

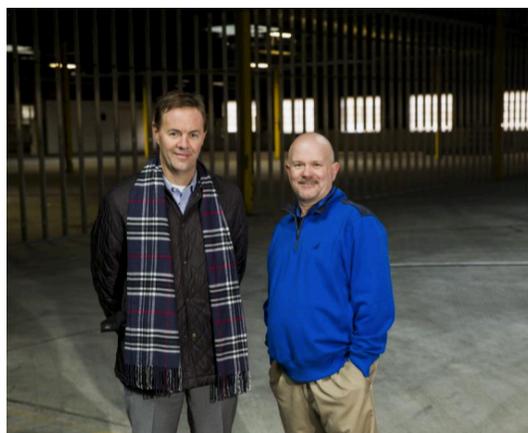
Louisville Company Buys Huge Former Coke Building

February 8, 2018

A former [Coca-Cola](#) bottling plant, a 320,000-square-foot building on Hill Street in West Louisville, is getting a new use.

We can confirm that two companies are moving into the space: [Zippy Shell](#) of Greater Louisville, a franchised business that offers moving and storage services, as well as interior design firm [Hubbuch & Co.](#)

Zippy Shell will take about 60,000 square feet of the building. Hubbuch & Co. will use 20,000 for distribution and warehousing. The latter is keeping its headquarters on Main Street.



There's also a deal in the works for a third tenant, which will take about 100,000 square feet, said [Chip Ridge](#), a partner in the building. That tenant isn't ready to make an announcement yet.

The activity comes after a partnership, JRR Investments LLC, purchased the property from Coca-Cola Refreshments USA for \$1.2 million during an auction in November. JRR Investments is made up of [Schuyler John](#), [Tim Ratliff](#), [Jason Kron](#) and [Chip Ridge](#).

Kron and Ridge also are partners in Zippy Shell. This property has been empty since [Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated](#) moved its bottling operation to [Jefferson Riverport International](#) in early 2015.

There's still about 100,000 square feet of space available in the building, Ridge told me during a tour this morning. He and his partners hope to lease that out to other tenants.

PRG Commercial Property Advisors is doing the leasing on the building. Ridge's group is investing about \$500,000 in improvements, including a new roof. It's also considering rebranding it as the Central Commerce Park — though that's a working title.

The space is sprawling — the result of add-ons over the years. Most of the building is warehouse space with concrete floors, skylights, overhead doors and so on.

That said, it also includes some art-deco-style office space. Photographer [Chris Fryer](#) was along for the tour and you can find his photos in the attached slideshow.

Zippy Shell of Louisville is a local franchise of a Washington, D.C.-based national moving and storage company Zippy Shell Inc. Prior to moving to the new space, it operated out of lease space on Allmond Avenue.

For Zippy Shell, this structure has a lot going for it.

"For the purpose we were going to use it — as a distribution center — it had a lot of good qualities," said Ridge.

Those include a good amount of space, solid structure and central location. Howard Ball Moving & Storage Co., a subsidiary of Zippy Shell of Louisville, does a lot of storage business with military personnel and this space offers room for that too, he said. The company had its eye on the structure for several months but the asking price was too high initially — around \$2.5 million, Ridge said.

A Zippy Shell is a 15-foot-long by 7-foot wide by 7-foot tall steel cage, which customers can use for either moving or storage. It's a bit like a portable storage unit, except that when it's delivered to your home or business, it's already loaded on the back of a trailer. You could load this cage with your belongings and Zippy Shell of Louisville can either store it for you or move it to a new location.

Zippy Shell's costs vary based on seasonality. But, [as we reported back in September](#), the company typically charges \$149 a month per storage container or \$45 per man per hour for moving and packing.

The strength with this system is adaptability, explained Kevin Hurst, operations manager for Zippy Shell and Howard Ball. Instead of requiring a special truck like other portable storage operations, these steel cages — or shells — can be loaded into the back of any semi-truck or trailer. They're also more breathable than other storage units, which can counteract mold-growth during long-term storage.

Most of Zippy Shell of Louisville's business — about 70 percent — is full-service moves. The other 30 percent is storage.

Most of its business is within a six-mile radius of Louisville, though Hurst said, it has gone further out than that on a couple of moves.