



New water reclamation plant replaces six

Gwinnett's new Yellow River Water Reclamation Facility is now online and replaces six old, inefficient treatment plants. Even better, the actual \$245 million cost of construction is \$5 million under budget.

"The state's Environmental Protection Division allowed us to consolidate these old plants into one and to reduce the overall pollutant load going to the Yellow River Watershed," explains Tyler Richards, deputy director for operations of Water Resources. The retired facilities are Jackson Creek, Beaver Ruin, Yellow River, Jack's Creek, No

Business Creek and Big Haynes Creek.

"We were convinced using a newer 'construction manager at risk' method of contracting versus the traditional 'plans and specifications and low bid process' would save money – and I'm proud to report that our decision paid off," adds Lynn Smarr, assistant director of Water Resources.

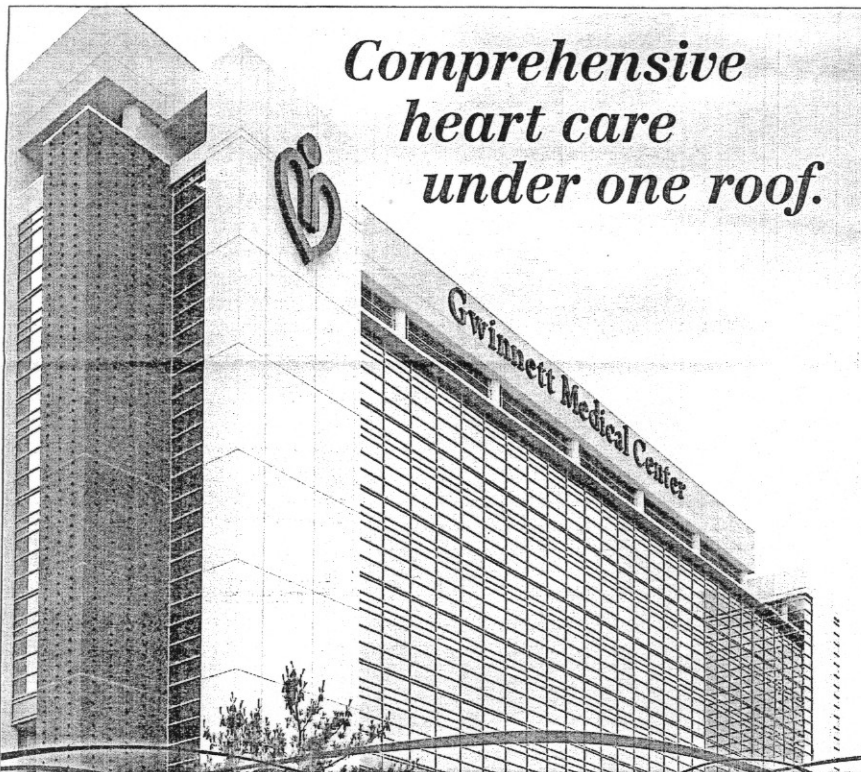
The County's Master Plan, that serves as a planning guide for the next 50 years, calls for an increase in the treatment capacity of the Yellow River Water Reclamation Facility from 14.5 million gallons per day (MGD) to 22

MGD. There will be no increase in the total permitted flow discharged to the Yellow River Basin, and the flow that is discharged will meet higher standards than that currently coming from the smaller facilities. Consolidation will yield reduced operating and maintenance costs, and facility improvements will increase capacity and aid management of flows during peak periods, meaning improved reliability of the system and enhanced facility performance. Benefits for homeowners in the immediate vicinity are improved odor control measures, stronger noise

abatement measures and reduced lighting around the site.

Gwinnett County Commission Chair Charlotte Nash said, "I'm so pleased that our Water Resources team and the contractors could bring such a large, important project on line at a reduced cost. I commend everyone involved for doing an outstanding job."

PC Construction, Jacobs, CH2M Hill, Precision Planning Incorporated and Gwinnett County staff all located offices on site to work together daily. Their efforts delivered the new facility while keeping the old one running during construction, as well as maintaining permit limits. The project even survived the September 2009 flood without any major work stoppages or significant spills.



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Risk the short-term for long-term viability

by Leo Wiener

Leasing is a challenge in this down economy. Property owners who make prudent choices can set themselves up for a big win in the short-term and ensure long-term viability for their commercial properties.

When you are trying to fill vacant space, you may be forced to take on additional risks by leasing to tenants that you might not have pulled the trigger on in a bull market. The critical concept to remember is that you will almost always earn more value from a building that has tenants than one that sits vacant.

In a retail center, you are often still paying common area fees – power bills for the parking lot and other charges that don't stop simply because a structure is empty. Weigh the value the impact of foot traffic will have on a fully leased commercial property – a crucial element needed for the health of your anchor stores. That alone can make finding a tenant for an empty property a top priority.

Be more flexible when structuring deals to fill your vacant properties. You can make bigger concessions on the bonuses for new tenants, or even take on a tenant with a lower credit rating than you would normally accept. Some of these risks will pay out and may earn you a long-term tenant that will keep your property occupied, increase foot traffic and help you earn money on your commercial properties.

Leo Wiener is chair of the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District board of directors and a principal and partner with Glenwood Development Co. LLC.