



# City of Duluth

411 West First Street  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

## Meeting Agenda

### Heritage Preservation Commission.

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Monday, August 8, 2022

12:00 PM

Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall, 411  
West First Street

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**1 Call to Order/Determination of Quorum**

**2 Public Hearings**

**3 Consideration of Minutes**

July 11, 2022

**4 Communications**

**5 Report of Final Disposition on Matters Previously Before the Commission**

PL 22-105 Proposed Demolition of 118 East First Street

**6 Reports of Officers, Staff and Committees**

**7 Consideration of Matters Regarding Commission Action**

State Preservation Conference

**8 Other Business**

**9 Adjournment**

Heritage Preservation Commission  
July 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes  
Council Chambers – City Hall

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

President Ken Buehler called to order the meeting of the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, July 11, 2022.

**Attendance:**

Attending: Ken Buehler, Stacey DeRoche, Brandon Hartung, Jess Mccullough, and Kal Randa

Absent: Jessica Fortney and Sarah Wisdorf

Staff Present: Steven Robertson and Cindy Stafford

2) Public Hearings

PL 22-105 Proposed Demolition of 118 East First Street – Steven Robertson gave an overview. On June 12, 2022, the city received an application from the owner of 118 East First Street. It was constructed in 1904 and was also known as Gray Brother's Bakery. It is a contributing building to the downtown historic district. The applicant is asking for the approval of a certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of the building. The reason for demo is because the building was damaged in a fire in November 2020 and sustained significant damage including roof and the collapse of the second floor. The damage is too severe for restoration and demolition is the best option for the building.

**Applicant:** Engineer Jeff Anderson (represents the owner/applicant Kevin Ruhnke) addressed the commission. He noted the building is in terrible shape and they want to make it safe for the public. The general estimate to rehab the building would be 5-7 million dollars.

**Commissioners:** Stacey DeRoche understands the building is in bad shape, but she doesn't know much about the history of the building. Robertson noted as a lay person, he understands the concerns about the structure and the safety of the building. DeRoche noted she feels like they are being rushed to make a decision. Jess Mccullough asked the applicant if they looked at trying to save the exterior façade of the building. Anderson stated they had a structural assessment performed and noted it is unsafe and the wall could cave in. They did not evaluate saving the exterior façade.

**Public:** No speakers.

**Commissioners:** DeRoche would like a better idea of the cost, and not just money, but the value to the community. Kal Randa would like to know the future plans for the building/site.

**MOTION/Second:** Hartung/DeRoche table for more information on a cost estimate and future plans

**VOTE: (5-0)**

3) Consideration of Minutes

June 13, 2022 Regular HPC Meeting

**MOTION/Second:** DeRoche/Mccullough approved the minutes

**VOTE: (5-0)**

4) Communications

Duluth Water Treatment Plant – 8130 Congdon Blvd – Robertson gave an overview. FEMA is received a letter from SHPO which determined there are no adverse effects. Chair Buehler asked where the new building would go. Per Robertson it will be to the west of the existing structure on the lakeside below the highway, but views of the new structure will be blocked by vegetation and it will not negatively impact the adopted preservation plan.

5) Report of Final Disposition of Matters Previously Before the Commission – PL22-090 Proposed Demolition of 102 East Superior Street (FKA Astoria Hotel) – Robertson gave an overview.

**Applicant:** Anne Stratioiti addressed the commission. She represents the owner who wishes to demo the building at 102-108 E Superior Street. The building is listed as a contributing structure to the historic district. The building has been altered and deteriorated to a point where it is no longer recognizable as a good representation of the city’s architecture. She noted with the demo of this building (which is less than 50% of the original building) there is no risk of the historic district becoming delisted. This building no longer serves the public. Keeping the building would be a hardship to the owner, both financially and as a liability. There is a hazard for fire threat. She noted commissioner Jessica Fortney’s comment from last meeting which mentioned willful neglect from the owner. She noted the owner bought the building in disrepair. She suggests an outreach program to help owners would have been helpful. The estimated cost to fix the building would be 2.4 million for the exterior and 9.2 for the interior. It would need to be brought to ADA standards. This would be for retail only, and would not make money back. No bank will finance. It would cost 480,000 to demo the building. Attorney Bill Burns addressed the commission. When the owner purchased the property, it was prior to any barriers to demo it were known. In reality, regulations evolve. The historic district guidelines are not yet approved by the city council. Burns noted the communication from SHPO stating they have no jurisdiction on this. Burns stated the decision now falls on the HPC. He asks the HPC to step back and accept the situation in that it is not economically feasible.

