

We're Open!



by Lesly Rascoe, *Vice President, Communications*

The Greater Waco Chamber swung its new doors wide open June 6 to hundreds of members, supporters, community leaders and well-wishers.

The much-anticipated new green headquarters at 101 S. Third St. is now the marketing center for Greater Waco with 23 staff members and hundreds of volunteers.

Stately with its bronze dome and outdoor art, the Chamber is attracting local and out-of-town visitors who are dropping in to look around.

Public Relations Specialist Binti Feralles says most visitors ask what makes the building green while others want to see the Chamber Collection of local and regional art.

While construction is complete at the Chamber, this is only the beginning for the heart of the city.

The sound of construction at the neighboring Austin Avenue Lofts, the early stages of development at the new student

housing complex on Washington Avenue and the nearly complete renovation of the Hilton Waco suggest that this a new day for downtown.

Chamber president Jim Vaughan said that momentum is building in the three block area bounded by University Parks Drive, Franklin Ave, Fourth Street and Washington Avenue.

“We’re pleased to be in the hub of what appears to be a turning point for downtown,” said Vaughan. “We talk about spurring a Billion Dollar Decade of Development, but when that talk turns into a functioning building for the Chamber and moving dirt all around us, clearly the vision is becoming reality.” ■



Rick Brophy, David Lacy, Don Moes, Terry Stevens, Bob Davis, Tom Salome, Johnny Mankin, Dr. Roland Goertz and Jim Vaughan cut the ribbon for the new Chamber building.

Photo by Jill Davis



ROOF

The first living roof in Greater Waco is planted with varieties of sedum that require little water and maintenance. The 1,750-square-foot living roof reduces the urban heat island, absorbs air pollution, collects airborne pollutants and stores carbon. Rainwater that would otherwise run off the site is retained in a cistern, and a solar-powered pump returns the water to the roof during dry periods. The Chamber’s 5,400-square-foot white roof is Energy Star®-rated and its reflective qualities will contribute to lower cooling costs and reduced energy consumption.



NATURAL LIGHTING

The 9’ x 24’ skylight brings the outside inside with superior winter and summer energy efficiency while transmitting diffuse daylight. This high-performance translucent product—combined with a light well—allows natural sunlight to illuminate both first and second level workspaces. Most staff areas receive natural lighting through the skylight and the building’s 40 insulated windows.

ENERGY

A grant from Green Mountain Energy is providing a 9.6 kilowatt solar array on the roof of the building. The 48 photovoltaic solar panels will offset the building’s annual electrical usage by 6.5 percent and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by more than 26,500 pounds. That’s as much CO2 emissions avoided as 1,500 trees would absorb in one year.

The building was designed to consume 22 percent less energy than typical new construction, and the Chamber is proud to set the standard for innovative ways to utilize cleaner, renewable technologies.



Develop the Region's Workforce

Address quality and capacity issues facing institutions providing education and workforce training.

The Chamber's committees meet with local educational institutions at the building to create and promote programs that develop the region's future workforce, support public schools, expand community and technical colleges, establish new linkages with Baylor University and explore a state university.

Change Perceptions of Greater Waco

Build awareness of Greater Waco's diverse and growing economy and outstanding quality of life based on what We Do—aviation, advanced manufacturing, health care and wellness, professional services, logistics, higher education and creating a green, livable city.

Opening the first green Chamber building in America in Waco will generate positive publicity and make lasting impressions on both professional guests and tourists.

Grow Waco

Increase funding for strategic and economic development programs to attract the businesses and jobs of the future and help existing companies grow.

The new Chamber headquarters serves as the marketing center where prospective investors are introduced to Greater Waco. These relationships lead to quality job growth and increased community wealth.

Revitalize Strategic Community Areas

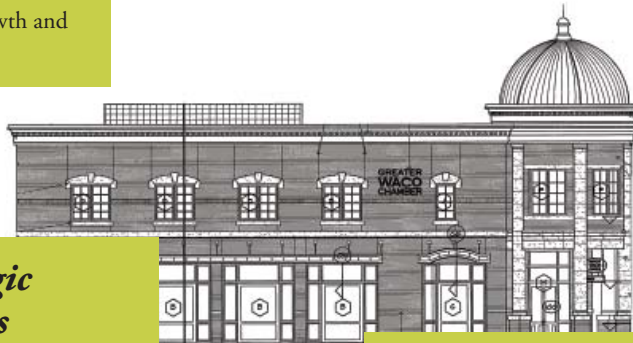
Downtown and older business and residential neighborhoods are important and need special attention.

The Chamber's new building in the heart of the city is stimulating construction in a three-block area that is part of a Billion Dollar Decade of Development for downtown. The Chamber's traditional neighborhood development task force meets at the building to advocate development in key areas and realize the potential of the Brazos River corridor and East Waco.

Build a Culture of Implementation

Mobilize community leaders and resources to implement the Challenge Greater Waco strategic plan and all of our goals.

More than 200 businesses and individuals joined the call to turn a vision into reality and invest in the future of Greater Waco by building a new Chamber headquarters to develop and empower a new generation of leaders.



LEED™

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) program of the U.S. Green Building Council is a third-party certification and nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings.

The Chamber building was designed to earn LEED™ certification at the gold level.

The Chamber's headquarters at 101 S. Third St. replaces an asphalt parking lot that was earlier part of the original Waco square. The Chamber and city recognized the site's potential as a live, work and play environment that is now being realized.



FSC-CERTIFIED WOOD

Millwork and furniture in the Chamber building is Forest Stewardship Council-certified.

The council sets high standards that ensure forestry is practiced in an environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable way.

WATER

Water-efficient landscaping and plumbing and low-flow faucets, waterless urinals and dual-flush water closets are designed to conserve resources. A shower also is available for employees who prefer to walk, run or ride their bike to work as another energy-conservation measure.

LOW V.O.C.

The paint and carpet in the building is low-V.O.C. (volatile organic compounds). This translates into fewer emissions and a healthier indoor work environment.

The sustainable carpet system was aired out for a week before being brought into the building, and the floors were steam cleaned before installation.

TILE

Visitors to the building will walk on glass in the gallery and first floor corridor.

The unique surface manufactured by Texas-based EnviroGLAS is made of multi-colored glass chips from discarded bottles, mirrors and plate windows. The durable floor is colorful and attractive while adding another product made from recycled material in the building.

