



A Sustainable Hub for Changemakers in Downtown Minneapolis

MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION IS ALL IN ON MISSION

At the McKnight Foundation, we are all in on our mission, leveraging every tool as a philanthropic organization. That's why it was so important to us that our new headquarters be a real-life example of building spaces that allow people and planet to thrive.

For the planet, we combined historic preservation, deep energy efficiency, green materials, and sustainable transportation to make our building a state-of-the-art demonstration of climate action.

For people, we designed our space to deepen connections—with one another and with our broader community. It's a space where people from all backgrounds can come together, share ideas, and get big things done to improve lives in our community and around the world. The space will host thousands of visitors each year, serving as a vibrant hub of collaboration.

*“People and
planet go hand
in hand....”*

**TONYA ALLEN,
MCKNIGHT
PRESIDENT**

MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION



A LEGACY OF COMMUNITY GIVING

Since 1953, the McKnight Foundation has awarded \$3.26 billion in grants to more than 4,000 nonprofit organizations, supporting causes that span climate and clean-energy efforts, racial equity and community development, arts and culture, neuroscience, global food systems, rural development, and basic needs like housing and jobs. Over time, we have built a legacy of community-centered philanthropy in Minnesota and beyond.

After two decades in our home on South Second Street above the Mill City Museum in downtown Minneapolis, the McKnight Foundation needed more room for our growing team. The expansion also allows us to welcome thousands more grantees, partners, and community members, multiplying opportunities to engage and collaborate. By signing a 20-year lease, we're reaffirming our long-standing commitment to the community.

In lieu of pursuing new construction, the Foundation chose to renovate and reinvigorate a historic building. The office comprises four connected structures, the oldest of which were erected in 1883 and 1890, that housed businesses serving the growing city's milling district.

Renting and renovating a 100-year-old building underscores McKnight's commitment to people and place, bringing new life to storied community spaces. It allows us to stand alongside partners we've supported in their innovative efforts to preserve historic community hubs and reduce pollution—like the Sabathani Community Center, Minneapolis American Indian Center, and the Historic Coliseum Building.



921 Washington Avenue South in the 1930s,
photo by Arnold Roth courtesy of Hennepin County Library



Historical signage is still visible on the brick wall in the board room



Downtown Minneapolis

Mississippi River

McKnight Foundation

75%+
of construction
waste diverted from
landfills



Thermal energy storage tanks (above) and a chiller-heater (below) work with heat pumps and other state-of-the-art equipment to heat and cool the building using ice, and without burning fossil fuels.



A SUSTAINABILITY SHOWCASE

Our new office is a physical demonstration of our mission to care for people and planet. By choosing sustainable energy and materials, we aim to achieve LEED Gold certification for the building.

To keep the office comfortable during Minnesota's hot summers and chilly winters, we invested in a state-of-the-art, all-electric heating and cooling system that uses heat pumps and thermal energy storage to reduce pollution and energy costs. Also, by choosing to renovate a historic structure, we're honoring our community's heritage, while supporting sustainable urban development.

Following the guidance of our design partners, we used sustainable building materials and incorporated as many reclaimed elements into the design as possible, while also diverting more than 75% of construction waste from landfills. We re-used furniture from our former office—refinishing and reupholstering to give them new life. With careful selection of building materials like carpeting, flooring, and fabrics, we avoided sending more than a ton of fossil-fuel derived plastic to landfills. Greener choices helped minimize harmful chemical exposure for construction crews and for everyone who will use the building—now and in the future.

Fully ADA compliant, our new headquarters is located near transit stations and bike and walking paths to encourage healthy and sustainable commuting options, and offers ample bike parking for staff and guests as well as electric vehicle charging for staff.



AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY HUB

Before construction began on our new headquarters at 921 Washington Avenue South in Downtown Minneapolis, McKnight partnered with local, diverse business owners to arrive at a shared vision for a welcoming space. We prioritized sustainable design, inclusion, and connection as the foundation for a vibrant hub for changemakers.

A five-minute walk from our former office, the renovated building strengthens McKnight's local ties through expanded meeting spaces that foster equity and belonging—including accessibility features, prayer and wellness rooms, all-gender restrooms, and a range of environments for collaboration and focus. The office also includes an in-house creative studio, which will enable staff and partners to advance and communicate our mission effectively.

An exterior mural wall will be a canvas for Minnesota artists and culture bearers, showcasing work that reflects the richness of local culture and creativity.

100%

*Fully electric heating
and cooling system*

RECOGNIZING OUR PARTNERS

We extend special thanks to our partners who helped make our new offices a reality:

5 by 5 Design • Avisen Legal with Crowe • Dunham Associates • FORTÉ • Greiner Construction
with Action Construction Services • Habitable • Hunt Electric • KimbleCo • Loucks • Modern
Heating & Air • NAC Mechanical & Electrical Services and APi Group • Parameters with Ideal
Workplace Solutions • Reigstad Engineers • Studio BV with Mobilize Design & Architecture • Trane

MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION