



A program of the Ramsey County Historical Society
Additional Material Regarding Our Request for Capital Support

Key Needs Addressed by Gibbs Farm Master Plan

The following are the highlights of the needs addressed by the Gibbs Farm Master Plan for which Ramsey County Historical Society is requesting assistance from the State of Minnesota.

Meet Educator/Student Education Needs

Students and educators are required to learn about early Minnesota history, including the history of immigrants and indigenous populations. A significant proportion of elementary school teachers self-identify as not being well enough equipped to teach these topics. Gibbs Farm helps teachers meet the needs of their students but cannot serve any additional students as a seasonal site.

Transition from seasonal to year-round operations: This will double the Gibbs Farm capacity for student tours, increasing from 15,000+ to 30,000.

Shelter from Inclement Weather: Programming is currently disrupted by weather, resulting in more than 1,000 students losing access to scheduled field trips last year.

Year-Round Afterschool Program: Built on the model developed for Investigate MN!, the proposed afterschool program will include on-site and off-site programming designed to enhance academic performance for 200 students/day.

More Restrooms: The restroom facilities are overwhelmed by the current visitor count; as the total number of visitors increases, restrooms and hand washing stations need to increase.

Meet Community Cultural Preservation Needs

RGHS has been entrusted as the repository for more than 2.5 million documents and 14,000 artifacts by individuals, organizations, and local units of government. Currently, 22% of RGHS storage spaces meet acceptable museum standards. Gibbs Farm is also a resource for individuals and organizations seeking to preserve the cultural practices and language of Indigenous communities. This project will address both of these community needs.

Artifact Display and Storage Space: The addition of 3,000 sf of purpose-built preservation space and 1,500 sf of viewable storage/education space will address community preservation needs for the foreseeable future.

Language Preservation & Cultural Practices Space: Outdoor spaces that allow the practice of Indigenous cultural traditions will address a variety of needs and will be adjacent to shelter while administrative space indoors will support the work of partners, including Dakota Wicohan.

Other Needs Addressed

Accessibility: The site will become more accessible to individuals experiencing mobility, vision, and hearing challenges.

Partners: A wide range of partner organizations will have access to program and administrative spaces. The site will sustain ongoing partnerships that are currently seasonal in nature.

Financial Sustainability: The project will support expanded earned revenue streams and catalyze fundraising efforts to support existing and new programs.



Education is Essential at RCHS/Gibbs Farm

- **Gibbs Farm serves more than 15,000 students on-site every year**, serving schools in 38 districts from all over the region last year.
- The total reach of education programs at Gibbs Farm in 2019 was **22,900 students and educators** through field trips, outreach to schools, and summer group programs.
- **All Gibbs Farm programs address Minnesota State Education Standards** for each K-5 grade level. *Examples are included on the next page.*
- **RCHS created *Investigate MN!*, a six-week, museum-based summer school program** with the goals of reducing summer learning loss and shrinking the achievement gap by using regional cultural resources, including Gibbs Farm and a dozen other partner organizations. *Investigate MN!* served 50 young scholars grades 5-7 each of the past five summers and is boosting academic achievement.

Recent School Districts Served (past 10 months, excludes Wisconsin Schools)

◇ ISD 12	◇ ISD 279	◇ Anoka-Hennepin	◇ Hopkins	◇ Robbinsdale	◇ Stillwater
◇ ISD 16	◇ ISD 622	◇ Central	◇ Minneapolis Public Schools	◇ St. Louis Park	◇ Wayzata
◇ ISD 194	◇ ISD 623	◇ Edina	◇ Moundsview	◇ St. Paul Public Schools	◇ Westonka
◇ ISD 195	◇ ISD 624	◇ Forest Lake	◇ Northfield	◇ Somerset	
◇ ISD 197	◇ ISD 832	◇ Fridley	◇ Norwood	◇ South Washington County	
◇ ISD 199	◇ ISD 2975	◇ Glenwood City	◇ Prior Lake-Savage		
◇ ISD 271	◇ Aldon Conger	◇ Hastings			

Site Weather Constraints

Gibbs Farm operates as a seasonal site and is serving as many students as it can accommodate. This means that any inclement weather results in field trip cancellations, most of which can not be rescheduled. For example, in the 2019 season, **11 schools had to cancel their field trip to Gibbs Farm due to inclement weather, resulting in 1,108 students unable to attend a field trip.** Evolving to a year-round operation is necessary to meet existing and future demand for the unique programs offered at Gibbs Farm.

