

RETHOS™

# PLACES REIMAGINED

Issue 1, 2022

2021  
YEAR in  
REVIEW





# RETHOS<sup>®</sup>

PLACES REIMAGINED

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rethos.org Saint Paul, MN 55102-9775

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**Hayden Troy** | EDITOR  
**Jacqueline McCarthy** | DESIGNER

*Rethos: Places Reimagined is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to connecting people to historic places, promoting community vitality and building reuse.*

# THANK YOU TO OUR...

## OUR PROGRAM PARTNERS



MINNESOTA MAIN STREET



MORRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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CARL AND VERNA SCHMIDT FOUNDATION  
Rochester, Minnesota

**COVER IMAGE** | Lanesboro, Minnesota



# Thank you to our Keystone Sustaining Members

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Keystone Sustaining Members, contributing over \$10 monthly or \$100 annually, form the bulk of all gifts Rethos receives and are crucial to providing an ongoing base of community support that Rethos can rely on to advance the mission we all care about.

Thank you to our 2021 Keystone Sustaining Members!

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Outgoing Board President  
Ryan Sailer



Incoming Board President  
Chris Sherman



Executive Director  
Heidi Swank

# The First Word

Rethos executive director Heidi Swank sat down with Ryan Sailer and Chris Sherman, the outgoing and incoming Presidents of the Rethos board of directors. We wanted to know more about what they believe to be the most important achievements of 2021 and what they are envisioning for this year.

**Heidi:** Ryan, thank you so much for your outstanding leadership as President of the Rethos board in 2021. Last year was significant in many ways. What stands out for you?

**Ryan:** Rethos really moved forward in 2021. We hired you as our new executive director, and we made some key additions to the team. We worked hard to strengthen relationships within our networks, especially around our efforts to extend the Minnesota State Historic Tax Credit. There's more to do, but we are on a good path.

**Heidi:** Our organization, like so many others, was faced with challenges related to the ongoing public health crisis. How did you and your fellow volunteer leaders respond?

**Ryan:** Last year was full of challenges and opportunities for Rethos. The pandemic forced us to adjust how we do our work, moving more online. But we found opportunities there, too. We were able to expand the audience for our classes, be more inclusive, and try new ways to advance our mission.

**Heidi:** You mentioned some of the accomplishments over the past twelve months. How do you see Rethos building on that momentum?



**Ryan:** It's really exciting to be part of an organization that's showing its agility and creativity. We added a whole new program last year, the Rethos Policy Institute. We've been doing policy work for decades, but now we have a dedicated program and resources to help elected leaders, administrators, and interested citizens tap into a network of policy experts. That's a major addition to our capabilities.

**Heidi:** Chris, congratulations on being confirmed as President of the Rethos board of directors for 2022. You have worked closely with Ryan and your fellow directors for a while now. What do you see as the most significant challenges and opportunities for the organization this year?

**Chris:** Well, as you may have guessed, my top priority is building on the great work we did in 2021. We have already expanded our board to include more voices and perspectives and we will continue to do that. We really need to get that Historic Tax Credit extended this legislative session. So many important historic preservation projects all over Minnesota rely on that proven program in order to make the finances work.

**Heidi:** Now that I have one full year under my belt, how will we team up to move Rethos forward?

**Chris:** Heidi, you are tremendous. You hit the ground running when you came here last January from Las Vegas. We work well together and I am eager to work with you and the rest of the board and staff at Rethos. We plan to open an office in Duluth this year and will be making an extra effort to expand our partnerships in northern Minnesota.

**Heidi:** Ryan, thank you for your outstanding leadership as board President. Do you have any words of wisdom for Chris?

**Ryan:** Enjoy the ride. Rethos is on the move and building some serious momentum. Think big and big things will happen.

It's really  
exciting to  
be part of an  
organization  
that's showing  
its agility and  
creativity.  
- Ryan Sailer

## 2022 Rethos Board of Directors

Welcome new board members, Thomas Hanson and Timothy Stone!

### President

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Minneapolis –

Guaranty Commercial Title, Inc,

### Steve Knight

Minneapolis – Weis Builders

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### Tony Simmons

Minneapolis – The Simmons Group

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Minneapolis –

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### Timothy Stone

Moorhead – Tim Stone Architects

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**Jane Bisel**

Rochester – Blue Planet  
Museum Consulting

### Collin Kaas

Minneapolis –

Kaas Wilson Architects

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**Nick Place**

Saint Louis Park – Bridgewater Bank



## The J. I. Case Building Redevelopment: Rethos' First Historic Rehab Loan project of 2022

Another great state historic tax credit redevelopment project begun by Sherman Associates and Rethos Board President; Chris Sherman has begun.

The J. I. Case Threshing Machine Company built and occupied the building for over 50 years, and it is now on the National Register of Historic Places. The building's historic features, such as its floor-to ceiling windows and 16 ft. high walls will be maintained, while rooftop space, a feature staircase and unique design features will be added.

State historic tax credits help buildings like these extend their use well into the future! Sherman Associates has received an allocation of federal and state historic tax credits to finance the project that is expected to be completed in the first half of 2023.



*Photo courtesy Sherman Associates*

## Rethos Opens Winona Office

As Rethos continues to grow its programming and resources around the state, the need to have a physical presence in communities outside the Twin Cities has also grown. Community Programs Director Emily Kurash Casey has been based in Winona, MN the entirety of her time with Rethos. This September, Emily officially opened the Winona branch of Rethos, located at 164 E. Third Street. Emily shares, "It's truly been wonderful opening up shop in Downtown Winona, which is one of the Main Street communities we work with. Being part of an active downtown has been invigorating! It's also been great proof to Rethos partners that we truly mean it when we say we want to have a statewide presence beyond the metro area."

Rethos is sharing space with Frozen River Film Festival. (You can learn more about them at [frff.org](http://frff.org).) We look forward to seeing you at upcoming events in Winona, soon!



*Director of Community Programs Emily Kurash Casey showing off our fresh new sign at our new office in Winona! We're lucky to share the building with Frozen River Film Festival.*



# Education Pricing:

OUR NEW

## Sliding Scale

Our goal is to keep rehab education affordable by offering classes at a price that fits your budget. When you register for a Rethos class, you'll see four price options. We invite you to select the price that fits your budget best.

- **General Admission** is our standard, suggested rate. We typically charge \$15 for one hour of education and \$10 for every additional hour. For example, a 3-hour class will cost \$35. Classes with more hard costs, like tools and supplies, might cost a bit more. Classes with additional external support like a sponsor or grant might cost a bit less.
- **Sliding Scale Option #1** is the lowest cost option. It is anywhere from \$0 up to one-third of the general admission fee.
- **Sliding Scale Option #2** is the mid-range cost option. It's usually half of the general admission fee, and up to two-thirds of general admission.
- **Sliding Scale Option #3** is the highest cost option. It includes a donation on top of the general admission fee. The above-and-beyond gift supports Rethos' goal to make rehab and maintenance skills available to all. Your gift will directly support low or no-cost admission for those who need it.

