TRAFFIC ZONE CENTER FOR VISUAL ART

250 Third Avenue N., Minneapolis, MN 55401
artspace.org/traffic-zone

PROJECT DETAILS

**Owner** Artspace Projects, Inc.

**Development Partner** Traffic Zone Center for Visual Art

**Architects** LHB Engineers & Architects

**Financing** Greater Metropolitan Minneapolis Housing Corporation; Minneapolis Community Development Agency; Minnesota Nonprofit Assistance Fund; TCF Bank

**Funders** Dayton Hudson Foundation; General Mills Foundation; The McKnight Foundation; Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission; Piper Jaffray Foundation; Winthrop & Weinstine

**Total Development Cost** $4.3M

**Total Area** 100,421 sq. ft.

**Number of Working Studios** 23

OVERVIEW

With its distinctive limestone exterior, the six-story Traffic Zone is one of the most beautiful buildings in Minneapolis’ historic Warehouse District. Built in 1886 as a farm implement warehouse, it was converted into a bakery two years later. From 1951 to 1992, the building was an appliance parts warehouse. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Traffic Zone was created to meet the needs of a group of mid-career artists who approached Artspace in the early 1990s because they were being forced out of their studios in another building in the area. Pooling their resources, the artists formed a for-profit corporation that now owns and operates the property in partnership with Artspace.

The Traffic Zone contains 23 large studios on its first, second and third floors. All studios feature hardwood floors, high ceilings, exposed brick and beams, and large windows; many also afford views of the downtown skyline. The artists share their
building with several commercial tenants — including an architecture firm, Graywolf Press and Artspace itself. The artists also curate the Traffic Zone Gallery on the ground floor and host annual spring and fall open studio events, each of which typically draws more than 1,200 visitors to the building.

“Stability for artists is really important. Artists tend to be working in spaces that aren’t being used for anything else at the time, but they don’t have a sense of what’s happening next year or next month.”

— Jim Dryden, Artist