**Commissioners:** Brandon Hartung asked about an itemized list of repairs. Stratioti provided a copy of the itemized repair list which totaled 11+ million dollars. DeRoche noted the building as a contributing building to a historic district, and the owner had naïve thinking about there being no demo repercussions. Strioti noted the building was on the market for a while prior to them purchasing it. They probably wouldn’t have purchased it knowing now what they didn’t know then. Burns noted case law, and that if the property was purchased for a reason, they should be able to use it. Hartung asked about their plans for future development. Stratioti noted it is still an idea in someone’s mind, and this hasn’t changed since 2017. She thinks eventually they would propose a hotel, or market housing with retail below and access to the lake walk. Now she said it would be possible to place top soil and flowers. There are no immediate plans to build. Mccullough noted the number of Duluth and Superior buildings falling into disrepair. He sees both sides.

**MOTION/Second:** Hartung/DeRoche deny the certificate of appropriateness for the demo of 102 East Superior Street

**VOTE: (3-1, Mccullough Opposed, Buehler abstained)**

6) Reports of Officers, Staff and Committees

Robertson noted the planning commission had nothing this month pertaining to the HPC.

7) Consideration of Matters Regarding Commission Action

2022 Preservation Conference – Robertson gave an overview. There will be mini-sessions and tours of buildings with adaptive re-use. He noted emails will be coming up. The city will pay for HPC members admission.

8) Other Business

None at this time.

9) Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Respectfully,

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Adam Fulton – Deputy Director  
Department of Planning and Economic Development

**Application for  
CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
for Duluth Heritage Preservation Landmarks and Districts**

Please complete this application as it pertains to your project. Attach all information required, including a scope of work form.

**Location of Building:** 118 East 1st Street Duluth, MN 55802  
 (Street Address) (City, State) (Zip Code)

None listed Unknown  
 (Historic Name) (Architect Name(s) - if known)

**Owner:** Kevin Ruhnke 4925 Haines Road, Hermantown, MN 55811  
 (Name) (Street Address, City, State, Zip Code) (Daytime Phone)

**Applicant:** Jeff Anderson, PE 332 W. Superior, #600, Duluth, MN 55802 (218) 499-3175  
 (Applicant's Name, if other than owner) (Street Address, City, State, Zip Code) (Daytime Phone)

**Owner's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED**

- Exterior Restoration    Addition to Building    Landscaping    Signs    New Construction  
 Interior Restoration (COA may not be required - please check building's preservation plan)

**EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- Windows  
 Doors  
 Siding  
 Roof change  
 Chimney  
 Lighting  
 Facade  
 Other

Checklist of items needed for application:

- Scale drawings of all building elevations impacted by change  
 Photos of current condition of all building elevations impacted by  
 Detailed specifications and scope of work  
 Materials to be used (color number, sample of material & that  
 which is being matched, name of manufacturer & material)  
 Detailed drawings of new windows, doors, or other features in  
 scope of work

Description of proposed changes:

Demolition of the building

Reason for changes: Building was damaged in a fire in November 2020 and sustained significant damage including roof and second floor collapse. The damage is too severe for restoration and demolition is the best option for the building.