If you have questions about our sliding scale registration fees, please email [kelly@rethos.org](mailto:kelly@rethos.org).



## Welcome to our new Capitol Pathways Intern, Alejandra!

Alejandra is a junior at St. Catherine University majoring in Public Policy with minors in Political Science and Spanish. She is passionate about human rights, especially as it relates to immigration, and hopes to pursue careers in policy and law areas to further advocate for these issues. She has previously interned with the Advocates for Human Rights and the International Institute of Minnesota in their refugee and immigrant services programs. Alejandra applied to Capitol Pathways to get hands-on experience with policy issues and to better understand our state government.

## Correction

In the last issue of *Places Reimagined*, the article on filming at the Warden's House in Stillwater neglected to mention that this project was partially funded by the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office in the form of a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant to the City of Stillwater, which is pass-through funding from the SHPO's Federal partner, the National Park Service. We regret the omission.



# CLASSES

All class registrations  
can be made at  
[rethos.org/classes](https://rethos.org/classes).

## 2 APR REHAB LAB: RE-ROPING DOUBLE HUNG WINDOWS

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM | Saint Paul, 753 Hague Ave, St Paul, MN 55104

Broken sash cords are one of the most common problems that happen with old double-hung windows. The good news is that it's not that difficult or expensive to repair them! In this Rehab Lab, you'll learn how to carefully remove your window sash and repair sash cords, ensuring that your window opens smoothly...and stays open.

Olivia Siem and Anders Christensen from TigerOx Painting will demonstrate proper techniques and discuss necessary tools and supplies. This workshop will take place in an old house in St. Paul with plenty of windows for you to practice on. You'll leave with a hardware store shopping list and a brand new home repair skill!

## 12 APR BUILDING PERMITS PRIMER - 2 CE CREDITS

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM | Zoom Webinar

Do I need a permit for my building project? Curious as to why? Puzzled by what determines when you need a permit and when you don't? Then this class is for you! Gain useful knowledge about the ins and outs of permitting from this comprehensive webinar. Building Permits Primer will cover when you need a permit, why you need one and what you need to know before applying. The class will review building and related projects, including permits for fencing, electrical systems, heating and cooling (HVAC) and plumbing.

Instructor Chukwunyere 'Chuks' Ugochukwu recently built a home and will share his experience and provide examples from communities of various size across the state.

*This course has been approved by the Minnesota Commissioner of Commerce for 2 hours of real estate continuing education. It is open to all.*



**14**  
**APR**

## MAXIMIZING WINDOW ENERGY EFFICIENCY

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM | Zoom Webinar

Are you worried that your old wood windows might be getting a little drafty? Have you thought about replacing your old wood windows with new windows to save energy? Well, wait a second! Did you know that it's almost always cheaper, easier, and more energy efficient to tune up your old wood windows than it is to replace them? Join window restorer Joe Hayes for a webinar all about how we can make our old windows more energy efficient in small, affordable ways. Joe will explore common myths around window energy efficiency and show you some easy ways to weatherize your old windows. You'll learn plenty of tips and tricks that will help keep your home comfortable all year long!

**3**  
**MAY**

## OLD HOME WEATHERIZATION: LOW-COST UPGRADES

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM | Zoom Webinar

Did you know that small, low-cost updates to your older home can make big differences to your energy use and budget? There is no shortage of projects you can tackle that will reduce energy usage, save you money, and prevent bigger issues down the road. Join experts from the Center for Energy and Environment for this info session, jam-packed with tips & tricks for homeowners like you! You will learn about: Low-cost upgrades like caulking and door seals, how to maximize sunlight/shade and other behavioral shifts and where to find materials, tools, and how-to tips for tackling various projects.

**7**  
**MAY**

## HISTORIC FINISHES: VARNISH, STAINS, DYES, AND WAX

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | 315 3rd Ave S, St Cloud, MN 56301

This class, taught by Mark Johnston of Historic Design Consulting, introduces you to wood finishes commonly found in older homes. Mark will discuss the differences between varnish, stain, dyes, and waxes. He'll describe how to identify these finishes in your home and will demonstrate best practices for application, cleaning, and repair. You'll have the opportunity to practice these techniques during class at a historic home in the South Side Historic University Neighborhood. Come with your questions and curiosities about historic wood finishes! We'll supply all the tools and materials.

**24**  
**MAY**

## REPAIRING & RESTORING OLD WINDOWS

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM | Hayes Window Restoration (Outdoors),  
4439 Hiawatha Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55406

Do you have old wood windows in need of some TLC? Ready to practice window repair skills? Join window restorer Joe Hayes for a hands-on outdoor workshop all about windows. Joe will explain common window issues and demonstrate basic repairs. This class will focus specifically on glazing, paint prep, and painting. Participants will have their own station at which to practice these skills. You are invited to bring a window from home. We'll also have plenty of practice sash to use. Designed for homeowners and property owners who plan to restore and repair their old windows, this workshop is primarily a hands-on practice session and will be hosted outside.

# Rethos' First Ever Buildings on Main Street Conference Coming This Spring

Are you ready to fully utilize and rehabilitate your community's historic downtown buildings, but wondering where to start? Or is your community heavily involved in downtown development and ready to tackle new steps in the revitalization journey?

You're in luck! Rethos is hosting its very first Buildings on Main Street Conference April 20 –22 in Faribault, MN! The Buildings on Main Street Conference is an opportunity for Minnesota Main Street districts and communities interested in revitalizing their aging downtown buildings to obtain tools, knowledge, and resources to help their communities flourish.

This conference is geared towards Minnesota Main Street staff, board, and volunteers; Heritage Preservation Commissioners; city staff; building owners; and anyone interested in downtown revitalization! No matter how big or small your community is, the Buildings on Main Street Conference is for you! This two-day event will offer several unique and fascinating sessions, including:

- **Demystifying Building Inspection**
- **Maintenance Planning**
- **Energy and Sustainability in Old Buildings**
- **Main Street Essentials**
- **And much more!**



Some sessions will be geared towards communities that are in the early stages of downtown development, while other sessions will advance the skills of those that are already deeply immersed in building revitalization. All sessions will take place in beautiful historic Faribault buildings!

The Buildings on Main Street Conference will also include keynotes featuring success stories from regional redevelopment projects in communities ranging from small towns to mid-size cities.

Rethos and Faribault Main Street will be hosting plenty of exciting local activities and networking opportunities in the evening hours, so don't miss out on the fun!

You can register on Rethos' website at the following link: [www.rethos.org/events/buildings-on-main-street-conference](http://www.rethos.org/events/buildings-on-main-street-conference). Take advantage of our early bird registration prices now through March 21 at 5:00pm! We can't wait to see you in Faribault!



