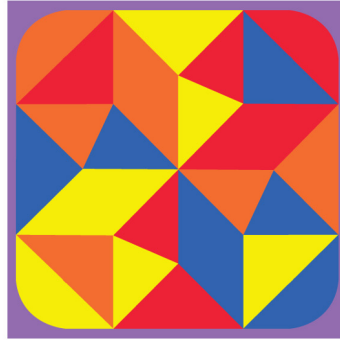


## Legacy Fund Request

**HF396  
and  
SF645**



# Great River Children's Museum

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*Appropriate \$250,000 in 2020 and \$275,000 in 2021 from the arts and cultural heritage fund to develop a children's museum in central Minnesota*

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The former Liberty Bank building, valued at \$1.4 million, was donated to the Great River Children's Museum in December 2018. This historic downtown building is over 20,000 sq. ft. and highly visible from Highway 23 in Saint Cloud, the hub of central Minnesota.



Mark Bragelman & company handing the keys to Glen Palm and board members.

***Developing a place where every child and their caring adults can create, explore, discover and be inspired through the extraordinary power of play.***

### **The Great River Children's Museum will...**

- **develop foundational skills in young children.**

Children's museums combine learning with play in environments that are engaging, fun and developmentally appropriate for children ages 0-10. Art, science, math, literacy and other exhibits and programs would be valuable supplements to early childhood and K-12 programs in our area.

- **strengthen family connections through creativity, exploration and play.**

Children's museums are places away from work and household distractions, where parents and other caregivers can be entertained, learn something new, and experience the luxury of quality time with the children in their lives.

- **serve as a town square to bring community members together.**

The well-being of children is a strong motivator for community investment and action. A children's museum will engage families, individual citizens, schools, and area businesses to share their talents and perspectives in order to create and operate a valuable community resource.

- **address community diversity in a unique way.**

Children's museums are popular sources of information, attract a diverse cross-section of people and provide shared experiences through interpretive and interactive exhibits. In the St. Cloud community, we have an opportunity to create museum programs and exhibits that include stories of both recent immigrants and long-term residents of our area, building bridges of understanding across cultures and times.

- **contribute to the local economy as a destination attraction.**

Children's museums are sought after as local and travel destinations. More than 30 million individuals annually visit children's museums around the world. Children's museums in similar sized Midwest communities have attracted 60-100,000 visitors each year.

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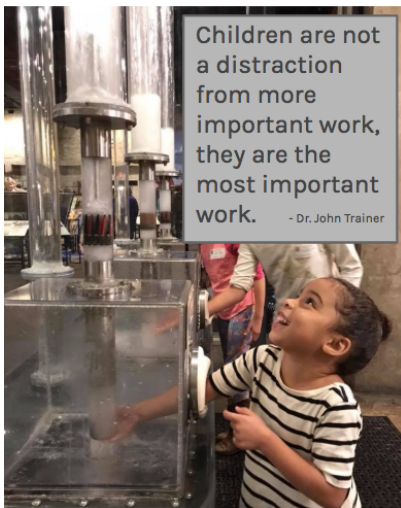
*Next steps:*

*Address immediate safety concerns in order to host a series of “Play, Explore & Learn Labs” in our building and gather community input.*

*Work with an architectural firm and museum planners to create a master plan for the museum.*

*Launch a capital campaign for a phased approach to remodeling and museum exhibit development.*

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Central Minnesota families are excited to have high quality museum experiences accessible to them.



## **With the Support of the Community and Its Children**

### **Excitement for this project begins with children and grows**

The Great River Children's Museum has garnered community wide support that continues to grow. We have volunteers from all sectors of the community including health care, education, business and finance assisting with everything from technology to marketing. We have raised nearly \$200,000 in funds from individuals, aided in part by a successful \$25,000 matching campaign. Support begins locally with the mayor and city council and extends to the Minnesota Children's Museum and nationwide to the Association of Children's Museum of which we are a member organization. We are in collaboration with the Stearns History Museum, our local United Way, and area schools to name just a few. In a touching show of support, one group of homeschoolers reached out to us because they voted to give the proceeds from their annual fundraiser to the Great River Children's Museum. Each year, students and parents in the group create arts and crafts which they sell to raise money for a local charity. This year they wanted to support an organization that shares their values of creating space in children's lives for learning through play and the importance of adults creating, exploring and discovering the world alongside children.

## **With the Support of the Legislature**

### **We thank you for considering funding this regional project**

The Great River Children's Museum got its name due to the regional nature of this project. The children's museum unites everyone in the community from diverse backgrounds to learn about each other and the world we share. The Mississippi River is a resource that unites us as it flows through central Minnesota collecting water from various tributaries. We look forward to creating playful exhibits that will teach children and families about the river, the history of the region, and the cultural backgrounds of all who make up the fabric of this culturally rich area of the country. We believe it is an excellent use of the Arts and Cultural Legacy Fund that will make a long-lasting contribution to greater Minnesota.

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