



ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEDIA RELEASE

The Alabama Historical Commission protects, preserves, and interprets Alabama's historic places and is the State Historic Preservation Office.

468 South Perry Street
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www.preserveala.org

Lisa D. Jones, Acting Executive Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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OLD DECATUR POST OFFICE RESTORED USING HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES

A prominent structure in the Bank Street/Old Decatur National Register Historic District is now home to a branch of Magnolia River, a small Alabama-based business that focuses on infrastructure and geospatial solutions.

On December 1, 2015, the National Park Service approved the rehabilitation of the Old Decatur Post Office at 408 Bank Street NE. This certified that the work met preservation standards and qualified the owner for a federal tax credit.



Ribbon cutting at Old Post Office, the new branch of Magnolia River, Decatur, AL

The Old Post Office, an example of the classical Georgian Revival style, was constructed circa 1925 on Bank Street, the commercial hub of the city of Decatur at that time. Samuel M. Plato contracted with the federal government on April 1, 1919 to construct a single-story post office for \$44,492 (\$610,379 in today's money). Plato was the first African American architect to be awarded a contract to design a U.S. Post Office. He went on to design more than 30 post offices before his death in 1957. The post office operated in the building until a new one was constructed during the 1960s.





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After the Decatur City School Board acquired the nearly one-hundred-year-old post office building they used it for office space and programs. In 2014, the school board sold the building to the current owner, Magnolia River, who invested the necessary funds for the remodel. The owner's renovation of the exterior involved repair of the historic features and materials including the windows and doors, masonry, cast iron light posts and railing, and wood trim. On the interior of the building, the dropped ceilings were removed in order to restore the original ceiling heights in the post office lobby and work room. The old post office wood-and-glass vestibule was also restored, as well as the terrazzo floor and original stairs. Stained trim and



Refurbished doors on the 2nd level corridor



Post Office Vestibule



Post Office Lobby

original doors in the second level corridor and offices were refurbished, and finishes were repaired and refreshed with paint.





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Composite of present day and 1923 images created by the Alabama Historical Commission

Investors in the project received a 20% tax credit for all eligible costs associated with the rehabilitation.

The National Park Service oversees the Preservation Tax Incentive program jointly with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). To qualify, the building has to be listed in the National Register, either individually or in a historic district. Additionally, the property must be used for income-producing purposes. For more information concerning standards and guidelines please visit www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm AND http://preserveala.org/taxcredits.aspx?sm=i_b

The Alabama Historical Commission manages the state program for the National Park Service. The Commission administers the federal restoration guidelines so the historic materials and look of the building remain.





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Renovating and reusing these historic buildings is a win-win situation for the owner and the community.

To learn more about the tax incentive, visit www.preserveala.org/taxcredits.aspx or contact Chloe Mercer at 334-230-2669/ chloe.mercer@preserveala.org.

About the Alabama Historical Commission

Located in historic downtown Montgomery at 468 S. Perry Street, the Alabama Historical Commission is the historic preservation agency for the State of Alabama. The agency was created by an act of the state legislature in 1966 with a mission of safeguarding Alabama's historic buildings and sites. The Commission is tasked with the acquisition and preservation of historic properties and educating the public about historic sites in Alabama. For a complete list of historic sites, hours of operation, and admission fees please visit <http://preserveala.org/>

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