

Karcher Artspace Lofts

405 Washington Street | Waukegan, IL 60085 | Opened 2012



Rendering by 4240 Architecture

Looking Up in Downtown Waukegan

The City of Waukegan commands a strategic Lake Michigan site midway between Milwaukee and Chicago. Shipping and manufacturing were its economic lifeblood for decades, but now the city is reinventing itself in the post-industrial age and turning to the arts to help drive economic revitalization of its downtown area.

For Waukegan, an important step in the process was the renovation of the historic Karcher Hotel into a mixed-use arts facility. This nine-story building, located a block from City Hall, opened in 1928 as a 140-room hotel. But like most of downtown Waukegan, it fell on hard times. By the 1970s it had been turned into a senior citizens' residence, and had stood vacant since 1984 when Artspace entered the scene.

Artspace has now renovated the Karcher at a cost of \$14.6 million to create 36 units of affordable live/work space for artists and their families plus 2,811 square feet of ground-floor retail and community space for arts-friendly businesses and nonprofit organizations. Other amenities include a two-story gallery and community room, computer learning center and an outdoor patio.

“Any time a group comes in with a zero failure track record, that’s good. It’s an overwhelming undertaking, but... Artspace had unanimous support of City Council members when it was approved under the last city administration, and aldermen still back it.”

— Bob Sabonjian, Mayor of Waukegan



DEVELOPMENT COST

\$14.6 million

TOTAL AREA

33,386 sq. ft.

COMMERCIAL AREA

2,811 sq. ft.

LIVE/WORK UNITS

36

ARCHITECT

4240 Architecture

FINANCING

City of Waukegan

IFF

Illinois Housing Development Authority

JP Morgan Chase

Lake County

Raymond James

LEAD FUNDERS (\$5,000+)

Abdula Family Foundation

AT&T

Amy Callahan

First Bank of Highland Park

First Midwest Bank

Fred W. Losch Beverage Company

Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelly Foundation

Beth Levine

William & Suzanne Lindsay

Midwest Generation

NorStates Bank

North Shore Gas

North Shore Trust and Savings

The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation

Waukegan Park District

Waukegan Savings Bank

Dave & Sandi Whitmore

Artspace thanks the many individuals and local businesses that have supported this project.