



# NEW HISTORY

**SOUTH ST. PAUL LIBRARY REUSE STUDY**

**CITY COUNCIL INTRODUCTION**

**October 21, 2024**

# AGENDA

## 1. PROJECT TEAM

New History has assembled a multi-disciplinary team with experience creating and successfully implementing reuse studies.

## 2. PROJECT GOAL

Our goal is to maintain the Historic Library as a community asset and increase its use and vitality for generations to come.

## 3. APPROACH

Our approach is always the same: 1) understand the building, 2) establish a use that fits within the physical, economic, and social context of the building, and 3) create funding pathways for reuse.

## 4. OVERALL SCHEDULE

Our work on this project began in early September of 2024 and will conclude at the end of May 2025.

## 5. STEP 1 – BUILDING DEFINITION (Status Update)

Neighborhood context and condition assessments are underway. The report will be published mid-November on the project website.

## 6. LOOKING FORWARD (STEP 2 and beyond)



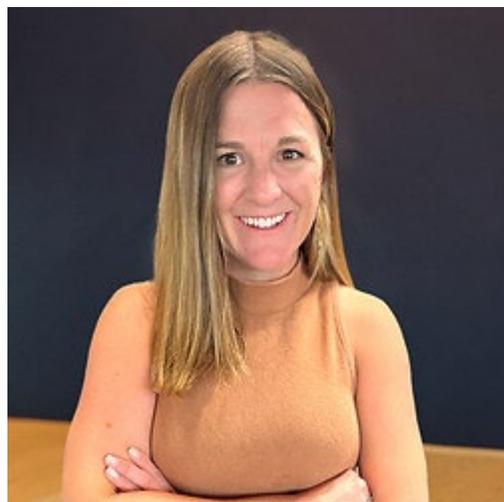
## 1. PROJECT TEAM



# NEW HISTORY



**Kirk Davis, PE**  
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER



**Katie Kuisle, AIA**  
ARCHITECT



**Lauren Anderson**  
HISTORIAN



**Meghan Elliot, PE, Assoc. AIA**  
FOUNDING PRINCIPAL

# NEW HISTORY

## History and Profile

- Founded 2011 by Meghan Elliott
- Size: 7
- Principals: Meghan Elliott, Kirk Davis
- Certifications: Targeted Group/Economically Disadvantaged (TG/ED) and Woman-Owned Business (WBE)

## Services

- Historic Building Reuse Consulting: Development and implementation of strategies for building reuse
- Historic Architecture and Engineering: condition assessments, building analysis, design guidance, and concept design solutions for reuse
- Historic Tax Credits and Project Funding Sources: state and federal historic tax credit certification, grant assistance, project funding source identification
- Historical Consulting, including: historical research, National Register of Historic Places nominations, and historic preservation reviews and approvals

## Municipal Clients

- We routinely work with municipal clients through all phases of feasibility, design, and construction, including: Albert Lea, Anoka, Brainerd, Cottage Grove, Duluth, Excelsior, Minneapolis, Rochester, and Wayzata among others

