

Save the Kirkbride Building in Fergus Falls, Minnesota

How you can help



For talking points for all items below, please refer to our [petition](#) and the 2nd page of this document.

Everyone:

- ✓ **Follow** the new official “Friends of the Kirkbride” Facebook page for up to date info, action announcements, and more. Share these posts widely and often, and invite your friends to follow the page. You can also join the “Friends of the Kirkbride Community” group on Facebook to converse more informally with other supporters.
- ✓ **Sign and share** our change.org petition to MN Legislators. Leave comments and mention where you live so that they can get a sense of the scale of interest in preserving the building:
<https://www.change.org/p/mn-legislators-say-no-to-funding-demo-of-fergus-falls-kirkbride>
- ✓ **Write letters** to the editor of the Fergus Falls Daily Journal and the Star Tribune expressing your opinion:
<http://www.fergusfallsjournal.com/services/letters-to-editor/>
<http://www.startribune.com/submit-a-letter-or-commentary/115289839/>
- ✓ **Spread the word** that developers with viable funding and business plans are needed to preserve this unique national treasure. This is the only thing that will truly save the building in the long run.

Minnesota residents:

All of the above, plus...

- ✓ **Write** to State Legislators and Governor Dayton to ask them to deny the City’s \$8.9 million bonding bill request for demolition. We will update this section when we have the bill numbers, committee member names and more information, but it doesn’t hurt to let them know how you feel now.

Find your representatives here: <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>

Governor Dayton contact form: <https://mn.gov/governor/contact-us/form/>

Fergus Falls residents:

All of the above, plus...

- ✓ **Call or email** your Ward representative:
Find your ward representative: http://www.ci.fergus-falls.mn.us/mayor_council
- ✓ **Email** your state representatives:
Representative Nornes: rep.bud.nornes@house.mn
Senator Ingebrigtsen: sen.bill.ingebrigtsen@senate.mn
- ✓ **Sign up to speak** during the open forum at any future city council meetings. Meetings are every other Monday at 5:30pm (check the City website for dates). You must sign up for open forum 24 hours in advance of meetings, which means the deadline to sign up will usually be a Friday at 5:30pm. If you want to have pictures, documents or other information included in the “packet” that the council receives before every meeting, the deadline to get it in is Thursday at noon.

Open forum sign up form: [http://www.ci.fergus-falls.mn.us/vertical/sites/%7BC83A9759-035D-4EAB-A39F-EA24B2F5336D%7D/uploads/Open_Forum_Registration_Form_and_Policy-Rev_2013_-_FillIn\(2\).pdf](http://www.ci.fergus-falls.mn.us/vertical/sites/%7BC83A9759-035D-4EAB-A39F-EA24B2F5336D%7D/uploads/Open_Forum_Registration_Form_and_Policy-Rev_2013_-_FillIn(2).pdf)

Ideas for Talking Points

Our main points are listed in our [petition](#), but here are a few more. Decide what resonates with you and what you feel comfortable speaking about - don't feel like you have to cover every topic – clear, concise and respectful communication is key.

- The city council is driven by the fear that somehow the cost of maintaining or developing the Kirkbride will fall on the residents of Fergus Falls. This is a negative motivation.
- The Friends of the Kirkbride are driven by hope that a renovated site will respect the history of the RTC and will bring jobs and economic growth. This is a positive motivation. Focus on the positive.
- The city council does not have a plan for the site once the demolition is complete.
- Stantec was hired to prepare the estimates for the phased demolition. According to the estimates provided by Stantec, the cost to demolish all but the central tower building (Building 1) is \$8.9 million, and that is what the city is asking the state to provide. Stantec also estimated that the cost to demolish all but Building 1, plus the cost to fully restore Building 1 would be \$27.2 million. So, by their own estimates, the cost to restore Building 1 is \$18.3 million. Where is the city going to get this money?
- If the city truly wants to save the central tower, why not do that first? Make this the first priority. Work with a developer on a limited project, rather than trying to force a developer to take on the entire complex.
- The city council claims that “they have done all they can”. How do they know this? How is it possible to know this? Any deadlines are arbitrary and self-imposed.
- The city council believes the river is an asset of the city, and the council is aggressively focused on maintaining and developing this asset. While many cities have rivers, few have historical landmarks comparable to the RTC. The city needs to recognize the high value of the RTC and treat it as the asset that it is.
- In seeking funding for demolition, the city is demonstrating that they have no vision for the future of the Kirkbride. If they wanted to capitalize on the presence of this landmark in the city, they would be seeking funding for renovation and restoration.
- The \$1.9 Million of tax dollars being spent on Phase 1 demolition could have been better spent on mothballing, humidity control, and mold remediation.
- The fact that the city does not value the RTC as an asset is demonstrated by their unwillingness to save even some small things. The gazebos pose no threat, yet will be destroyed without any effort to sell them or move them. Springboard for the Arts and the Otter Tail County Historical Society requested that the city allow some materials and artifacts to be salvaged for use by artists, and the council voted no.
- The demolition of the Kirkbride would demonstrate poor stewardship of tax dollars. Hundreds of thousands of tax dollars have been invested in the site just within the last two years to upgrade the water and sewer, repair roofs and maintain the grounds. This tax money will have been wasted.
- Through the use of the term “deconstruction”, the city demonstrates their willingness to be deceptive regarding their intentions. Their goal is demolition. Deconstruction implies that the materials are going to be reused in some way. The materials from this planned deconstruction are going to the landfill.