

RETHOS™

PLACES REIMAGINED

Issue 1, 2020



2019
YEAR in
REVIEW



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Preservation Alliance of Minnesota DBA Rethos is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to preserving, protecting, and promoting Minnesota's historic resources.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM THE FOLLOWING:



The Art and Martha Kaemmer Fund of HRK Foundation
 The Dominion Foundation
 Leuthold Family Foundation

Production of this issue of Places Reimagined was made possible through a generous grant from the



Cover photo: Flight of Colors, Jorge Ponticas, Artists on Main Street, Faribault, 2019.

Rethos Investment Partnership projects account for \$90M of the \$357M tax credits awarded through the HTC program since 2011.

Your support works, and with the Historic Tax Credit sunset date getting closer, we need your support now more than ever.

Your 2020 sponsorship provides the funding needed to fight for the Historic Tax Credit at the State Capitol. If we can assist in generating nearly a third of the money awarded in only ten years, imagine what we can do with ten more.

Become a sponsor. Protect the HTC.

Please email Todd Wright, Director of Advancement, at todd@rethos.org to learn more.

Thank you to these leaders who have already committed to their 2020 Sponsorship:

INFLUENCER



SKYLINE



BRIDGEWATER BANK

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SEASON



W. L. HALL CO. Builders Specialties

CORPORATE

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Guaranty Commerical Title, Inc.
Hess, Roise and Company
Loucks, Inc.
Skyline Fire Protection, Inc.

PATRON

Gary L Stenson/MetroPlains, Winthrop & Weinstine



EDUCATION

In 2019, the Rethos education program hit new records, reaching nearly 1,000 students through 60 workshops, talks, and tours. It's energizing to see the numbers and to think about the impact of our classes, but the most exciting update from 2019 is the growth of our education staff.

Rethos has contracted with the Morrison County Historical Society staff in Little Falls as well as Addison Galagan in Duluth. We've seen lots of success and lots of potential in Central Minnesota, Northern Minnesota, and Northwestern Wisconsin, and the time was right to place staff people in these regions. They are making new connections with homeowners, craftspeople, city staff, funders, and other partners in their own communities.

CLASSES

All class registrations can be made at rethos.org/classes.

10
MAR



TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM | Minnesota Tool Library, Northeast Chapter

Toilets – chances are you'll deal with a slow, clogged, or broken toilet sooner than later. In this class, you'll learn how to remove and install a toilet, how to fix common problems, and basic maintenance you should DIY to keep your toilet flushing smoothly.

This class is in partnership with the Minnesota Tool Library and is open to all experience levels.

17
MAR



FEELING FRAYED? UPDATING OLD ELECTRICAL

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM | Minnesota Tool Library, St. Paul

Older homes weren't built to handle today's electronics—come learn the basics of upgrading old and outdated wiring. Our instructor will provide an overview of electrical systems and fixture basics. You'll learn how to update old wiring and install a basic outlet.

This class is in partnership with the Minnesota Tool Library and is open to all experience levels.

18
MAR

HOME SWEET HOME: MAINTENANCE 101

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM | NeighborWorks Home Partners, St. Paul

Brand new homeowner? Looking for a home maintenance refresher? Home Sweet Home: Maintenance 101 is the place to begin. In this class, you'll learn tips and tricks for taking care of your house. Taught by a local home inspector (who has seen it all!), this class is essential for any homeowner.

Partnership with Morrison County Historical Society



We are excited about our recent partnership with Rethos: Places Reimagined. Thanks for inviting us to join the team! As the education coordinator for Rethos in central Minnesota, the Morrison County Historical Society (MCHS) is glad to be working with a highly-regarded nonprofit that is dedicated to leading and inspiring all to preserve, protect and maintain valued sites, spaces and structures within their communities.

True confession, our gig with Rethos is not completely new. MCHS

and Rethos have a long history. When Rethos was first organized in 1981 as the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, one of its first board members was Jan Warner, former executive director of MCHS. Jan, along with her husband, Art, were stalwarts in the field of cultural heritage and more than willing to share their

skills and expertise with the fledgling organization. We are glad to be able to continue this legacy and partnership.

Our small staff of four – Grace, Paul, Mary and Ann Marie – had also already been working closely with Rethos to bring educational programming to our area before becoming the central MN education coordinator, arranging classes both in St. Cloud and Little Falls.

A class already under our belt is the Historski: A History Ski Tour of Riverside Park. This history scavenger

hunt ski tour took place on January 26th and was a partnership project with the Nordic Ski Club of Central Minnesota, the Central Minnesota Youth Ski League, the Southeast St. Cloud Neighborhood Preservation Coalition and Rethos. The Historski was held in conjunction with the 13th Annual Sons of Norway Banelopet (Banelopet means “kid’s ski race!”)

We can’t wait to see what the future with Rethos has in store for us here in Little Falls!

*Top Left: MCHS members at Historski event.
Below: Attendees registering for event sessions at the Historski event.*



The sky's the limit when it comes to programs we hope to offer in central Minnesota. If you have ideas or want to set up a class in your area, let us know! We currently cover Morrison, Benton, Stearns and Sherburne counties. Feel free to give us a call (320/632-4007) or contact us by email (CentralMN@rethos.org). We are looking forward to hearing your ideas for future central Minnesota rehabilitation learning and fun!

19 MAR ^R LEAD, RADON, & ASBESTOS, OH MY!

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM | Keller Williams Integrity Lakes, Minneapolis

Do the words lead, asbestos, or radon have you (or your clients) running for the hills? These are common to older homes, and as long as you know how to identify and mitigate them safely, there's nothing to worry about! This course has been approved by the Minnesota Commissioner of Commerce for 2 hours of real estate continuing education. It is open to all.

21 MAR ^R REPAIRING AND RESTORING OLD WINDOWS

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM | St. Cloud

Join window specialist Paul Schmidt for a day all about windows. Paul will dispel common myths about old wood windows, explain the difference between original and replacement windows, and demonstrate common repairs that you can do at home. You'll get a thorough overview on how to repair drafts, reglaze windows, fix rotted wood, and improve overall window operation. Most importantly, you'll learn why old wood windows can be just as energy efficient as replacements.

24 MAR ^R FIX-IT (ELECTRICAL)

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM | Minnesota Tool Library, St. Paul

In the dark about basic rewiring? Almost any old fixture can be rebuilt and relit using inexpensive materials and supplies. Learn what tools you'll need & what steps to take in order to replace cords and rewire fixtures and switches on your own. Give that old lamp a new lease on life or add electrical to that cool dumpster dive of yours to create a unique statement piece!

This class is in partnership with the Minnesota Tool Library and is open to all experience levels.

31 MAR ^R IF WALLS COULD TALK...

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM | Minnesota Tool Library, Northeast Chapter

Before you remodel, remove or repair—learn the language of wall systems! We'll review basic wall structure, discuss what to look for when adding or removing a wall, and how to finish off the frame. Learn how to properly attach and/or repair plaster and sheetrock, patch that hole from the baseball your kid threw inside the house, and troubleshoot common plaster issues found in older homes.

This class is in partnership with the Minnesota Tool Library and is open to all experience levels.

4 APR ^R DOOR & WINDOW REPAIR WORKSHOP

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum, Little Falls

Older homes can suffer from tight doors and drafty windows. Since traditional windows and doors were designed to be easily maintained, repaired or rebuilt, there is no reason that the originals in your house can't be brought back to better-than-new condition and energy efficiency. In the process, you will learn how properly maintained old wood doors and windows can be made as energy efficient as replacements. You will also get tips on the best methods for weatherization.

16
APR^R

HOT IN HERE: UNDERSTANDING BOILERS AND FURNACES

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM | Keller Williams Integrity Lakes, Minneapolis

This two-hour class introduces you to different types of heating systems commonly found in Twin Cities homes. You'll discover how furnaces & boilers work, how to maintain them, and how to handle common issues. This course has been approved by the Minnesota Commissioner of Commerce for 2 hours of real estate continuing education. It is open to all.

