

## 2008 “Excellence in Downtown Revitalization” Award Winner

### Dedicated Olympia-family Business Restores Olympia National Bank Building after Nisqually Earthquake



#### Project Overview

The 1915 Olympia National Bank Building is one of the most ornate and classically designed buildings in downtown Olympia. The building housed banking institutions until heavily damaged by the 2001 Nisqually Earthquake. During the quake, much of the ornate, decorative terra cotta broke off the top of the building and tumbled to the sidewalk below, leaving more than 127 tons of debris.

After such devastation, many property owners would have simply turned their back and walked away, leaving a boarded up building or an empty lot. That didn't happen here. Building owners KBJ Investments understood the importance of this structure to downtown and waited four long years for their insurance company to pay their claim. They also spent months working through building code compliance issues on the historic structure.

Using original blueprints of the building and salvaged pieces of terra cotta, a team of artists recreated features in a lightweight material both compatible with the integrity of the original building and to avoid future quake damage.

Two specially trained masons chipped out old and broken grout and completely re-grouted the entire exterior. The building was coated with a special sealer and painted.

Renovation activities also included seismic retrofitting, extensive ceiling and wall repair, new wiring and plumbing, and installation of new tile flooring. The project was accomplished without compromising the style and character of the original design.

#### Funding

The building owners spent an estimated \$3 million in demolition and renovation.

#### The Result

During the construction phase, the project created jobs for local workers and cycled millions of dollars throughout the community. The Olympia National Bank Building is fully leased and continues to enhance one of downtown's busiest corners.



Contact the Olympia Downtown Association at 360-357-8948 for more information.