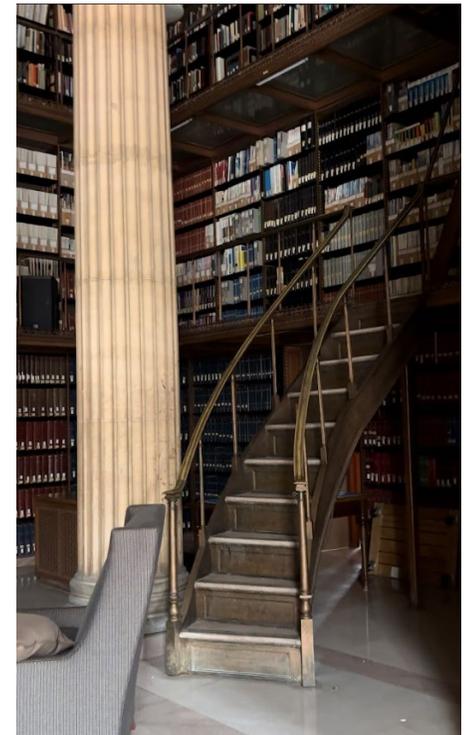
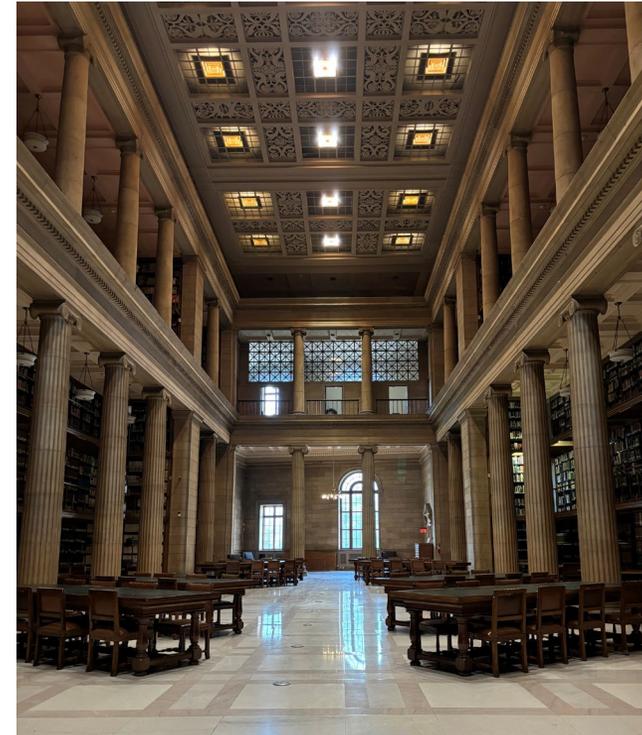


# JAMES JEROME HILL (JJ HILL) REFERENCE LIBRARY

St. Paul, MN

## Project Scope:

- Historic Structure Report
- Design guidance for historic preservation
- Historic tax credit certification
- Planning and preparation for future reuse
- Project Management and Owner's Representation, coordinating subconsultants and general contractor



# ABBEY APARTMENTS

Minneapolis, MN

## Project Scope:

- Condition Assessments
- Development and feasibility of reuse options
- City and State Historic approval
- Developer outreach and request for proposals
- Project Management and Owner's Representation for State of Minnesota
- Review of Construction Plans for impact on campus)

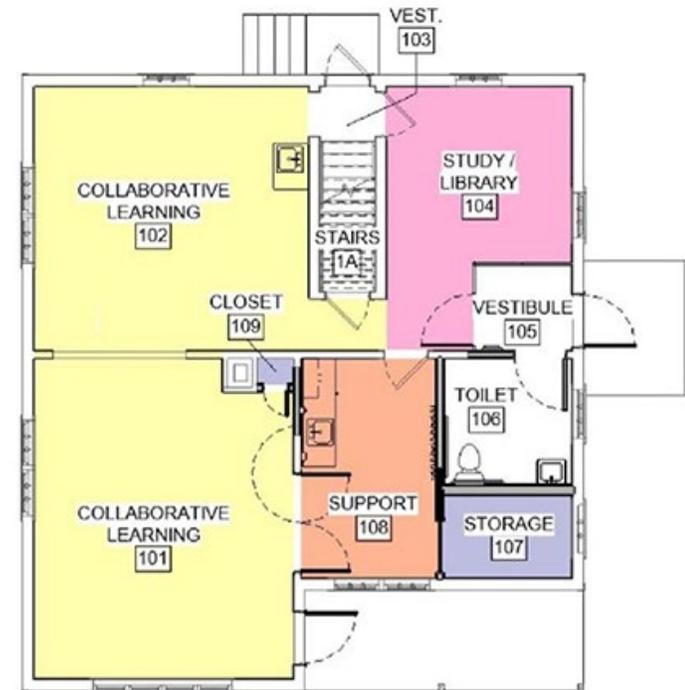


# SECTION FOREMAN HOUSE – SANDVOLD LAKESHORE LEARNING CENTER

Wayzata, MN

Project Scope:

- Updated conditions assessments
- Construction documents for stabilization
- Design Guidelines and Plan for Reuse
- National Register nomination
- Donor cultivation support
- Development of reuse options



# 1. PROJECT TEAM



**Jeff Miller, AICP**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



**Kendra Ellner, AICP**

PLANNING



**Marah Sobczak**

STRUCTURAL



**Jack Dougherty, PE**

CIVIL/SITE



**Josh Netterlund, PE**

MECH/ELECT/PLUMB



**Justin Michael, PG**

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS



## 2. PROJECT GOAL

### Primary Goal:

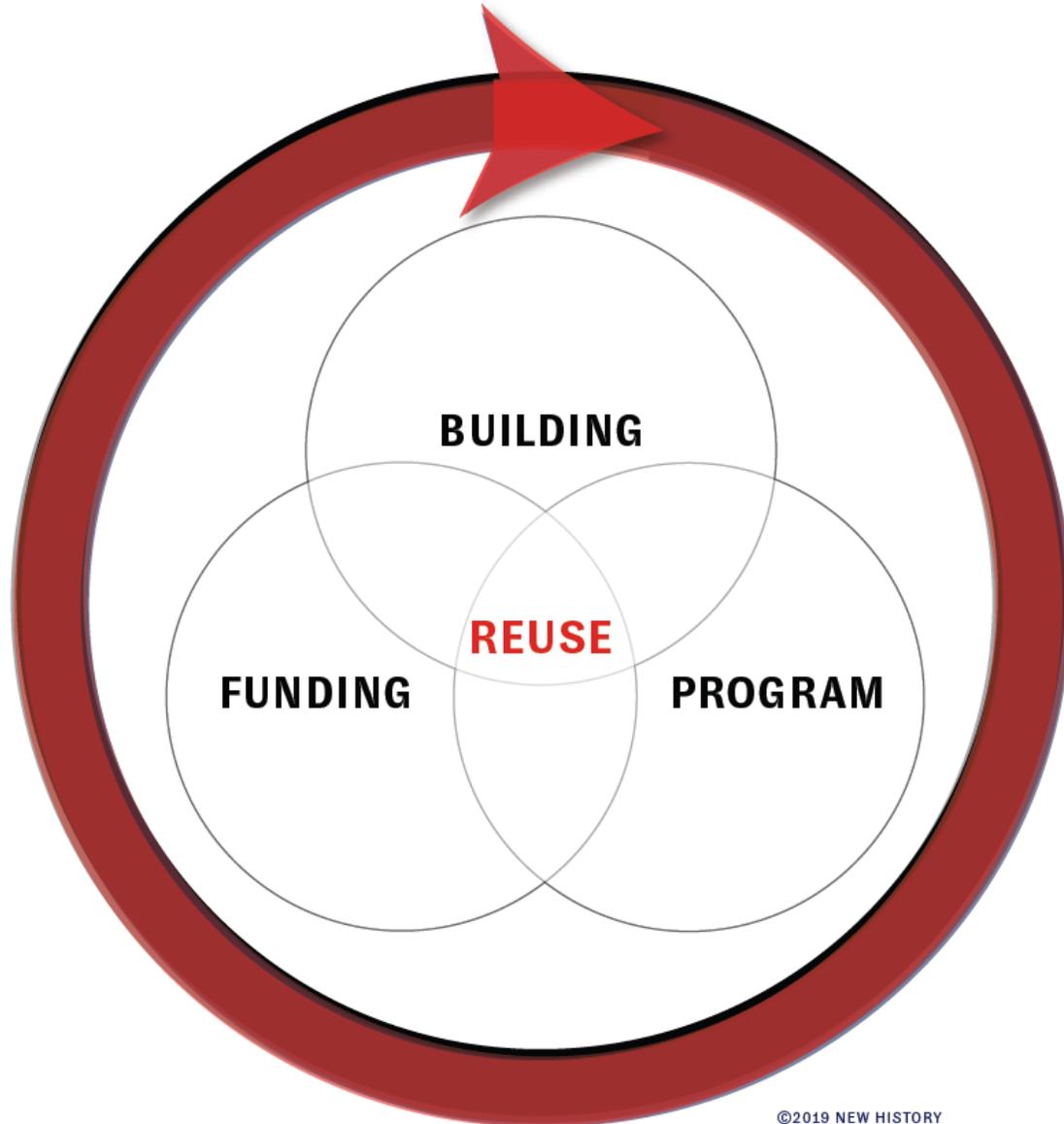
**Maintain the Historic Library as a community asset and increase its use and vitality for generations to come.**

