

# Save the Northfield Depot

2025 Annual Report

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## Mission

The mission of Save the Northfield Depot is to reuse the restored/renovated 1888 Milwaukee Road Depot as a community gathering place for both public and private events.

## Vision

The vision of Save the Northfield Depot is to maintain the historical integrity and features of the 1888 Milwaukee Road Depot and to educate the community about its rich history and continued usefulness as a community resource.

Checks can be mailed to: *Save the Northfield Depot, P.O. Box 486, Northfield, MN 55057.* A check ensures that your FULL donation goes toward the project.

Online donations also accepted through:



Learn more at: [northfielddepot.org/give/donate-money/](http://northfielddepot.org/give/donate-money/)

***Save the Northfield Depot is an incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.  
Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.  
Our tax-identification number is 27-2081273.***



Greetings to the Northfield Community!

*Save the Northfield Depot* Board is pleased to share the major accomplishments and activities of 2025. In June, the three-part complex of the Depot-Pavilion-Transit Hub envisioned by the public in 2010 became a reality. Some necessary accommodations in our Depot functioning were made during the City’s construction work — well worth the attractive and valuable multi-use community resource. We are grateful to the City for their commitment to the project and celebrated with them at the Transit Hub ribbon cutting on June 24, 2025 (see photo below).



With the completion of the complex and full functioning of the Depot, it seemed appropriate to step back and review the intended benefits of the project as articulated in an early document 2008 **Founding Document:** *“Long-term public benefits include historical preservation, economic development catalyst, visible and welcoming venue for visitors, blighted city lot beautification, community gathering place, a projected adjacent transportation center (City Transit Hub), and possible future passenger rail use.”*

It is a deep sense of satisfaction and gratitude to the community for their time, energy, skills, and funding to reach these aspirational outcomes. We hope that you find the following report reflects another successful year, and our commitment to the mission.

With gratitude,  
Board Officers and Advisors of *Save the Northfield Depot* Board of Directors

**Rob Martin**  
*Chair*

**Clark Webster**  
*Treasurer*

**Alice Thomas**  
*Secretary*

**Judy Code**  
*Landscaping*

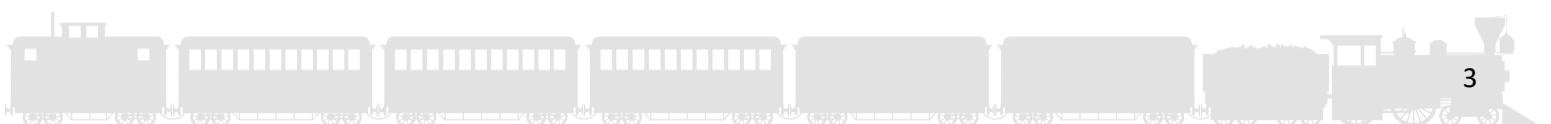
**Ray Coudret**  
*Events*

**Tracy Davis Heisler**  
*Public Partnerships Liaison*

**Pepe Kryzda**  
*Architectural*

**Don McGee**  
*Technical*

**Lisa Thompson**  
*Communications & Marketing*



## Administration

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The administrative activity reflects the first full year of focusing on utilization vs. rehabilitation.

- Welcomed one additional board member in 2025, **Tracy Davis Heisler**: After many years serving on City boards and commissions as well as local nonprofits, Tracy came to appreciate how historic preservation, transportation, and thoughtful urban design work together to strengthen communities. She was drawn to the Depot's work of honoring our city's architectural heritage while reimagining its role.
- Updated the mission and vision statements (see page 2).
- Provided input to the City on various aspects of the Transit Hub-Pavilion construction that remained in progress in 2025 until June; e.g., communicated with City staff and the construction firm to coordinate the availability of parking spaces when needed for Depot events. Our collaboration included donating some of the unused shingles from the Depot project for use on the pavilion, while retaining some for Depot repairs.
- Managed rentals (scheduled reservations, opened and closed Depot for events, maintained supplies, cleaned when needed).
- Donated 42 archival architectural plans related to the 1888 Depot to the Northfield History Center . The documents included the 1888 original building and the subsequent proposed changes in 1911, 1917, 1958, and 2015; most plans were previously owned by Chip DeMann and/or the SMSQ architectural firm.
- Carried insurance policies for property, general liability, builders risk, and the board officers and directors.
- Maintained financial records, filed appropriate 501(c)(3) reports, and tax forms.
- In partnership with the City of Northfield and the Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce, we supported expanded passenger rail service along the Saint Paul–Kansas City corridor through joint letters and resolutions to state legislators. This effort aimed to secure legislative support for directing MnDOT to pursue a federally funded evaluation of the corridor, as part of broader regional advocacy.
- Considered the appropriate future model of administration and ownership of the Depot.



## Depot Building and Grounds

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No work on the Depot building itself was needed. Activity on the grounds was limited during the Transit Hub-Pavilion project but resumed after the June completion.

### Grounds Activity

#### *Volunteers*

- Replaced the plaques and landscaping rocks that were removed on the north side of the Depot during the City construction of the pavilion. Volunteers reinstalled the large, historical plaque on the northwest corner and the Machacek plaque on the northeast corner. Volunteers repaired one of the plaque stakes that had been damaged during the construction.
- Planted low-growing evergreen shrubs contained within a brick and limestone surround at the southwest corner of the Depot.
- Added crushed limestone rocks to the interior of the fountain base to discourage growth of weeds
- Donated materials, constructed, and installed a sign on south lawn that provides information about the Depot and its availability for rental.
- Repainted the baggage cart.
- Cleaned and prepared fountain for the seasonal transitions.
- Continued on-going weeding/maintenance of sculpture garden, fountain, and grounds.