Location of changes on building: \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITION TO BUILDING**

Description of addition:

Reason for changes: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of addition on site: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for addition: \_\_\_\_\_

Size: \_\_\_\_\_

(Number of Stories) (Length) (Width) (Height)

Architect: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) - \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) (Street Address, City, State, Zip Code) (Phone)

Contractor: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) - \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) (Street Address, City, State, Zip Code) (Phone)



332 W Superior Street  
Suite 600  
Duluth, MN 55802

**P** (218) 722-3915  
**TF** (800) 777-7380  
**F** (218) 722-4548

[www.msa-ps.com](http://www.msa-ps.com)

June 10, 2022

Mr. Kevin Ruhnke  
4295 Haines Road  
Hermantown, MN 55811

Re: 118 1st Street East Building Condition Evaluation  
Duluth, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Ruhnke,

MSA has completed a review of the St. Louis County Parcel #010-0930-00640 located at 118 1<sup>st</sup> Street East, Duluth, Minnesota 55802. The site location is shown on the attached **Figure 1**. In November 2020, a fire severely damaged the building on the property causing significant damage including the collapse of the roof and second story of the building into the first floor. MSA conducted a inspection of the building to determine the general extent of the damage and to determine the best course of action for the continued use of the property.

The onsite building at the property consists of a 5,500 square-foot, three-story retail store that was built in 1924. A brief historical search did not identify any historical names associated with the building. Based on discussions with the current owner of the property, the building was used for general storage of clothes and other miscellaneous retail goods prior to the fire in November 2022. Adjacent properties consists of an adult bookstore to the southwest, an elevated parking garage to the northeast, an alleyway to the southeast and 1<sup>st</sup> Street East to the northwest. Site details and area features are shown on **Figure 2**.

An inspection by MSA personnel observed that the building is currently vacant with no roof or windows. There is a large amount of debris located on the first floor consisting of the former contents of the building and debris from the collapse of a portion of the second story and all of the roof. The brick outer walls of the building are still relatively intact, but no other major structural elements of the building were visible. The first-floor window and door openings have been boarded up to prevent trespassing. No interior insulation, plumbing or other intact building feature or amenities were observed during the inspection. A photographic log documenting the conditions encountered during the building inspection is included as an attachment to this letter.

The fire and subsequent collapse of the roof and partial collapse of the second story have caused extensive damage to both the interior and structural integrity of the building. There does not appear to be sufficient remaining structural or utility components to attempt renovating the building and additional weaknesses may be present that were not identified during the inspection. Based on the condition of the building observed during the inspection, MSA recommends demolition of the building as it would be more economical and feasible to build a new structure than to renovate the existing building. Please contact me at (218) 499-3175 or [jkanderson@msa-ps.com](mailto:jkanderson@msa-ps.com) if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,  
MSA Professional Services, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff K. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Jeff Anderson, P.E.  
Senior Team Leader - Environmental  
[jkanderson@msa-ps.com](mailto:jkanderson@msa-ps.com) | +1 (218) 499-3175

Page 2

Mr. Kevin Ruhnke  
Hermantown, MN 55811  
June 10, 2022

Attachments: Figure 1 – Site Location Map  
Figure 2 – Site Plan View (aerial background/aerial view)  
Photographic Log

## FIGURES



Print Date: 6/10/2022  
Printed By: chaddahl, File: G:\21\21830\21830000\Environmental Figures\GIS\21830000 Figures.aprx



Data Sources: USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road Data; Natural Earth Data; U.S. Department of State Humanitarian Information Unit; and NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, U.S. Coastal Relief Model. Data refreshed August, 2021.

**FIGURE 1**  
**PROJECT LOCATION**  
118 EAST 1ST STREET  
DULUTH, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MINNESOTA



# FIGURE 2

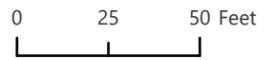
## SITE PLAN LAYOUT

**118 EAST 1ST STREET  
DULUTH, ST. LOUIS COUNTY,  
MINNESOTA**

- Site Boundary
- Parcel Boundary

*All data shown in this exhibit is approximate for display purposes only and does not reflect actual survey data.*

Data Sources:  
Esri Community Maps Contributors, © OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA



## **PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG**

**Photographic Log**  
**118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street**  
Duluth, MN 55802  
MSA Project No. 0021830000



*View from the alley of the fire damaged structure located at 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street.*



*View of the caved in roof of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building which resulted from fire damage to the building sustained around Thanksgiving 2020.*



*Elevated parking structure located adjacent and northwest of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building.*



*View of caved in debris from the roof and second floor of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building.*



*Complete roof collapse and partial collapse of the second-floor structure of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building.*



