

Oklahoma City, UCO looking to ride Olympic status into future

U.S. COMMITTEE SELECTS OKLAHOMA RIVER AND UNIVERSITY AS OFFICIAL TRAINING SITES

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Published: July 29, 2009

Chalk up another victory to Oklahoma City's Metropolitan Area Projects.

The United States Olympic Committee announced on Tuesday that the revived Oklahoma River, made possible by the first MAPS ballot, and the University of Central Oklahoma would be training sites for several Olympic and Paralympic sports.

The committee's selection of the Oklahoma River as a training facility is an example of the unexpected benefits of MAPS, Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett said.

"Of all the mind-boggling results of MAPS, the river is No. 1," Cornett said. "The others you could kind of see. You build an NBA/NHL type of facility, you might get a team. You build a Triple A (baseball) park, and they'll be happy for a long time.

"But building a river, and to say our city will have the Olympic designation and be recognized as the world's premier venue for rowing and kayaking, that's not something a sane person could have envisioned in 1993."

Committee Chief Executive Officer Stephanie Streeter joined the mayor at the Chesapeake Boathouse to announce Oklahoma City will be the training site for rowing and canoe/kayak and the University of Central Oklahoma will be an Olympic and Paralympic training site for archery and volleyball. UCO is the only university that will train both Olympians and Paralympians.

"What an unbelievable day for this community," Streeter said.

"At the USOC, we're in the dream business. I bet a lot of people didn't expect this dream to come true. Frankly, it's not every day we get to see these kinds of dreams come true."

The first MAPS ballot, approved by voters in 1993, funded nine projects, including construction of the AT&T Bricktown Ballpark, the Ford Center, Ronald J. Norick Downtown Library, the Bricktown Canal and development of the Oklahoma River. Other projects were renovation of the Cox Convention Center, the Civic Center Music Hall and improvements at State Fair Park. MAPS for Kids then used a 1-cent sales tax to fund local schools.

Cornett is proposing a potential MAPS3 ballot that would fund a transit system, downtown park and convention center.

"Every one of the MAPS projects has found a use that wasn't created or even thought about on Election Day back in 1993," Cornett said. "As we look forward to the formulation of MAPS3, you want those same ideas."



See you at the pole

High school students at Del City and Putnam City High Schools gathered by the flag pole for a prayer

8 photos



Beatrice Carr Wallace Old Science Hall

Dedication ceremony of the Beatrice Carr Wallace Old Science Hall, the first campus building, on the

13 photos



Oklahoma State Fair: Monday, September

Photos from the Oklahoma State Fair Monday, September 21, 2009

13 photos



Daily Published Photos: September 21,

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11 photos