

## ▶ SKIBELL PROPERTIES

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– Jerry Skibell, President of Skibell Properties





## PECAN PLAZA SHOPPING CENTER, WITH ANCHOR TENANT EL CHICO RESTAURANT, OPENS IN GRANBURY, TEXAS

### Situation

Located approximately 30 miles southwest of Fort Worth in fast-growing Granbury, Texas, Pecan Plaza Shopping Center reflects the country traditions of this community nestled in the heart of the Brazos River Valley. The 22,765-square-foot single-story shopping center is situated on 3.2 acres adjacent to Texas State Highway 377.

After successfully working with AUI Contractors on a similar retail project in Sherman, Texas, Developer Jerry Skibell of Skibell Properties, LC, chose to work with AUI team members for a second time. Skibell Properties is headquartered in Dallas. Pecan Plaza and El Chico Restaurant project started in October 2004 and was completed by April 2005.

### Challenge

Skibell first contracted with Phelps Woods, the project's architectural partner, and Cross Engineering Consultants to provide

Project Description.....	22,765 square foot shopping center and anchor restaurant build-out
Owner.....	Skibell Properties, L.C.
Location.....	30 miles southwest of Fort Worth on State Highway 377 in Granbury
Value.....	\$1.7 million for Pecan Plaza retail center and \$450,000 for El Chico Restaurant
Architect.....	Architects Phelps Woods
Completion Date.....	April 2005

elevations, site plan, floor plan layouts and site development. Upon completion of conceptual drawings, Skibell asked AUI to develop an initial budget for use in securing project financing. AUI also entered into a separate site development contract to expedite the schedule since the restaurant already had a non-negotiable opening date set.

Design changes to the building's footprint created numerous challenges, not the least of which was keeping all drawings current and in the hands and heads of

AUI subcontractors. Fortunately, AUI had selected subcontractors from its "design/build" list with whom AUI had successfully worked in the past.

The building pad with supportive utilities was nearing completion when Skibell negotiated the sale of a separate site pad to a national drug store chain. The sale of the land shortened the overall length of the building shell, as well as necessitated the relocation of a newly installed fire lane and storm drain. This sort of flexibility would not have been possible without the

## AUI WORKED COLLABORATIVELY WITH THE DESIGN TEAM TO ASSIST IN “VALUE ENGINEERING” ON THE PROJECT...

incorporation of the pre-engineered building system and AUI's intimate knowledge of such a system. AUI coordinated communications on the new design between various engineers, the architect, the pre-engineered manufacturer and Skibell. After the design was completed and approved, AUI had to manage and implement the changes while incurring minimal costs and making up time lost in order to meet El Chico's completion deadline.

Other project challenges included working with the local utility cooperative to ensure electrical poles were relocated, as well as communicating with and ensuring that the concerns of 10 residential homeowners whose properties were abutting to the development were met. Maintaining access to State Highway 377 also was an ongoing challenge due to the proximity of a nearby signal light. Coordination between Skibell, AUI and Texas Department of Transportation was important to safeguard public safety and satisfy the requirements of all parties involved.

### **Solution**

AUI worked collaboratively with the design team to assist in “value engineering” on the project, which is an organized approach to providing the necessary functions at the lowest possible cost. AUI suggested the use of pre-engineered building framing and an associated roofing system that would enable most of the structural engineering costs to be rolled in with the framing system itself, reducing Skibell's upfront design costs and providing better design flexibility. Utilizing the pre-engineered building system also enabled Skibell to extend his timeframe to modify and further customize the buildings as he was developing the overall project.

Skibell deferred to AUI's construction expertise to develop both the structural design and associated details necessary to integrate the pre-engineered structural system with conventional materials. This process required a much higher commitment of time and communications skills than is normally associated with the standard general contractor role. AUI had to coordinate and resolve numerous design issues, including wall and roof framing, bracing requirements and compatible design loads.

Understanding the time constraints of NTR Management LLC, AUI began work on the El Chico restaurant immediately upon installation of the roofing over this portion of the shopping center.

### **Results**

Entering into a separate site development contract with Skibell Properties enabled the AUI project team to keep the El Chico portion of the project moving forward and on schedule while other major modifications were taking place. Skibell and NTR Management LLC also achieved both cost and time savings by utilizing common scopes of work such as supervision, job trailer and utilities. AUI completed both projects within budget and on schedule.

“With AUI's guidance and the leadership of Ken Conway, we overcame a multitude of obstacles, such as numerous changes to the building's size and dimensions that needed immediate attention,” said Jerry Skibell, president of Skibell Properties. The end result was a well-built, high quality retail center. We also met El Chico's deadline and pre-established grand opening date.”

### **About AUI**

As a full-service general contractor, AUI has served the public and private sector and completed more than 700 construction projects since 1983. AUI acquired Pyramid Building Systems in 2004 to expand its design/build capabilities and better serve its commercial/industrial clients. AUI serves civil, municipal, transportation (trucking and rail), industrial and retail customers. AUI also is engaged in projects that include office buildings, streetscapes, interior renovations and finish-outs, historic renovations and rehabilitations. AUI's commercial services include design-build construction, construction management services, and facilities development. The company's civil services include site development, road construction, heavy civil contracting projects, parks and trails development.

Headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, AUI has approximately 300 employees and annual revenues of \$120 million. AUI is a member of The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), The Texas Building Branch of the AGC; The Texas Heavy, Highway, Utility, and Industrial Branch of the AGC; Quoin, The Dallas/Fort Worth/East Texas Branch of the AGC; Associated Builders & Contractors; Society of Commercial Realtors; the Better Business Bureau; and many other business and professional organizations.

# **AUI** CONTRACTORS

*“Superior Services with an Exceptional Team”*

## **Contact AUI**

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