

Relocation of USA Canoe/Kayak to Oklahoma City expected to attract attention to Oklahoma River development

USA Canoe/Kayak is expected to bring more development along the Oklahoma River following the announcement that the organization's headquarters is moving to Oklahoma City.

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USA Canoe/Kayak, a member of the United States Olympic Committee, is expected to usher in a new era of development along the Oklahoma River following its announcement Tuesday that the organization's headquarters is relocating to Oklahoma City.

Both USA Canoe/Kayak Chief Executive Officer Joe Jacobi and Mayor Mick Cornett attributed the move to development of the Boathouse District along the river and ongoing transformation of the waterway thanks to the original Metropolitan Area Projects.

USA Canoe/Kayak will office with the Oklahoma City Boathouse Foundation, allowing the two organizations to collaborate and build on the inherent synergy of shared values and objectives.

“USA Canoe/Kayak is launching a new era in paddlesports in the United States, with a focus on enabling U.S. athletes to achieve sustained competitive excellence in Olympic, Paralympic and other international competition,” Jacobi said.

“Attracting a national governing body with an Olympic affiliation is a tremendous achievement for any community. This will result in many additional sports organizations and event promoters taking a closer look at what have already been accomplished in Oklahoma City.”

More interest

Pat Downes, longtime development director at the Oklahoma City Riverfront Redevelopment Authority, predicted the announcement will be closely followed by other sports organizations and that more interest in the Boathouse District will follow.

“The decision by USA Canoe/Kayak to relocate its headquarters to Oklahoma City

validates much of the work accomplished to date, and represents a tremendous opportunity for future development,” Downes said. “When an Olympics-affiliated national governing body establishes new headquarters in a community, it does not go unnoticed by the national and international sports community. We expect great things to follow.”

New campaign

Jacobi said his office, which first opened in Oklahoma City along the Oklahoma River in 2009, will work closely with the city in developing a white-water rapids venue included in the 2009 MAPS 3 ballot. The Oklahoma City office will replace Charlotte, N.C., as the organization's national headquarters as the group begins its first ever promotional campaign for paddle sports.

“This is a perfect illustration of how MAPS 3 was an attempt to build on the success of the original MAPS,” Cornett said.

“I don't know what this is going to lead to, but I'm sure there are many opportunities ahead.”



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