

# Former department store transformed into 1 million sf mixed-use complex

Sibley Square anchors downtown revitalization in Rochester, N.Y.

**BY PETER FABRIS, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR | MARCH 18, 2022**



Sibley Square encompasses 1 million square feet.

[Sibley Square](#), a giant mixed-use complex project that transformed a nearly derelict former department store was recently completed in Rochester, N.Y.

Encompassing more than 1 million sf, the landmark structure now houses an array of public and private services and businesses including art galleries, retail shops, restaurants, a grocery store, childcare services, high-tech office and lab space, and nearly 300 units of mixed-income housing. The decade-long adaptive reuse project led by WinnDevelopment is a prominent anchor for Rochester's ongoing downtown revitalization.



Restaurants are a huge part of Sibley Square.



Sibley Square's key program elements include market-rate, senior, and affordable housing; a 68,000 sf high-tech research and development incubator; a central food hall featuring local restaurants; commercial kitchen space for local food businesses; and extensive outdoor amenities on multiple landscaped roof decks.





Sibley Square also consists of office space.

Spreading out over than 23 acres of floor space covering an entire city block, the \$200 million project provides a compelling case study in repurposing vacant or underutilized commercial properties. Constructed in 1906 and expanded several times, the brown-brick Sibley Square building is iconic for its scale, expressive Renaissance Revival exterior detailing, and a copper-topped clock tower that has long been a regional landmark. The property's size, architectural distinction, and central location near multiple transit lines made it an appealing candidate for transformation.

Lead designers, The Architectural Team (TAT), faced a major challenge, essentially redesigning the building from the inside out for numerous uses, while retaining as much historic detail as possible. Residential components include Liberty Lofts, a 104-unit affordable and workforce housing community; Spectra, offering 104 units of market-rate housing; and Landmark, containing 72 affordable residences for seniors. Interior designers focused on imbuing each community with distinct aesthetics.

For instance, Liberty Lofts sports a vibrant and eclectic industrial-inspired palette. Spectra embraces a sleekly luxe environment that artfully incorporates historic elements such as restored brick and original finishes along with new touches including locally fabricated millwork.



A look inside the residential components of Sibley Square.

A highlight of the commercial space is NextCorps, a 68,000 sf high-tech research and development incubator supported by the University of Rochester. It features co-working space, an auditorium, conference rooms, private offices, and state-of-the-art labs, and makerspaces. The space also offers a roof deck and multiple shared common areas full of restored historic detailing, including original custom millwork and murals by local artists highlighting a connection to Rochester's history as a center of architectural and technological innovation.

The building's skylit central atrium highlights Mercantile on Main, a 15,000 sf food hall featuring local restaurants and other independent food and beverage vendors. Anchored by a large four-sided bar, the space includes a selection of dining and lounge furniture alongside creatively detailed

storefronts.

Owner and/or developer: [Winn Development](#)

Design architect: [The Architectural Team \(TAT\)](#)

Architect of record: The Architectural Team (TAT)

MEP engineer: [Crosby Brownlie, Inc.](#)

Structural engineer: [Odeh Engineers](#)

General contractor/construction manager: [DiMarco Constructors](#)