

## Conference Center Feasibility Midwest City, Oklahoma

The Reed Center at Midwest City was developed to induce reconstruction of the City's four property hotel cluster that was destroyed by a tornado in 1999. Plans for the project had reached the ground-breaking stage when officials determined that there was an insufficient understanding of the potential market and its implications for design and operation. Furthermore, the conference center development plan did not call for a headquarters hotel, an element they also determined could be critical to success.

Ernest Bleinberger's firm was engaged at this juncture and a demand-focused market analysis was immediately undertaken. With input gathered from an extensive user-group survey and other sources, recommendations were made to the building program that resulted in a facility more in tune with the actual market. Changes included a 100 seat tiered auditorium with state-of-the-art telecommunications (used extensively by groups associated with nearby Tinker Air Force Base including defense and aerospace industry firms), a television/media center (located in a storm-safe shelter within the facility), better natural lighting, and other enhancements.

A hotel market and financial feasibility analysis was also completed and led to recommendations for a functionally integrated headquarters hotel. Mr. Bleinberger worked closely with the local hotel operators and succeeded in gaining their support for the project that would be both a competitive influence as well as an overall business generator. Approximately two years following completion of the conference center, a Sheraton Hotel was built as the headquarters facility.



**A tiered auditorium was an additional programming element recommended to enhance market penetration.**