# 2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

*Rethos Community Programing encompasses the programs that work with individuals, businesses, and community leaders to make preservation and building reuse possible. Community Programs has two primary areas it works in – Education and Minnesota Main Streets.*



Since 2010, Rethos has been the Main Street America™ Coordinating Program in Minnesota and our staff collaborate on a local level to help rural communities maximize the unique cultural and business identity of their downtown business districts. We work with local stakeholders and entrepreneurs to create a space that fits the needs of residents, recognizing that communities are stronger when they have a thriving local economy that is rooted on main street. Our Main Streets Minnesota programs are aimed at fostering community regrowth through various building reuse strategies that support small business entrepreneurship, promote existing cultural assets, and engage local talent.

## EDUCATION

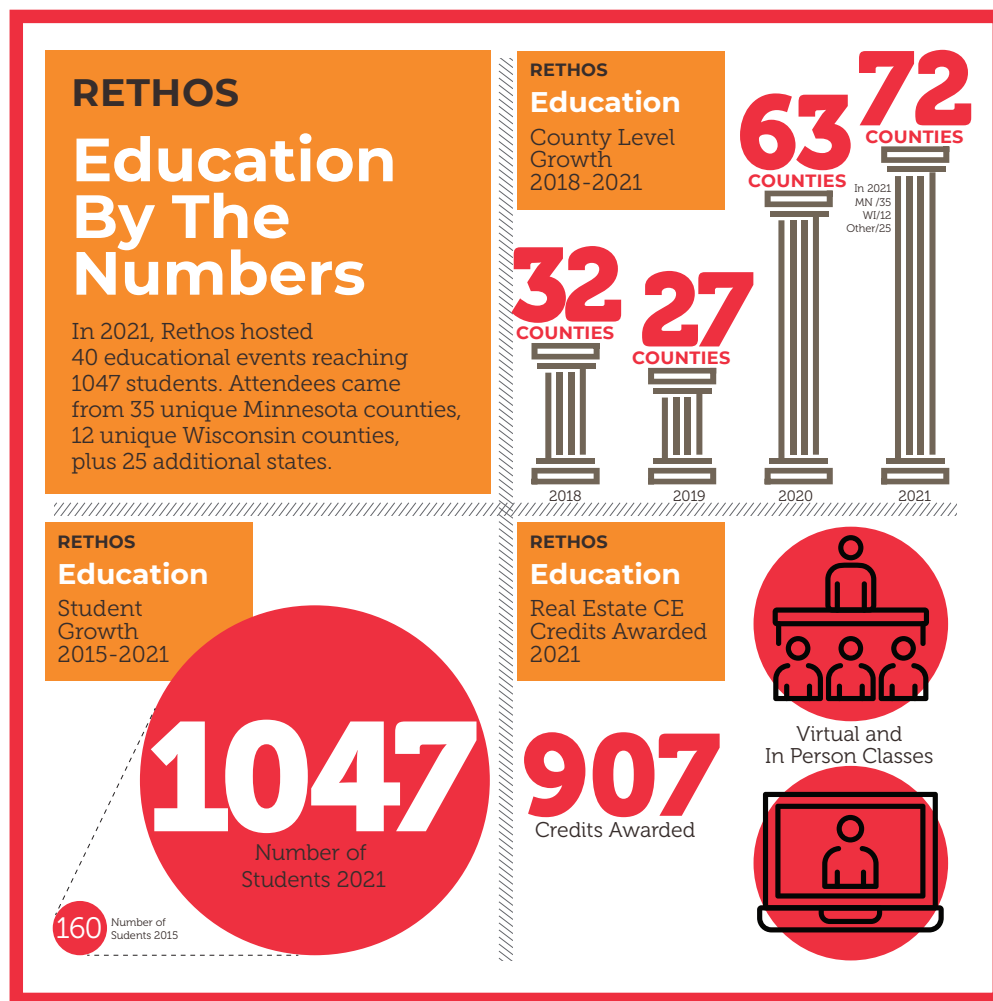
Rethos Education works to empower individuals with the tools, skills, and experiences they need to restore and revitalize the places they live in and value. By delivering unparalleled hands-on workshops and classes, Rethos is creating an expanding network of homeowners, craftspeople, and Realtors, who possess the passion and knowledge to care about and care for old buildings and neighborhoods. As housing stock across America's cities and towns continues to age, this program provides vital resources to residents, helping maintain our living spaces in a sustainable, affordable, and equitable way.



The Historic Rehabilitation Loan Program helps to reimagine underutilized spaces into vibrant, modernized buildings that generate income, sales, property tax, and new enthusiasm in their communities. We partner with industry leaders in development, finance, construction, and legal fields to provide exceptional service that is cost-effective, fast, and reliable. Historic tax credits encourage investment in historic preservation and building reuse. We help make the most of these credits.



Founded in 2021, the Rethos' Policy Institute serves as a resource for elected leaders, local and state government officials, active community members, and everyone interested in promoting the best practices in public policy around historic preservation and building reuse.



Main Street Reinvestment total private dollars  
**\$58,476,059**

Main Street Reinvestment total public dollars  
**\$15,211,570**

Main Street jobs created  
**304 Full-time Jobs**  
**134 Part-time Jobs**

Main Street buildings rehabbed  
**192**

Main Street New Small Business Expansion  
**59**

Main Street volunteer hours  
**5,010**

Value of Main Street volunteer hours  
**\$143,376**

Attendees at Main Street Events  
**68,856**

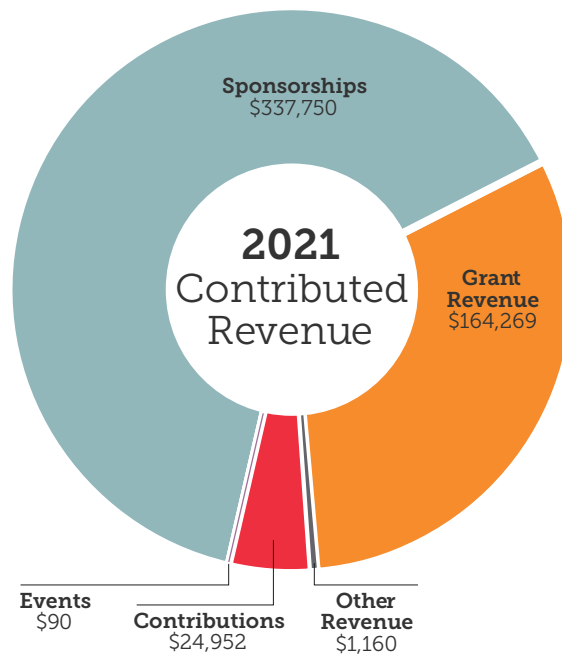
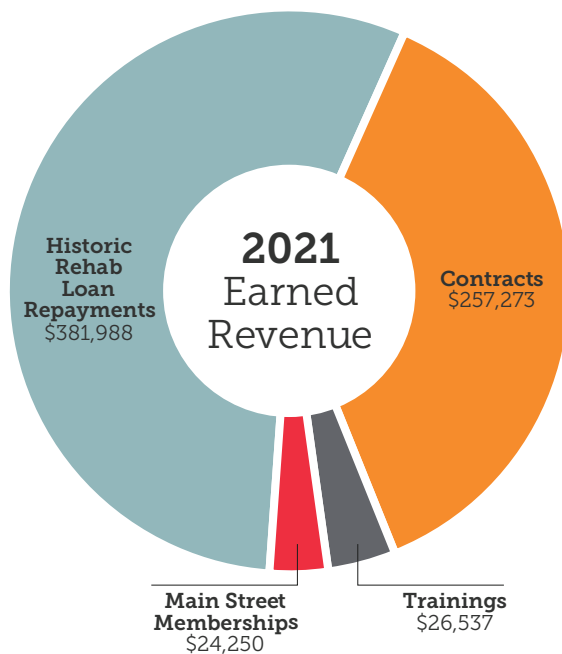


Rethos staff and Board of Directors continue to carefully manage the organization's resources. We limit operational spending for the fiscal year to remain within our budget, and supplement by additional service revenues.

