First National Bank Towers Should Give Area Big Boost

First National Bank Towers, the $6.5 million office building and parking garage to be constructed on Jefferson St. this year, should have a big impact on Lafayette, Acadiana and Louisiana, according to First National Bank officials and political leaders.

Gov. Edwin Edwards labeled the 15-story project as evidence of growing prosperity and economic stability in South Louisiana.

"Own Citizen"

"The economic outlook of any state can be judged by the faith its own citizens place in its future. For this reason, it is very gratifying to me to see projects like the First National Bank towers come into being. Such projects are a hopeful sign, not only for Acadiana, but for all of Louisiana," the governor said in a prepared statement.

"I hope that this impressive building will serve as an even greater stimulus to other people in South Louisiana. People from all walks of life, in positions of life, to believe in the future of their area. For not only will the Lafayette area receive direct benefits such as jobs and increased tax revenue, but also indirectly receive the long-term benefits of an expanded business and industrial community. I think that the citizens of South Louisiana have every reason to be proud, just as the entire state is proud of them," Edwards said.

Joint Statement

James Parker, chairman of the board of First National and R. T. Moody, vice chairman, said in a joint statement that they had received "enthusiastic cooperation from all corners of the Lafayette business community" in regard to the Towers.

They said the community response was "an indication of the appreciation these people have for the chance to live and work in South Louisiana." The statement stressed that whenever possible, work on all phases of the Towers' construction would be done locally and that all work of more than 50 per cent of the $6.5 million bond issue for the project will be spent with local firms and that every attempt will be made to spend an even larger percentage.

Lafayette Mayor Kenyon Boone called the project a "landmark and anchor for Lafayette's growth."

"Reflects Confidence"

"The decision to build at the site reflects confidence in Lafayette's future and further reflects the visible symbol of a dynamic community. It also focuses realistically the type and quality of growth this community is going to have for its future. This structure will not only give to Lafayette a new skyline but also bring this new skyline to Acadiana," Boone said.

The parking garage was seen as "a big shot in the arm for downtown Lafayette" by Chamber Commerce President Ed McAllister.

"This will provide a place for people to work that will create shoppers downtown. It should bring the retail business back to main street," McAllister said.

U.S. Congressman John Breaux termed the Towers a symbol that the seventh district is becoming one of the major areas in the state for economic growth and expansion.

"Long Range"

Breaux stressed the long-range implications of the project. "For the economy of an area to continue strong or to expand, there must be periodic influx of new money. Such a project as The First National Bank Towers means that not only will money be spent in the district, but that money will generate more money and provide an increasing stimulus to the economy. There can be no doubt that the decision to build such an ambitious complex in Lafayette reflects a sound economic future for the entire district. It is a tribute to the people, and a tremendous stride forward for the men and women who made it possible," he said.

Breaux said that in years to come, all will look back on this day and see in it the beginning of an era of prosperity that will benefit all.

The bank will occupy the first and second floors with the existing bank building connected at both levels. Self-Service Restaurants, Inc., Burger King franchise presently based in New Orleans, will be a major tenant in the new building.

The building will have all up-to-date facilities and will be serviced by four high-speed computer-operated elevators.

Additional conveniences will space. The self-parking garage include a post office, rooftop will be to the rear of the high restaurant and lounge, health rise and will accommodate more club and modern security than 250 cars with complete coverage from weather. This high-rise structure will also allow customers to park off approximately 186,000 of their own autos with quick, close-footed feet of rental office data access to the ground floor.