Community Partnerships

Aligning resources to create effective, authentic, and engaging programs unique to Gibbs Farm

Some of our partners include:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| • Dakhóta Iápi Okhódakičhiye | • The Bell Museum |
| • Dakota Wicohan | • The Good Acre |
| • University of Minnesota Dakota Language Department | • Ramsey County |
| | • City of Falcon Heights |
| | • Wargo Nature Center |



Dakota Tour

Students learn about the seasonal life of the Dakota of Cloud Man's village in the 1830s, including going inside a real tipi and replica bark lodge.

MN State Standards Met (2nd Grade):

The Nature of Science and Engineering

- Identify a need or a problem and construct an object that helps to meet the need or solve the problem.
- Explain how engineered or designed items from everyday life benefit people.



History

- Use historical records and artifacts to describe how people's lives have changed over time.
- Compare and contrast daily life for Minnesota Dakota peoples in different times, including before European contact and today.
- Describe how the culture of a community reflects the history, daily lives or beliefs of its people.

Pioneer Tour

Students learn about the life of pioneers Jane and Heman Gibbs by touring the Gibbs Historic Farmhouse, schoolhouse, replica Soddy.

MN State Standards Met (1st Grade):

The Nature of Science and Engineering

- Recognize that describing things as accurately as possible is important in science because it enables people to compare their observations with those of others.
- Recognize that tools are used by people, including scientists and engineers, to gather information and solve problems.

History

- Describe how people lived at a particular time in the past based on information found in historical records and artifacts.
- Compare and contrast family life from earlier times and today.
- Compare and contrast buildings and other technologies from earlier times and today.



SPPS Kindergarten Tour

All St. Paul Public School Kindergarteners attend a natural science-based field trip to Gibbs Farm thanks to a generous grant from 3M.

MN State Standards Met (Kindergarten):

The Nature of Science and Engineering

- Sort objects into those that are found in nature and those that are human made.

Life Science

- Observe and compare animals and plants.
- Identify the external parts of plants.
- Observe a natural system - a prairie or garden.

"Both the Pioneer and Dakota Life are equally important, but I would definitely keep all aspects of Dakota Life. It is very difficult to find these resources in other places."

-2nd Grade Teacher, Returning for 10+ Years

"The comparison of life then vs. now meets our state standards. Continuing to reinforce this is important."

-1st Grade Teacher (Dist. 833)

Twelve reasons to support Gibbs Farm, Pathways to Dakota and Pioneer Life
HF 2225 & SF 2113

1. Gibbs Farm is a Regional Asset

Students from more than 60 legislative districts attend Gibbs Farm each year.

2. Gibbs Farm is Unique

The powerful story of Gibbs Farm centers on the experiences and history of Jane Gibbs and her friendship with the Dakota people of Heyata Othunwe (Cloud Man's Village). In addition, this narrative emphasizes the role of women in early Minnesota history, a subject often overlooked in traditional curriculum.

3. Gibbs Farm Gets Kids Outside

Students on field trips spend most of their visit outdoors, just like the Gibbs family and the Dakota people would have. Agriculture is incredibly important to understanding Minnesota's early history. Our economic, social, and political development all have strong roots in the agricultural heritage of the state. Gibbs Farm immerses students in the day-to-day life of a farming family. They get to spend time with farm animals and walk through historic barns, gardens, and a natural prairie, experiences they cannot get in the classroom.

4. Gibbs Farm is Effective

Gibbs Farm uses the best learning tools available, including participatory theater, language immersion, and hands-on activities. This helps bring history to life in the imaginations – and the hands – of students.

5. Gibbs Farm Helps Teachers Teach

Gibbs Farm's programs meet state curriculum standards for history, science, and engineering. At Gibbs Farm, experts teach these subjects in effective and engaging ways.

