## Thomas M. Cooley Law School GRAND RAPIDS CAMPUS

# CASEstudy

#### SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE FACILITIES

**LOCATION:** 111 Commerce Avenue, SW

Grand Rapids, Michigan

**OWNER:** Thomas M. Cooley Law School

In 2003, Thomas M. Cooley Law School chose the former H.H. Cutler Building and Durfee Building in Grand Rapids, Mich., for its third campus site. The renovation project was completed in 2006, and the 111 Commerce Street SW building has since served as an integral campus in a vibrant downtown core.

At five stories and 107,000 square feet, this facility was a major undertaking for Cooley and Rockford Development. Rockford began to redevelop this site and a dozen other buildings in the Cherry Street Landing area. Before, the neighborhood was mostly abandoned with some areas designated as Brownfield sites; now, it is a developed and bustling destination.

Cooley's Grand Rapids campus began as a partnership program with Western Michigan University. Initially, Cooley held classes at the WMU Grand Rapids campus while renovations began. It was important to Cooley to establish a presence in Grand Rapids, one of the fastest-growing and most economically prosperous cities in the Midwest.

This building is an outstanding example of adaptive reuse. Proper adaptive reuse can transform a facility's form or function without changing the fundamental integrity of the former structure, while maintaining the character of the surrounding area. Cooley's renovation project adapted a historic 1890s-era building and built an expansion onto it. The building itself was not in good shape. It had been designated a Brownfield site by the state of Michigan. This is a common designation for formerly industrial properties that



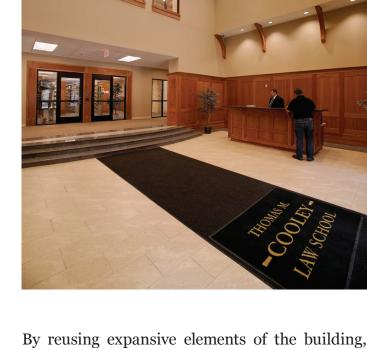


**SERFgreen.**org

#### SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE FACILITIES GRAND RAPIDS CAMPUS

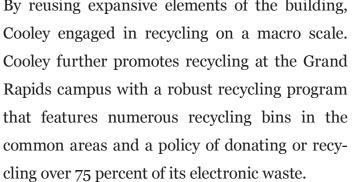
have a certain amount of contamination associated with them. State law requires these environmental contaminants be removed before construction is complete. Not only did Cooley accomplish this, but they sought to preserve and enhance the facility itself.

Though the Grand Rapids campus features stateof-the-art water efficiency systems, modern insulation, high air quality standards, and efficient computer systems, old-world charm is never far away. Exposed original brick walls, handsome wood floors, and worn wood columns abound in





this classic building. As esthetically pleasing as these features may be, they also serve to benefit the campus in other ways. Cooley was able to save these materials rather than discard them and consume more raw materials. Cooley even used parts of wood floors they were replacing to patch up broken areas of surviving floor.





#### SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE FACILITIES GRAND RAPIDS CAMPUS

Cooley also located the Grand Rapids campus in an area where car travel could be minimized. Located adjacent to the principal business district, the campus is within walking distance of apartments, restaurants, entertainment, Van Andel Arena, and plenty of internship/job opportunities. For those who must commute via car, the campus sits right on the edge of U.S. Highway 131. Cooley also worked with the city of Grand Rapids to build an attractive and reasonably priced public parking garage next to the campus.

The Grand Rapids campus is a stunning reminder of how effective adaptive reuse in a vibrant urban core can be, and a great example of Practical  $Environmental Stewardship^{TM}$ .

For more information contact: communications@cooley.edu



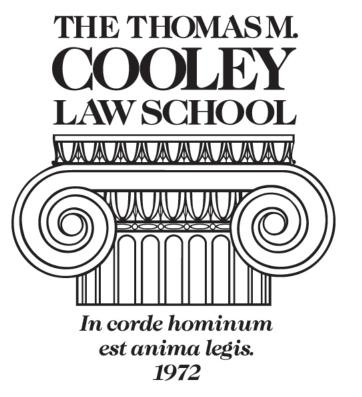
Prepared in cooperation with

Environmental Economics and Policy

at

MICHIGAN STATE

U N I V E R S I T Y



## Thomas M. Cooley Law School GRAND RAPIDS CAMPUS



#### SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE FACILITIES

**SERF** makes environmental certification affordable and more accessible to building owners, managers and developers. SERF leverages its certification program to advance the concept of *Practical Environmental Stewardship.*™

**SERF** affirms that with private property rights come *responsibilities* — not least of which are the responsibilities to construct, rehabilitate, and operate our homes and facilities, enhance our communities and minimize environmental impact.

**SERF** recognizes that protection of our environment is the duty of every steward of the land, and such stewards who act accordingly should be recognized and encouraged.

**SERF** holds that honest cost-benefit analysis should be applied to building improvements and systems intended to help the environment. To endure, sustainability must be affordable.

**SERF** is an inclusive organization which provides live and online forums for members to share methods to cost-effectively meet our goals.

**SERF** builds future generations of environmentally responsible property owners. Our examples and support can teach and endow future generations to live in harmony with our planet and to conserve its precious resources.

**SERF** Catch the wave ~ get certified!



### PRACTICAL ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



**SERFgreen**.org

1350 E. Lake Lansing Road • East Lansing, MI 48823 • 517.337.8367