These graphs identify the sources of operational revenue and our use of those funds. For review of Rethos' IRS Form 990, contact Executive Director Heidi Swank at 651.293.9047.

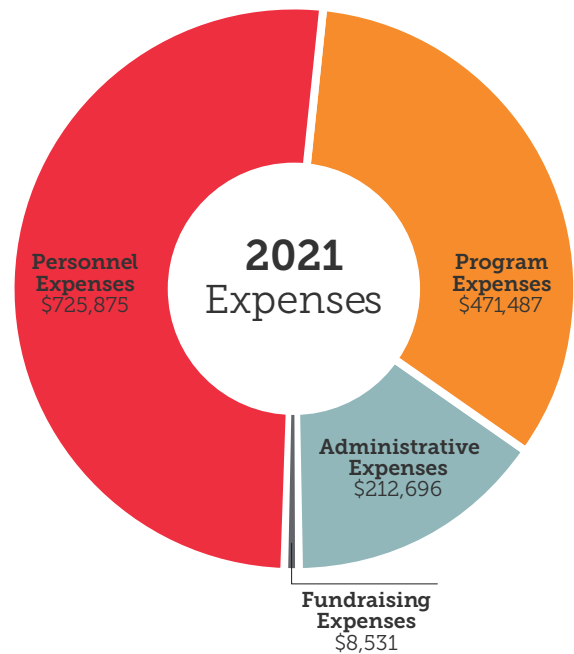
## REVENUE

## EXPENSES



**2021 Total Revenue**  
**\$1,366,390**

\*Includes additional \$148,119.00 released from restrictions in 2021.



**2021 Total Expenses**  
**\$1,418,590**

# 2021 Donors

## \$200,000+

Minnesota Historical Society

## \$50,000+

Dominium

Sherman Associates

## \$25,000+

Weis Builders

Winthrop & Weinstine

## \$10,000+

Mulcahy-Nickolaus

Bridgewater Bank

Colliers Mortgage LLC

D&M Industries

Hempel

Major Mechanical Inc.

Medina Electric

National Window Associates

Prindle Painting

Skyline Fire Protection, Inc.

## \$5,000+

Carl and Verna Schmidt  
Foundation

Hennepin County

City Of Willmar

Steve Knight

Acme Tuckpointing & Restoration

Advanced Masonry  
Restoration, Inc.

B&P Drywall

Carl Bolander

Enhanced Historic Credit Partners

Gardner Builders

Hightower Initiatives

New History

US Bank

W. L. Hall

## \$1,000+

Braun Intertec

Gresser Companies

Guaranty Commerical Title

Hess, Roise and Company

Loucks, Inc.

Minnwest Bank

City of Stillwater

Lake Superior Area Realtors

Historic Preservation Education  
Foundation

Ryan Sailer

Verve Realty

Burns and Hansen

Jeff Hall

University of Minnesota

Allegion

DJR Architechture

Hust Law Firm, PLLC

Jackson Law Firm, PLLC

JB Vang

PWS

Gary Stenson

National Trust for  
Historic Preservation

Anders Christensen

Five Wings Arts Council

Henry and Sarah Wheeler  
Foundation

Jane Bisel

Nick Place

Carlisle Tax Credits

Saturday Properties

Thank you  
to all our  
donors!

For a  
complete  
donor list  
visit  
[rethos.org/  
ways-to-give](https://rethos.org/ways-to-give)





# What's Up DOWNTOWN?

We know, it is hard to keep up with all the great work our Main Street communities are doing! But did you know that they all have Facebook pages where they regularly put highlights from their downtowns? Check out these quick updates below or dig more in depth on the connected links!

**Albert Lea:** The Big Freeze takes place in Albert Lea in mid-February! Complete with a pancake breakfast, pond hockey tournament, and scavenger hunt, it's the festival we need to embrace winter while it lasts!

**Faribault:** The sixth annual Faribault Flannel Formal is happening in mid-March! Donning their finest flannel, attendees will enjoy live music, games, and a hotdish contest!



**Willmar:** Sweet little snowmen have been popping up in downtown Willmar! Community members have been asked if they'd like to design and paint more snowmen for next winter, with a prize awarded for the best design!



**Lincoln Park (Duluth):** Love is in the air in Lincoln Park! Bingo and a light projection show are part of the Valentines Day plans up in Duluth!

**Northfield:** 2021 was a great year for art in Northfield! Be sure to visit their Facebook page to see all the new community art!



**Owatonna:** The annual Holiday Lighted Parade and Lighting of the Lights took place in downtown Owatonna!





# Red Wing Redevelopment Challenge



As Main Street Communities grow in their revitalization efforts, it's important to make steps toward deep and lasting transformation in a district, going beyond the activity that takes place early on. While shopping events, community celebrations, and general promotion is crucial to downtown success, it's also important to take on more in-depth project that directly speak to the needs of their district. Red Wing Downtown Main Street (RWDTMS) is stepping into the next phase of their program life, and has a great tradition of using the "Challenge" to spur activity in their district.

Their first effort was the Restaurant Challenge, which took place in 2015, and focused on activating vacant spaces to spur dining options in downtown Red Wing. In collaboration with the City, Port Authority, and Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA) the Restaurant Challenge led interested entrepreneurs through a multi-week course, building business plans, meeting with experts, and learning about what it takes to open a business. This course culminated in a business pitch, with the "winner" being awarded a package of reduced rent for six months, \$20,000 from the HRA for hard assets, in-kind marketing,

accounting, advertising and other business expense package with a \$40,000 value, and kitchen equipment valued at \$40,000 which was purchased by RWDTMS through a grant from the HRA. Once the restaurant remained open for five years, they owned the kitchen equipment outright. Staghead, located at 219 Bush Street, was the winner of the Restaurant Challenge, and it's become a hot spot for locals and visitors alike. While this challenge was great for the winning businesses, it also fostered additional growth in downtown. A food truck also opened as a result of this challenge.