6. Gibbs Farm Respects Culture

For the past 20 years, Gibbs Farms has partnered with Dakota Elders and Culture Bearers to tell the Dakota story. All Dakota programming continues to be guided by Dakota advisors today.

7. Gibbs Farm is Operating at Capacity

Gibbs Farm wants to meet the needs of schools across Minnesota, but it can currently only accommodate 15,000 students each year due to the seasonal nature of the site. To meet the demand from schools wanting access to Gibbs Farm year-round, an indoor education center is required.

8. Gibbs Farm is Prepared to Grow

Due to its seasonal nature, Gibbs Farm isn't able to accommodate every group who wants to visit. The addition of an indoor education center will be able to double Gibbs Farm's capacity to 30,000 students each year. With the addition of a new after-school program, Gibbs Farm can host 200 more students every single day!

9. Gibbs Farm Cares about Safety

Safety is Gibbs Farm's number one concern. When severe weather threatens a field trip, staff would rather be safe than sorry. In 2019, over 1,000 students missed out on their field trips because of bad weather. The addition of an indoor education center means that Gibbs Farm won't have to cancel field trips.

10. Gibbs Farm Cares about Access

Gibbs Farm wants to make sure it is accessible to all visitors. The capital expansion includes plans for additional restrooms, improved trails, and more, all designed to make the visitor experience more enjoyable for everyone.

11. Gibbs Farm is a Good Partner

Gibbs Farm works with an increasing number of partners each year to offer unique program not available anywhere else. These partners include Dakota Wicohan, the University of Minnesota, the Bell Museum, and Good Acre.

12. Gibbs Farm Preserves History

Gibbs Farm wants to preserve and tell the stories that matter to the diverse communities of Minnesota. The capital expansion will include a gallery dedicated to local heritage and storage space for a portion of the Ramsey County Historical Society's collection of more than 4.5 million artifacts and archival documents.

Acknowledging This Sacred Dakota Land

Mnisóta Makhóche, the land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds, extends beyond the modern borders of Minnesota and is the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Dakhóta (Dakota) people. It is also home to the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples, all who make up a vibrant community in Mnisóta Makhóche. The Ramsey County Historical Society acknowledges that its sites are located on and benefit from these sacred Dakota lands.

Dakota people are the first people of Mnisóta Makhóche and have lived here for thousands of years. In the nineteenth century, Dakota lands were greatly diminished by a series of one-sided treaties that continue to benefit the United States government and the descendants of those who immigrated to Minnesota. These treaties were knowingly mistranslated, and land and annuities promised to the Dakota were stolen and never received. In 1862, war broke out between some Dakota and the Governments of the United States and Minnesota. As a result of that war, Governor Alexander Ramsey (namesake of Ramsey County) called for all Dakota people in Minnesota to “be exterminated or driven forever beyond the borders of Minnesota,” their homeland. This codification of genocidal State policy resulted in the violent and forced removal of Dakota people from their homeland, included offering bounties for killing Dakota men, women, and children and years of exterminatory military campaigns.

Yet the Dakota people have survived this attempted genocide and the ongoing attempts to erase their histories and culture through assimilation practices, including sending Dakota children to boarding schools and erasure by omission of Dakota history in curriculum in educational institutions.

Ramsey County Historical Society is committed to preserving our past, informing our present, and inspiring our future. Part of doing so is acknowledging the painful history and current challenges facing the Dakota people just as we celebrate the contributions of Dakota and other Indigenous peoples.

We pledge to honor the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples of Mnisóta Makhóche by:

- continuing to share an accurate historical curriculum at Gibbs Farm that covers the seasonal life of the Dakota of Ĥeyáta Othúnwe (Cloud Man's Village) at Bdé Makhá Ska;
- developing improved language for signage and curriculum that more accurately describes colonization;
- providing a platform for Dakota and other Indigenous partners to showcase their work at our physical sites through virtual programming, exhibits, and publications;
- maintaining relationships with Dakota community members and organizations;
- supporting Dakota and other Indigenous-owned businesses;
- providing space for traditional and contemporary Dakota cultural activities and events;
- and by advocating for the respectful and equitable treatment of Dakota people, culture, and history.

