

Official: More growth expected for Edmond

by David Page

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Brian Preston, third from left, with Re/Max, leads one of the discussion groups about real estate during the 2012 Economic Preview event at UCO Tuesday. (Maike Sabolich)

EDMOND – Edmond experienced a year of growth in 2011 with more expansion expected in 2012, said Janet Yowell, executive director of the Edmond Economic Development Authority, at the 2012 Economic Preview on Tuesday.

The growth for the year included 26 commercial building permits for a total value of \$102.1 million, up 56 percent from 2010. Taxable sales for the year totaled \$1.35 billion, up from \$1.31 billion for 2010. Eleven new restaurants opened, she said at a luncheon presented by the EEDA at the University of Central Oklahoma Nigh University Center.

Edmond issued 391 residential building permits in 2011, up 31.65 percent from 2010. The residential building permits

issued for the year were for \$111.7 million, up 39.7 percent from 2010.

The community had 206 net new jobs added for the year, Yowell said.

More growth is expected in 2012.

“Two new specialty groceries are opening soon,” Yowell said.

Buy for Less plans to open Uptown Grocery in late February. A Sunflower Farmers Market is expected to open in March.

In January, Francis Tuttle Technology Center officials closed on the purchase of property for a new campus on Progressive Drive, near the northeast corner of Interstate 35 and Covell Road in Edmond.

The technology center plans to build a 38,000-square-foot, two-story facility in the Cross Timbers Office Park. Construction is scheduled to begin in late spring. The more than 3-acre site will accommodate Francis Tuttle’s Center for Municipal Excellence, Adult and Career Development courses and workshops, a business incubator, classrooms and offices.

Deidre Myers, director of policy, research and economic analysis for the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, told the group that Oklahoma’s 2011 growth exceeded much of the nation.

“Not many other states can say they have recovered from the recession like we have,” Myers said.

Among the states, Oklahoma ranked third in 2011 with 2.7-percent employment growth, she said. Oklahoma trailed only North Dakota, which was first, and Utah, second, in employment growth.

“Not every part of the state took part in the employment growth, but that is to be expected,” Myers said.

The 2011 employment index statewide and for the Oklahoma City area exceeded the 2007 level, or before the recession, she said. Tulsa’s employment index in 2011 was still below the 2007 level.

"Tulsa was hit harder because of manufacturing," she said.

Oklahoma ranked first among the states in manufacturing growth in 2011 with a gain of 8.4 percent.

"Manufacturing is important because it is where wealth is built," Myers said. "It is also high-wage."

The state's manufacturing growth was led by energy and aerospace, she said.

"When we see manufacturing growth like this it is very, very exciting for our economy," Myers said.

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