18
APR^R

REHAB LAB: PLASTER REPAIR

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM | Minneapolis

This hands-on workshop introduces you to the materials, tools, and techniques to fix vintage walls. Participants will learn how to repair cracks in plaster walls at a 1925 Minneapolis home. Registration includes two mud knives and a mud pan for you to take home. Taught by plaster and paint expert Anders Christensen, this class provides a unique opportunity to practice new skills in an old home with many of the same repair needs as your own. Come with questions, prepared to get messy!

News From the North

Our new Education Program Associate Addison Galagan moved to Duluth after his service with Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps. He joined Rethos in November 2019 to support our growth in northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin. He looks forward to connecting people in the Northland to preservation resources in their communities.

Addison is hitting the ground running and connecting with non-profits and community members all over Northeastern Minnesota and Northwestern Wisconsin to bring new Rethos class opportunities to the area. We are excited to announce our emerging partnership with Old World Windows to host window repair workshops in Virginia, Ely, Duluth, and Superior. Paul Freese and Bill Smith of Old World Windows have been restoring windows professionally since 2003 and are excited to be developing community workshops to help homeowners repair their windows.

If you are a Wisconsin resident, we want to tell you more about the state's Tax Credit



Program for Historic Homes. In partnership with the Wisconsin Historical Society, we will have an informational presentation in Superior to help qualifying homeowners apply for the program.

Stay tuned for a possible bar tour along Tower Avenue in Superior this summer. We plan to collaborate with local bars and businesses to learn about the unique and personal history of these buildings.

Have an idea for a class in this region? Know a potential instructor or class venue? Let us know! Send Addison a note (addison@rethos.org). We'd love to hear from you!



*Erin Hanafin Berg
Rethos Policy Director*

2020

SESSION IN FULL SWING

The Minnesota Legislature started its 2020 session a few weeks ago (2/11). While this session is supposed to be “shorter” (it started about a month later than the 2019 session did), it still must conclude by May 18 and promises to be jam-packed with important issues.

There’s no question that the most important issue to our constituents (the Minnesota Historic Tax Credit’s looming sunset date) must be addressed this session. The HTC is due to expire at the end of June 2021, which means that the Legislature must vote to extend the sunset date or the critical incentives that the HTC provides will go away.

Over the past several years, we have been focused on the difficult issue of Federal tax conformity, addressing the changes that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act passed in December 2017 imposed on our state historic tax credit program. This year, the message is much clearer: extend the Minnesota Historic Tax Credit so that communities across the state

have uninterrupted access to the benefits provided for historic building rehabilitation.

This year is also a bonding year, which means that the Legislature will decide how much money to raise through its borrowing authority to fund capital improvement projects for publicly owned sites and facilities. Governor Walz released his bonding proposal in January, which includes projects as varied as water treatment plants, affordable housing, higher education building renovations, local bridges and roads, regional sports centers, and a few key historic rehabilitation projects. It’s now up to the House and Senate Capital Investment Committees to align their own proposals with the Governor’s and to work out a deal by the end of the session. Rethos will be advocating for a strong state investment in the kinds of building rehabilitation projects that we know produce a high return on investment for local communities’ economies and sense of place.

Rethos will also continue to advance issues that acknowledge the significant role that downtown historic districts play in creating economically and culturally vibrant communities throughout Minnesota. Visit our website to find more information about how you can join us for Main Streets at the Capitol on March 10 and advocate for these places. We will also be trying to raise awareness about the environmental benefits of building renovation and reuse, and highlight preservation’s role in retaining and creating affordable housing; see the overview of our Legislative Priorities for more information about these issues.

Connect to Rethos’ advocacy efforts to bring your support for community revitalization to the State Capitol. Our social media pages and regular policy update emails will give you concrete ways you can take action to help protect and rehabilitate valued places – while building a more sustainable and resilient future for all Minnesotans.

2020 AGENDA

STATE HISTORIC TAX CREDIT

Support HF 1642 / SF 1639, which:

- Eliminates the June 30, 2021 sunset date
- Allows the full amount of the MN Historic Tax Credit to be claimed in the year the qualified rehabilitated building is placed in service
- Allows the credit certificate to be assigned to subsequent taxpayers

BONDING BILL

Support excellent projects that invest in the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing state and local assets, including:

- the Batcher Opera House restoration in Staples
- the renovation of the Victoria Theater in St. Paul
- new and renovated buildings at the historic Gibbs Farm in Ramsey

MAIN STREET

Support policies that direct funding and programmatic support to under resourced communities, especially in Greater MN where local initiatives are constrained by lack of access to capital and limited operating support.

Join us for Main Street Day at the Capitol on March 10th. Registration at rethos.org/events.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

VOLUNTEER

Two Ways to Volunteer

1. We need volunteers to help contact key legislators and let them know how important the Historic Tax Credit is to communities across Minnesota. If you can help, please email nidhi@rethos.org.
2. Let us call on your behalf. We know life gets busy, so if you don't have time to give your Reps a ring, sign up to have a volunteer call on your behalf at rethos.org/2020advocacy.

CALL YOUR REPS

Send an email, visit them in person, call them, tweet at them - whatever your mode of communication, your representatives need to hear from you.

Head to our website for talking points, contact information, and opportunities to meet your legislators in person.

Don't know who represents you? Head to rethos.org/public-policy.

SPREAD THE WORD

Visit our Advocacy page to read the full 2020 Legislative Agenda, sign up for our weekly policy updates, download key graphics and stories to share on your own social media pages, and register for events at the State Capitol.

rethos.org/2020advocacy

ONCE A HOTEL, ALWAYS A HOTEL

The Hotel Northland has Green Bay running through its architectural veins.

Hotel Northland returned to downtown Green Bay, WI last February 2019 as a 160-room Marriott Autograph collection. The historic building's renaissance ends the decade-long effort to rehabilitate the building, spurring an excitement around town reminiscent of its first opening in 1924. As one of our investment partnerships, Rethos funded a state historic tax credit loan to the project, helping to monetize the credit and ensuring the best use of the state's investment. The Northland was a poster project for

the expansion of Wisconsin's tax credit policy in 2013, and Rethos is proud to have partnered with Octagon Finance in this historically significant rehabilitation.

When it opened in 1924, the Hotel Northland was admired for its size, luxury, and opportunity for downtown Green Bay. The Hotel Wisconsin Realty Co, the state's premier hotelier at the time, developed the hotel and recruited architect Herbert Tullgren for its design. Built over the course of one year, Green Bay residents watched in awe as the large nine story Tudor-revival building rose above their town. The hotel opened in March 1924 and one local newspaper claimed it was the most modern hotel in Wisconsin, with 260 hotel rooms, 5 miles of pipe, 380 radiators, 45,000 yards of plaster, 4 Bruno Ertz paintings, coach service to the train station, a fleet of taxis, and fireproof construction that launched the tagline "Sleep in

Cover: Walnut Dining Room. Photos courtesy of Octagon Finance.

Safety!" A train from Milwaukee carrying 100 people arrived the day after opening to continue the celebration with a dinner dance.

Over the next 55 years, the hotel held numerous banquets, dances, and was visited by fleets of football fans. Intricately tied to the history of the Green Bay Packers football team, the hotel was host to out-of-state teams, was the site of Vince Lombardi's first speech to the press (in the Crystal Ballroom), and Curly Lambeau once resided on the eighth floor.

In addition to being important to football, the Northland represents the growth Green Bay experienced in the early-to-mid 20th century, an energy that its rehabilitation has tapped into once again. Converted to housing for the elderly and disabled in 1979, the building took a break from being a hotel for 40 years. The all-too-common tale of downtown's losing residents and falling into disrepair in the latter half of the 20th century unfolded in downtown Green Bay,

as projects like the Port Plaza Mall failed to maintain a thriving business district. The city demolished the Port Plaza Mall as a result of a 2010-2011 redevelopment plan that also called for the construction of CityDeck, a new waterfront park around the corner from the Northland, and the expansion of the KI Convention Center. Although numerous issues faced potential developers since this project's conception in 2010, the Northland's rehabilitation is an integral part of this plan because of the benefits to surrounding businesses and recent public investments.

