

*“The Dodge Brothers Ride Again”*

With the continuance to rejuvenate downtown Mobile, Alabama; this property was part of a plan to transform what was commonly known as “Auto Alley” into a tech corridor and business park. The main building on the property was a 1920’s era Dodge Dealership that sported a sign at the entrance “Dodge Brothers”. The resulting transformation was from an abandoned car dealership and service department into new engineering offices and instrument control testing facility. Having the property recently placed on the National Register of Historic Places, it was important that the project go through the National Park Service for approvals. This was done to secure tax credit incentives along with preserving the historical value of the design. The project also needed approvals from the Mobile Preservation Board for incentives the city offered for site improvements. The architectural design team, working with a historical preservation specialist, was able to secure all of the desired approvals and the owner was able to realize a significant savings on the 4.5 million dollar renovation project. In addition to the historical significances, the architectural team was saddled with the task of fitting 100 offices, conference rooms, restrooms, breakrooms, entrances etc.; into the existing space. The solution was to create perimeter offices with a series of corridors to connect the interior offices that were divided with 8’ partitions open to the roof structure with multiple skylights. What resulted was a transformation of a vacant and abandoned historical property into a viable new use and purpose. Along with the renovated façade and interiors; the project features new landscaping, sidewalks, paver parking lot, historical lighting; all bolstering the contribution to the historical significance of the area. The Dodge Brothers are probably long gone. But metaphorically, they are probably happy to see their previous business location renovated to its former glory; and they are indeed: “riding again.”

