



908-F-03-003-D

OGDEN CITY, UTAH

The Renaissance of Downtown Ogden City

Ogden City, not unlike many other communities in Utah and throughout the West, owes its origin to the fur trappers who found a lucrative trade in beaver and muskrats along mountain streams. With the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, Ogden City grew from a small frontier town into a thriving and successful industrial center. However, as the railway jobs and travelers declined, the influx of money and people slowly dried up. The jobs that made up the city's core started to disappear and the corresponding residential neighborhoods began to decline. The railroads and associated industries closed operations in Ogden City in the 1970s and 1980s, leaving behind high unemployment rates and pockets of environmental contamination. The departure of business and industry resulted in abandonment and blight throughout the City's Central Business District (CBD).



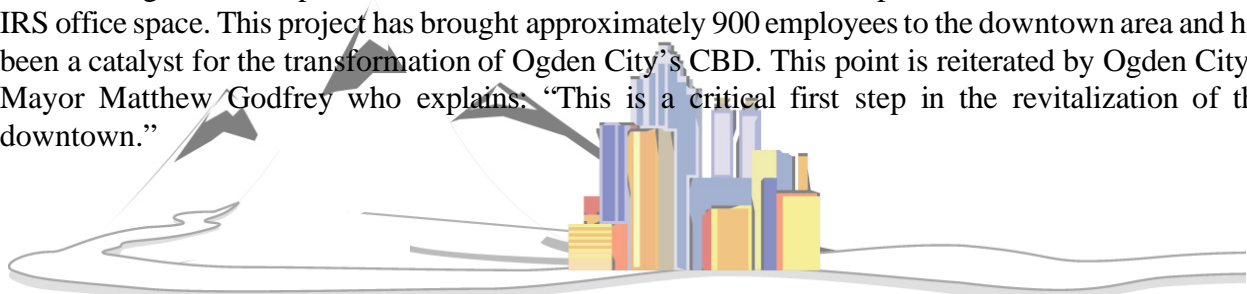
Stegan's Corner

In recent years, a commitment to urban revitalization and redevelopment has created big changes in Ogden City. In 1997, Ogden City with a population of 77,226, was selected as an Assessment grant recipient by EPA's Brownfields Program. The Ogden City Redevelopment Agency (OCRDA) focused its Brownfields Program funding on a nine-block area of Ogden City's CBD where vacant rail yards, former tanneries, and large warehouses were in abundance. In January 2001, OCRDA submitted a revised workplan that expanded the scope as well as the area of the project by five blocks to a total of 14 blocks within the CBD. In the targeted

area, 80 percent of the properties were vacant, including a large railroad property which covered half of the CBD. Ogden City's vision for the CBD was to remove barriers to economic development and reclaim valuable properties for mixed-use development. To date, 99 different properties have had Phase I environmental assessments completed under this EPA grant. Furthermore, the assessment activities have led to environmental cleanups and urban redevelopment projects throughout downtown Ogden City.

Partnership Makes the Difference

An innovative partnership that includes multiple levels of government along with private sector partners was formed to complete the first major project in the redevelopment of Ogden City. OCRDA, the General Services Administration (GSA), and the Boyer Company partnered to develop a 135,000-square-foot Internal Revenue Service (IRS) office building on the 10-acre Block 37 in the CBD. The IRS building is the first phase and anchor of the new Twin River Complex that will include additional IRS office space. This project has brought approximately 900 employees to the downtown area and has been a catalyst for the transformation of Ogden City's CBD. This point is reiterated by Ogden City's Mayor Matthew Godfrey who explains: "This is a critical first step in the revitalization of the downtown."



OCRDA conducted Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments with Brownfields Program funding on a group of 17 properties called Block 37. OCRDA then funded \$788,000, in cleanup activities at numerous properties within Block 37, under a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement with the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). After the cleanup was complete, OCRDA sold the properties (Block 37) to the Boyer Company who won a contract with GSA to construct the \$20 million Twin River office complex. The construction included the renovation of the historic Boyle's Warehouse and the construction of an adjoining new office building. The Boyer Company now leases the complex to the IRS through GSA.



Twin River Office Complex

One of the benefits of a brownfields project such as this one is the potential to preserve and restore historic buildings and properties like the Boyle Furniture Warehouse. The building, which was constructed in 1906, was refurbished under the State Historical Preservation Office guidelines. The Boyle building was refurbished to include office space, training areas, and a cafeteria. Reinforcing the point that the Twin Rivers Complex is a key component in the revitalization and redevelopment of downtown Ogden City and the area surrounding it, is the fact that the complex is now considered prime real estate in the heart of the CBD.

OCRDA believes the Twin Rivers project is the reason behind the continued renovation of the CBD and downtown Ogden City. Evidence of this can be seen directly across the street in Part II of the Twin Rivers IRS Campus, which involves a major refurbishing of the historic Scowcroft Warehouse. This four-story building will house approximately 800 IRS employees and is scheduled for completion in late 2003.

A Vision for Change

Redevelopment efforts can be seen throughout Ogden City. The facade of Ogden City will soon be changing as redevelopment of the former Ogden City Mall takes shape. The former mall is being prepared for an exciting new mixed-use development project that will combine an open-air retail and restaurant section with residential units connected by a central plaza. A strong residential presence will ensure this downtown neighborhood has a comfortable and vibrant feel. Along with the redevelopment of the Ogden City mall, a high-tech education and research center is being renovated at the Historic American Can building. The new research center will combine educational uses, research facilities, classrooms, laboratories, and business offices.

OCRDA's vision of reclaiming and putting valuable properties back to productive use is coming to fruition across downtown Ogden City. The creation of innovative partnerships and the support from local government has spurred the redevelopment of the CBD. With all the redevelopment that this project is bringing to Ogden City the goal of attracting high-tech companies to the CBD seems very attainable.

For more information about the Ogden City Brownfields project, please contact Tammie Nalder in Ogden City, at (801) 629-8995 or Karen Reed, EPA Region 8, at (303) 312-6019.