The Hotel Northland acted as the poster project for expanding Wisconsin's historic tax credit in 201. Governor Scott Walker signed into law the expansion of the state credit to 20% of qualified rehabilitation expenses in the lobby. Wisconsin's state historic tax credit has existed since 1989. It offered a 5% credit for historic building rehabilitations, but the expansion to 20% prompted hundreds of millions of private investment into the state's historic buildings, with ripple effects in housing creation, businesses, and jobs. Rethos has been involved in Wisconsin tax credit lending since 2015, with 7 projects total. Our involvement has



Top: Postcard depicting the original Hotel Northland. Bottom: Hotel Northland post-rehabilitation. Photo courtesy of Octagon Finance.

spanned the state geographically and projects range in size and purpose. The Hotel Northland (and our six other projects) in the state have helped build our capacity to expand our education programming to Wisconsin, all while supporting the reimagination of historic buildings with positive community impact.



Far left: Bar in Walnut Dining Room. Top Left: Crystal Ballroom, site of Vince Lombardi's first speech to the press. Bottom Left: Hallway leading to Crystal Ballroom. Photos courtesy of Octagon Finance.

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

In our first year as Rethos: Places Reimagined, I couldn't be prouder of the organization's successes and heart warming welcome that we all have received in Minnesota and throughout our region. This Year in Review demonstrates the impact of our work, the growth toward achieving our mission, and the people that make our work possible. We're thrilled to share with you the varied ways that we reimagine buildings, celebrate culture, and support small business in more and more places than ever before.

You will see that Rethos is in a great place to keep growing our impact in the years to come. Our financial foundation is strong, our partnership development continues to blossom, our investment in rural places is flourishing, and our policy initiatives continue to protect the Historic Tax Credit for projects across the state.

Thank you for your commitment to Rethos and our mission of connecting people to places.

Executive Director
Doug Gasek



9

new tax credit projects



TOP MOMENTS FROM 2019



FROM PAM TO RETHOS

This past summer we reimagined what the next thirty years could look like for us as an organization that helps communities flourish. We'd like to thank the incredible team at ImageHaus Design for leading our staff and board through the process of transforming from the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota to Rethos: Places Reimagined. The time and resources that they spent truly discovering the ethos of who we are as an organization was more than we could have ever expected. Thank you to Jay, Darcy, Pooh, Stephanie, and Colton for helping us solidify a branded identity that finally feels aligned with our core programs and services.

19

Rural Program Communities



912

students educated



92

artists supported through Artists on Main Street



Rethos: Places Reimagined is grateful for each and every level of contributor; individual, sustaining, corporate, and philanthropic. Your support gives us the ability to live our mission to lead and inspire people to connect with historic places, promoting community vitality.

The following list reflects support given between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019.

Top Social Media Moments of 2019

STORY OF THE YEAR



Transformation of the Lora in Stillwater, MN.

MOST LIKED POST



No one loves old windows as much as our Facebook followers! These facts about wood windows received the most likes in both 2019 and 2018 across all of our active platforms - way to go DIYers!

BIGGEST FOLLOWING YET

20% increase across social media platforms in 2019, resulting in our biggest online following to date!

Individual Donors, Corporate Sponsorships, Grants and Foundations

\$190,000+

Bush Foundation
Minnesota Historical Society

\$20,000

Dominium Development Acquisition, LLC

\$10,000

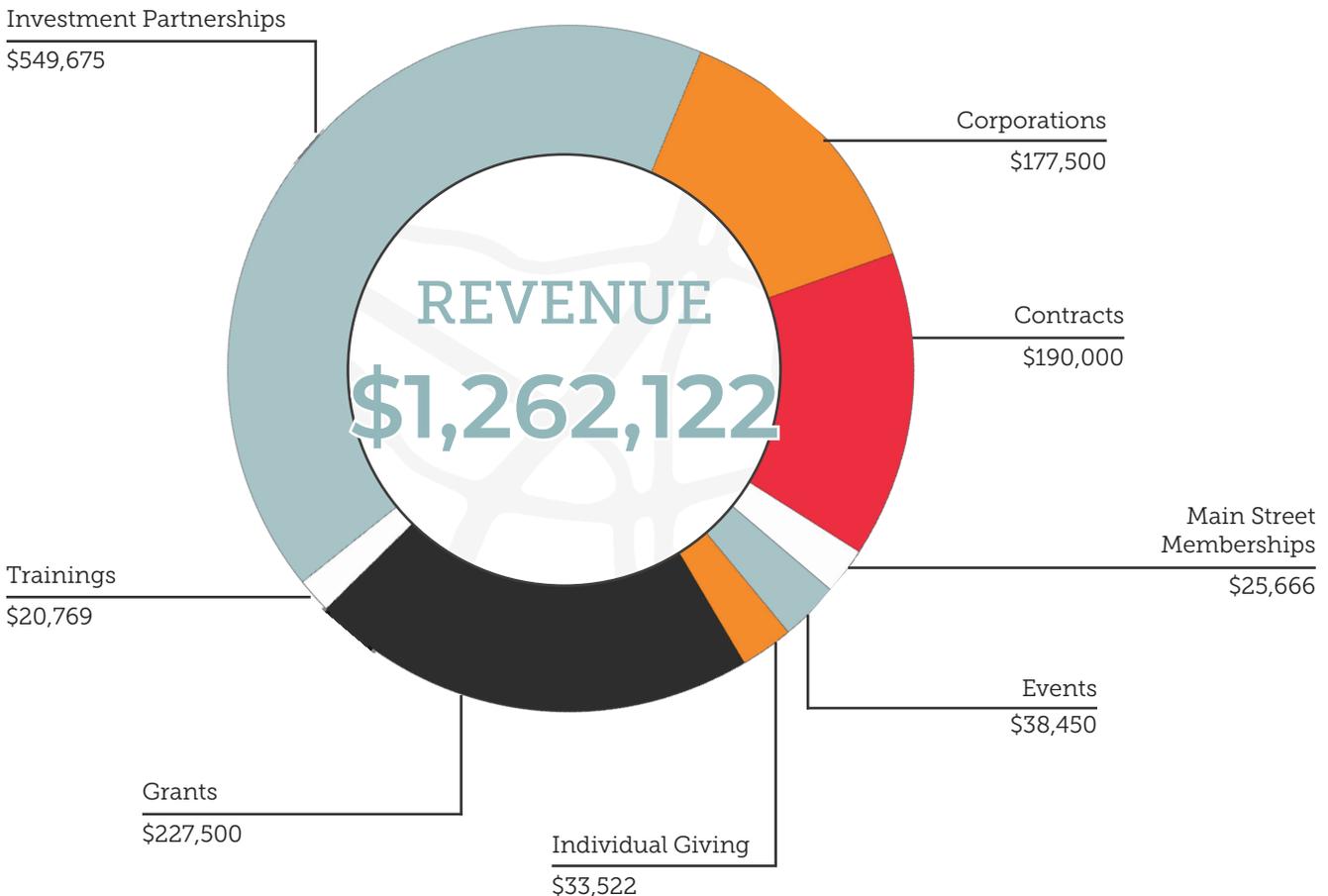
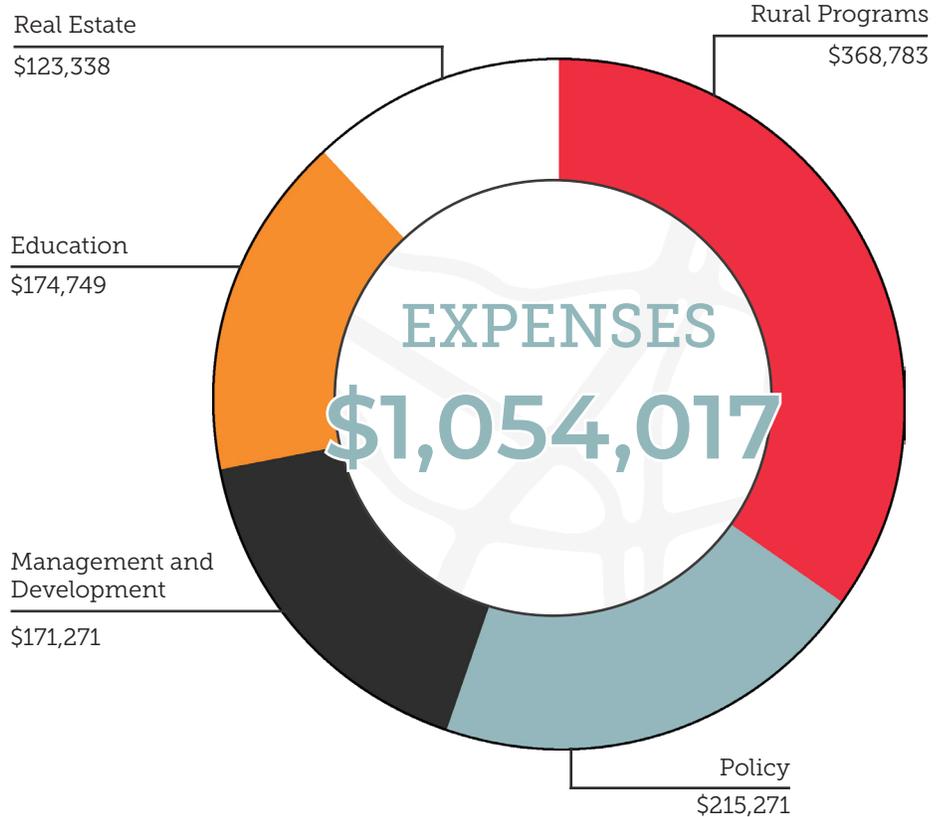
Bridgewater Bank
Dougherty Mortgage LLC
JE Dunn Construction Company
Sherman Associates, Inc.
Weis Builders

