

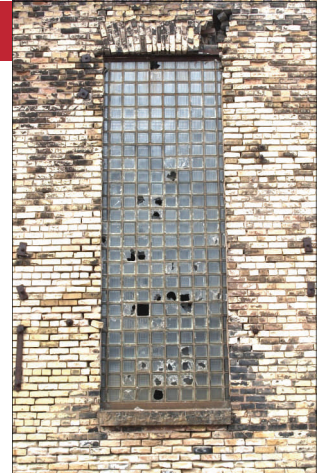
Sites Worth Saving

MINNESOTA'S 10 MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES 2011



Preservation Alliance of Minnesota ❖ www.mnpreservation.org

In the late nineteenth century, the U.S. became an industrial powerhouse, and the Iron Range of northeastern Minnesota led the way by providing raw materials for the growth of industry. At its heyday, “the Range’s” many iron ore mines buzzed with activity and employed thousands of people. A strong infrastructure of rail and maritime transportation was needed to move the iron ore from the mines to shipping ports in Duluth and on to steel plants in Chicago, Gary, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh. Railroads played a key role, but many of the structures and switching yards—essential cogs in this industrial process—have been lost.



Mitchell Yards, located just northeast of Hibbing, is an exception. The engine house and machine shop buildings, constructed in 1906, provided a place for the maintenance and repair of the locomotives and rail cars that served the iron ore industry. Mitchell Yards was active until 1965, but decades of neglect and decay are now evident on the massive brick structure and its surrounding eighty-acre site.

The engine house’s 20,000 square foot roof needs replacement to keep water and snow from penetrating the interior of the building. Where the roof is missing, the brick walls are uncapped, allowing water to seep into the mortar joints and causing structural damage. The current owner purchased the site several years ago, and since then has worked to maintain and preserve the buildings. His ultimate dream is to reuse the building for both performing and metalwork arts, but he needs financial and organizational assistance to develop his vision and to take the project to the next level.

Action Steps

1. Assist the owner and Hibbing Heritage Preservation Commission with applying for grants to evaluate the historical significance of Mitchell Yards and to pursue historic designation.
2. Help form a non-profit organization to rehabilitate and operate the building as a community arts center.
3. Provide design assistance, materials, and volunteer labor to address dire stabilization and repair needs.



HIBBING

MITCHELL YARDS



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