



Historic Old Central High School ~ Duluth, MN

Original construction of Historic Central High School was in 1890 (134,114 sq. ft) with 3 later additions in 1926 (20,787 sq. ft), 1938 (2,079 sq. ft.), and 1973 (5,334 sq. ft.).

The building, which sits on an entire city block in the heart of downtown Duluth, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

~ The District was presented a Historic Central deferred maintenance feasibility study in June of 2019 which outlined over \$48.5 million of interior and exterior building repairs. These repairs would qualify through Long-Term Facilities Maintenance (LTFM) funding which is an equalized levy. LTFM projects, under current law, cannot include upgrades, new construction, or remodeling.

~ Further building analysis concluded that the building has over three times the space actually needed to support the staff and programs currently in Historic Central.

~ Interest in Historic Central by outside developers prompted the District to consider what a transfer of ownership would entail.

~ A facilities work group was created in the fall of 2019 to analyze current facilities and funding options with the goal to create a recommendation to the school board.

~ Work group recommendations were presented to the school board in January 2020 and the school board unanimously voted to direct District staff to find funding options that would include a relocation from Historic Central.

~ The relocation recommendation includes moving some building staff and programs into new & remodeled facilities on the Central High School site. This recommendation includes the option for additional outside development on the Central High School site with the District utilizing property already owned by the District that is less desirable to developers and has been a barrier to economic development.

~ An estimated cost savings of over \$17 million can be realized in site costs vs. investing LTFM funding into Historic Central.

~ The transfer of ownership of Historic Central can put it in the hands of those with better resources and experiences to caretake and preserve this iconic building.

~ A legislative request also includes addressing the required transportation facility improvements that have been deferred.

~ The District continues to gauge interest in both properties and work will progress on finding the right facility and funding options for the school board to consider, with the goal to have effective use of space with funding options that are responsible and sustainable.