#### > To get there

- Assess condition of the building
- Engage community and public stakeholders to understand the needs and desires
- Analyze categorical uses and ownership models
- Estimate costs of reuse
- Identify and evaluate funding sources available
- Provide recommendations based on the economical and functional merits of each option
- Decide whether the property should be publicly or privately owned



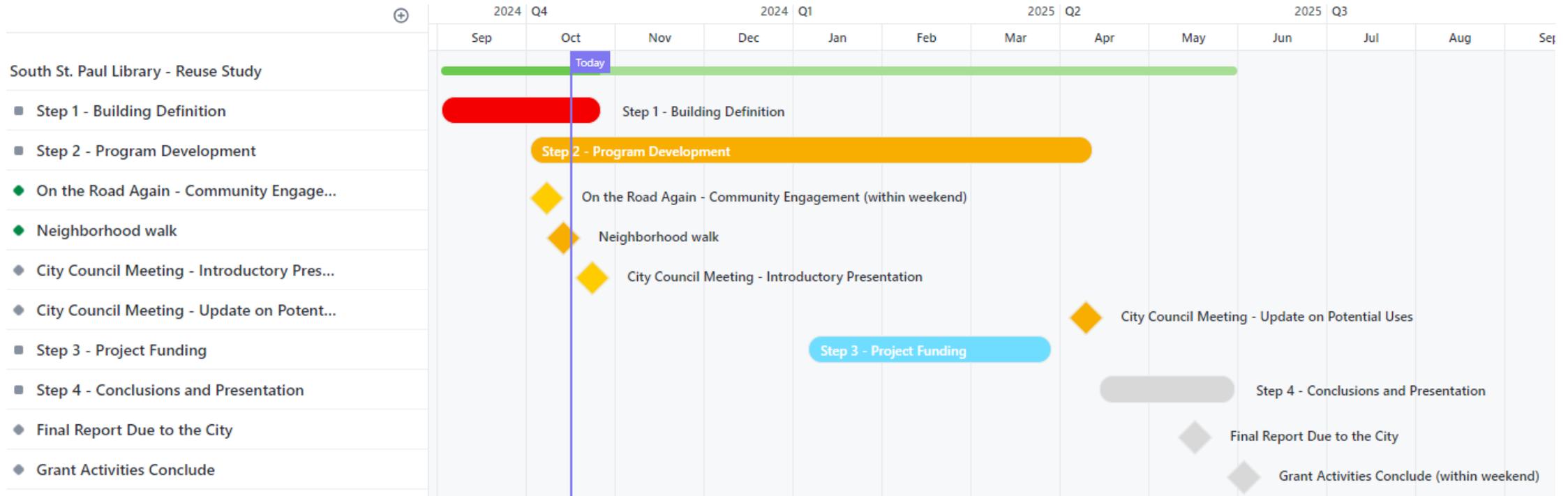
### 3. APPROACH



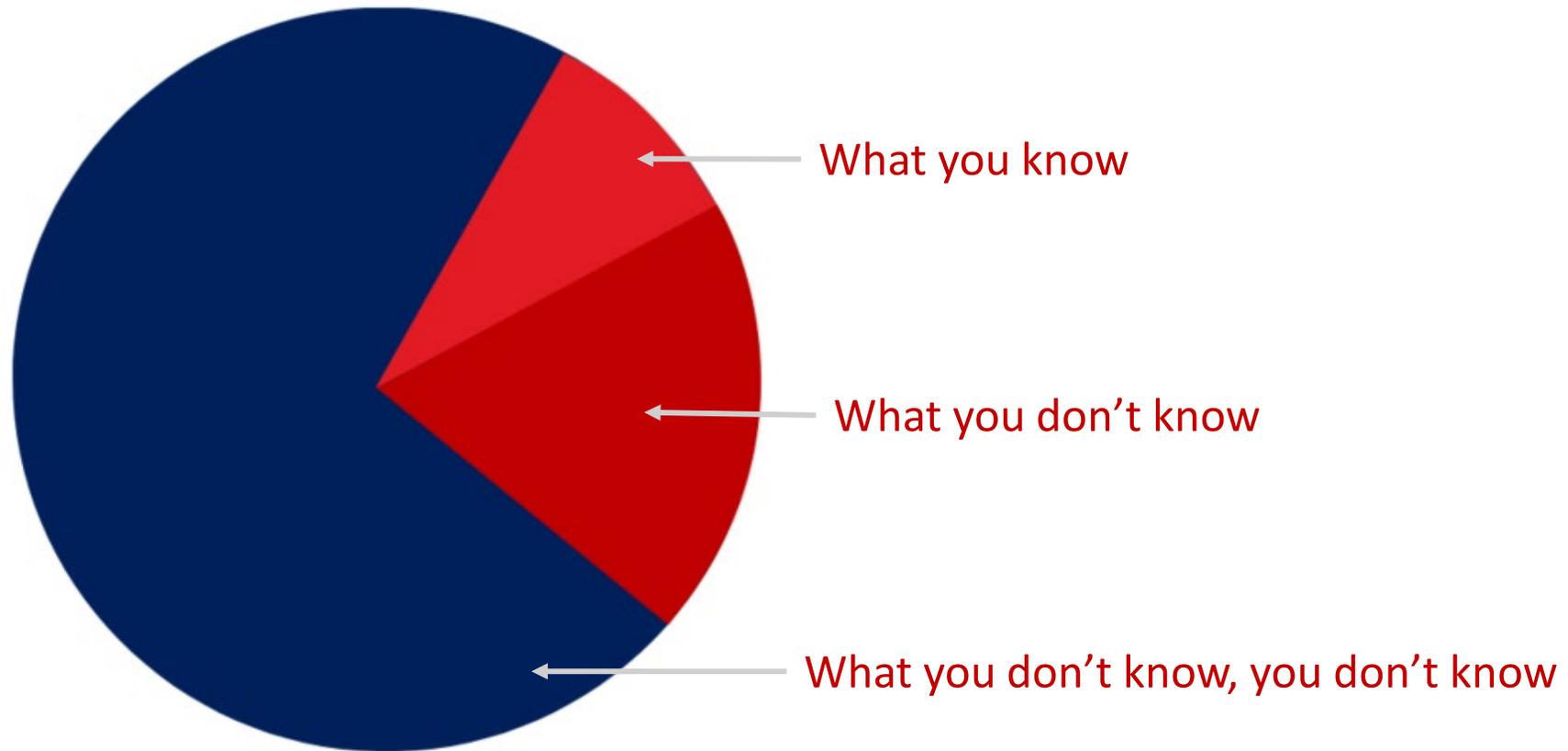
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1. **Step 1 – Building Definition**  
(September – October 2024)
2. **Step 2 – Program Development**  
(October 2024 – April 2025)
3. **Step 3 – Project Funding**  
(January 2025 – March 2025)
4. **Step 4 – Conclusion**  
(April 2025 – May 2025)

# 4. OVERALL SCHEDULE



## 5. STEP 1 – BUILDING DEFINITION – STATUS UPDATE



# 5. STEP 1 – BUILDING DEFINITION

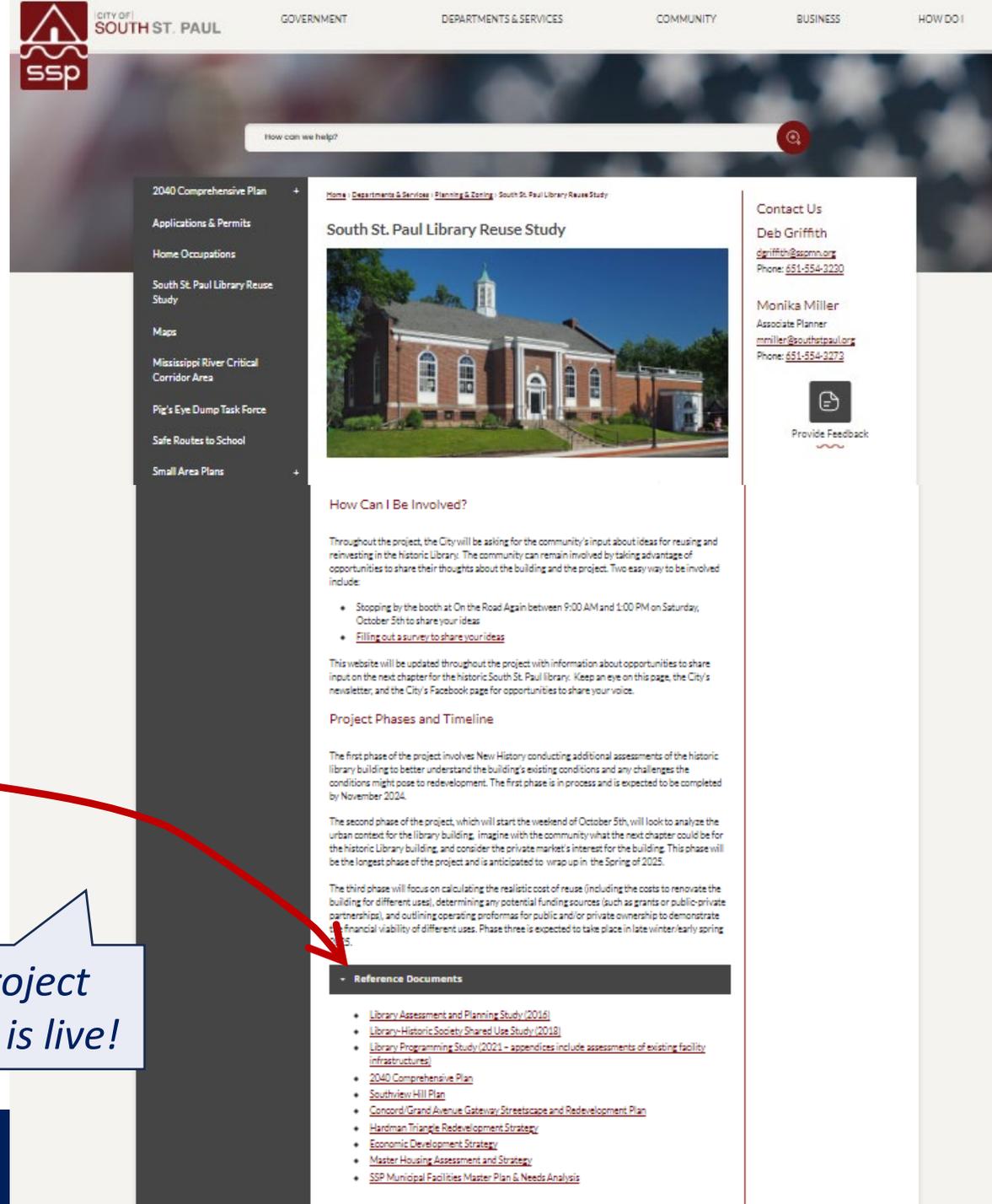
*(underway!)*

We are in the midst of collecting, reviewing, augmenting and interpreting information about the building and site in order to develop a technical framework for evaluating use options.

