

NEWARK CASE STUDY

GSA CAN BE COMMUNITY FRIENDLY WHILE MEETING STRICT SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

OVERVIEW

Continuing Newark's remarkable revitalization, GSA has partnered with the City of Newark and Claremont Newark, LLC developing the city's first waterfront development project on the corner of McCarter Highway and Center Place.

Directly across the street from the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), the state-of-the-art facility will be home to the Newark Division Headquarters of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The development will also include nearly 14,000 square feet of ground floor retail space for shops and restaurants for the community's use.

On October 6, 2000 Federal and local officials proudly announced that under the terms of the lease contract negotiated by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), the FBI will occupy 240,000 square feet of office space in the 12-story building.

In this high visibility location along Newark's Passaic River, the building is designed as a beacon on the waterfront at the city's new front door, while giving form to the proposed Joseph G. Minish Park. Blending with NJPAC's contemporary look, the office tower

façade will be constructed of vision glass and brick, similar to that found at NJPAC. Additionally, beautiful trees will adorn the promenade along the waterfront. Completion of the state-of-the-art facility is scheduled for fall 2002.



Claremont Newark retained Ehrenkrantz,

Eckstut & Kuhn Architects, one of the nation's leading architects whose buildings are known for revitalizing American cities, to design the building. The firm has designed many of the new downtown development projects in Newark, including the concepts for a new mixed-use business district on the north side of Military Park, and a master plan and design for the New Jersey Nets' new downtown arena.

CASE STUDY BACKGROUND

At the inception of the Newark, FBI project, the GSA Contracting Officer met with the Newark Economic Development Corp. officials regarding possible sites for the new FBI headquarters for the State of New Jersey. The meeting was held to implement Executive Order 12072 that requires consultation with local officials on significant federal acquisition projects. The Newark Economic Development Corp. advised the Contracting Officer that there were three (3) City controlled sites along the Passaic riverfront that were part of a redevelopment plan. The Contracting Officer gave them a copy of the Solicitation for Offers so that they could make sure that potential developers knew of the requirement and could make an offer.

As the procurement progressed, one of the offers received was for the northernmost site in the redevelopment area. A potential issue concerned the offerors ability to demonstrate control of the offered site. The offerors knew that they had to have control of their site by the Best and Final Offers due date. The City of Newark expedited its process to make sure that the offeror of City owned land (title to the site was held in large part by the City of Newark Housing Authority and the rest by the City itself) received site control in time to submit its Best and Final offer (BAFO). The developer obtained a purchase option in sufficient time to submit its BAFO.

The SFO did not require a single tenant building. The FBI has been in a multi-tenant office building in Newark for 25 years, so it did not insist on a single occupancy building as its requirement. Accordingly, offerors could design a building with other uses as long as they met stringent security requirements and maximized blast protection in the building design. The Contracting Officer made certain that the security requirements for protecting the FBI building were met while the building was made “community friendly”. In addition, the owner of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), who had some influence in the community, voiced a concern that the building not look like a “fortress” in view of the intended occupant. The Contracting Officer then negotiated with the developer to make sure that the building would be compatible with its surroundings. The result was a building that looks like the beacon to the downtown business district with materials that blend the look of the more modern neighboring office buildings and the NJPAC. As a result of these meetings, the developer insisted that his architectural team make the building compatible with its surroundings.

After evaluating BAFOs, the Government team determined that the best value was provided by the offeror for space in the building along the City of Newark waterfront. By entering into this lease, the Government provided the City of Newark with the additional benefit of “kicking off” its waterfront redevelopment. Since the leased building is situated at the north end of the waterfront redevelopment area, other development will be “filling in” the land between the Government’s FBI Building and existing office buildings. The use of much of the ground floor along the river’s edge for retail space will help in this purpose by enhancing the public friendly image of the waterfront park which is part of the overall City plan. Special security designs that are user friendly enabled this mixed, public space to co-exist with this security conscious agency. The Government and the City of Newark will both benefit from this blending of purposes.