Following the Restaurant Challenge's success, Red Wing DTMS launched the Retail Challenge in 2016. This challenge had a similar concept as the Restaurant Challenge. This challenge also fostered growth for more than one space in downtown, and two additional stores and one pop-up shop opened following the Challenge.





Once again, Red Wing is using the Challenge concept to foster downtown revitalization, but this time they're trying a new tactic—working with buildings and developers to redevelop historic sites. By collaborating with partners at the City of Red Wing, Red Wing Housing & Redevelopment Authority, Red Wing Port Authority, Goodhue County, and the Jones Family Foundation, Red Wing Downtown Main Street is creating a program that developers and building owners can use to match funding and spur economic and housing growth in the historic downtown area. In addition to previous funding from public sources, this challenge is also incorporating funding from local foundations, creating a true public/private collaboration for revitalization.

Taken from the Revitalization Challenge application:

*"Community partners are offering an incentive package worth up to \$335,000 for 1 (one) redevelopment project that will be completed by December 2023 (or 18 months after the project is awarded) and located within the downtown Red Wing historic district of downtown."*

*The Red Wing Redevelopment Challenge utilizes existing funding sources dedicated to downtown revitalization in combination with local foundation funding to provide this financial assistance program. This pilot program will enable the community of Red Wing to market a suite of redevelopment financial assistance tools together, demonstrating the integration of multiple redevelopment resources and supporting vertical infrastructure projects that contribute to the continued development of downtown Red Wing."*



"The key to our success is collaboration," shared RWDTMS Executive Director Megan Tsui. "We [at RWDTMS] bring very few physical resources to the table, but what we're good at is bringing organizations and people together that have those resources. The role of RWDTMS in Red Wing is to collaborate. We build partnerships that can make a difference and work towards a collective goal. I recognize that we at Main Street can't wait to be invited to the table. We create the table and fill gaps."

Red Wing is certainly seeing the continued impact of these challenges, which would not have happened without the leadership of the Main Street program. We look forward to seeing the results of the Redevelopment Challenge, and the future growth of Red Wing Downtown Main Street!

Photos: Pam Dusbabek



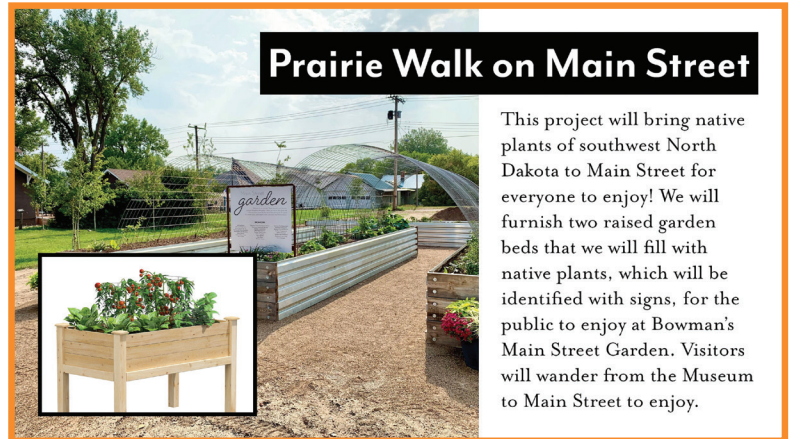
# Artists on Main Street in North Dakota

In 2021 Rethos together with Springboard for the Arts worked with North Dakota Commerce to bring Artists on Main Street to the state of North Dakota. "The accelerated program offers technical assistance and funding to develop artist-led projects that help make main streets active, welcoming and vibrant, and engages residents of all ages in conversation about the community's past and future," stated Tracey Miller, Community Development Liaison for North Dakota Commerce.

Starting in summer 2021, Artists on Main Street did a pilot project with one community in North Dakota—Bowman. Located in Southwest ND, Bowman has a population of 1,560, and is facing issues many small Main Streets are struggling with such as vacant storefronts and lack of options for participation in downtown. Brooklyn Engelhart, Creating Marketing Coordinator for the Bowman County Development Corporation/Bowman Area Chamber of Commerce, led efforts with the Bowman team.

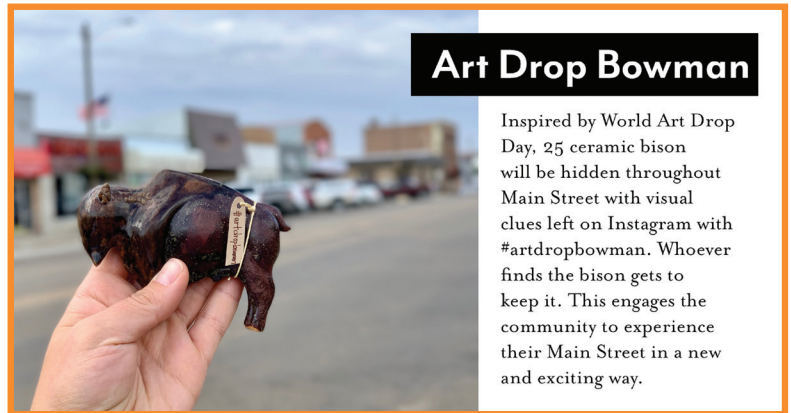
Brooklyn shared, "Artists on Main gave some of our local artists the courage to jump back into their art practices or try something new all while supporting their vision of a vibrant Main Street. I think that was my favorite part, seeing some of our artists find their love for creating again and the passion to share it."

Projects in Bowman took place in fall 2021 and will finish in spring 2022. Although all Rethos' interaction with Bowman artists was virtual due to the pandemic, it was incredibly inspiring to begin this work in another state. In addition to the work that happened in Bowman, Emily Kurash Casey, together with Brooklyn Engelhart, presented Artists on Main Street to the North Dakota Main Street conference attendees in Fargo during October 2021. We look forward to more Artists on Main Street projects in North Dakota this year!



## Prairie Walk on Main Street

This project will bring native plants of southwest North Dakota to Main Street for everyone to enjoy! We will furnish two raised garden beds that we will fill with native plants, which will be identified with signs, for the public to enjoy at Bowman's Main Street Garden. Visitors will wander from the Museum to Main Street to enjoy.



## Art Drop Bowman

Inspired by World Art Drop Day, 25 ceramic bison will be hidden throughout Main Street with visual clues left on Instagram with #artdropbowman. Whoever finds the bison gets to keep it. This engages the community to experience their Main Street in a new and exciting way.



"I don't know the last time I actually strolled down Main Street."  
-Main Street Business Owner

Artists on Main Street Training in Bowman

Photos: Brooklyn Engelhart





## Welcome new Old Home Certified agents!

Did you know Rethos is the sole provider of Old Home Certified, a one-of-a-kind designation for Minnesota real estate agents? Every year, Rethos designates a new crop of Old Home Certified agents with a comprehensive, two-day course. Expert instructors teach about Twin Cities neighborhood history, historic preservation, old home sustainability, researching house histories, and more. Agents leave with a wealth of resources and tips for buying and selling old homes.



the wonderful team at VIBE for supporting our work!