*Caved in debris from the second floor of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building.*



*Storefront view of the fire damaged 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building.*



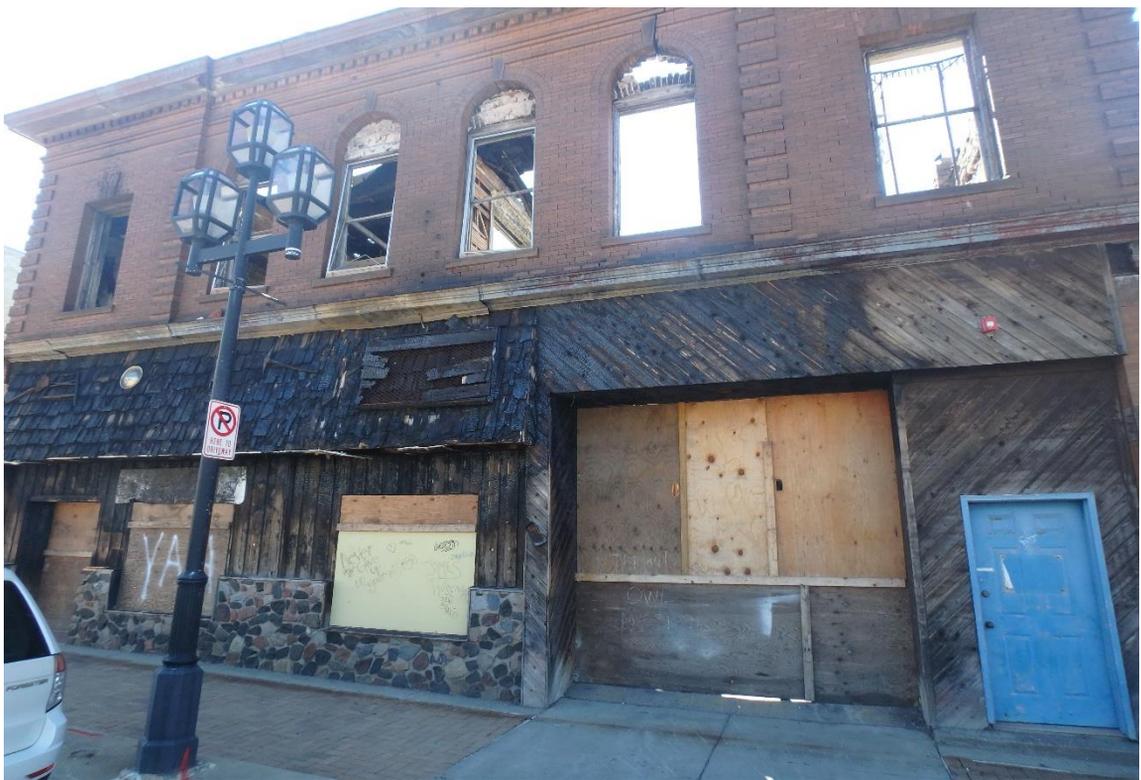
*Sidewalk and pavers fronting the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building.*



*Remaining interior wall feature (southwest side) of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building showing fire and structural damage. Note roof absence and second floor separation.*



*View from the inside of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building looking towards 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Note roof absence and second floor separation.*



*View of the 1<sup>st</sup> Street frontage of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building.*



*Northeast side of the 118 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street building as viewed from adjacent parking lot.*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section <u>7</u>		Page <u>62</u>	Name of property Duluth Commercial Historic District
			County and State St. Louis County, Minnesota

**Architect: unknown  
Contributing**

This simple tan brick building with a long, narrow rectangular plan was originally constructed as the Union Fur Company in 1922 with two floors of residential units above. The commercial storefront at the first floor was later converted to use as the First Street Exchange Pawn. The storefront has been altered through the removal of the original entry doors, windows, bulkheads and transoms, now replaced with aluminum storefront windows, a set of aluminum double doors, and large plywood signage panels. The secondary entry door providing access to the upper floor residential area has been replaced with a new hollow metal paneled door. The second and third floors of the front façade remain largely intact, with two pairs of two 1/1 double hung wood windows on each floor. Aluminum storm windows have been added on the exterior of each window unit. Each window pair is joined by a broad, flat wood mullion and rests on a plain cast concrete sill. The flat brick façade is relieved only by a narrow pressed metal cornice below a low brick parapet wall that exhibits moisture damage. Cast concrete coping tiles cap the parapet.

