of \$1.9 million annually; local purchases by employees of the facility would create an annual economic impact of \$2.3 million per year.
- Visitors to the facility would have an economic impact of \$179.6 million over 13 years, or an average of \$13.8 million per year.
- In addition, visitor spending associated with the facility could generate \$14.3 million in local sales, property and transient lodging tax revenues in the first 13 years of operation, and \$14.5 million in state sales taxes during that period.
- The proposed facility would not only add to the recreational attractions available in Oklahoma City, but would also attract additional visitors and conference attendees that might not otherwise visit Oklahoma City. It would also create significant economic benefits to local businesses that support the hospitality industry.

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