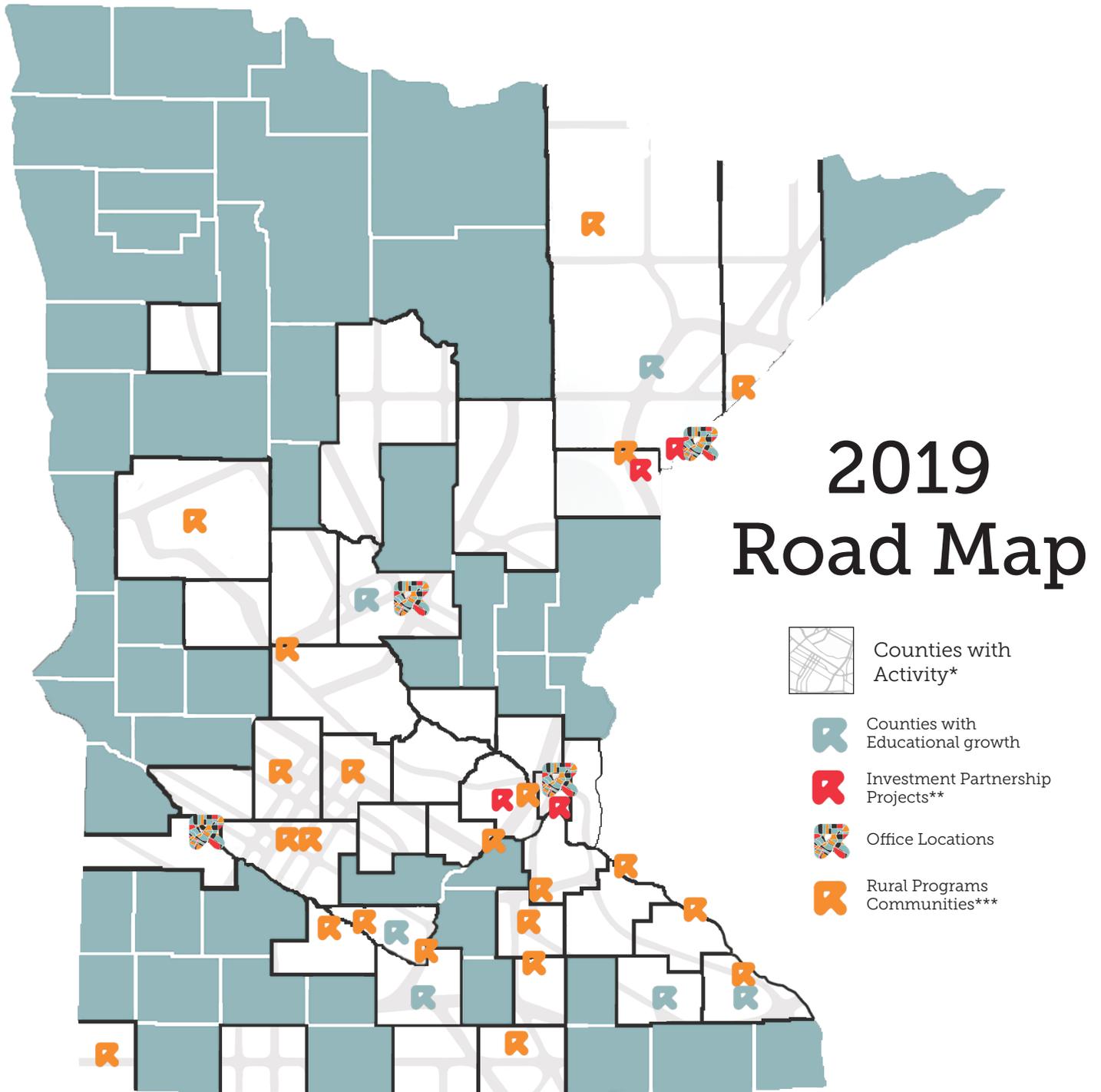
\$5,000

Berwald Roofing Company
BKV Group
Building Restoration Corporation
Carl Bolander & Sons, Co
D&M Industries
David Carisch
Frana Companies Inc.
Hempel
Kaas Wilson Architects
Kristen Faye Olson
Lois Maciej
Mahoney Ulbrich Christiansen Russ P.A.
Major Mechanical, Inc.
Medina Electric, LLC
Mulcahy Nickolaus LLC

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. The graph identifies the sources of operational revenue and our use of those funds.

For review of Rethos' IRS Form 990, contact Executive Director Doug Gasek at 651.293.9047.





*Activity includes all program areas **Markers in Hennepin and Ramsey counties represent 30 projects
***Rethos Main Streets, Artists on Main Street, and Downtown Assessment communities

2019 Investment Partnership Projects in Other States



Northland Concrete and Masonry Company, LLC
 Steven Leuthold Family Foundation
 Timberland Partners
 US Bank
 Virginia E. Sweatt
 W L Hall Company
 Winthrop & Weinstine

