



Dowell Center—Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Vertical Brownfield Redevelopment—A New Lease on Life

The City of Oklahoma City's dogged pursuit of its ambitious Metropolitan Area Project (MAPS) masterplan for downtown redevelopment has inspired a host of innovative projects that have transformed the city. One of these, the Dowell Center, a 20-story building located in the City's Central Business District, has been a beneficiary of this massive revitalization effort.

The Dowell Center building had stood vacant since the early 1990's. A declining urban core and asbestos issues had made this site unattractive and too risky for potential redevelopers. However, as Oklahoma City's multi-faceted masterplan leveraged investment in its downtown area, the Center became a jewel because of its location and potential for reuse.

Oklahoma City provided a loan to the Dowell Center from its EPA Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Grant—one of the resources within its arsenal of capital improvement funding. This \$955,976 loan, granted in March 2007 and currently the largest in EPA Region 6, was for the asbestos cleanup in compliance with the Oklahoma Department of Labor's standards. Cleanup is expected to be completed by the end of 2007.

Current plans for the Dowell Center redevelopment focus on leasable office space marketed primarily to small and startup businesses with some retail encouraged at ground and underground levels. Renovation will be completed in stages, opening up approximately 30,000 square feet (3 floors) per year with completion expected by 2015.



Dowell Center, 250 N. Robinson Avenue,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

A major component of Oklahoma City's revitalization has been MAPS' impetus on projects such as the Bricktown Ballpark, Myriad Convention Center renovation, state fairground improvements, Bricktown Canal, Library/Learning Center, trolleys, Civic Center Music Hall renovation, North Canadian River improvements, and the Ford Center which have leveraged to date over \$2.5 billion in investments. Projections indicate that another \$1.5 billion in new downtown development is coming. MAPS successes have also served as a model for the creation of the "MAPS for Kids" program to energize the city school system. Additional fallout is a housing boom in the downtown area. Thirteen housing developments with a total exceeding 1,200 units are under construction, and a need for nearly 13,000 units by 2010 is projected.