



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Oklahoma Department of Commerce Celebrates Historic 2021**

In 2021, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (Commerce) doubled down on providing assistance to Oklahoma companies and communities while also selling the state as a premier location for business expansion.

“Oklahoma was among the very first states to fully re-open for business in 2020 and we entered 2021 with incredible momentum,” said Scott Mueller, Oklahoma Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development. “I am proud of our exceptional team and the work they’ve done to bring new jobs and investment to the state while also finding new ways to support existing Oklahoma businesses and their communities.”

“During 2021, we saw an impressive increase in the number of economic development projects choosing rural locations with more than 50% of our wins going to rural Oklahoma,” said Brent Kisling, Commerce Executive Director. “We have long seen rural Oklahoma’s untapped potential and initiatives like the Oklahoma Economic Development Project Portal, \$1 million EDA grant award, the Oklahoma Innovation Expansion Program and the growth of our film industry combine to bring even greater opportunities to these vital areas.”

Major accomplishments during 2021 included:

- ***Commerce realigned its business development division*** to focus on sector-based recruitment of economic development projects. Categories include Aerospace & Defense, Agriculture, Automotive, Bioscience, Traditional & Renewable Energy, and Information Technology/Distribution/Financial Services.
- ***Supply Chain strengthening and development*** took center stage in 2021 as the world continued to deal with supply chain issues from the COVID-19 pandemic. Oklahoma responded by launching two partnerships to address supply chain needs in the state.
  - Connex Oklahoma, a partnership with the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance, that provides a free supply chain database tool for the manufacturing industry.

- Commerce’s partnership with Sustainment Technologies, Inc., is a supplier platform designed to help Oklahoma companies involved in the aerospace & defense sector of the U.S. economy more easily connect and conduct business with large defense contractors and the U.S. Department of Defense.
- The ***Oklahoma Innovation Expansion Program***, created and administered by Commerce, awarded \$7.74 million in grants to help 108 Oklahoma companies develop new products or increase capacity. The funding will facilitate \$49.6 million in projects and create 680 new jobs.
- ***Oklahoma’s film and music industry saw its biggest year ever.*** The Oklahoma Film + Music Office joined Commerce and the industry received an incentive boost with the “Filmed in Oklahoma Act of 2021” which increased the funds available to films and television series filmed in the state.
- ***Local communities received economic development support.*** In April, Commerce launched its Economic Development Project Portal to provide Oklahoma communities with increased access to requests for proposals for economic development project opportunities. In November, Commerce was awarded a \$1 million grant through the U.S. Economic Development Administration to provide support and funding to Oklahoma communities to increase economic development opportunities. Applications for the grant opened on Dec. 1, 2021, and close Jan. 7, 2022.
- Commerce-led economic development ***projects won during the year are expected to bring more than 7,500 new jobs and \$1.8 billion in new private investment.*** Some of the projects contributing to these numbers include the following major announcements:
  - **Canoo:** In June 2021, Canoo, a manufacturer of breakthrough electric vehicles (EVs) announced a 400-acre site at the MidAmerica Industrial Park complex in Pryor as the site for its U.S. mega microfactory. It will house a paint shop, body shop and general assembly plant. Canoo will create an estimated 2,000 high paying jobs and invest more than \$1 billion dollars. In November, the company announced it is relocating its headquarters from California to neighboring Arkansas and will expand its Oklahoma operations to include new R&D, software development and customer support and financing centers. The investments are expected to bring at least 700 additional high paying jobs to the state.
  - **Carvana:** In 2019, Carvana—a leading e-commerce platform for buying and selling used cars—unveiled its newest Car Vending Machine in Oklahoma City. The eye-catching, all-glass tower stands eight stories high and holds 27 vehicles. In September 2021, Carvana announced plans for a new distribution and inspection/reconditioning facility in Oklahoma City. Carvana will add approximately \$45 million in new investment and up to 500 new jobs in Oklahoma. The nearly 200,000-square-foot auto detail shop is under construction, where used cars will be reconditioned and made ready to sell. It's one of 10 inspection and reconditioning centers Carvana has going up across the country.
  - **Lyseon:** In September 2021, Lyseon announced plans to set up a plant and commence operations at the Tulsa Port of Catoosa in Rogers County. The company will make a \$6 million investment and plans to add 80 employees over the next three years. The company will serve as a supplier to Tulsa’s Navistar Bus and bring another automotive and electric vehicle supplier to our state.

- **Mint Turbines:** Mint Turbines is an independent turbine engine maintenance, repair and overhaul facility located in Stroud. The company celebrated its 40th anniversary in May by dedicating a \$5 million expansion which will add up to 30 jobs to its current staff of 42.
- **Signify Health:** In December, Signify Health, a leading healthcare platform, announced plans to open a new service center in Oklahoma City, creating more than 200 new jobs. Signify Health was named one of *Fast Company's* Most Innovative Companies of 2021.
- **TAT Technologies:** TAT Technologies is a strategic global partner to leading players in the aerospace industry and specializes in innovative commercial, defense, OEM and MRO solutions. TAT is the parent company to TAT LIMCO located in Tulsa, which is recognized as a world leader in thermal management solutions with a primary focus on the aerospace industry. In 2021, TAT announced it is relocating its headquarters from Israel and co-locating with Limco in Tulsa. The move will result in more than 200 new jobs and an investment of over \$17 million.

Oklahoma also ended the year with a historically low unemployment rate of 2.5%, ranking as the third lowest rate in the nation.

“This past fiscal year, Oklahoma’s economy has bounced back in a big way and continues to improve,” said Governor Kevin Stitt. “In Oklahoma, companies find freedom to do business their way. This is a message that resonates as companies find themselves facing more and more unnecessary regulations and limitations. As we head into 2022, I am excited for the momentum we’ve built and the potential that lies ahead.”

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