Most importantly, congratulations to the 28 agents who took the full course and are now officially Old Home Certified agents! If you're considering buying or selling an old home, check out our full list of Old Home Certified agents at [www.rethos.org](http://www.rethos.org).

This year, Rethos was lucky to partner with VIBE Realty to host the course. VIBE is a brokerage located in St. Paul's beautiful Historic Hill District. Thank you to

*Photos: Brian Fisher*

## Preservation Month: Deconstruction Workshop Series

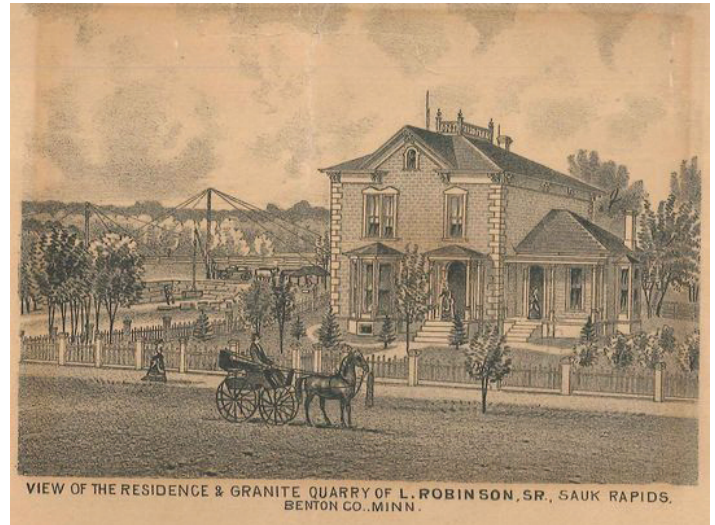
Rethos recently received a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to create a pilot series of virtual education workshops about building deconstruction and how it connects to historic preservation. Deconstruction allows us to salvage the high quality, historic components of unviable buildings and put them back into the construction resources pipeline, making them usable in future rehab projects.

This grant will fund curriculum development for three workshops. Each workshop covers a different component of deconstruction. We will discuss the basics of deconstruction as a demolition alternative, the environmental benefits of deconstruction, and its intersections with preservation and material heritage. Classes will happen on the 4th, 11th and 14th of May and will be open to the public, encouraging a rich conversation on the connections between heritage and material management. Stay tuned for dates and more info!





# Introducing: Robinson-Stanton House!



Near the heart of the city of Sauk Rapids, MN, stands the grand and beautiful Robinson-Stanton house. The oldest documented house in Sauk Rapids, and perhaps the oldest private home made of solid granite in Minnesota, it was constructed by Leonard Robinson in 1873 out of granite harvested from a quarry just one block away from the house itself.

The house was purchased by the Hommerding family in the early 1900's and was converted into a group home, resulting in two separate additions in the 1960's and 1990's. Eventually, the group home was closed as federal restrictions tightened in the early 2000's. Having sat vacant for several years and with talk of eventual demolition, the Benton County Historical Society chose to purchase the house in the Fall of 2019.

The Benton County Historical Society is currently in the process of converting this massive 9,400 square foot home into their new museum, research, and archives facility. The museum and historical society operations will be located on the main floor, which includes the original 1873 granite structure. The research facility will be in the 1990's addition, and the archives and records will be located in the 1960's addition. The Historical Society plans to open Robinson-Stanton house for public viewing and visiting in Spring of 2022! This house truly is one-of-a-kind, with a visual history that provides a captivating timeline of the last 146 years!

Rethos will soon be hosting classes and tours at the Robinson-Stanton house, so you too can see this amazing slice of history up close! Keep an eye on our website for more information and upcoming events.





# Deconstruction and Salvage at Great River Children's Museum in St. Cloud

By Ann Marie Johnson,  
Rethos Central MN Education Coordinator

On a bright sunny afternoon in early January 2022, a small group of volunteers got together at the Great River Children's Museum (GRCM) in downtown St. Cloud to help with deconstruction and salvage. The emerging nonprofit is working to get its site ready to serve children of all ages across the central Minnesota region and beyond. Donated to the organization in December 2018 by Liberty Bank Minnesota, the building is a compilation of structures dating back to the early 1930s. The location's rich history shows the key role it has played and continues to play in the community, housing everything from a chicken hatchery and grocery store to a car dealership, print shop and, more recently, a bank.

The determined efforts of GRCM's board and staff, both paid and unpaid, to disassemble and salvage as much of the building's material assets as possible serves as a role model for other property owners and developers. Their success in keeping thousands of pounds of materials in use and out of landfills highlights the value of building reuse and the structural sustainability that is often unrecognized but is typically found in many older and existing buildings. The additional revenue garnered for the organization is an added benefit. Recycling pays!

Among the tasks for the volunteers were hauling diffusers and other metal pieces from the reworked HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system to an outside dumpster destined for metal recycling, disassembling fluorescent ceiling light fixtures, hauling and stacking fluorescent tube lights, bundling electrical wire for transport to recycling, and removing electrical panels and conduit boxes. Museum board members and volunteer staff were onsite helping organize the efforts and were eager to get things done and ready for the contractor scheduled to arrive early the next morning. The tasks ranged from simple to complex, making for an easy fit with all skill levels (mine being solidly in the unskilled labor department). The event showed how with a little effort and determination, a lot can get done and much can be saved.

The time and effort of the volunteers was greatly appreciated by the museum and the results of that weekend's work were shared with everyone. Four loads of salvaged building materials were hauled to recycling, generating \$1,350 in revenue for the museum. This is added to the over 35,000 tons of materials that had already been salvaged and recycled by the end of the previous year. The bundled wire,



metal and other deconstructed building materials that were recycled instead of landfilled had both an economic and environmental impact on the community. Through their building project, GRCM is helping to flip the thinking from automatic demolition to seeing deconstruction and salvage as a viable option. Building disassembly and material salvage keeps useable materials out of landfills and helps better protect the environment. The labor intensive process also provides jobs and job training.

Perhaps St. Cloud's location along the mighty Mississippi River, its abundant and well-loved greenspaces - from nearby Lake George and Clark Field to the public landscapes of the city's new Southeast St. Cloud New Deal-Built Landscapes Historic District - or the examples of other local reused and repurposed buildings in the area have helped to encourage the level of care for community and the environment showcased by the museum's efforts. Whatever the reason, more power to them!





In May 2020, voters on the Iron Range approved a school consolidation plan that had been under discussion and negotiation since 2017, merging the Virginia and Eveleth-Gilbert school districts. The consolidation includes the planned construction of three new schools. This plan has made six current schools and two vacant school buildings available for either demolition or reuse.

At the urging of some Range-area citizens who wished to see how the remaining school buildings could be reused, Rethos Policy Institute director Erin Hanafin Berg presented options for potential reuse to the Rock Ridge School Board and Gilbert City Council in early January. Numerous schools have been adaptively reused in Minnesota as housing, including projects in Cloquet, New Ulm, and Winona that were completed within the past couple years. Other schools have been repurposed to provide community spaces, public libraries, city offices, community organizations, and a multi-purpose reception and performance venues.