This step includes an assessment of:

- **History and Context**
- **Previous Work**
- **Building Assessment**

*The project website is live!*



## Understanding the historical context



- **1880s+** — South Saint Paul’s riverfront area began to see industrial development. The meat packing industry was particularly successful, and during the twentieth century, the Swift & Company (plant constructed beginning in 1897) and the Armor & Company (plant constructed beginning in 1919) dominated the local economy.
- **1916** — “Up the hill”, the city established the library commission, secured a \$10,000 pledge from the Carnegie foundation and two lots of land.
- **1922** - The city authorized the purchase of \$2,500 books and opened a small library within the Fitzgerald Building.
- **1923** - The South St. Paul American Legion Post began a fundraising campaign and citizens approved a \$25,000 bond issue in a special election, supplemented by Dakota County. With this funding, the city hired St. Paul architectural firm of Ellerbe and Company to design the library in the Colonial Revival style
- **1927** - The American Memorial Library was the culmination of a decade of community effort to construct the building. The building was the first purpose-built library in Dakota County.

In her book, *South St. Paul Centennial*, local historian Lois Glewwe notes that following the library’s construction, “almost immediately the new building became a bustling center of activity” and “for many years,” the basement “was used for social events, wedding receptions, and civic functions.”

- **1952** - The library opened a “Children’s Room” in the basement.
- **1961** - A mobile “bookmobile” program to distribute library collections across the community was established.
- **1965** - The most significant change to the library building occurred, when overcrowding led to the construction of a new wing at the building’s south elevation.

## Eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places



Based on our research, the American Legion Memorial Library has a **high potential for listing in the National Register of Historic Places** .

It appears to be **historically significant under NPS Criterion A** for its role in community education and civic life. As the city's only public library from 1927 until 2023, and a public event space until at least 1952.

Because the library continued in this location through 2023, the **property's historic period ("period of significance") would be 1927 until 1975**, fifty years from the year in which a NRHP nomination could be submitted (2025), to account for the "50 year" rule

All features present by 1975 should be considered **"historic," including the 1965 addition**, but not all historic elements rise to the level of "character-defining", or contributing to its historic character.

If it was placed on the National Register and **privately-owned** as an income generating property, a rehabilitation could **qualify for Historic Tax Credits**

## Assessing the Neighborhood Context

- **Previous Plans & Studies**
- **Zoning Districts & Zoning Map** – C-1 district, uses allowed, setbacks/building height, parking
- **Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA)** – Bluff impact zone, bluffline setbacks, erosion control, stormwater management
- **Comprehensive Plan** – Existing and future land use maps
- **Parking** – Parking supply (on-site and on-street), needs, requirements, options
- **Neighborhood Building Usage** – Types of non-residential uses currently
- **Neighborhood Connections** – Surrounding mix of uses and destinations, street connections and design, walking/biking environment, bluff views



