



Business Real Estate Solutions

Case Study: Lloyd Gosselink Expands to 38,000 S.F.



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Lloyd Gosselink Blevins Rochelle & Townsend, PC is a leading Austin-based law firm with practice focuses including environmental and regulatory law, litigation, real estate and transactional law. Founded in 1984, the firm has grown to 70 attorneys and staff members. Shortly after the firm's inception, Lloyd Gosselink took up residence at 111 Congress Avenue. Nearly twenty years later, the firm occupies 27,000 square feet across three floors in the building.

The firm has enjoyed its location in downtown Austin and, over the years, looked for ways to expand while remaining in the building. But, with continued steady growth in the region, the firm's partners agreed it was time to evaluate other options. In addition to needing more space for future expansion, their existing floor plate was no longer ideal for the changing dynamics of the firm. The number of paralegals and other staff has increased significantly. Being able to cluster growing practice groups has also been a challenge and quarters, while manageable, have been tight for several years. The firm needed more square footage overall and a wider floor plan that could accommodate clustering and more communal spaces— issues integral to Lloyd Gosselink's unique culture.

Commercial Texas was brought in to evaluate options for Lloyd Gosselink's workspace strategy. Shortly after becoming involved, it was apparent more was at stake than simply securing space. While the firm was thinking about its ongoing expansion, growth strategy and the favorable tenant real estate market, Michael Kennedy and Russell Young of Commercial Texas recognized that these investigations into a long-term lease commitment would naturally bring to the surface issues regarding the firm's future direction. Commercial Texas helped the organization recognize that its real estate strategy was an illustration of its business strategy.

To continue its expansion in existing and new practice areas, the firm would need room to grow its staff and attorneys steadily over the next decade. After evaluating potential options and defining the organization's future needs, the top two floors of 816 Congress Avenue were chosen.

Not only was the additional square footage available, it was a wider building that could support new workspace configurations efficiently and, therefore, make the building choice even more financially attractive. With Commercial Texas' representation, the firm was able to secure 38,000 square feet of space, representing an 11,000 square foot increase. The new location will enable the firm to add another 15 attorneys and additional staff over the course of its 10-year lease.

"Michael Kennedy and Russell Young of Commercial Texas worked with us to determine how our workspace would contribute to the overall trajectory of the firm. We needed a long-term lease that realistically addressed our needs as a firm. Many considerations were involved in evaluating the various options and making the correct business decision for the transition," stated Michal Bagley, Firm Administrator. "For many years we were very pleased with our offices at 111 Congress Avenue, but logistically, functionally and, thus, culturally, had reached maximum capacity. There was no question that we needed to remain downtown as close to the Capitol as possible—it's the pulse of our firm. With our new lease in place, we now have the opportunity to create an environment that fully addresses our operational framework and needs."

As part of the Commercial Texas-assembled team, the firm of Susman Tisdale Gayle (STG), a leading architecture firm in Austin with extensive interiors experience, along with Brent Jones of American Realty as project manager, was brought together. STG is currently working with Lloyd Gosselink to define the optimal configuration of the new space, as well as create an inviting and professional atmosphere. The process includes working with the attorneys to understand their needs, developing workspace strategies for the administrative staff and creating filing and space saving solutions. Key priorities for the project include creating a more cohesive environment and client-friendly conference areas for conducting business at the firm.

"Lloyd Gosselink's new workspace is being developed to create a more unified environment that addresses the way the firm's staff and attorneys work with one another," stated Jim Susman, Partner with STG. "A workspace should address a company's cultural, growth and marketing objectives. While we're still in the planning stages, we look forward to seeing their vision come to fruition in this new space."

The firm will be transitioning to its new space by the end of 2005. Michael Kennedy and Russell Young of Commercial Texas represented Lloyd Gosselink, and Bill Gump & Trish McQueen with Crescent Real Estate Equities represented 816 Congress.

"We look forward to a new workspace that allows us to better serve the needs of our clients and contributes to the operational efficiency of the firm. We're confident the move will address the needs of the attorneys and staff, and will spur the firm forward for many years to come," stated Ms. Bagley.