



BRICK CITY MAKES

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THE HUB FOR GROWING MANUFACTURERS

BRICK CITY MAKES OFFERS HUB FOR GROWING MANUFACTURERS

Not-for-Profits Team Up, Create First-of-its-Kind Facility Offering Space, Support Services

ST. LOUIS (January 11, 2017) - Two St. Louis not-for-profits have joined forces to fill a niche in the region's business ecosystem by transforming a historic industrial building into a center for growing manufacturers. In the process, they're creating the first facility of its kind in the country.

Brick City Makes: The Hub for Growing Manufacturers (www.brickcitymakes.com) will combine the character of a historic, urban industrial building with modern-day systems and business development support. Plans include renovating a six-level, 87,000-square-foot manufacturing building located at 2528 Texas Ave. in south St. Louis, creating production space for small to mid-sized manufacturers. Brick City Makes will also offer business development support services and a collaborative environment to help these companies thrive. Unlike other similar business development entities, the \$11 million Brick City Makes will be privately owned.

The not-for-profits behind Brick City Makes are DeSales Community Development, one of St. Louis' oldest and most accomplished community development organizations, and St. Louis Makes, an entrepreneurial support organization focused on the manufacturing sector. DeSales purchased the building in October. This is the largest commercial development to date for DeSales, whose 40-year history has been mostly focused on housing development and property management.

"We believe that renovating this historic building into a 21st century facility that provides employment opportunities is a natural extension of our residential development work," said Tom Pickel, DeSales Community Development executive director. "The support services we will offer through our partnership with St. Louis Makes will create a truly unique property."

St. Louis Makes will house its offices at the building and provide services, programming and special events at Brick City Makes. The organization promotes best practices in product management, new product innovation and business development for manufacturing companies.

"Brick City Makes will create a one-of-a-kind concept: two acres, under roof, in the city, completely dedicated to helping manufacturers succeed," said St. Louis Makes Executive Director Marc Bowers. "This is a private-sector solution for growing the region's economy. We will serve manufacturers that need affordable space that can grow with them."

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“Manufacturing makes up a quarter of the St. Louis region’s economy and is one of our greatest strengths,” added Bowers. “St. Louis Makes is excited to work with a partner like DeSales that recognizes how manufacturing changes lives, reinvigorates neighborhoods, and creates tremendous economic growth.”

The all-concrete building was constructed in 1912 by the Koken Barber Chair Company at the intersection of Sidney Street and Texas Avenue. For much of its history, the building was home to the International Hat Company and most recently, the Walsh & Simmons Seating Company.

Renovations will include: a new, automatic, 5,000 lb. capacity freight elevator, updated electrical and mechanical systems, two dock-high overhead doors, dock upgrades enabling service for 53-foot truck trailers, 24-hour secure access, a parking lot for tenants and visitors, and the addition of a community room available to tenants for meetings and events.

The proposed space plan creates up to 37 rentable units ranging from a 1,300-square-foot suite to an entire 12,000-square-foot floor. The flexible design allows small units to be combined into larger ones to accommodate tenant growth. Each unit will feature natural light and offer individually metered electric service. Each floor will have new common restrooms and an industrial sink.

Initial occupancy is projected for January 2018. Development funding sources will include a combination of public incentives and private investment: federal and state historic tax credits, New Markets Tax credits, private bank financing and private philanthropy.

“We’ve specifically planned Brick City Makes to meet the needs and budgets of small businesses,” said Pickel, noting that pre-leasing specials are available for a limited time. Leasing agents for the project are Bryan King and Brad Waldrop of King Realty Advisors (www.kingrealtyadvisors.com or 314-588-1900). More information can be found at www.brickcitymakes.com or followed on Twitter [@BrickCityMakes](https://twitter.com/BrickCityMakes).

DeSales Community Development (www.desaleshousing.com), founded in 1976, is one of St. Louis’ oldest and most accomplished community development organizations. Formerly known as DeSales Community Housing Corporation, the non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization has developed of \$60 million in residential space in city neighborhoods over the last two decades. DeSales’ services include affordable housing development, property management and planning designed to strengthen neighborhoods.

St. Louis Makes (www.stlouismakes.org) provides networking, education and analysis programs which connect and train manufacturers, makers and inventors. Founded in 2014, the private non-profit organization’s mission is to grow manufacturing revenue and employment across the St. Louis region. St. Louis Makes sponsors a variety of events, including ProductCamp St. Louis, Design Jam St. Louis, and monthly Factory Tours.