

2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: COMMERCIAL GROWTH, NEW JOBS, FIVE STARS, AND MORE

The Olathe Chamber of Commerce was the first chamber in Kansas to earn a **five-star accreditation** from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—a rating fewer than 1 percent of the nation's chambers have achieved.

The U.S. Chamber recognized the Chamber, too, for “Best Practices” for its state legislative agenda, its VoteOlathe program, its financial policies, its environmental scan, and its communications and marketing plan.

The Chamber moved into new offices at 18001 W. 106th St. in Corporate Ridge Office Park.

Through the direct efforts of the Chamber's Economic Development Council and the City, Olathe still experienced impressive growth, despite the economic downturn. Measures of this growth include:

- Total jobs approximately—930
- Total square feet of commercial growth—more than 1.7 million
- Total investment in Olathe—nearly \$200 million

For a breakdown of retail, industrial, office, and other development—**whether the project is just announced or actually under construction**—see below.

Retail in Olathe grew by over 256,250 square feet, including Wal-Mart & West Village Shopping Center at 204,000 sq. ft. and Prairie Trails West at 52,250 sq. ft.

Industrial grew by over 914,000 square feet with \$82.2 million invested, including:

- Kessinger/Hunter speculative warehouse at 600,000 sq. ft. and \$28 million
- Garmin, 304,000 sq. ft. and \$55 million for warehouse and manufacturing and engineering additions
- Parkside Business Park speculative facility at 10,000 sq. ft., \$2.2 million

Office space grew by over 486,350 square feet with \$133.2 million invested, including:

- Corporate Ridge Office Park—Corporate Ridge I with 90,000 square feet, \$15 million; Intrust Bank at 3,200 sq. ft., and John Deere Agricultural Marketing Center at 126,150 sq. ft. and \$40 million
- US Bank Business Center at 163,000 sq. ft., \$75.4 million
- I-35/119th St. Technology Park with Farmers Insurance at 95,000 sq. ft.
- Anderson Pointe with two 4,500-sq.-ft. buildings and \$2.8 million investment

Other growth, including **healthcare** and **hotels**, grew by over 85,292 square feet with \$64.25 million invested.

- The Gardens at Creekside, 140,000 sq. ft. with \$12 million invested
- Olathe Medical Center Campus, \$20.85 million for imaging center and infrastructure with \$17.5 million expansion of Cedar Lake Village and the Hoeger House
- Comfort Inn, 37,720 sq. ft., \$3 million, 72 rooms
- Olathe Hotel & Suites by Best Western, 37,720 sq. ft., \$3 million, 67 rooms
- Candlewood Suites, 47,364 sq. ft., \$3 million, 85 rooms

- LaQuinta Inn & Suites, 58,000 sq. ft., \$4.9 million, 106 rooms
- Mahaffie Stagecoach & Stop Heritage Center, 10,000 sq. ft.

The Hampton Inn and the Fairfield Inn & Suites expanded or renovated their facilities.

Olathe now has 1,087 hotel rooms, compared to 800 rooms for many years.

The Chamber expanded the Olathe Marathon, Half Marathon, 5K and new Kid's Run with registrations increasing by 50 percent (direct economic impact: \$645,000). The CVB created a new logo and Web site for the 2009 marathon coming in March.

The Chamber's CVB assisted with numerous reunions and events that brought visitors to Olathe, including:

- Track & Field USATF Championships (400 athletes; \$804,000 impact)
- Kansas State Soccer Cup (1,600 players; \$2.14 million impact)
- Special Olympics Boccee and Soccer state tournaments

The “Olathe is a Great Draw” National Tourism Week promotion brought 15 meeting planners from across the region to tour Olathe accommodations and meeting facilities, generating 122 room nights and five meetings.

The Olathe CVB completed a positioning and visitor branding initiative resulting in new advertising campaigns and a new tagline: “The Crossroads to Adventure. Olathe.”

A new Olathe Visitor Center was opened at Bass Pro Shops.

The Chamber did the groundwork for improving its Web site—the navigation, features, and appearance. The unveiling is set for Jan. 30, 2009.



OLATHE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ONE VISION. ONE VOICE.

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2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(CONT. FROM REVERSE SIDE)

The Chamber hired its first ever full-time webmaster and e-communications manager to increase electronic communications with members.

The Chamber increased non-dues revenue from 40 percent in 2007 to 45 percent in 2008.

The Chamber assisted over 200 existing businesses in numerous ways:

- Visited to help assess needs
- Helped with relocations, site and property purchases
- Facilitated Department of Commerce incentive meetings
- Served as a liaison with the City of Olathe in Neighborhood Revitalization Program, incentives for expansion, street signage, and other issues
- Assisted with staffing and workforce development
- Provided input and assistance with new owners on redevelopment of the Great Mall of the Great Plains
- Helped identify potential tenants

The 2008 “Five Star” Grand Prix Membership Drive generated \$130,609 in revenue and 300 new or renewing members, thanks to the work of member volunteers and staff.

The Chamber began initiating an environmental sustainability emphasis, forming a Sustainability Task Force.

The American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) presented the

Chamber with a *Membership Achievement Award*, listing the Chamber in the top ten chambers in the United States in new member dollars in its membership size category.

The Chamber also qualified to compete for the ACCE *Chamber of the Year* award.

Twenty-six new leaders graduated from the 27th class of Leadership Olathe.

The Leadership Olathe Alumni Association was formed with 125 charter members.

A new program, Close-Up Leadership, was established to bring 21st Century leadership tools to companies on-site.

The Leadership program secured two \$50,000 grants for the leadership funds from the Kansas Health Foundation.

Internally, the Chamber converted its membership database, cut operating expenses in the areas of telephone, postage, and credit card processing, and cut administrative costs associated with payroll and health insurance.

The Chamber’s Business Lunch Series, addressed issues such as transportation, real estate development and growth, workforce, and voting, providing insight from community and business leaders and access to state elected officials.

Attendance at Chamber events grew to encompass more diverse segments of membership.

The Chamber’s position on three critical election issues prevailed at the polls:

- Support: 1/4 cent sales tax to fund the Johnson County Education Research Triangle (JCERT)
- Support: \$68 million School Bond Proposal
- Oppose: Change in judicial selection

The Chamber coordinated and participated in local candidate forums and provided candidate responses to questionnaires online as part of the VoteOlathe initiative to encourage educated voting.

More than 200 member businesses participated in the VoteOlathe program, providing access to an estimated 41,000 employees and encouraging them to vote. The initiative helped draw voters, and an estimated 79 percent of Olatheans voted in November, once again surpassing the county’s 78 percent voter turnout—by a little less than 1 percent.

To help boost the local economy, the Olathe *Preferred Savings Plus* program expanded with more than 18,000 directories distributed with major employers (Farmers, Garmin, Olathe District Schools, Olathe Medical Center, Terracon, and more) providing it to their employees. Visit www.olathe.org/value.