
TexAmericas Center 101 acre site designated as first STAR Site in Texas

By Jana Russell

Published: 01/17/2017 - 3:28pm

TexAmericas Center and MTG Engineers & Surveyors are pleased to announce that TexAmericas Center has received the first STAR Site designation through the Texas Economic Development Council's (TEDC) Documented Sites Program. The certified STAR Site is a 101 acre parcel, located less than 1 mile from I-30. The site is officially determined to possess the quality standards that companies request when conducting a search for a location to build a new facility— making it a unique, first-rate business location in Texas and the greater Texarkana area.

TexAmericas Center, a state of Texas redevelopment authority, has been pursuing this STAR site designation through the TEDC since 2014. Their journey paid off this week when Carlton Sheets, executive director of the TEDC, proclaimed a 101 parcel on the 12,000 acre TexAmericas Center industrial park as having met the qualifications of the TEDC STAR Site program and is now the first official STAR site in the state of Texas.

Texas S.T.A.R. Documented Sites (Sites That Are Ready) is a program of the Texas Economic Development Council that verifies sites as meeting the required criteria and are fully-documented as Sites That Are Ready for construction to begin. This program provides critical information up front, in order to help accelerate the decision making process for site selectors and industry leaders considering Texas for future development. "Being a STAR site signifies that your community understands that speed to market means speed to profit; the quicker a company can begin operations, the quicker it can begin selling or shipping goods," said Carlton Sheets, Executive Director, TEDC.

Economic developers have found that the timeframe for making business location decisions has shortened, and companies are becoming much more risk-averse. When a company makes a decision to build a new facility, they search for a site that is shovel-ready and relatively risk free. "MTG was honored to assist TexAmericas Center throughout the process to identify and certify an industrial site that could be considered development-ready by TEDC. TexAmericas Center can now propose a certified site to their clients, who can be confident of the site's availability and suitability. This designation also offers the additional advantage of ensuring that the client's construction is more likely to remain on schedule," says David Williams, with MTG Engineers & Surveyors.

The STAR Site Program was established by the TEDC to recognize the Shovel-Ready properties that exist in the state of Texas and encourage more development. Texas was one of the only southern states to not have a state-wide program to recognize properties that are development ready. This program was designed to promote the quality business parks that exist in the state of Texas and for securing more business expansion in Texas. Scott Norton, CEO of TexAmericas Center stated, "This results-oriented approach has been used to build and

propel job creation in many communities. State certification assures potential tenants that our business park is of high quality and Shovel-Ready. We are leveling the playing field by winning this designation.”

The process of securing this STAR Site designation took over a year to complete. The information collected during the process is an invaluable tool for marketing the site. Eric Voyles, Chief Economic Development Office for TexAmericas Center said, “The STAR Site Program is a tremendous opportunity for the TexAmericas Center in terms of attracting new businesses to the greater Texarkana area. The documentation allows site selectors and business owners to know exactly what they are getting into with regards to our specific property.”

While there can be no prediction of success for STAR sites, the state of Oregon has certified 57 sites totaling over 3,300 acres; of these, 19 have been sold and over 2,500 jobs created since they were certified. As more certification programs are developed, evidence continues to show that these programs have proven to successfully propel economic development programs in those states and regions in which they have been implemented.

About TexAmericas Center:

Located in the Texarkana metropolitan area, TexAmericas Center owns and operates one of the largest mixed-use industrial parks in the United States. With more than 12,000 acres of land and about 3 million square feet of commercial and industrial product, TexAmericas Center services the four states (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas) market. TexAmericas Center has the operating capabilities of a municipality but functions more like a traditional real estate development company. In addition to controlling its’ own zoning and permitting processes, it also sustains the lifecycle of the public infrastructure on the complex. TAC has the capability to lease, build-to-suit, or facilitate Greenfield, owner-constructed projects in a timely and efficient manner. At TAC, we streamline leasing and manage government development processes, all through a single point of contact. Our customers benefit from faster market entry by resolving zoning, permitting, inspection, and state and local incentive programs through our organization alone. Tenants of TexAmericas Center tend to be private business owners and corporations seeking flexible and cost effective space solutions.

About MTG Engineers & Surveyors:

MTG Engineers and Surveyors, since its founding in Texarkana in 1962, has continuously provided a broad range of quality professional engineering and land surveying services. MTG believes the mission of TexAmericas Center is critical to the future of our area and considered it a privilege to be a part of the team that helped them achieve this STAR site designation. This success is another great example of the MTG philosophy that quality planning is the key to a successful project.