

INNOVATIVE URBAN CAR DEALERSHIP: GROSSINGER CITY AUTOPLEX

Tuesday, March 10th, 2009

Location

1500 N. Dayton, Chicago, IL 60622 [map](#)

Owner/Developer

[Grossinger Motors](#)

Architect

[Gensler](#)

General Contractor

[Valenti Builders, Inc.](#)

Structural Engineer

[Name Walker Parking Consultants](#)

Mechanical Engineer

[Environmental Systems Design, Inc.](#)

Civil Engineer

[McDonough Associates, Inc.](#)

Commissioning

[Environmental Systems Design, Inc. / Building Science Group](#)

By April Hughes

The Grossinger City Autoplex at 1500 N. Dayton is, first and foremost, an example of large-scale, urban [adaptive reuse](#). The project is the reimage a building that once played host to a jukebox manufacturer and most recently a [Home Depot EXPO Design Center](#). The new Grossinger City Autoplex, currently under construction, will house a multi-line automotive retail sales and service center for three manufacturers, including Toyota, Cadillac and Chevrolet. Thanks in part to TIF requirements, the facility has been designed to meet LEED-NC Version 2.2 LEED Silver certification, and has successfully participated the City of Chicago Green Permit process.

The existing 1960's era industrial building, on long-term lease to Grossinger by current owner Crate and Barrel, was once under consideration for alternative development as part of a Crate and Barrel portfolio of buildings—but this plan was never realized. Enter Grossinger, one of the Chicago metropolitan area's most widely recognized car dealers, to take up the mantle of sustainable [renovation](#).

This is certainly no small undertaking, given the inventory-driven program of the new tenant. "Urban dealerships are a particularly challenging business because the land cost and the drivers of selection of inventory make them extremely expensive," architect and project design leader Deeg Snyder, an associate at Gensler in Chicago said.

Grossinger City Autoplex takes on the preconceived automotive industry notion that a car dealership must be spread out over unyielding swaths of sun-baked asphalt to successfully meet its customer's needs. "The challenges of land, cost, product identity, and accessibility to the service and sales business in tight quarters and dense parts of the city are simply a unique animal," Snyder said.

This indoor dealership, however, took the opposite approach to "if you pave it, they will come". Grossinger's reuse squeezed every inch out of the existing indoor and outdoor space of this 310,000-square-foot building and lot. The third floor has a surprising capacity, thanks to 190 double-stacking car storage lifts—room for plenty of Priuses. The inventory storage space also uses a new, highly reflective cool roof.

While the energy-reduction goals of the project are modest, there is a projected 14% energy reduction. This efficiency is due in large part to the replacement of make-up air units with high efficiency equipment. Significant attention is paid to changing corporate purchasing to allow [recycled-content](#) materials into the standardized automotive dealership palate. An additional environmental measure includes new glass box projections and window walls to allow daylight to penetrate the space. Under the watchful eye of Valenti Builders, the project so far has achieved a high construction debris diversion rate (88%) by [recycling](#) with [Recycling Systems, Inc.](#)

Slated for completion in September 2009, Grossinger City Autoplex is one of several adaptive reuse LEED rated designs by architecture firm Gensler and mechanical design consultant Environmental Systems Design, including the [Center on Halsted](#), which was completed in late 2007.



1500 N. Dayton