The separate one-story Thorsell-Nesgoda Garage building was constructed at the rear of the property in 1922. The low, concrete block building has a rectangular plan that is oriented along and east-west axis, and is joined to the rear of two adjacent buildings. On the east it abuts the rear of the Wabasha Bookstore, but does not appear to be physically linked to it. On the west and south it is joined to the Duluth Family Sauna.

**101. Historic Name: International Harvester Company  
Current Name: Wabasha Bookstore/Fuzzy's Place  
Address: 114-116 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Date: 1924  
Architect: unknown  
Contributing**

This small one-story commercial building has a long, narrow footprint that adjoins, but is not linked to, the Thorsell-Nesgoda garage building at the rear of the adjacent western lot. Originally constructed for the International Harvester Company, it functioned as Moose Lodge #505 during the 1970s and 1980s, before being sold and converted to its current uses. While the original reddish-brown wire-cut face brick forming the "frame" for the storefront is intact, the bulk of the façade is a large central storefront opening that has been modified with the introduction of new aluminum entry doors, vertical wood siding, vinyl tile over a curved plywood wall, a small amount of brick facing, and a new vinyl awning. A flat band of cast concrete separates the storefront from the large stepped brick parapet, which is framed in its entirety by a stepped band of cast concrete, which also serves as the parapet coping along the upper edge. A large backlit plastic sign has been attached to the center of the parapet.

**102. Historic Name: Gray Brothers Bakery  
Current Name: Duluth Auto Sales  
Address: 118-120 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Date: 1904  
Architect: J.J. Marberry or John J. Wangenstien  
Contributing**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Name of property  
Duluth Commercial Historic District  
County and State  
St. Louis County, Minnesota

Section 7 Page 63

This is a Renaissance Revival style two-story commercial structure set on a deep lot with a long, rectangular plan and exposed sidewalls of common brick. The first floor is composed of two outer brick piers with flat red sandstone bases and details, which frame a large storefront opening. No original material from the Gray Brothers Bakery survives, replaced with new infill materials in 1937 when the function was switched to auto sales. Diagonal wood siding covers much of the storefront and transoms on the western half of the first floor, with vertical wood siding, a wood shingled canopy and stone veneer facing on the eastern half. Two paneled hollow metal doors, a hollow metal sidelight, a new overhead door, and two fixed aluminum frame windows have been inserted into the storefront. A full width pressed metal cornice separates the first floor from the second.

The second floor is divided into three bays, with the center bay slightly set back and pierced by a row of four single-hung wood frame windows with new aluminum storms. Each window rests on a red sandstone sill and is topped by a half round brick arch with a long, thin red sandstone keystone framing a tinted plaster panel decorated with a garland molded in low relief. Only three inset panels survive, and appear to be badly deteriorated from moisture damage. The outer two bays are defined by large, tightly-spaced, brick quoins on each edge framing a single double hung 1/1 wood frame window with a red sandstone sill and brick flat arch head with a prominent brick keystone. Three projecting flat brick bands decorate the upper portion of the second floor below a band of wide brick dentils and a full width pressed metal cornice. A low brick parapet capped with concrete coping stones terminates the façade.

**103. Historic Name: Northwest Radio**  
**Current Name: Viking Micrographics**  
**Address: 123 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street**  
**Date: 1950**  
**Architect: Giliuson and Ellington**  
**Non-contributing**

This is a two-story cream brick building constructed in 1950 for Northwest Radio by Giliuson and Eliingsen architects. They also provided the small two-story addition on the east in 1953. The recessed entry door with its cantilevered metal canopy is original to the period of construction, but several windows have been replaced with new casement units or glass block. This building falls outside the period of significance for the historic district.

