

Fort Worth Star-Telegram (TX)

July 22, 2006
Section: Metro
Edition: ArlingtonS
Page: B1

Land buying nearly finished ANDREA AHLES STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

ARLINGTON — The city has only one more landowner to buy out for the new Dallas Cowboys stadium.

Real estate manager Roger Venables said the city expects to buy the last three commercial parcels along Division Street, owned by Atmex Corp., by the first week of August.

When the sale is completed, the city will have spent \$71 million, not including relocation and moving bonuses, to buy the 156 parcels for the Cowboys site, Venables said.

The Cowboys began excavating the bowl of the stadium at Randol Mill Road and Collins Street in April while the city worked to acquire the rest of the land needed for the site.

Initially, the city said it could cost \$50 million to acquire close to 200 acres for the stadium. But as parcels were added and then excluded from the footprint, cost estimates rose to \$70 million and then to \$100 million.

Land acquisition costs may rise depending on the outcome of several lawsuits by property owners who opposed having their land taken for the project.

Glenn Sodd, an attorney for some of the landowners, said he has settled with the city on a few lawsuits but is moving forward with litigation on 18 parcels. Sodd said he is in the discovery phase of those suits, which were filed in state district court.

And on Friday, attorney Bob Cohen filed motions in county court asking the judge for a summary ruling that would reverse the city's condemnation of 15 parcels owned by five or six different owners. Cohen said these owners are contesting the city's use of eminent domain to take their land.

Cohen said he has other pending suits that argue that the city should have paid more for certain parcels. One of those cases is already scheduled for trial, he said. The city is allowing some of the businesses in the footprint to continue operating until their land is needed. For example, the city has agreed to let the Bank of America branch on Collins Street remain open until construction is complete on its new branch farther north on Collins, across from the Albertsons grocery store, Venables said.

The city is not forcing the Greenwood-Mount Olivet funeral home to move from Division Street even though Arlington has condemned the property. Venables said the funeral home is an outlying parcel and is not needed immediately. Eventually, that land will become a parking lot for the stadium.

Andrea Ahles, 817-548-5523 aahles@star-telegram.com

Map: Land acquired for Cowboys stadium

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