

development news

Re-imagining Grand Rapids' busiest corner: TowerPinkster injects new life in derelict JA Building

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The iconic building with the curved corner façade at the intersection of Fulton Street and Division Avenue is, literally, the center of Grand Rapids -- the place where the NE, NW, SE, and SW quadrants shake hands. As of January 2013, 40,000 cars passed through the intersection daily.

One building facing that corner, known as "the Junior Achievement Building" or the "JA Building" and now called 4 E. Fulton, is no longer the derelict eyesore it has been for years, but is undergoing a dramatic transformation of its entryway and second floor by its new second-floor tenant, [TowerPinkster Architects & Engineers](#).

The building, owned by [Locus Development](#), has a historic designation, so façade repairs had to conform to historic requirements. But inside, the 7,500-square-foot second floor has joined the 21st Century with a sleek energy-efficient new interior for 40 of TowerPinkster's employees; 25 will move in sometime in October, leaving room for future growth.

"The elevator core is wood reclaimed from Asian shipping crates, and we designed the entry with the kitchen space forward to act as a lobby/welcome area," says Matt Slagle, design architect. "We saved the glass from the building's 1937-era windows; we crushed them and used them as aggregate in the countertop in the front of the space. Throughout, there are [Interlam 3-D](#) wall panels that look like crinkled paper to give dimension to the space. The countertops in the kitchen and bathroom are recycled aluminum shavings in a resin base."

Other features include:

- Roller window shades attached to solar sensors for auto control of daylight levels.
- Open workspaces for collaboration.
- Height-adjustable work surfaces so employees can sit or stand.
- Soft seating areas where employees can work away from their desks.
- [Polycom](#) video conferencing system with a 70-in screen.
- Private offices.

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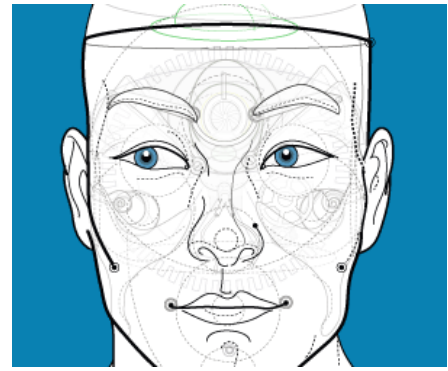
- A 1,500-square-foot event space available to the community.

The lobby will be open during ArtPrize and will exhibit the works of three artists.

[Click here](#) to view an animated video of the interior.

Source: Matt Slagle, TowerPinkster; Chris Knape, SeyferthPR

Writer: Deborah Johnson Wood, Development News Editor



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