**104. Historic Name: Model Laundry**  
**Current Name: First Street Exchange Pawnbroker**  
**Address: 126 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street**  
**Date: 1911**  
**Architect: E. H. Branton**  
**Contributing**

This three-story commercial structure has a red-orange brick façade with common brick sidewalls and a small one-story brick addition at the rear. Traces of historic painted signage remain on the west façade. The first floor of the primary façade is composed of a cast iron storefront framed by flat brick piers that are highlighted by rough-faced red sandstone banding at the base, middle and top. Little remains of the original storefront, with the exception of the two central iron columns and the large steel head beam. As part of a 1996 renovation, new

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: July 26, 2022

TO: Certified Local Governments

FROM:   
Amy Spong, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

SUBJECT: Scholarship Notice to Attend Preserve Minnesota 2022

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The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (MNSHPO) is pleased to offer scholarships to Certified Local Governments (CLGs) for the **42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Statewide Preserve Minnesota Conference to be held on September 14-16, 2022 in Duluth**. This is our first in-person conference since we last gathered in 2019 in St. Cloud, and we are thrilled at the opportunity to see many of you this fall!

As part of the annual CLG pass-through funding, heritage preservation commissioners, city staff, and city officials with direct involvement in the HPC are invited to apply for a CLG grant for a scholarship to assist in covering the cost of attending the conference. The conference includes a variety of educational sessions, tours, and networking opportunities. More information about the conference is available at the [Preserve MN website](#).

**Scholarship recipients must attend the conference on both Thursday and Friday.** Scholarships can cover registration, lodging, and mileage for up to two vehicles per city. Carpooling is strongly encouraged. Hotel expenses can be requested from cities located more than 50 miles from Duluth. Grants must be matched by 30% for total costs, although there is no cash match required. Travel time and attendance at the conference can be used as match. Scholarship recipients are required to make their own registration, transportation and lodging arrangements.

**Scholarships will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis, beginning Monday, August 1**, until all funds have been expended. Each CLG may request scholarships for up to five participants.

**Application Deadline: Wednesday, August 31**

Please note that the scholarships will be awarded to the CLG, to whom the reimbursement will be made. Matching funds can come from the CLG as city funds, in-kind match, or costs borne by the attendee. Any CLG under a cooperative agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office is eligible to submit an application for a scholarship. **Scholarship recipients must attend the conference on both Thursday and Friday.**

**Source of Funding and Availability**

The MNSHPO administers the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Program in cooperation with the National Park Service. Under this program the Department of the Interior specifies that at least ten (10) percent of Minnesota’s annual HPC Program award be designated as pass-through funding to CLGs each year. Scholarships are available on a 70:30 matching ratio.

Scholarships will cover:

- Registration (including tours)
- Lodging
- Travel
- Per diem: maximum allowable rates are Breakfast: \$11.00; Lunch: \$13.00; Dinner: \$20.00

The match requirement is 70:30, 70 percent federal and 30 percent local match. No cash is required for the 30 percent match. Travel time and attendance at the conference may be used as match.

**Beginning on August 1<sup>st</sup>**, CLGs can apply for a scholarship in Foundant, an online grants management system. Applicants can access the on-line grants system here:

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=mndeptadmin>

- *If you have previously applied for a CLG grant you should have a user name and password. Please click “Forgot your password?” to reset your password if necessary.*
- *If you are a new applicant, please click “Create New Account” to get started. The system allows you to save your work on an application and come back to finish it later.*
- *The application simply includes the name of the individual applying for a scholarship, their role/relationship to the HPC and the CLG mailing address.*

As of July 2022, the following Minnesota communities have been certified and are eligible to apply for funds:

Afton	Edina	Lake City	Otsego
Albert Lea	Elk River	Lanesboro	Pine Island
Belview	Excelsior	Litchfield	Pipestone
Carver	Faribault	Little Falls	Red Wing
Center City	Farmington	Mankato	Saint Cloud
Chaska	Fergus Falls	Maplewood	Saint Paul
Chatfield	Florence Twp.	Minneapolis	Saint Peter
Cottage Grove	Gaylord	New Ulm	Stillwater
Dassel	Hastings	Newport	Taylors Falls
Duluth	Henderson	Northfield	Wabasha
Eden Prairie	Kenyon	North St. Paul	Waseca
			Winona

This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.