

**Mayor's Award
Teen Challenge of the Dakotas
"Adaptive Reuse"
317 3rd Avenue**



The former Dudley / Sawnee Hotel has been the home of Teen Challenge of the Dakotas since 1995. Constructed in 1904, the hotel was added onto and changed names multiple times. Based on building records and structural research, the design team could see no fewer than six different phases of construction over the history of the building!

The original hotel (estimated at approximately 34' x 72') was a much smaller building that

anchored the corner of 3rd Avenue & 4th Street, followed by 2 separate additions to the south, a 2-story annex to the West, eventually an addition to infill northward of the west annex, and then a cobbled together series of small spaces added to the south of the annex. All told, the building is comprised of roughly 20,000 square feet, with 9,507 square feet on the main level, 6,688 square feet on the second, and 4,726 square feet on the third. The foundation was originally a board-formed rubble wall with infilling concrete, and the lower level was excavated after-the-fact. It is still not completely excavated, and thus functions much like a mechanical crawl space rather than a true basement in much of that lower level.

The original structure and most of its additions were wood framed with wood lap siding. The full brick veneer was added to the main hotel in 1921, according to building records. The building also originally had a flat roof. Various oral histories suggest that the pitched roof was likely added around the 80's.

The Teen Challenge building at 317 3rd Avenue was on the verge of collapse, to be honest. It had extensive water damage, horribly deflecting structure, asbestos pipe insulation and finishes in several areas. There was still original wiring throughout the building (creating a significant fire hazard), numerous life safety issues needing to be addressed, poor heating and cooling, a crumbling chimney and extensive brick wearing, was in desperate need of tuck-pointing and some brick replacement, had numerous broken or boarded-over windows, and the list could go on. The project had been considered with varying levels of scope multiple times between 2008 and 2013, and with their new facility west of town fully operational, 2014 became the prime time to tackle the over 20,000 square-foot structure. Executive Director Mike Gilmartin walked the architectural and construction team through and considered several options before deciding to do a phased gut & renovation of the historic structure.

Fall of 2013 was the initial start of selective demolition – enough to examine the condition of the structure and look at the feasibility of salvaging the building. Late Winter/early Spring of 2014 was the full demolition of finishes occur in all but the south wing of the first floor. The second and third floors were complete in July of 2015, with the first floor anticipating substantial completion in June of 2016.



One challenge of this project is that it was almost continuously occupied by the tenants in various portions of the building while work was happening in other areas. This extended the overall project timeline and meant that additional care had to be taken to address that near-continuous occupancy when addressing fire protection features, life safety issues, etc.

Other features of note: The original flooring was a cobbled-together collection of numerous different sizes, species, and finishes of wood, in many cases with vinyl or asbestos tile glued down to it. Where possible (2nd floor south corridor, in particular) the hardwoods were salvaged and refinished. Where that wasn't possible, a salvaged maple gym floor was installed in keeping with the spirit of breathing new life into an old building and repurposing materials.



The “Adaptive Reuse” nature of this project enters in where it changed from primarily a residential occupancy to a mixed-use program, and in the desire of the owners to make the renovated structure as energy efficient and low maintenance as possible for the future. On the first floor and portions of the second floor, Teen Challenge’s “Home Again” thrift store will make its home, creating a retail/mercantile occupancy where there once wasn't. The old ballroom spaces were opened up a bit more, and the undersized structure was reinforced with new columns, reinforced

footings, and additional beams. The structural configuration of the original structure suggested that the existing column/beam system allowed for an open lobby area at the entry of the building when it was still serving as a hotel. The design-build team removed nearly all of the infilling walls in that main area to keep the renovated floor open for sales and merchandising. To give additional height to the space while still maintaining the fire separation needed and expressing the structure, the beams and columns were wrapped and the ceiling given an almost coffered appearance. LED lighting was used throughout to keep the building as energy-efficient as possible, and spray-foam insulation helped seal the building more effectively for weather, sound, and thermal control.

