

BEST NEW DEVELOPMENT OFFICE



PHOTOGRAPHER / SCOTT PAULUS

NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL — PHASE II

SOUTH 27TH STREET AND WEST DREXEL AVENUE, FRANKLIN

PROJECT CREDITS

OWNER:
Northwestern Mutual

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:
Opus North Corp.

ARCHITECT:
Eppstein Uhen Architects

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS:
Schreiber/Anderson Associates

ENGINEER:
Affiliated Engineers Inc.
(mechanical); GRAEF (structural);
Kapur & Associates Inc. (civil)

PROJECT COST:
\$85 million

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony last October commemorating Northwestern Mutual's \$85 million expansion at its campus in Franklin, company CEO Ed Zore said the project was "symbolic" of the insurance and financial service company's steady growth.

The project serves as a legacy to Northwestern Mutual's commitment to long-term growth, but it also is part of the cornerstone for future plans that the cities of Franklin and Oak Creek have for developing the South 27th Street corridor between Rawson and Drexel avenues.

The six-story, 400,000-square-foot office building was constructed as the second phase to Northwestern Mutual's 84-acre Franklin campus, anchored by an initial 500,000-square-foot building completed in 2004. In addition to the new office building, second-phase construction also included a 1,655-vehicle parking structure and expanded landscaping. Adding the second building nearly doubled the company's work force at the Franklin complex, which now houses 2,150 of the Milwaukee-based company's 5,000 area employees.

What does the expansion mean to the community?

Just ask Franklin Mayor Tom Taylor, whose city established a tax incremental financing district to support development at the campus and its surrounding area.

"We're very happy to have one of the best corporations in the world located in Franklin," Taylor

said. "The influence they've had has been immeasurable."

Taylor noted the project's impact in formulating development along the South 27th Street corridor and how the Fortune 500 company's presence is bringing new businesses to the area.

"We now have two Sendik's (Food Markets) in the city, and bringing the first Sendik's here was a direct result of having Northwestern Mutual here," he said.

He added that Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare's decision to build a health center to the south at 27th Street and Oakwood Road, and a new hotel currently under construction near 27th Street and Ryan Road also were influenced by Northwestern Mutual's Franklin presence.

Besides bringing long-term jobs to Franklin, the project put hundreds of tradespeople to work. On any given day during the construction period between August 2006 and July 2008, there were about 325 trades workers at the site, said Mike Skorstad, Northwestern Mutual's assistant director of facilities. About 80 subcontractors and suppliers worked to complete the building with Opus North Corp.'s Milwaukee office, the project's general contractor that also built phase one, Skorstad said.

The building's designer, Eppstein Uhen Architects, Milwaukee, which also designed the com-

plex's initial building, created a plan for a cohesive identity for the entire campus. Clad, pre-cast panels on the lower portion of the building's exterior include granite from the same Brazilian quarry used on the phase-one project. Many sustainable elements went into the new building and while it is not LEED-certified, LEED guidelines were used for design and construction, Skorstad said.



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Northwestern Mutual's master plan for the site shows possible expansion for two more buildings, which certainly would be welcomed by Mayor Taylor and the city of Franklin.

"If Northwestern wanted to come in and build two more buildings, we'd drop everything to accommodate them," Taylor said. "People here are very proud to have Northwestern Mutual in the city."

— Todd Bragstad