

# BEFORE





# Forest Arms Apartments

625 Second Avenue, Detroit

## COMPLETED 2017

### Project overview

Located in Detroit's Midtown, Forest Arms Apartments dates from 1905 when the Warren-Prentis district was popular among upper and upper-middle class professionals. It is one of the earliest and most architecturally impressive apartment buildings remaining in the area. During the 1940s, the original 36 units were subdivided into 72 and eventually became popular housing for Wayne State University students. In 2008, a fire destroyed much of the building, leaving nearly 100 people homeless. Rumors swirled that what remained of Forest Arms would be demolished to make way for a franchise coffee shop.

### Project details

This proved to be a comprehensive rehabilitation project to remove fire- and water-damaged components, preserve and restore the character-defining features of the property and modernize the facility for energy efficiency and resident comfort. Developer Scott Lowell purchased the building and began rehabilitating it in 2014 as part of a \$12.1 million project using Federal and Enhanced State Historic Preservation Tax Credits. Significant reconstruction took place on the top floor, which had been open and exposed to the elements after the fire burned off the roof. Forward-looking features such as solar panels, geo-thermal heating and underground rainwater collection demonstrate how historic buildings can be retrofitted with the latest technology in a sensitive and meaningful way.

The anticipation surrounding the rehabilitation of Forest Arms led to all 70 of the units being leased before the project was even completed.

**Historic Preservation Tax Credit value:** \$3.79 million