# Enhancements to Depot and Site

## Interior

Few amenities were added in 2025 (indicated below by \*). The following available amenities have served the various diverse events.

- ADA compliant bathroom
- Large desk (used as buffet, agendas for meetings, programs, sales of musical CDs)
- 7 folding tables (30" x 72")
- 50 folding chairs (for use indoors)
- 25 stacking metal chairs (for outdoor use)
- 6 cushioned, stacking chairs (for use indoors, beneficial for musicians, older people, long meetings, etc.)
- Chair pads (for long meetings)\*
- Portable 60" TV monitor
- Amplifier and speaker\*
- Small stand with podium
- Wi-fi (available via hot spot)
- Portable coat rack and hangers
- 60-cup coffee maker and 72 oz. thermal airpot
- Small refrigerator
- Flameless candles (pillar-style and tea-style)
- Internet access\*



**A unique amenity that sometimes serves as a gavel to start a meeting or other event: the train engine bell – also used as an instrument in a percussion concert a previous year.**

## Grounds

New landscaping and informational features were added to the Depot site.



**Repeated attempts to maintain grass in the southwest corner were unsuccessful. The evergreen shrubs surrounded by bricks and limestone are an attractive solution.**



**The new sign provides historical information about the Depot and includes sources for rental and history information; i.e., the website and QR code.**



## Community Use

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The Depot remains a popular venue for a variety of community events. The range of uses can be seen in the images below. The Depot continues to be the site for meetings of organizations (chiefly non-profits and small businesses); classes and workshops; public events (concerts, dance recitals, readings); and private social gatherings (showers, birthday parties, family gatherings, wedding rehearsal dinners).

### The Arts



**Top left:** Dance recital

**Top Right:** Author's reading of comic mystery

**Bottom left:** Art show

### Small Business Events



**Left:** Business Financial Management Seminar



**Right:** Regional Visitor's Center Conference



## Family Gatherings



**Left:** Bridal shower



**Right:** Birthday party

## Community Gatherings



**Top left:** Holiday market

**Top Right:** Gardening workshop



**Bottom left:** Music concert



## Public Awareness

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Various modes of communication were used to keep the community informed of the public events at the Depot, and its availability for public use.

- **Rental availability.** The dept website includes information about rental conditions and amenities, an online rental interest form, a venue photos page, and a form to request Depot tours.
- **Exterior sign.** A sign was installed in the sculpture garden near the south sidewalk that identifies the name and date of the Depot, and provides information on how it can be rented.
- **Online calendar of events.** The online calendar is accessible directly from the home page, helping event planners check when the Depot is available and for attendees for see what events are being held. For public events, the name and description is provided in the calendar itself and in an event slider below the calendar as well as added as a Facebook event.
- **Program Presentations.** A board member spoke at organizations' meetings in the Depot about the history of the Depot and the rehabilitation project.
- **Newspaper.** The *Northfield News* published articles about upcoming events at the Depot.
- **Radio.** A board member was interviewed for a KYMN podcast, *Tales of the Historic Depot*, The podcast includes stories about the Depot and its connection to Northfield through the lens of Cows, Colleges, and Community, and is available online at KYMN
- **Social media.** Progress updates and upcoming events were posted on Facebook and Instagram.
- **Email Newsletter.** *Save the Northfield Depot* subscribers received updates and event announcements by email through MailChimp.

## Future Plans

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The current board continues to plan for a strong, successful future of the Depot as a community asset. That includes considering an appropriate future model of administration and ownership of the Depot.



## Funding

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Fundraising continued; the remaining loan was \$17,592 by the end of the 2025 year.

- **Give to the Max.** *Save the Northfield Depot* participated again in Give to the Max.
- **Benefit Concert.** Guitarist Randall Ferguson generously provided a concert for the benefit of *Save the Northfield Depot*.
- **Event Participants.** In addition to paying a rental fee, some organizers of meetings or public events have provided a “Donations for Depot” jar in support of the Depot.
- **Rentals.** Revenue generated from renting the Depot for public and private events; the latter has increased from last year.
- **Tours.** Compared with tours in previous years provided chiefly for local groups interested in the project, tour efforts now focus on visitors to the community and can be requested from the Depot website. Donations are requested in lieu of charging a fee.
- **In-kind Donations.** As in the past, donated items and labor were critical to the progress of the Depot project. That includes board members and other volunteers who bring their professional expertise to the project.

## Financials

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### Revenue

Donations .....	\$3,194
Rent .....	\$8,232
<b>Total revenue .....</b>	<b>\$11,426</b>

### Expenditures

Mortgage interest.....	\$782
Building work & materials .....	\$0
Grounds & sculpture garden (snow removal & crushed limestone) .....	\$140
Interior amenities (amplifier & speaker, one folding table, chair pads, hotspot) ....	\$602
Supplies .....	\$177
Outreach (online rental interest form, postage, & processing fees) .....	\$138
Insurance (property, general liability, Directors & Officers).....	\$5,747
Utilities (City, County).....	\$2,777
Administration (non-profit registration) .....	\$25
<b>Total expenditures .....</b>	<b>\$10,388</b>







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