Detroit Metropolitan International Airport
Detroit, Michigan

ThePINNACLE
aeropark of Wayne County

METRO AIRPORT

CASE STUDY

OBJECTIVE

Detroit Metropolitan International Airport is a hub airport for Northwest Airlines and one of the fastest growing international airports in the United States. The vision of Detroit Metropolitan International Airport and Wayne County Economic Development Corporation is to create a master planned mixed use commercial business park (the "Pinnacle Aeropark") designed to compliment the airport's airfield operations and encourage growth and business development for the airport and surrounding communities.
The land area identified for the Pinnacle Aeropark is adjacent to the airfield operations area and consists of more than 120 parcels of land; comprising a land area in excess of 1,300 acres. One of the challenges confronting the Pinnacle Aeropark project is the fact that significant infrastructure and utility upgrades will be required. The construction and funding of such infrastructure is complicated by the fact that the land area falls within two separate municipalities. In addition, although Wayne County owns several key parcels within the identified land area, the critical component to the project's success is dependant upon the County's ability to assemble the 120 parcels owned independently by individuals, families and businesses. These parcels include commercial developments, residential properties, farms and uncultivated green fields.

Property owners opposed to the Pinnacle Aeropark Project filed suit against Wayne County questioning the County's authority to acquire the necessary land by way of eminent domain proceedings. Wayne County needed assistance in evaluating the viability of the Pinnacle Aeropark project. Trammell Crow Company was retained as a consultant with respect to the acquisition and eminent domain proceedings concerning the assemblage of the 1,300 acres of land as well as viability of the project from a third party development perspective with respect to issues concerning marketing, absorption and utility/infrastructure development.

STRATEGY

Wayne County and the Airport have committed significant human and economic resources toward development of the Pinnacle Aeropark and studying the viability of the Project. The vision for the Pinnacle Aeropark is to create a synergistic business park that promotes business growth and economic expansion for businesses and service providers whose business model is complimented from operating within the center of a major transportation infrastructure hub. Success of the Pinnacle Aeropark lies in part, in the County's ability to educate the local communities on the value and benefits created by the Project. In addition Wayne County and the Airport have been challenged with demonstrating the necessity of the County's involvement in the Project through eminent domain proceedings.

Trammell Crow Company was retained to conduct an exhaustive study of the Master Plan, the development budgets, and infrastructure costs. The scope of Trammell Crow's study included an analysis of market conditions including demand, absorption, and vacancy associated with various product types. Upon completion of its investigation and analysis, Trammell Crow Company prepared a report and provided expert testimony to the Circuit Court of Wayne County, Michigan concerning the viability of the Pinnacle Aeropark from a third party development perspective and testified to the critical nature of the eminent domain proceedings.

VALUE CREATION

The Wayne County, Circuit Court ruled at the trial court level that Wayne County had the jurisdiction and authority to acquire the necessary parcels of land pursuant to eminent domain proceedings. This ruling was appealed by the property owners and the Michigan Court of Appeals affirmed the Trial Court's ruling.

Quick Facts

Services
- Airport Master Planning
- Development Management
- Project Management

Scope
- 1,300 Acres

Geography
- Detroit Metropolitan International Airport