The staff and board of the Ramsey County Historical Society extend their heartfelt thanks to Teresa Peterson, Dakota & Upper Sioux Community citizen; Chris Pexa, Ph.D., Spirit Lake Dakota Nation; and Šišóka Dúta (Joe Bendickson), Sisseton Wahpeton Oyáte, University of Minnesota; for their support of RCHS and advice regarding this statement.



Saint Paul Music Academy
Independent School District 625
27 Geranium Avenue East, Saint Paul, MN 55117

(p) 651.293.8795 (f) 651.293.8798
spma.spps.org

April 2, 2021

Dear Representative Hausman:

I am a first grade teacher at St. Paul Music Academy (SPMA). For 3 years prior to the pandemic my school has had the opportunity to bring Gibbs Farm educators into our school to teach urban first graders about pioneer life. We do this to help bring to life our Social Studies history unit where students are to: describe how people lived at a particular time in the past, based on information found in historical records and artifacts (benchmark 1.4.1.2.2), compare and contrast family life from earlier times and today (1.4.2.4.1), and compare and contrast buildings and other technologies from earlier times and today (1.4.2.4.2).

Gibbs Farm, which is a Ramsey County Historical Society site, comes **to** our school each year because that is how they continue to educate the community during their “off season” when they previously have been unable to host students on site. Despite not being **at** Gibbs Farm, the first grade students at my school have been able to learn about pioneer chores through hands-on examples, learn what a one room schoolhouse was like in the mid-1800s, create a craft that tied into what life was like for pioneers, and (perhaps their most favorite) play pioneer games. The Gibbs Farm educators have truly helped bring history to life for my first graders! The experiences provided by the Gibbs Farm educators has led to meaningful discussions and deeper understandings of history as students compare life then with life today.

Currently, Gibbs Farm is seeking your support for a state investment of \$7 million, which will be matched by Ramsey County, to transform Gibbs Farm into a year-round operation that will allow them to serve 30,000 students like mine every year. Maybe my future first graders will even get to **go** to Gibbs Farm as part of their history unit! I believe the experiences provided by Gibbs Farm staff to be an asset to all learners as it engages students in a meaningful and memorable way. Funding for Gibbs Farm not only preserves Minnesota’s history but also ensures that its programming is able to reach to young citizens throughout the state. I am asking you to support their request which is part of the Ramsey County bonding request package.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Megan Rennerfeldt
1st grade teacher, SPMA

January 22, 2020

Dear Representative Ryan Winkler,

I am a teacher at Good Shepherd School in Golden Valley. I bring my students to Gibbs Farm, a Ramsey County Historical Society site, to learn about pioneer life and in particular a life-changing journey of a historical figure. This field trip enhances several areas of studies in the 4th grade as well as helps us meet several MN State Standards.

Gibbs Farm is seeking your support for a state investment of \$7 million, which will be matched by Ramsey County, to transform Gibbs Farm into a year-round operation that will allow them to serve 30,000 students like mine every year. I am asking you to support their request, which is part of the Ramsey County bonding request package.

The staff members at Gibbs Farm bring history to life in a way that connects with my students. The outdoor elements, activities, and skits all create a memorable adventure in learning that they talk about for weeks. In my experience, their approach is effective and engaging, and I believe more students from all over the state should have access to this important programming.

Good Shepherd 4th grade students have been visiting Gibbs Farm for over 30 years. It is always a favorite field trip of our students and one they will write about while reflecting upon their time at Good Shepherd before leaving our school after 6th grade.

