

# The Historic Duluth Armory

## HF 2680/SF 2641



The Armory Arts and Music Center (AAMC) is asking the state of Minnesota for \$7.5 million to fund design and construction for rehabilitation of the historic Duluth Armory and elements of the North Country Creative Center. This \$7.5 million will match a combination of federal money, state and federal tax credits, and state grants.

### Background:

The Duluth Armory is a former armory and event venue in the East Hillside area of Duluth. It was built in 1915 for the National Guard and Naval Militia and Reserve and expanded in 1941.

In 1978, it was purchased by the city and its use as an armory was discontinued. Since 2000, the armory has been threatened with demolition, though the city recently lifted the demolition order. Since the acquisition of the building in 2003, the non-profit Armory Arts and Music Center has been working to rehabilitate the building as a cultural venue, including investing nearly \$5 million in establishing a firm foundation for the proposed restoration project.

The Duluth Armory was listed on the National Record of Historic Places in 2011 for its state-level significance in the theme of military history and local significance in the theme of entertainment/recreation. It was nominated for its role as the home base of a critical port for peacekeeping and disaster response forces, and for being Duluth's largest cultural event venue until 1966.

### The Duluth Armory

The Duluth Armory honors the past and reimagines the future while providing important community space for economic and entrepreneurial development, arts and culture, and a place for history to come alive for future generations.

- History
  - The foundational history of the armory as a military training center will be showcased throughout the renovated facility. Built in 1915, military personnel from throughout the northland trained here for over 50 years, especially the Minnesota National Guard and Duluth Naval Militia and Reserve. The Naval Reserve not only provided naval training but played a key role in peacekeeping and disaster response for the Port of Duluth and surrounding area. Coordinating with the Minnesota Military Museum, the story of these service men and women will be honored in the Hall of Heroes.
  - At the same time, the Armory played an important role as a community gathering place and the cultural and entertainment hub of the Duluth region.
- Economic and Entrepreneurial Development
  - The old drill hall will be the centerpiece of a vibrant mixed-use commercial space; with a public marketplace filled with small businesses and food vendors. This will be an opportunity for entrepreneurs who may not be able to afford a storefront to have a retail space.
  - The lower level will contain a large-scale community kitchen space that can be used by a variety of food entrepreneurs.
  - The old barracks and officers' quarters will be available as office and business space; creating an encouraging space for small businesses to grow or expand.



- Arts and Culture

- Restoration of historic Duluth Armory stage will be a focal point to the mixed-use commercial space; allows the opportunity to foster local and regional talent and keep the space active and fresh.
- North Country Creative Center will be an exhibit space that celebrates the creative spark of the people and entertainers who were at the Duluth Armory. This includes Duluth native Bob Dylan who will have a permanent exhibit showcasing his ties to the Armory, Duluth, and Hibbing.
- Music Resource Center is an after-school music education program for area teens is currently operating in a nearby facility with plans to re-locate to the Duluth Armory once it is renovated.

**Economic Benefits:**

The rehabilitation of the Duluth Armory will provide a broad range of economic benefits to the region with the potential to directly employ hundreds of people, serve the neighborhood, while becoming a top tourist destination in northern Minnesota.

- Will provide economic opportunities to the neighborhood with a higher percentage of BIPOC residents living in it than the rest of Duluth; both in terms of business ownership and jobs.
- Will support small incubator businesses across a broad array of industries; but especially connected to food.
- Will provide a music and entertainment venue for students, local and regional artists.

**Financial Detail:**

- The total project cost to rehabilitate the Duluth Armory is estimated to approximately \$25 million, with the state being asked to provide \$7.5 million from the general fund through DEED.
- The new Duluth Armory will be owned by an LLC with the non-profit AAMC and Sherman Associates as members and partners. Sherman Associates will be the developer and will manage the rehabilitated Armory.
- The state general fund grant will be spent on design, and construction related costs for the restoration of the Duluth Armory—including critical infrastructure improvements and building enhancements.



*The Duluth Armory has a long history as a transformational place – a building that inspired greatness. It has served as a training facility for military units in World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam; as host to the who’s who of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – from Johnny Cash to Bob Hope and Buddy Holly and Harry Truman; and as a place filled with memories for generations of Northern Minnesota families. Our vision is to take this historic building that northern Minnesota holds so dear and reimagine it for the future; honoring the past while updating it for the next 100 years.*

