



Firestone Tire & Rubber Company Triangle Building

2016 State Historic Preservation Office Awards

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Preservation Merit Award to **Akron Phoenix Development Company; Chambers, Murphy & Burge Restoration Architects, Sol Harris/Day** and **Summit County** for the rehabilitation of the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company Triangle Building.

The Firestone Shipping and Warehouse facility in Akron, affectionately known as the Triangle Building, was built in 1926 as part of a series of massive structures built by Firestone starting in 1910. After sitting vacant for 25 years, this expansive industrial support building is now being used as offices for Summit County, putting multiple county services under one roof.

Windows on the east and south elevations, installed in the 1980s, were replaced during this project with new windows that replicate the original industrial appearance. Other exterior work to the building included brick and stone masonry repairs, restoration of art stone sills and lintels, restoring storefronts on the ground level, and roof work.

The concrete structural system was in good condition and the rhythmic concrete columns and mushroom capitals became part of the occupied spaces, further retaining the industrial character. On the interior, one set of stairs was restored, one set added and third set rebuilt to accommodate a new freight elevator. New mechanicals were installed throughout. Built as a warehouse, the building never had a grand entrance and so for this reuse project a modest new entry was constructed.

The huge scale of this project presented a significant financial risk for the developer making partnership a key factor. The City of Akron had purchased the entire Firestone campus in 2012. To develop the project, Akron Phoenix Development Company negotiated a long term lease with the City, while also negotiating with Summit County to become the tenant. State and federal historic preservation tax credits were used to finance a portion of the project along with the developer's personal capital.

This rehabilitation and reuse project saved a major piece of Akron's history and halted the spiraling blight the former industrial and surrounding housing areas have suffered. In addition to this project there is currently over one million square feet of vacant space remaining on the original Firestone campus. It is hoped this project will be the catalyst to developing the rest of the space bringing additional tenants to the area.

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