Like many single purpose structures, school buildings can sometimes seem like challenging candidates for adaptive reuse. Surprisingly, nothing could be farther from the truth. Although not suited for every reuse, former schools have quite a few enduring design and construction characteristics that make them great for repurposing. With sturdy brick construction, spacious hallways, plumbing and

electrical hookups, and ample classroom space, schools can be converted to community centers, offices, and apartments – and more. Whether still owned by the community or taken on by a local developer, these schools have the right features to continue to welcome community members long after students have left the building.

### Central Square and Madison Place (Winona)

The Central Grade School in Winona originally opened its doors in 1930, operating for over 80 years before its closure in 2012. Its storied career of contributing to the local community didn't end there though. Although small in size, the building's quality Gothic Revival design and interior tile and carved stone features were too great to destroy. Using Minnesota's State Historic Tax Credit, developers were able to renovate the school into 15 units of housing, which opened in 2021. A similar project nearby, undertaken by a different developer, turned the historic Madison School into 21 apartments. Both buildings are fully leased and have waiting lists for new tenants.







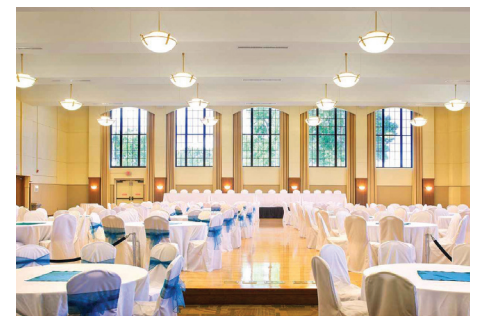
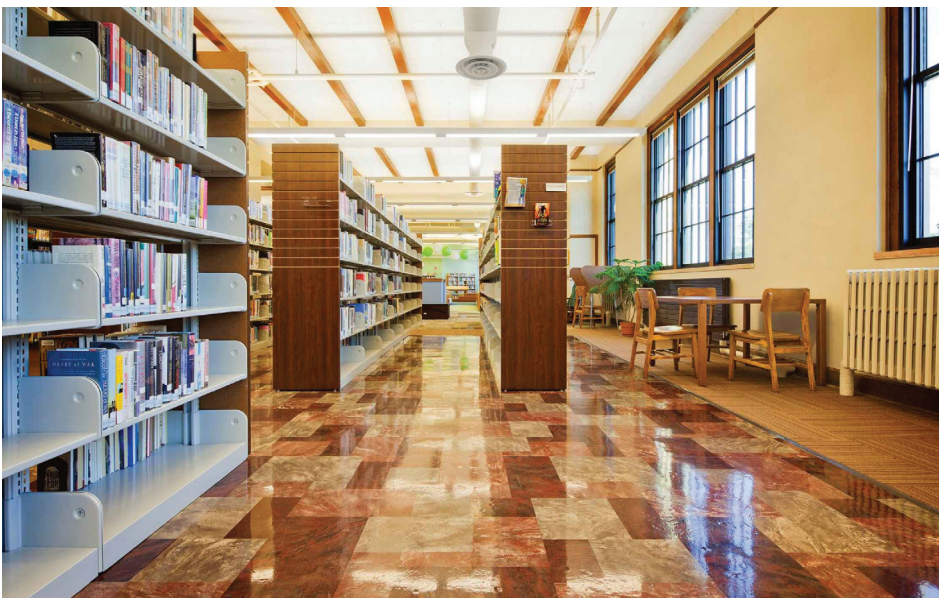
### Carlton Lofts (Cloquet)

Formerly the Cloquet High School and most recently the Middle School, the Carlton Lofts reimagine the 1920 and 1954 structures into a combined 57-unit residential building. To support community housing, a majority of the units are at workforce housing rent levels, while 20% are at market rate. Roers Companies recycled a lot of materials in the building, including original wood, concrete, and metals. They also integrated quirky remnants of the school into the overall interior design. Objects like chalkboards, lockers, and classroom doors make it a unique and engaging place to live. The project, which opened in 2020, was supported by Minnesota's State Historic Tax Credit.



### Glencoe City Center (Glencoe)

Serving in its time as the Grade, High and Middle school for the Glencoe community, the current Glencoe City Center began its transformation in 2009. Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the city center houses a myriad of community entities, a public library, as well as civic offices for the City of Glencoe. On any given week, the City Center continues to give back and house a number of public events, wedding receptions, local youth dances, clubs, and senior citizen groups.





# ADAPTING HISTORY

## The 1222 University Project



The Minnesota State Historic tax credit is instrumental in promoting the rehabilitation of historic structures across the state. Many of these buildings go through a process called 'adaptive reuse'. Adaptive reuse refers to the process of reusing an existing building for a purpose other than which it was originally built or designed for. Through this process, the outer structure and 'feel' of the historic building are maintained but its interior layout may be altered to fit a new purpose – such as providing affordable housing, commercial office space or becoming a small business location.

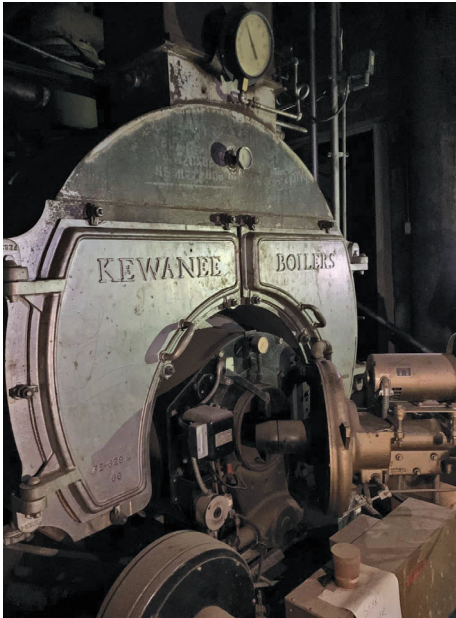
Through our support of the State Historic Tax Credit, Rethos partners with many building projects that are adaptively reusing historic structures. Recently, our staff received a tour of one of these buildings, seeing firsthand how architects and developers give old buildings new purpose.

Located on the corner of University Avenue W. and N. Griggs St. stands a four-story tall Modern Gothic Style commercial building. This building was originally constructed as the primary manufacturing site for the St. Paul Casket Company in 1923. The original building was designed in 1922 by the St. Paul architectural firm Allen H. Stem.

### 1222 University







This site, now recognized on *The National Register of Historic Places*, was notable for its vertically designed assembly process, with raw materials being freight lifted to the top floor and assembly happening in different stages as the casket traveled down floor by floor.

Additionally, the building housed a large showroom for funeral directors and individuals to view and purchase caskets on-site.

