



Public Safety Building Greenville, Texas *Formidable Redevelopment Challenge*

The City of Greenville conducted a needs survey in 2001 to evaluate various aspects of the proposed Public Safety Building, including an analysis of site selection criteria, and determined, along with factors such as location, size, appropriateness, access, and consistency with City goals, that approximately four to five acres would be required by the facility. The selection decision was made in favor of the downtown location, despite the formidable challenge anticipated in the acquisition of 26 separate properties. The City's commitment to revitalize the downtown area by investing public redevelopment money was the deciding factor.



Properties along Public Safety Building site before redevelopment

Very little investment had occurred in the downtown area of Greenville for over 30 years, leaving most of the residents without neighborhood amenities such as grocery and drug stores, restaurants, clothing shops, and other businesses that complement an urban neighborhood. The Public Safety Building project was an opportunity for the City to begin implementation of its long-term vision for revitalization of the downtown area. The removal of derelict and declining properties and replacing them with a new major public facility would provide a stimulus for other businesses to relocate into the downtown area.

The City of Greenville was awarded a \$200,000 EPA hazardous assessment grant and a \$200,000 petroleum assessment grant which were used to assess the potential contaminants on the 26 properties within the site. Former site activities included service stations, automotive repair/maintenance businesses, a bus depot, grinding company, transformer sales company, painting companies, and dry cleaners.

While the City of Greenville provided the vision and principal funding for the Public Safety Building project, community involvement was critical to the project's success. Neighborhood stakeholders participated in redevelopment efforts as did other public entities such as Hunt County, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and Texas Department of Health.



Public Safety Building, Downtown, Greenville

The construction of the Public Safety Building has provided a much needed economic stimulus to the area. During construction activities, local contractors were hired, local supplies were utilized, and the general appearance of the area went from a city block consisting of 26 parcels of dilapidated buildings, vacant retail stores, and high unemployment, to a new Public Safety Building employing 77 local residents. Private funding and development has been stimulated in this area as part of the City's revitalization efforts. Over \$2.5 million and over 20 business starts/relocations/expansions have occurred in the downtown area. A vacant former grocery store has been renovated by an independent grocer as a new Hispanic grocery store. A poll of area residents had selected "grocery store" as their first choice for a desired local business.

For more information on Greenville's Brownfields redevelopment program, contact John Adel, AICP-Director of Community Development, City of Greenville, 903-457-3160 or e-mail jadel@ci.greenville.tx.us.