



*Groundbreaking Ceremony
of the
United States Courthouse
Mobile, Alabama*

*March 11, 2016
2:00 p.m.*

The Southern District of Alabama

On this historic day we break ground on the construction of four new walls next door. This presents an opportunity to reflect on the four walls of the courthouse from which we will soon depart. The Southern District of Alabama is over 200 years in the making and spans 13 counties -- from the alligator and oyster laden Mobile Delta to the fertile topsoil of Selma's Black Belt. During the first 130 years, there were no truly permanent "four walls." Court was held in a variety of places from a rugged outpost in the Mississippi Territory, to the shade of Baldwin County's "great Jury Oak," to buildings in Cahawba and Selma, to the third floor of the former United States Customs House and Post Office. The 1930s and The New Deal, however, brought change to Mobile and with it a stunning federal building.

Under the learned eye of Louis A. Simon (Supervising Architect, U.S. Department of Treasury), construction was complete on the new federal building in December 1935, at a total cost of \$366,233.52. In 1939, as part of a WPA program and at the cost of \$280,000, the building was expanded westward and the formerly open light court was partially enclosed with strict instructions to match the existing structure. Air conditioning was added to a courtroom, becoming the first air-cooled courthouse in the United States.

As described by the National Register of Historic Places, the five story 146,000 square foot "building stands as a symbol of the Federal presence in Mobile while serving as a fine example of Federal architecture of the 1930s.... and serves as a good example of the Modern Classic style of architecture using a combination of Neo-Classical Revival, Renaissance Revival and Art Deco inspired detailing." Some of the impressive architectural gems include smooth white Alabama limestone ashlar, Michigan cast bronze ornamentation and spandrels, carved rosettes, granite steps, iron lanterns, terrazzo tile, Cardiff green marble, exceptionally skilled walnut and mahogany millwork, elaborate brass balustrades, and Art Deco styling.

In April 2015, an \$89 million contract was awarded to construct both a new federal courthouse a stone's throw away from the historic building and to revamp the existing building to house the offices of the District's U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Bankruptcy Administration, U.S. Probation Office, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Pretrial Services, Federal Defenders, and General Services Administration. Grounded in the Modern Classic, the design intent of the new four walls is to complement the architectural integrity of the neighboring historic structure and historic neighborhood, weaving the genteel fabric of Mobile with modern-day needs.

Once the new courthouse is constructed, the Southern District will move "next door," but the 1934 building and its four walls will remain -- likely undergoing additional metamorphoses to serve the needs of the 21st century world upon which its 19th century foundations were laid. The "four walls" of the Southern District -- From an oak tree to a New Deal Art Deco limestone edifice to this \$89 million structure -- adapt to accommodate the needs of the public they serve. And with the addition of the new structure, this little street in Mobile will again be transformed, enlivening the surrounding neighborhood and energizing the city, bringing change.

Order of Program

Welcome and Introductions.....*The Honorable William H. Steele*
Chief Judge, United States District Court
Southern District of Alabama

Presentation of Colors.....*Davidson High School*
J.R.O.T.C. Mobile, Alabama
Master Chief, Jerome N. King

National Anthem.....*The Mobile Big Band Society, Inc.*
Conductor, Ronald “Chip” Herrington

Pledge of Allegiance.....*William Lee Milling*
St. Ignatius Catholic School

Remarks.....*The Honorable Richard Shelby*
United States Senator
The Honorable Jeff Sessions
United States Senator
The Honorable Bradley Byrne
United States House of Representatives
Mr. Norman Dong
Commissioner, GSA Public Buildings Service
The Honorable William S. “Sandy” Stimpson
Mayor, City of Mobile
Mr. Lee Becker
Lead Designer / Architect New Courthouse
Ms. Mary Kay Lanzillotta
Lead Designer / Architect Campbell Courthouse

Closing Remarks.....*The Honorable Charles R. Butler*
Senior Judge, United States District Court
Southern District of Alabama

Retiring of Colors.....*Davidson High School J.R.O.T.C.*

Groundbreaking
Reception and Entertainment

Project Summary



Location

155 Saint Joseph Street

Mobile, AL 36602

Building Size

Approximately 158,000 SF

Project Cost

Approximately \$89 million

Kick Off Date

Design-build contract awarded 4/2015

Construction started 12/2015

Completion Date

Summer of 2019

Contractor

W.G. Yates & Sons Construction Company

Architect

URS Group, Architect of Record,
with Hartman-Cox Architects, Lead Designer

Construction Manager

APSI Construction Management