\$2,000+

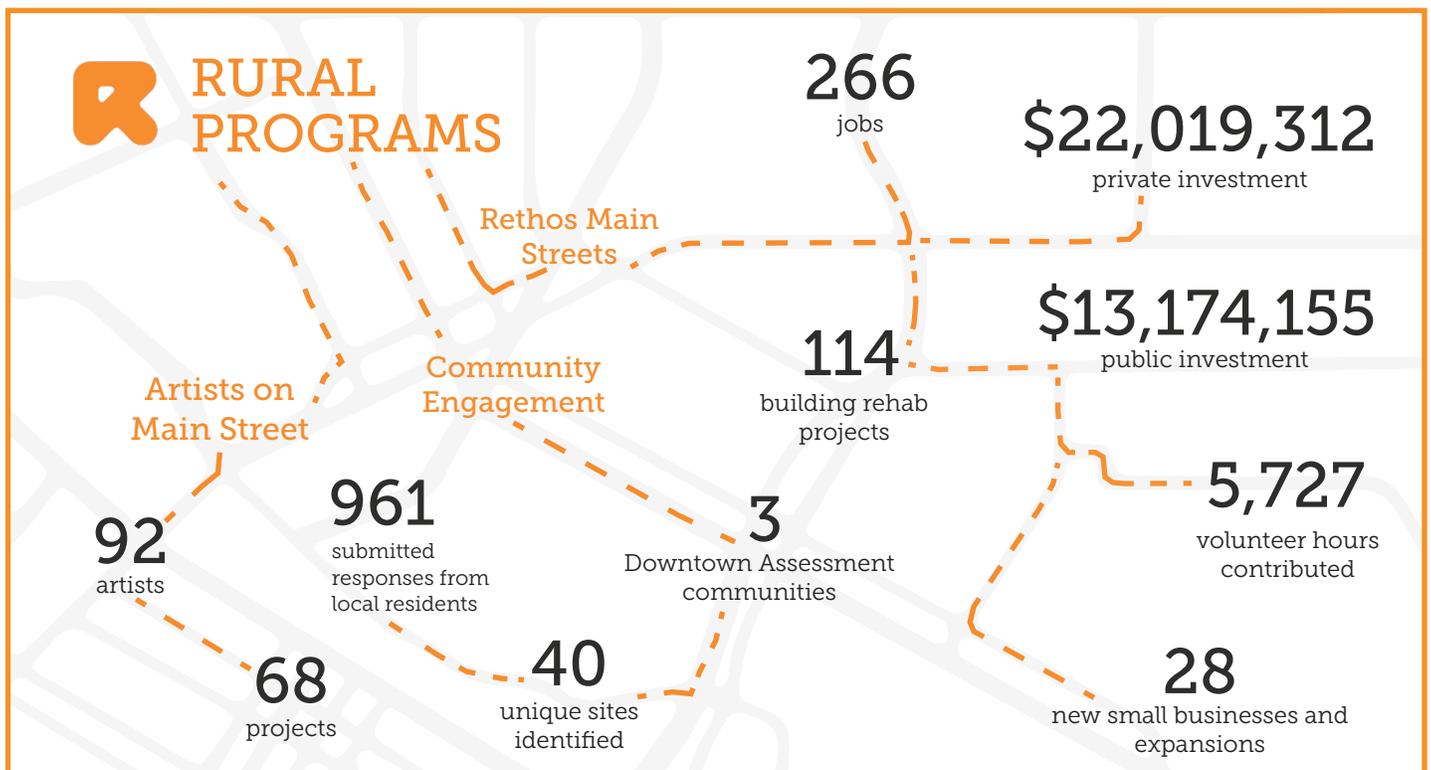
Marvel Anderson
 Advanced Masonry Restoration, Inc
 Chris Barnes
 Braun Intertec
 Wendy Ethen
 Hess, Roise and Company
 Loucks, Inc.
 Steve Knight
 National Window Associates
 Tony Simmons
 Skyline Fire Protection, Inc.
 George Sherman
 Terracon

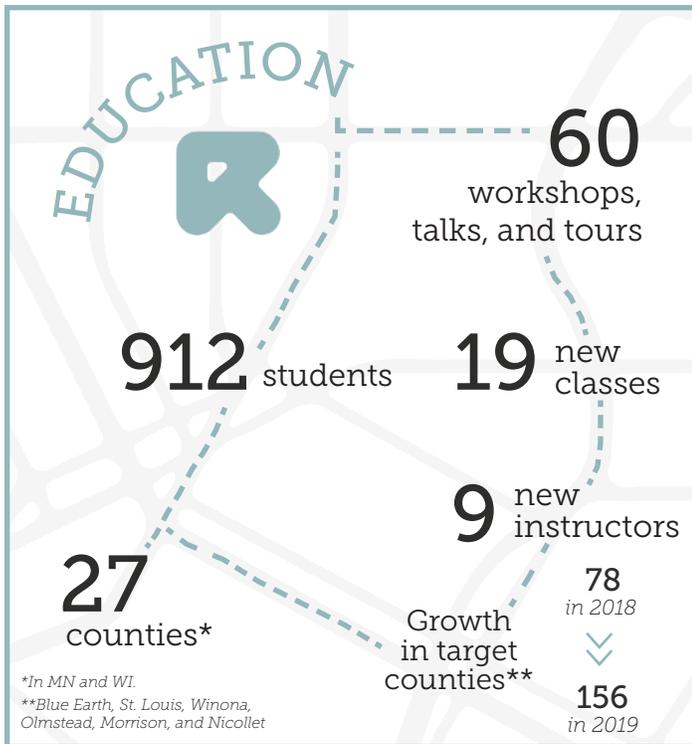
NEW ULM STORYMAPPING



In July Rethos staff traveled to New Ulm to speak with community leaders and residents about what makes their town unique. As part of their Downtown Assessment, we took those stories and placed them on an interactive map (accessible at rethos.org) and elevated them to potential ways to improve their downtown district and community at large.

Pictured: Ulmer Cafe in downtown New Ulm.





\$750+

- Allegion
- Jane Bisel
- Bernice Carlson
- Ryan DuPuis
- Egan Company
- Erik Hansen
- Fidelity Charitable
- Historic Preservation Education Foundation
- HRK Foundation
- Collin Kaas
- Vanessa Matiski
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Kevin Olsen
- Matthew Pavek
- Nick Place
- Ryan Sailer
- Mike St. Martin
- Tushie Montgomery Architects



GREATER MINNESOTA

Our Education program set a goal to increase outreach to Blue Earth, St. Louis, Winona, Olmstead, Morrison, and Nicollet counties by 25% in 2019. The final increase by the end of the year was over 50%.

Not only did classes draw in more students from these counties, but created so much interest that we added two new positions in our Education program in Little Falls (Morrison) and Duluth/Superior (St. Louis).

Pictured: Intro to Historic Masonry, Duluth, MN, June 2019.

\$1-\$300

- Karen Allen
- Kristen Anderson
- Howard Ansel
- Tom Arneson
- Jen Ashfeld
- Jill Baum
- Mike Benike
- Doug Berg
- Denise E. Brewer Bailey
- Michele Borowicz
- Roger Borowicz
- Jorgen Brandt
- Raydelle Bruentrup
- A.S. Buchanan
- Amanda Buhman
- Jeff Callinan
- Gretchen Camp
- Tom Cesare
- Ligeia Cholensky
- Rebecca Christensen
- Jessie Clausen
- Emily Durand
- EBSCO Industries, Inc.
- Stephen Fautsch

INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS

7 loans funded

\$21,673,459

9 new projects

State Historic Tax Credits paid

5 states

271 affordable housing units

\$108,367,295

total project expenditures

Roger Finney
 Mark Fjelstad
 Kelly Fogarty
 Justin Foley
 Kathleen Franzen
 Bethany Gladhill
 Julie Glass
 Rafi Golberstein
 Katherine Grumstrup
 Mark Hansen
 Paula Hanson
 Chris Hartnett
 Joe Hayes
 Janelle Hielscher
 Connie Hines
 James Hollnagel
 Jacob Honer
 Steven Hong
 Steve Jansen
 Ann Marie Johnson
 Maria Johnson
 Susan K Stone
 Rosella Keeler
 Anne Ketz
 Laura Kindseth
 Jennifer Kirby
 Laura Kotten
 Julia Larson
 Joe Lawniczak