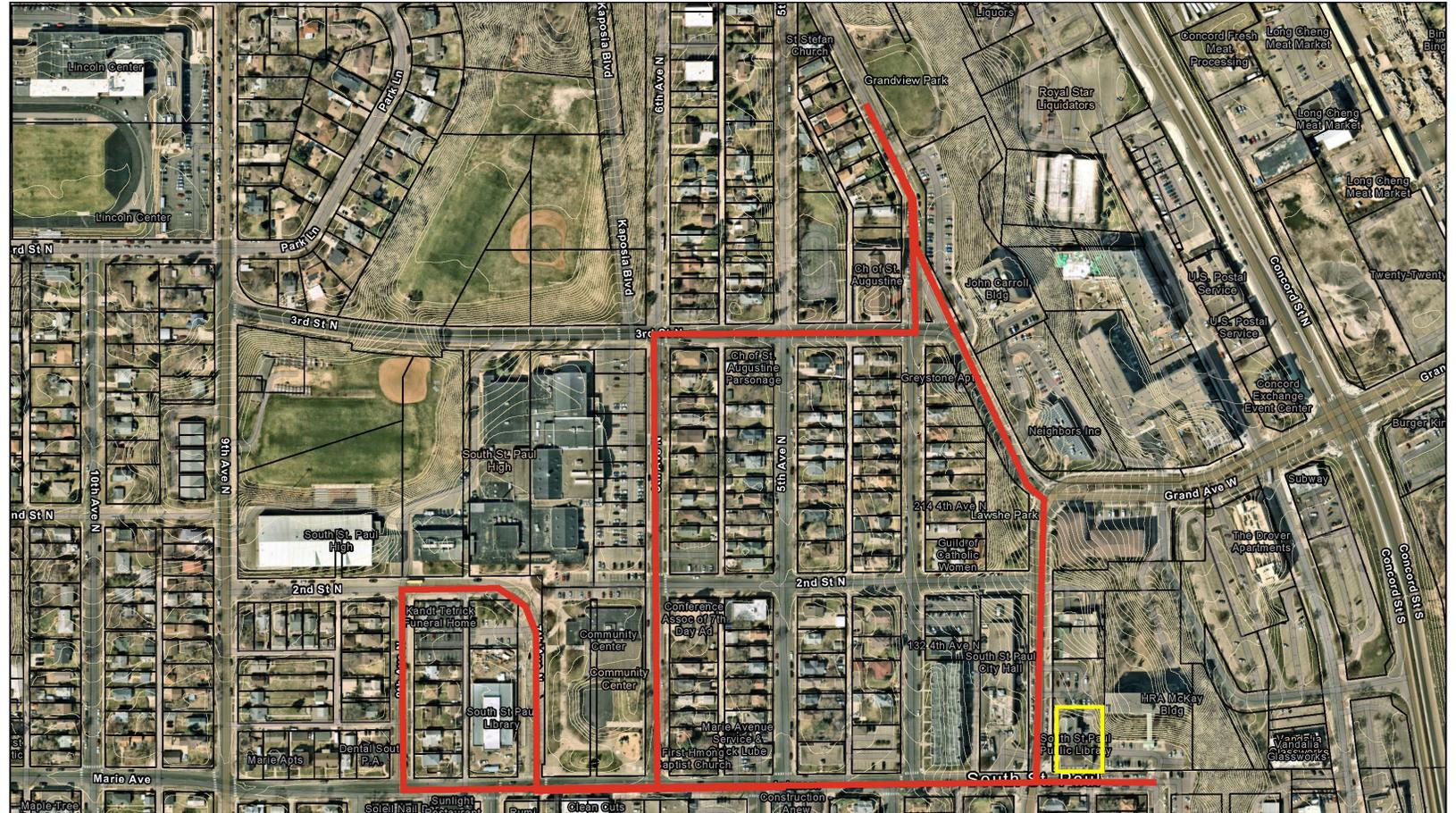
Future Land Use



# Assessing the Neighborhood Context

## Neighborhood Walking Tour

- What things about the neighborhood draw people here?
- What are the neighborhood's challenges?
- What changes could keep people living and coming to the neighborhood?
- How does this building and site relate to the neighborhood?



## Assessing the Condition of the Property

- **Building Code** – Accessibility, Egress, Occupancies Allowed
- **Site** – Stormwater on site, grade conditions (particularly at the surface lot to the east), setbacks/buffers (MRRCA)
- **Envelope** – Concerns with water infiltration at the windows, damaging face brick and steel lintels
- **Interior** – Condition of finishes and millwork, restrooms, stairs and railings
- **Structural Capacity** - Existing systems supports almost any new use with the exception of industrial.
- **Building Systems** – Mechanical systems at the end of their useful life, Electrical service, plumbing and stormwater capacity, no sprinklers on site

*Matterport Scan of  
Existing Building*



## 6. LOOKING FORWARD

**STEP 2 – PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT** (*anticipated October 2024 - April 2025*)

**Analyze the building site and urban context.**

**Facilitate Community Outreach and Input.**

**Private Market Analysis and Developer Outreach.**

**Evaluation of Opportunities & Challenges to Various Reuses.**

**STEP 3 – PROJECT FUNDING** (*anticipated January 2025 - March 2025*)

**STEP 4 – CONCLUSIONS AND PRESENTATIONS** (*anticipated April 2025 - May 2025*)



## Community Engagement

- Booth at Booya event
- Community event winter / spring 2025
- Key stakeholder meetings
- Online community surveys
- Project website
- City newsletter updates
- Display boards and flyers



  
SOUTH ST. PAUL LIBRARY  
EST. 1913

Former South  
St. Paul Library  
Building Reuse  
Study

  
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**QUESTIONS?**