

Historic Preservation in Michigan



2016 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation

City of Dearborn; Artspace Projects, Inc.;
Neumann/Smith Architecture; the Monahan
Company; and the East Dearborn Downtown
Development Authority

Rehabilitation of the Dearborn City Hall Complex

Minneapolis-based Artspace is a national leader in developing affordable space for artists through the adaptive reuse of historic buildings. With the goal of bringing diversity and vibrancy to East Dearborn, Dearborn city leaders and the East Dearborn Downtown Development Authority invited Artspace to the city, thinking it likely that the organization would find and rehabilitate a vacant building.

Although it was not for sale, the Dearborn City Hall complex, with its historic character and park-like campus, became Artspace's clear choice. As discussions with Artspace began, an office building near the city's other municipal complex came up for sale. City leaders saw a chance to bolster the east downtown business district, attract more visitors, preserve the historic facility through a sale to an entity committed to historic rehabilitation, and consolidate services in a modern facility that was closer to other city operations.

The City of Dearborn purchased the office building, and Artspace acquired the historic City Hall complex. Using Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, Artspace rehabilitated the historic buildings as City Hall Artspace Lofts, with residential, studio, and exhibit space for artists.