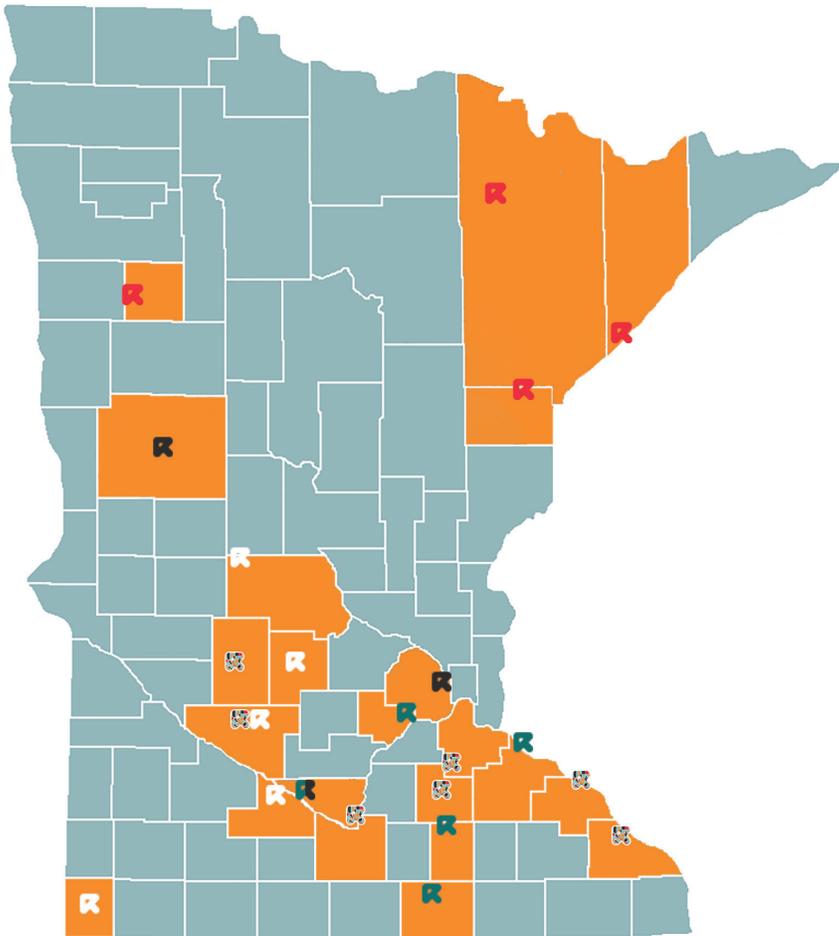
Jeannine Lee
 Connie Lies
 Cornelius Mahoney
 Susan Maki
 Aaron Martin
 Janice Maxson
 Robert McEachren
 Daniel McKee
 Scott McQueen
 Ward & Linda Merrill
 Jay Miller
 Minnesota Society of the Sons
 of the American Revolution
 Sydney Nesbitt Masee
 Franklin Noel
 Bettijo Norman
 Emily Northey
 Will O'Keefe
 Kelly O'Neil
 Kathleen Oneill
 Tanner Ott
 Rebecca Paulsen
 Marjorie Pearson
 Charlene Roise
 Deborah and Doug Rosenthal
 Sheri Ross
 Dolores Rufenacht
 Randy Rust
 Lolly Salmen

Patrick Stanaway
 Evan Stanley
 John Stark
 Ryan Stephens
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If something is incorrect with your listing, please contact Director of Advancement Todd Wright, at 651.293.9047, todd@rethos.org, so we can address the error.

RURAL PROGRAMS

Rethos Main Streets  Artists on Main Street  Community Engagement



RETHOS MAIN STREETS MN



MINNESOTA MAIN STREET

As a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program, Rethos Main Streets helps to lead a powerful, grassroots network consisting of over 40 Coordinating Programs and over 1,200 neighborhoods and communities across the country committed to creating high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.

ARTISTS ON MAIN STREET

Artists on Main Street, a program of Rethos Main Streets, explores how the arts help address the challenges affecting Main Street communities today.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our Downtown Assessment service helps you develop a plan to change the way people think and talk about your downtown by tapping into local wisdom and uncovering your community's distinct assets.

-  Network Community
-  Downtown Assessment Community
-  Artists on Main Street Community
-  Designated Community
-  Designated Community and Artists on Main Street Community

DESIGNATED COMMUNITIES			NETWORK COMMUNITIES	
Albert Lea	Northfield	Shakopee	Bird Island	Sauk Centre
Faribault	Owatonna	Wabasha	Litchfield	Sleepy Eye
Mankato	Olivia	Willmar	Luverne	
New Ulm	Red Wing	Winona		
ARTISTS ON MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES			DOWNTOWN ASSESSMENTS	
Faribault	Olivia	Cook	New Ulm	
Mankato	Wabasha	Mahnomen	Otter Tail County	
Winona	Willmar	Two Harbors	Cedar Riverside, Minneapolis	
Northfield	Cloquet		Elliot Park, Minneapolis	
			Logan Park, Minneapolis	
			Whittier, Minneapolis	

RETHOS MAIN STREETS MN

— 2020 Spring Convening —



Artists on Main Street Cohort Meeting, Olivia, MN, July 2019

WHEN:

April 14-15

WHERE:

Albert Lea, MN

REGISTRATION:

Complete Spring Convening information and registration will be online at rethos.org.

Each year our Main Street Network in Minnesota continues to grow. As new communities join and longtime Main Street communities become more developed, we've embraced the need for enhanced educational opportunities. We're excited to launch our own mini-conference to tackle all things Main Street in Minnesota at the Rethos Main Streets Spring Convening, which will be held in downtown Albert Lea, MN.

Main Street Basic Training has been a staple of our spring calendar, and this year is no different. We're incorporating Main Street Basic Training into the convening schedule, while also offering a second, more advanced track for folks who are familiar

with the Main Street approach. Main Street Basic Training is a great opportunity for new Main Street Staff, volunteers, and other individuals invested in their downtowns to get acquainted with the specifics of what it takes to run a successful Main Street Program with methods that have been proven to work in hundreds of communities throughout the country.

We know that there are many opportunities for Main Street staff and volunteers to attend fantastic conferences and trainings held by other organizations, many that we partner with, and our goal with the Spring Convening is to focus specifically on issues in our historic downtowns throughout

Minnesota. A complete schedule will be released soon, with sessions focusing on Volunteers, Fundraising, Navigating Diversity, Vacancies, and much more. In addition to the Basic Training and mini sessions, we'll also be leading a half-day workshop on April 15 highlighting Artists on Main Street methods and ideas that can be applied in any community at nearly any funding level, not just the communities who were recipients of the Artists on Main Street grant.

The event will also include a tour in Downtown Albert Lea as well as opportunities to connect and network with Main Street professionals and volunteers from throughout Minnesota.



BACK to

NORTHFIELD'S

FUTURE

By Greg Siems, Northfield Main Street Director



For locals and visitors alike, the city of Northfield, Minnesota is synonymous with history, character, quirkiness, and charm.

These attributes, however, do not necessarily equate to a backward-looking attitude or developmental inertia as one might expect, especially in a community whose most prominent claim to fame is an averted bank robbery in 1876.

Quite the opposite, in fact. Over the past several years Northfield has enjoyed a renaissance of investment that capitalizes on the town's history without being restricted by it. Businesses are creatively reimagining existing spaces to compete in a world increasingly dominated by online shopping and free shipping. Both new and existing enterprises are embracing the reality that comfortable places, unique experiences, and intentional community building are more important to a successful retail operation than ever before.

Several recent projects are emblematic of this trend

and simply could not have been possible without the innovative entrepreneurs, productive collaborations, and effective support from public sources that have created a thriving local economic ecosystem here in Northfield.

Reunion – Eat, Drink, Gather is perhaps the poster child of this movement, having opened in May 2019 after more than a year of construction at the corner of Division and 5th. Over 12,000 square feet of space across three historic buildings (originally built in 1878, 1901, and 1904) were remodeled and refashioned into an original restaurant concept that will surely be an anchor destination in downtown Northfield for years to come.

Armory Square Event Center and Imminent Brewing have been around slightly longer but are still relatively new kids on the block (literally – they are just



Cover photo:
Tanzewald interior.
Bottom left:
Tanzewald exterior,
before. Bottom
Right: Tanzewald
exterior, after.



Reunion is thought of as the poster child of the business trend emerging in downtown Northfield - originality and community focused. Exterior of Reunion before, left, and after, right.

down the block from Reunion). These two businesses transformed the vacant 1915-built National Guard Armory and its attached garage into modern, hip spaces that play host to musicians, artists, food trucks and pop-up community meals throughout the year (not to mention the great beer).

Speaking of beer, Tanzenwald Brewing arose across the river right around the same time, in the spring of 2017. What began in 1887 as a pump house for the municipal water system, then a steam engine servicing station, then a working creamery, and finally a derelict eyesore along Highway 3 has become an essential gathering space for those who love food and drink that is globally inspired but locally sourced.

Eco Gardens similarly took what used to be a rundown gas station and service center near the heart of downtown and created an iconic garden store specializing in plants grown organically. The relative elder statesmen of the bunch, they've been

offering unique varieties of annuals, perennials, heirlooms, natives, and more since 2010. They also received matching funds from the City's streetscape improvement budget to construct an attractive retaining wall and other landscaping on the property, which greatly added to the area's

“NORTHFIELD HAS THEIR SHARE OF ISSUES, INCLUDING RETROFITTING OUR AGING BUILDING STOCK TO BE SAFER AND MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES.”

aesthetic.

Last, but certainly not least, Little Joy Coffee opened in the spring of 2019, renovating what had most recently been a clothing boutique in the historic 133 year-old John Sitze building into a warm, inviting space with an industrial-chic vibe that could easily fit into any thriving urban neighborhood across the country. As the retail outgrowth of Groundwire Coffee Roasters, Little Joy benefited from an outpouring of community investment through

online crowdfunding platforms, an EDA micro-grant, and agreements with other downtown businesses such as Just Food Co-Op and Brick Oven Bakery to sell Groundwire's thoughtfully sourced and locally roasted beans.

These businesses are indeed the

bright new stars of downtown Northfield, and they fit perfectly alongside Division Street stalwarts like the Rare Pair, Goodbye Blue Monday, and Hogan Brothers

Acoustic Café. But I also don't want to paint an overly rosy picture of downtown, either. We still deal with our share of issues, not the least of which includes retrofitting our aging building stock to be safer and more accessible for people of all ages and abilities. What the above examples prove, though, is that with thoughtful planning, creative investment, and broad-based community support we can continue to thrive and meet the demands of a changing world.

It comes as no surprise to those



Imminent Brewing, exterior, left. Armory owners, Armory interior, right.

knowledgeable about historic preservation, urban placemaking, and local economic development that proactively investing in and marketing a community’s existing assets can generate significant dividends in the long run. Success requires ongoing attention to market and demographic conditions, persistent imagination in adapting and reusing spaces, and constant commitment to the principle that the best solutions to local problems are derived locally. All of this is rooted in a community’s history but ultimately depends on the business community’s ability to evolve and the general

population’s willingness to buy into changes that make sense in relation to global trends and local context.

This is simply stated but difficult, of course, to achieve. Progress is often slow and painstaking, but it is frequently punctuated by bursts of new opportunities that can generate sustained momentum with the right mix of private and public investment. I believe we are living through one of those moments, despite the volatile political and economic times we find ourselves in.

Northfield was once a pioneer of the historic preservation movement, having established its downtown

historic district in 1978 and earning a spot in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. Upon this foundation we are now seeking to do more than just preserve our history; we are working to create it.

To learn more about all of our Main Street communities, visit rethos.org/rethos-main-streets.



BEFORE AND AFTER: ECO GARDENS

Eco Gardens took what used to be a rundown gas station and service center near the heart of downtown and reimagined it into an iconic garden store specializing in plants grown organically. They’ve been offering unique varieties of annuals, perennials, heirlooms, natives, and more since 2010. They also received matching funds from the City’s streetscape improvement budget to construct an attractive retaining wall and other landscaping on the property, which greatly added to the area’s aesthetic.

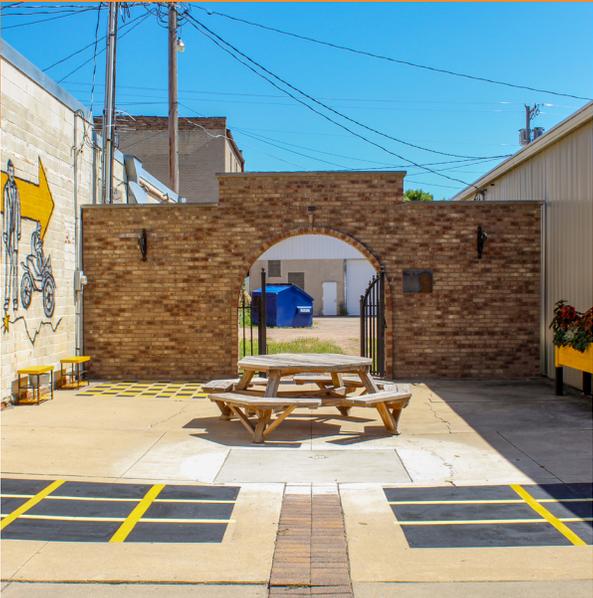
Top: Site of Eco Gardens prior to rehabilitation. Bottom: Completed renovation of Eco Gardens.

ARTISTS ON MAIN STREET



Artists on Main Street is a program by Rethos in partnership with Springboard for the Arts, with support from the Bush Foundation.

2019 Artist Projects



From top left: Fantasy Landscapes, Joey Feaster, Faribault; Nagi Abdullahi & Fardowsa Ibrahim, Somali Celebration Day, Willmar; Jess Gorman and Adam Pruess, Dowling Square, Olivia; Suzanne Daehlin, Love Makes the World Go Round, Northfield; Wendy Cockrell, A Corny Affair, Wabasha; Catie Deysachs and Jamie Schwaba, Main ReACTION, Winona; Patti Ruskey and Heather Hamilton, Free to the People Theatre, Mankato



SING ALONG WITH ME

Over the course of a year musician Kashimana Ahua and residents of Willmar, MN created what is essentially a soundtrack to the town.

As part of the InCommon composer in residence program, St. Paul based musician Kashimana Ahua led multiple workshops where she taught the art of songwriting with diverse groups. The end result is a 60-plus page songbook that serves as a snapshot of the past and present

of Willmar.

Every month, Kashimana would host a couple workshops across a variety of settings. Such places ranged from coffee shops, senior living facilities, churches, 5th grade classrooms, and just about every meeting space you can imagine. The result is

Along with performances of the songs written by Kashimana, Willmar residents were able to participate in several fun activities, such as sidewalk chalk stencils, giant Connect 4s, and opportunities to play instruments with their neighbors.

Far Right: Drum circle with Willmar residents. Right: Sidewalk chalk stencils. Photo credit: Willmar Main Street



a diverse set of reflections and feelings across generations, wholly different yet all connected through their experiences in Willmar. According to Kashimana she tried to get people to tell their stories, being raw and honest through the accessibility of songwriting. The best part of this, she says, was seeing people make connections who hadn't before. Most notably this happened at the community integration center (a Somali run organization) where some participants had their first interactions with the community at large. Groups would talk about what was going on personally at the time, then they would work to weave those emotions together through personal storytelling.

"Every writing session was a bit different," she says. These often led to unintended results. "The fastest writing sessions was with the 5th grade elementary students from Kennedy. One day was a snow day and we had like 35 minutes to do a song after a two hour delay. Music, lyrics, everything... The song was pretty much perfect when I walked out of that class." Once the sessions were finished there was a need to share the work with the community at large. That's when

Sarah Swedburg, Willmar's Artist on Main Street Director, came into the fold. Utilizing Artists on Main Street the two of them found the biggest front porch on main street at the Unitarian Universalist Church and set out to have a party. The results was a quasi-potluck on the front lawn where people could come share in a meal and music that was a true reflection of the town. Initially Kahimana was nervous about the event, wondering if anyone would show up or attend, or if they would have too many people attend. Around 100 people showed up, the "perfect amount" according to Kahimana. Attendees included those who had already participated in the writing aspect of the project, but also those who weren't involved in the project at all.

Sarah Swedburg remembers seeing people wander up off the street intrigued by all of the activity, "It felt like a personal neighborhood event," she recalls. "While the event was an intimate but rewarding affair, all involved hope that it will continue to thrive and grow." Kashimana sees the songbook itself as a living document to be added to for the purposes of community pride and collaboration.

It is her hope that through this type of interaction and exchange people might gather, get to know each other, and learn what they all have in common.

To explore all the 2019 Artists on Main Street projects, visit rethos.org/artists-on-main-street



Cover photo: Musicians (including Kashimana), performing on the front porch of the Unitarian Universalist Church. Above: Children play with oversized Connect 4's during the Sing Along. Photo Credit: Willmar Main Street.

PEACE



ART POLE

Artist Tamara Isfeld brought peace to Olivia's streets with bright, colorful poles created by the community.

Peace can come in many forms for different people and cultures across the world. For Olivia, MN the concept of peace meant working together through art to create a series of decorative poles around town. Over 6 sessions of workshops and conversations a diverse group of citizens created the artwork under the guise of being mindful to one another and the work as a whole.

Artist Tamara Isfeld would begin each workshop with a conversation about peace and what can bring peace. These conversations were aimed at revealing what can allow for both individual

and widespread peace. From there the groups, consisting of people as young as 4 and as old as 80 across the town's diverse cultures, would sit and paint sections of boards that would later be fastened together to create large poles.

