

UFL eyes sponsors, staff for OKC team ahead of '28 kickoff

BY SAM ROYKA

The Journal Record

League executives are building a team from scratch in Oklahoma City, setting up corporate sponsorship options ahead of its 2028 United Football League kickoff.

UFL President and CEO Russ Brandon detailed the expansion plans during a league briefing, pointing to the metro's growing population and the upcoming MAPS 4 Multipurpose Stadium as major drivers for bringing a team to the city.

"We'd been talking to them for close to a year and a half prior, knowing what was coming on board with the venue," Brandon said. "(Oklahoma is) an emerging market, growing population, great sports state and sports town."

Noting the development work led by Christian Kanady and Echo Investment Capital in supporting the stadium project, Brandon said the league is making progress behind the scenes on the logistics to bring the team online.

Corporate opportunities, local offices

While private team ownership is not yet available, league leadership is evaluating the option for the long term. The UFL operates out of its headquarters in Arlington, Texas, but will open offices in each team city.

"We will have full-time staffs in every market that represent Salt Lake and Oklahoma City when it comes to marketing and ticket sales and sponsorship," Brandon said.

Corporate partner packages and founding sponsorships will open once the league settles on its brand identities.

"We need to get some names and colors and brand identities and logos done," Brandon said. "That's a big part of our business plan and that will be coming very shortly."



The Louisville championship cooler dump is pictured in July 2026. PHOTO PROVIDED BY UNITED FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Building the roster

Under its principal owner, billionaire Mike Repole, the UFL plans to expand to 12 teams by 2030.

The Oklahoma City roster could feature a mix of college talent and former NFL players, Brandon said, though the league leans toward experienced professionals.

“Most of our players have NFL experience in some form or fashion,” he said.

Along with scouts and agents, the league uses open showcases across the country to identify talent. The UFL held 10 showcases in 2026.

“We had 35 players, I believe, last year signed out of showcases, but 25 players rostered out of showcases, including our UFL championship-winning quarterback Chandler Rogers,” Brandon said.

Coaching and executive staff for Oklahoma City will be named after the league fills positions for its 2027 expansion teams in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Rhode Island.

“We are working on that organizational design as we speak, but in the short term, we will be naming coaches in Colorado Springs and in Rhode Island very shortly,” Brandon said.

Watching the games

The UFL’s games are broadcast through its network partners, Fox and Disney’s ABC and ESPN.

“We’re excited to continue that,” Brandon said. “We will have every game on Fox on Friday night; that’s been part of our portfolio over the last couple years. And then obviously our games scattered throughout on Saturdays and Sundays.”

The league also uses its own rules to set its product apart from the NFL and encourage closer games.

“We do some really cool things with our rules,” Brandon said. “Last year, we implemented the four-point field goal.”

Kickers responded well to that, he said. The league also bars teams from punting once they cross midfield.

“Nowadays, kickers are making 60-yarders like they’re extra points,” he said. “We’ve done a lot of cool things that I think move the game along a little bit from an offensive standpoint. But first and foremost, it comes down to the fan experience for us.”

FOOTBALL from page 1 to 8



This map of future UFL teams includes Oklahoma City, Rhode Island and Salt Lake City, along with a few other future locations. PHOTO PROVIDED BY UNITED FOOTBALL LEAGUE