Next fall will be my 12th visit to Gibbs Farm. Even after 12 visits, I still learn something new about Dakota life, pioneer life, Jane Gibbs, and Minnesota history. The staff members at Gibbs Farm are truly dedicated and passionate about their mission to educate students. Every year the tour process and content is improved upon. Any support they receive will be put to good use and will directly improve the education of Minnesota students and all visitors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stacey Poppler

Fourth Grade Teacher, Good Shepherd School

Support for Gibbs Farm Capital Expansion request

Krista Hanson <klfhanson@yahoo.com>

Thu 5/14/2020 12:15 PM

To: Senator John Marty <sd66iq@mnsenate.lmhostediq.com>

Cc: Natasha Thoreson <Natasha@rchs.com>

Hello Senator Marty,

I am writing to support the Ramsey County Historical Society's Gibbs Farm Capital Expansion request.

Gibbs Farm is a regional asset serving students and teachers from more than 60 legislative districts in Minnesota, including your own. The capital project involves transforming Gibbs Farm from a seasonal program – currently operating at capacity – to a year-round facility able to serve 30,000 students annually. They also plan to launch a year-round out-of-school program that builds on their successful Investigate MN! summer school program, designed to help close the achievement gap by engaging students in their community, their history, and the many cultural and educational resources available in the region.

Your support will help Gibbs Farm serve more than 250,000 students and 6,000 teachers in the ten years following the completion of this capital project.

Ramsey County is committed to match the State's investment in full.

Gibbs Farm has meant a lot to me and my family. My children and I have volunteered there for years. Both of my kids went through all their summer camp programs from age 5-11. Then my daughter continued to volunteer as an intern with the camps for 6 years after that. It is a well-run program that gets kids outside and exploring nature, and helps them to learn about the history of farms, Ramsey county and Minnesota, Native Americans, and much more. My daughter gained valuable leadership experience as a camp intern. And as a family we have enjoyed volunteering at and participating in the many, wonderful Gibbs Farm Festivals.

So many thanks for your support for the Gibbs Farm,

Krista Finstad Hanson

To concerned lawmakers,

I have had a wonderful opportunity on many occasions to bring my students to Gibbs Farm. I have visited with several 2nd grade classes and also with kindergarteners. The staff is very organized and knowledgeable. They create an informative, standards based, experience to inner city students who otherwise have limited to no understanding of our history and the importance of agriculture to our state.

My students are second language learners. The best way for them to learn language is through actual experiences. These field trips provide a rich and deeper understanding of so many of the concepts covered in our curriculum.

We look forward to many more field trips as enriching as Gibbs Farm provides.

Sincerely,

*Susan Arndt
Language Academy Second Grade
Frost Lake Elementary School
SPPS*

This Document can be made available
in alternative formats upon request

State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. **2225**

03/15/2021

Authored by Hausman

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Capital Investment

- 1.1 A bill for an act
- 1.2 relating to capital investment; appropriating money for improvements to Gibbs
- 1.3 Farm Museum: Pathways to Dakota and Pioneer Life; authorizing the sale and
- 1.4 issuance of state bonds.
- 1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:
- 1.6 Section 1. **RAMSEY COUNTY; GIBBS FARM MUSEUM: PATHWAYS TO**
- 1.7 **DAKOTA AND PIONEER LIFE.**
- 1.8 Subdivision 1. **Appropriation.** \$7,130,000 is appropriated from the bond proceeds fund
- 1.9 to the commissioner of employment and economic development for a grant to Ramsey
- 1.10 County to predesign, design, renovate, construct, furnish, and equip site improvements,
- 1.11 buildings, and facilities at Gibbs Farm, a museum dedicated to the history of early Minnesota
- 1.12 agriculture and the relationship between the Dakota people of Heyata Othunwe and the Jane
- 1.13 and Heman Gibbs family. This appropriation is not available until the commissioner of
- 1.14 management and budget determines that at least \$7,000,000 has been committed from
- 1.15 nonstate sources to complete the project.
- 1.16 Subd. 2. **Bond sale.** To provide the money appropriated in this section from the bond
- 1.17 proceeds fund, the commissioner of management and budget shall sell and issue bonds of
- 1.18 the state in an amount up to \$7,130,000 in the manner, upon the terms, and with the effect
- 1.19 prescribed by Minnesota Statutes, sections 16A.631 to 16A.675, and by the Minnesota
- 1.20 Constitution, article XI, sections 4 to 7.
- 1.21 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.