In Nester Park, individual citizens and whole families gathered to paint, with the ability to choose a variety of stencils and paint markers or brushes. While painting there was an emphasis on not covering up anyone else's work in order to enhance the collaborative spirit, and to bring peace through respecting everyone's expression. To ensure

that everyone could paint, additional assistance was provided to those who were unable to hold or fully operate the paint brushes. In total 36 boards were painted and eventually fastened together to create the square poles.

The result is a colorful explosion of ideas now situated around Olivia. Across the peace poles one finds multi-colored flowers interspersed with wrapping vines, inspirational quotes, abstract expressions of love, and textured with a variety of patterns. Situated mostly along main street, the peace poles provide uplifting moments to those

“ACCORDING TO ISFELD, ART DOESN’T ONLY BELONG IN A MUSEUM”

walking by, and pop with vibrancy to invoke intrigue for those driving past them.

As the face of small town America is changing, Tamara Isfeld sees art as the bridge to connect people regardless of cultural experience or language, she states that in this space there are no mental or physical barriers and everyone’s value is acknowledged. Through the shared experience of creating bonds are formed and people are also able to laugh together over the little triumphs of a painting come together or the silly mishaps of a cup of paint tipping over. This form of connection also lends to a feeling that anyone can create art and that it comes in a variety of forms. According to Isfeld, art doesn’t only belong in a museum, and though people were apprehensive at first she sees the excitement snowballing as community is built and reinforced through shared artistic experience.

To explore all of the 2019 Artists on Main Street projects, visit rethos.org/artists-on-main-street.



Cover photo: Armed with a variety of paint brushes, residents put their creations on wooden poles. Top right: Finished peace poles in downtown Olivia. Right: Residents work together on their peace pole creations in Nester Park.

NEW ULM'S GERMAN HERITAGE

How would you define and prioritize the cultural assets of the place you call home? Beginning in July 2019 Rethos partnered with local residents in New Ulm, MN for an assessment of their downtown area. This downtown assessment identified community assets to provide cultural activation strategies for better serving the wants and needs of New Ulm residents, as well as providing a cultural framework to draw new ideas from.

Over a six month period Rethos' Rural Programs team engaged the community in a number of ways. A preliminary partnership with the downtown assessment steering committee and New Ulm Chamber of Commerce helped to identify stakeholders and gather initial information about the town. Rethos staff then put boots to the ground and over a series of visits met with business owners, city leaders, stakeholders, and New Ulm residents broadly to discuss their thoughts, both positive and negative, of downtown New Ulm. During these visits Rethos staff met community members where they're at, talking to people in restaurants, boutiques, bars, parks, and at community events. These engagements led to in person conversations with over 300 residents and an online survey resulting in 561 local responses. In these conversations we identified distinct cultural assets of the neighborhood: the places, stories, and features that make downtown unique. Major themes emerged that told the story of downtown New Ulm: pride in the German heritage of the town, affection for the iconic downtown

George's Bar and Ballroom, now vacant, looms over New Ulm's downtown with its iconic neon sign.





The Grand Hotel

Along with being a staple of arts and culture in New Ulm's downtown district, the rehabilitated Grand Hotel is featured in the 2019 Historic Tax Credit Economic Impact Report as a successful case study. Reimagined with only \$2.4M, the project generated \$16.60 per dollar of State Historic Tax Credit dollar.

Left: Exterior, The Grand Center for Arts and Culture. Bottom: Grand Dining and Music Venue.



look combined with German architectural flair, generations of families making New Ulm business their lives' work, a tradition of festivals and celebrations in the downtown, and the desire to keep downtown New Ulm as a gathering and business space for all ages.

The results of these conversations and surveys were compiled into a report of what New Ulm holds dear as well as what residents desire. In addition to the report a GIS story map was constructed featuring downtown's most beloved businesses and institutions both past and present. Including former icons of downtown New Ulm was pivotal to the story map as many residents still mourn the loss of downtown anchors and longtime staples such as Herbergers, George's Ballroom, and Retzlaff Hardware to name a few. This map is also managed by the New Ulm Chamber of Commerce who are capable of adding, editing, and customizing moving forward.

Featured within the story map are also intangible cultural characteristics, or the most mentioned phrases and feelings that people use to define

The New Ulm Journal Office.





downtown New Ulm. In many ways these characteristics serve as the basis for dissecting the rest of the map and the town as a whole. For example New Ulm's strong German heritage could be linked to the abundance of restaurants and gathering spaces as a reflection of traditional German ways of socializing, celebrating, and community engagement.

Once the report and story map were completed two community presentations were held in New Ulm to discuss the findings with New Ulm residents. Findings ranged from favorite businesses and ways of identifying the town to what residents felt was most needed downtown; with a men's clothing store, a shoe store, a grocery store, and improvements to parking laws and availability being at the top of the list.

The report also detailed additional recurring themes from conversations such as the town's feeling of personal responsibility towards businesses. New Ulm residents feel a personal obligation to shop local, dine, local, spend their dollars locally. They feel a desire to keep their town alive and vibrant, in turn young entrepreneurs are stepping up and making New Ulm a place that they want to be. Not

only are new businesses opening up, young entrepreneurs are taking over existing businesses, ensuring a future for these cornerstone shops while forming a lasting legacy of retail built on the natural evolution and needs of New Ulm.

German heritage was also a major theme discussed, with the report showing differences in generational attitudes of the idea of an *ausländer* German for foreigners. With younger residents placing far less importance on whether or not someone was or

wasn't born and raised in New Ulm. These examples are only a sampling of what is included in the report which concludes with a number of recommendations and opportunities that New Ulm might utilize moving forward.

While the community can look at the information presented in the report

Top: Marktplatz Mall metal sign that looms over a parking garage in New Ulm's downtown district. Below: Popcorn Wagon outside of City Hall downtown.



OTTER TAIL COUNTY DOWNTOWN ASSESSMENT

A localized county wide assessment of cultural stories is currently underway throughout Otter Tail County in Northwest Minnesota, with residents providing on the ground community engagement through unique funded projects. This model is a partnership between Rethos, Otter Tail County Historical Society (OTCHS), and Springboard for the Arts (SFTA) with each organization utilizing their unique strengths to equip locals with the tools necessary to explore cultural and community development in creative ways.

On January 30th and 31st a series of workshops were held throughout Otter Tail County at the Henning Landmark Center, New York Mills Cultural Center, and Pelican Rapids Public Library. During these workshops project partners presented information on story mapping, methods of gathering community stories, how to recognize cultural heritage assets, and example forms that the projects might take. These broad

forms range from one on one oral history collection to creative and public projects such as Randi Campbell's Artist on Main project, Moments in Wabasha.

The workshops utilized Rethos experience of identifying cultural heritage along with SFTA's expertise in creative placemaking and community engagement to give participants tools to better empower their own local experience and projects. Once the workshops were completed participants became eligible to apply for project funds to help implement and promote their creative cultural asset projects. Participants will then engage new perspectives in identifying overlooked cultural assets that are important to Otter Tail County's history and identity.

Through this process we hope to empower locals in Otter Tail County to bring greater awareness to, and build relationships around, the people, places, events, cultural traditions, and objects that are important to local residents.



Above: Interior of Ulmer Cafe.

and draw their own recommendations, the plan can be used as a framework to develop marketing and tourism initiatives, a platform for business and resident retainment and recruitment, a building block for seeking various types of investment, or as a planning tool to build additional strategies for growth and revitalization. This story map serves as an interactive way to identify what the residents of New Ulm value most, which in turn can help the city or other organizations in identifying areas of need, implementing new policies or initiatives, organizing events, and other avenues of creative project based planning.

Downtown assessment work is continuing in other communities as well, with early work and partnerships being developed in Litchfield and Willmar for 2020. In essence, downtown assessments are a testament to what makes downtown unique and special to residents. It articulates the legacy of downtown, the specific qualities that define it in the present, and a vision for growth that will carry it towards a thriving future.

If your community is interested in an assessment please contact Rethos Rural Programs for more information.



PLACES REIMAGINED

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