**For more information, please contact:**

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# COMMUNITY SUPPORT

23rd Veterans

ACCT

Aimclear LLC

Alakef Coffee Roaster

APEX

Bent Paddle Brewing

Commissioner Patrick Boyle

Catalyst Story Institute

City of Duluth

Duluth Area Chamber of  
Commerce

Duluth Dylan Fest

Duluth Fiber Guild

Duluth Grill

Duluth LISC

Duluth Playhouse

Duluth Pottery

Duluth Preservation Alliance

Duluth Superior Area  
Community Foundation

Duluth Superior Symphony  
Orchestra

Entrepreneur Fund

Family Rise Together

First Avenue

F. I. Salter Realty

Forging Community

Greater Downtown Council

Grandma's Restaurants

Hanft Fride Law Firm

Hexagon Productions

Hibbing Dylan Project

Hibbing Historical Society

Sandy Hoff

Hunt Electric

Johnson Wilson  
Constructors

AW Kuetel & Sons

LHB

Lake Superior Sustainable  
Farming Association

Mayor Emily Larson

Love Creamery

Lion Hotel Group

Lyric Opera of the North

Mavo Systems

Minnesota Farmers Union  
Minnesota Military

And Veterans Museum

Laura Fryberger Mullen

National Bank of Commerce

Don Ness

New History

Northern Bedrock Historic  
Preservation Corps

Northland Small Business  
Development Center

Northspan

Ordean Foundation

Councilor Roz Randorf

Real Estate Consultants

RETHOS

Jack Seiler

Sherman Associates

St. Louis County Historical  
Society

St. Luke's

Senator Tina Smith

Twin Ports Culinary  
Academy

USS Duluth Crewmembers  
Association

Valentini's

Vikre Distillery

Zeitgeist Center for the  
Arts and Community

Zenith Research Group Inc.



# ARTISTS & MUSICIANS FOR THE DULUTH ARMORY

\*Performed at the Duluth Armory

\*\*Performed in AAMC Benefit Concerts

\*\*\*Performed at both

Steve Addabbo\*\*  
 Steve Aldrich, Winterwood\*  
 Eric Andersen, The Songpoet\*\*  
 Don Anderson, The New Dynamics\*  
 Tony Andreason, The Trashmen\*  
 Fredy Argir  
 Paul Berdahl, Stillroven\*  
 The Big Wu\*\*  
 Darin Bergsven\*\*  
 Born Too Late\*\*  
 Bill Bulinski, The Electras\*  
 Sarah Burton\*\*  
 Jan Cartier, The Corvairs\*  
 MN Mike Chase, KOWZ  
 Communist Daughter\*\*  
 Jimmy Cooper, The Fractals\*\*  
 Denny Craswell, Castaways and  
 Crow\*  
 Ralph Dacut\*\*  
 Rick Davern, The Emotional\*  
 Dennis Donovan, Midas Touch\*  
 Rod Eaton, TC Atlantic\*  
 Todd Eckart\*\*  
 Jerry Fink, The Electras\*  
 Matt Fink, The Revolution\*\*  
 Arne Fogel\*\*  
 James Geisler\*\*  
 Len Gel  
 Low  
 Germain Gemberling\*\*  
 Amy Grillo\*\*  
 Warren Grillo, The Reknowns\*  
 Barry Thomas Goldberg\*\*  
 Steve Grossman\*\*  
 Billy Hallquist, Thundertree\*\*\*

Ed Howard, The Corvairs\*  
 Jeff Jarvinen, Promoter\*  
 Denny Johnson, Jokers Wild\*  
 Tom Johnson, The Chaparrels\*  
 Wings Kalahan, Hot Rod Radio  
 Louis Kemp, Rolling Thunder Revue  
 Stan Kipper\*\*  
 Tom Klugherz, The Gestures\*  
 Lonnie Knight, Jokers Wild\*\*\*  
 Kenny Krona\*\*  
 Gene LaFond\*\*  
 Doni Larson, The Underbeats\*  
 Gaelynn Lea\*\*  
 Sherwin Linton\*  
 James Loney, Lolo's Ghost\*\*  
 Gary Lopac\*\*  
 Tracy Lundeen, Promoter\*  
 Rich Mattson\*\*  
 Rick McClean  
 George McLellan, The Titans\*  
 Dale Menten, The Gestures\*  
 Paul Metsa\*\*  
 Barbara Meyer\*\*  
 Tom Michaels, Local DJ MC\*  
 Jim Mills, Tammy & the Bachelors\*  
 Sam Miltich\*\*  
 Morning Bird  
 John Murray, The New Dynamics\*  
 Colleen Myhre\*\*  
 Ed Newman\*\*  
 Chet Orr and the Rumbles\*  
 Reid Papke\*\*  
 Charlie Parr  
 Chico Perez\*\*  
 Marc Percansky, Producer\*\*

Barry Pirkola, The Fractals\*\*  
 Marvin Pomeroy, The Fractals\*\*  
 Cheryl Prashker\*\*  
 The Rayman, KOOL 1-1 DJ MC\*  
 Scarlet Rivera\*\*  
 Gary Rue\*\*  
 Jack Rygg, The New Dynamics\*  
 Mike Salek, The Emeralds\*  
 Charles Schoen, Del Counts\*  
 Rick Shefchik, Author  
 Dale Siegfroid, KOWJ DJ  
 Jeff Slate, Musician and Writer  
 Dave Slattery, Yes It Is\*  
 Greg Smetna, The Emeralds\*  
 Alan Sparhawk\*\*  
 Jim Steinworth\*\*  
 Rob Stoner  
 Superior Siren  
 Lone Tomasetti, The Reknowns\*  
 Travelons\*\*  
 Tom Unterberger, Sacred Heart  
 Bobby Vee\*  
 Robby Vee\*\*  
 Jiffy Jeff Volman, WKLK Radio  
 Ingborg von Agassiz  
 David Waggoner, Crow\*  
 Mike Waggoner and The Bops\*\*\*  
 Darryn Wallace, The Fractals  
 James Walsh, Gypsy\*  
 Rob Wheeler\*\*  
 Larry Wiegand, Crow\*  
 Dal Winslow, The Trashmen\*  
 Courtney Yasmineh\*\*