Since the end of its use in casket manufacturing in the 1950's, the building saw various usage as a warehouse for other companies. Recently, it was acquired by the development company JB Vang, who intends to renovate the structure. Utilizing both Federal and State Historic Tax Credits, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and Tax Exempt Bonds issued through the City of Saint Paul, JB Vang intends to convert the old St. Paul Casket Company building into a thriving, affordable housing community. The finished product, scheduled for about a year from now, will bring 55 new units of affordable housing to St. Paul's Midway neighborhood.

The building itself is an ideal candidate for this type of redevelopment. Its reinforced concrete structure provides solid basis for rehabilitation, with little major restoration required to the foundational components of the building.

## Historic name: St. Paul Casket Company

**Developer:** JB Vang

**Architect:** Pope Architects

**Historic Consultant:** Landscape Research

**About JB Vang** – founded in 1984 the firm offers development services, construction services, advisory and management services for real estate throughout St. Paul

Likewise, the wide factory installed windows will allow plenty of light in residential rooms. Its location adjacent to public transit, sitting near the Lexington station of the light rail, makes it ideal for an affordable housing project not to mention immediate access to surrounding commercial businesses and

Allianz Field. The layout and redesign of the building will be carried out by Pope Architects; Amy Lucas of Landscape Research is the historical consultant.

The tax credits and tax-exempt bonds being issued by the City of Saint Paul are an integral part of this project, helping JB Vang close financing gaps that would have otherwise made this project, along with the building it is preserving and the housing it will provide, unfeasible at the affordable rents being underwritten. There has been community wide effort between the City and the Union Park District Council in trying to preserve the historical integrity and rich character this building brings to the Midway while also providing access to much needed affordable housing.



## Building History (from NR nomination)

*Built between 1922-1923 and designed by St. Paul architectural firm Allen H. Stem.*

*Designed in commercial style with Modern Gothic detail.*

*Construction: reinforced concrete with structural clay tile partitions, roof and walls.*

*Exterior is covered by light-gray-beige stucco.*

*Significance: It was the home for almost 30 years of a large specialized manufacturing company for caskets that was one of the most important in St. Paul and Minnesota at the time. Also significant for its notable example of a 1920s industrial building designed as a multi-story vertical urban factory.*



*Central Park Condominiums, Red Wing*


# Rethos Easement Program Revamp

As Rethos celebrated its 40th birthday last year, we wanted to draw attention to our oldest program: Easements. Since 1986, Rethos (then the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota), has held preservation easements on historic buildings in Minnesota. This preservation tool keeps buildings in good condition and prevents against demolition.

## What is an Easement?

An easement is a restriction on the property that transfers the rights to certain features to another entity that isn't the property owner. For old buildings, this pertains to certain aspects of the buildings design – like the building's facade – but can also apply to the property's landscape and the building's interior. Preservation easements typically restrict certain activities on the property, for example, demolition of the building, storing of trash or debris, or any use that would alter the view or experience of the building's architectural design. They are recorded with the title of the property and run with the land in perpetuity. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the certain values of the property are preserved and maintained as the property changes hands for (in theory) forever.

## Why would someone want one?

Property owners are motivated to place easements on their property for several reasons. With the end goal to preserve the property in perpetuity, a property owner may want to ensure that their building is protected against development pressures where there aren't any other protections. For example, a building that falls outside of a city with a historic preservation ordinance. Another scenario might be a homeowner who restored their house and wants to protect their work after they eventually sell their home. Additionally, certain tax advantages accompany the donation of an easement to a qualifying organization (like Rethos), where the value of the easement (as determined by an appraiser) can be taken as a tax deduction by the property owner.

## How does one put an easement on their property?

Rethos recently redefined the process for accepting easements. The first stage is the pre-application phase where Rethos staff work with a property owner to obtain due diligence items to make a determination of whether or not Rethos would be interested in accepting the easement. This



*Gilbert Building, St. Paul*

## What kind of properties?

Rethos is open to all kinds of properties interested in easements. Our current portfolio ranges from single family homes to downtown commercial buildings, and even includes a farmstead and a former post office.

Certain tax benefits of an easement donation require the property to be a certified historic property according to the IRS. Property owners may have various motivations for donating an easement and are willing to do so without a tax benefit and with a property that doesn't have any designation status. Rethos is open to talking with any property owner about potential easements, however, please contact your accountant or lawyer to get the full breadth of potential tax advantages of an easement.

If you are interested in learning more about Rethos' easement program, please contact Rethos' Director of Real Estate, Ethan Boote.

*Mankato Post Office*

isn't a guarantee for whether or not Rethos would accept the easement, but rather a preliminary determination about the property and its alignment with Rethos' values and mission. The next stage is kicked off after an application fee is paid to Rethos in order to create the easement document, document the property, complete necessary title work, and prepare the application for our easement committee to review. The easement committee will consist of volunteer members from outside of Rethos with expertise in historic preservation and real estate. The easement committee will make a recommendation to Rethos' board of directors for the final approval of the easement. After final approval the easement will be recorded.

*Veblen Farmstead, Nerstrand**Policoff House, Shoreview*



# PLACES REIMAGINED

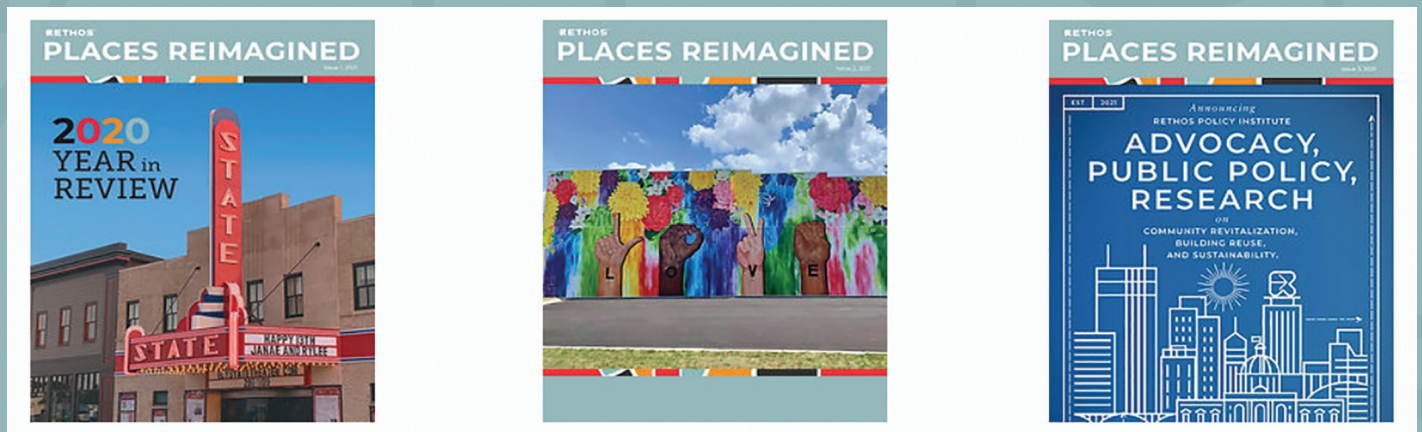
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