

The Latina/o/x History and Cultural Center on St. Paul's West Side

Rondo Community Land Trust (CLT) and the West Side Community Organization (WSCO) join in partnership to steward and realize the vision for a Latino History and Cultural Center (The Center) located on the West Side of Saint Paul. The project will center arts and culture to showcase the rich history and contemporary contributions of Latina/o/x communities across Minnesota. While additional community engagement is planned for the proposed site, a coalition of stakeholders including artists, residents, community leaders, elected officials, scholars, and more have envisioned a space featuring:

- a permanent historical exhibit highlighting Latina/o/x economic, cultural, and political contributions to the state of Minnesota beginning with the late 19th century Mexican migration to the West Side flats, the establishment of urban Latina/o/x communities along Cesar Chavez Street in St Paul and Minneapolis' Lake Street, and the vibrant communities in greater Minnesota such as those established in Worthington and Wilmar
- a rotating visual gallery to exhibit local, national, and international artists
- artist studios and/or lofts for artist residencies
- a Café Teatro, a music lounge to showcase poetry nights, comedy, music, and other live performance art while immersed in a Latina/o/x culinary experience
- classroom spaces for artists to lead workshops on traditional and contemporary artforms
- a flexible black box space for performance art, dance, and theater
- a community meeting and programming space

Latina/o/xs in Minnesota

Latina/o/x communities have a rich and deep history in Minnesota. Art and culture have been central components of the community's contributions to the state. The first recorded Minnesota resident of Mexican descent was in fact an artist. During the late 19th century, the increase of Mexican migration north to Minnesota was propelled by agricultural, railroad, and meat packing industries. Workers who decided to live year-round built a rich cultural neighborhood including places of worship, stores, schools, and homes. Today, we comprise roughly 6% of MN's population making Latina/o/xs the third largest demographic group in the state. Over the past twenty years, the Latina/o/x population growth accounts for 26% of the state's total population growth. These numbers will continue to rise as Latina/o/x youth are a rapidly growing sector of the state's population (in 2020 Latina/o/x under 18 comprised 37% compared to the state's population under 18 at 23%). While the majority of Latinos live in the Twin Cities, rural communities have a significant population, for example in Worthington (32.6% of the population) and Willmar (13.5% of the population). Latinos have a purchasing power of \$5.4 billion and the highest labor force participation rate in the state.

Rondo Community Land Trust (CLT) and West Side Community Organization (WSCO)

Founded in 1993, Rondo Community Land Trust (CLT) is a community-based affordable housing & commercial land trust operating in St. Paul & Suburban Ramsey County. The West Side Community Organization (WSCO) works to increase the civic participation of residents by initiating organizing campaigns, providing leadership development opportunities for youth and adults, and by educating and building the power of residents to create the community they envision.

To Learn More

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