

THE DAILY ARDMOREITE

NEWS

Lt. Governor speaks on Ardmores opportunities to attract and retain population, business growth

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Lt. Governor Matt Pinnell came to Ardmore on Monday to visit the area, tour the Airpark, and talk to local business owners. After a luncheon held by the Ardmore Chamber of Commerce, Pinnell spoke about his visit and the opportunities the city has for growth in the coming years.

“In my job as Lieutenant Governor, I’m basically the sales and marketing director for the entire state, and what’s going on in Ardmore is really special,” Pinnell said. “I truly believe that Ardmore is the front door into Dallas, and if we (the State of Oklahoma) are going to see positive growth with jobs and new businesses moving into any town in Oklahoma, Ardmore is at the top of that list.”

Pinnell noted that according to the figures collected in the 2020 Census, the state currently has around 3.9 million residents where as the state of Texas has 29 million people. While Oklahoma will not be getting any new congressional representatives from the census, Texas will be getting three, Pinnell hopes to see some of that growth come to Oklahoma. He believe’s Ardmore’s proximity to the DFW Metroplex and other locations in Texas make it a prime location to bring in new people and businesses.

“As close as you are to one of the largest economies in the world, that is a differentiator that Ardmore has that cities like like Tulsa do not, and you need to leverage that,” he said. “I believe the best opportunity we have for growth over the next 10 years is to partner with the Sate of Texas, and to go into the Sate of Texas to bring more people back to Oklahoma. Are people moving in from the coasts? Of course, and we’re having those conversations, but I still believe the best opportunity we have is Texas.”

He sees Southern Tech as being one of the city’s biggest advantages.

“Our career tech system here in Oklahoma is already top 10, and I think the partnership we have with Southern Tech here is special,” Pinnell said. “I use the word special because they can build curriculum within a few weeks for companies looking to relocate here.”

Pinnel also pointed out the investments the city is making that improve quality of life in the area.

“The quality of life in Ardmore is impressive,” he said. “You’re investing in the arts. You’re investing in trail systems. You’re investing in thing that employees are demanding from their employers. I would make sure that you continue to do those things.”

As Lt. Governor, Pinnell serves as chair of the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Committee, and he believes the city’s proximity to Lake Murray also serves as another major draw.

“The Department of Tourism is investing in Lake Murray, and Lake Murray will be arguably the best state park in the state,” he said. “Lake Murray and Beaver’s Bend in Broken Bow already do the most business, and that is a recruitment tool you need to leverage. Tourism is a front door into the economic development that we want to see. So the more Texans you get into Ardmore and Lake Murray, the better. The more people from Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas the better because that helps us sell Ardmore.”

Pinnel said he will take what he learned from his trip to Ardmore back to Oklahoma City to better know how the State of Oklahoma can help the city with its efforts for growth.