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DFW developer scores massive mixed-use project that will house new OU basketball arena



Image: Photo courtesy of Rainier Development Company

The men's and women's OU basketball program is planned to begin playing at the new arena at the Rock Creek Entertainment District for the 2028-29 season.

Photo courtesy of Rainier Development Company

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Story Highlights

What's This?

- Rainier Development Co. has signed a master development agreement for the planned 269-acre Rock Creek Entertainment District.
- The project will include an 8,000-seat arena for University of Oklahoma sports, plus concerts and conventions.
- The district will also include office, retail, hotel, dining and more than 1,000 residential units.

A Dallas-based company will lead the development of a \$1.1 billion mixed-use entertainment district in Norman, Oklahoma, with construction set to start soon.

Rainier Development Co. has signed a master development agreement with the University of Oklahoma Foundation for the planned 269-acre Rock Creek Entertainment District, the Dallas-based company announced last week.

The project is envisioned as a “year-round destination” that will house an 8,000-seat arena for concerts and conventions and be the future home of University of Oklahoma men’s and women’s basketball programs, as well as host women’s gymnastics, Rainier’s April 15 press release said.

Overall, the district will include office, retail, hotel, dining and more than 1,000 residential units. The project will not include any casino or gambling component.

Rainier CEO Danny Lovell told Dallas Business Journal the project will break ground in the next 30 days, with vertical construction set for late 2026. Plans call for at least three phases of construction over a potential 10-year build-out, with phase one projected for completion by the end of 2028 or early 2029.



Rainier CEO Danny Lovell

Guy Patton, OU Foundation president, called the partnership a “significant step forward in advancing a vision shaped by the community and its leaders.”

The statement from Rainier said Rock Creek Entertainment District will be a “transformative” mixed-use project in Norman, located near Highway I-35 and Rock Creek Road.

The university’s basketball programs are expected to begin playing at the new arena in the 2028-29 season, Lovell said. An arena operator, which will be the venue’s eventual owner, is being selected through a request-for-proposals process by the Cleveland County Recreation and Entertainment Facilities Authority.

Cleveland County leaders [approved a \\$50 million bond anticipation note](#) in March to help fund the planned arena. The funding announcement comes a month after the Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled that plans to build the district can move forward without a public vote.

Both men’s and women’s basketball currently play at the Lloyd Noble Center and have called the arena home since the building opened in 1975. The university and its donors have funded several renovations of the facility, including a \$17.1 million renovation in 2001 and a recent \$9.5 million facelift that finished in 2025.

Rainier Development Co. has secured \$2.5 billion in transactions since its 2023 inception. Its portfolio includes investing in and developing mixed-use, retail and residential projects across the U.S.

The company currently has in its portfolio 1001 Ross, a 30,000-square-foot multifamily development in Dallas' historic West End, along with numerous retail centers in Texas and Oklahoma. [Rainier acquired 1001 Lamar in March 2025](#) through a joint venture with Discover Multifamily and is planning a comprehensive modernization, including a rebrand to The Griffin, with 204 apartment units.

Rainier Cos. [launched Rainier Development Co.](#) in 2023, and operates it as an independent entity under the firm's portfolio. The company appointed David Neher as president of the venture. Neher most recently led Lincoln Property’s national retail platform, focusing on mixed-use development. Throughout his career, he’s led over 8 million square feet of retail and mixed-use development projects across the country.

https://www.bizjournals.com/dallas/news/2026/04/20/rainier-development-rock-creek-ou-arena-district.html?csrc=6398&link_source=ta_first_comment&taid=69e6be2a3e8ea4000176c368&utm_campaign=trueAnthemTrendingContent&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&fbclid=IwY2xjawRTpPdleHRuA2FlbQlxMABicmlkETFhMlVvd25PMFJ0UWlhWU1lc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQOMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHtaydYfQrykRlkdJCgUCkqsCEDersyBdiEyYdvelH7mz9rsfcrbKIHUbZX8L_aem_kqoSOXMROsB9gxdwli67Cg