

Transforming Hate into Inclusivity and Creativity



Concept rendering by MASS Design Group.
Courtesy of Transform 1012 N. Main Street.

You may have heard that a group of artists is transforming 1012 North Main Street, originally the Ku Klux Klan Klavern Number 101 Auditorium, into the Fred Rouse Center for Arts and Community Healing. It made the *Washington Post*. It made *Smithsonian Magazine*. Heck, it even made the *Dallas Morning News*!

A coalition of local nonprofits, Transform 1012 N. Main St. (aka Transform 1012), acquired the building in December of 2021 through a significant donation from the former owners of the building and a grant from the Rainwater Foundation. The building, one

of the few purpose-built KKK halls, opened in 1924, and eventually became the headquarters of the KKK in Texas. An imposing building, it was designed and located along North Main Street to intimidate Black, Hispanic, and immigrant Fort Worthians returning to their homes on the Northside from their jobs downtown.

Transform 1012 aims to transform a building that was once a symbol of fear and hatred and turn it into a space that celebrates truth and healing. The Center will be named for Fred Rouse, a Black Fort Worthian who was lynched by a white mob in 1921.

The founding board of Transform 1012 includes such local organizations and entities as the Opal Lee Foundation, DNAWORKS, The Welman Project, LGBTQ SAVES, SOL Ballet Folklórico, Window to Your World, 1012 Youth Council, and the Tarrant County Coalition for Peace and Justice. These groups represent and/or serve the people who were targeted by the KKK. It is fitting that Black, Catholic, Hispanic, immigrant, Jewish, and LGBTQIA Fort Worthians have come together in this labor of love and community reconciliation.

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“I envision a crossroads where all of Fort Worth can gather; where every cultural group feels a sense of belonging, of being seen, represented, and listened to; where we celebrate the richness of our individual cultures freely and openly; and where repairing past harm and damage leads to greater respect and appreciation, creativity, and love - of self and one another.”

Daniel Banks, Ph.D., Board Chair and Co-Founder/Co-Artistic Director of DNAWORKS, a founding organization of Transform 1012

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“The Fred Rouse Center for Arts and Community Healing will contribute to the Fort Worth of the 21st century an oasis of love, acceptance, and freedom of expression for all people, cultures, and communities.”

Fred Rouse, III, grandson of Fred Rouse, Transform 1012 Board Member At-Large, representing the Rouse families

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“I want people to know that they can work together, live together, play together - and this building personifies that to me.”

Dr. Opal Lee, activist, Nobel Peace Prize Nominee, and founding board member of Transform 1012

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“I’ve been very supportive of the reimagining of the Ellis Pecan Company building from the beginning of the project. I’m proud of Transform 1012 and all of the organizations playing a role in the revitalization effort. My hope is that a space which at one point in history was a gathering place for hate and bigotry will be a haven for those who have felt disenfranchised or disparaged to heal, find peace, and celebrate life.”

Councilmember Michael D. Crain

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“It is a truly beautiful thing to see members of our community band together to transform a dark piece of Fort Worth history into a place of light, art, and beauty. In naming the project after Mr. Fred Rouse, a dedicated husband and father, hard-working employee, and member of the Fort Worth community who was cruelly and violently beaten and lynched simply because of the color of his skin, this project will also stand to memorialize him and affirm Fort Worth’s continued obligation to stand against racism and hate.”

Fort Worth Mayor Mattie Parker

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“We believe the Fred Rouse Center is an opportunity to acknowledge the hard truths of our past and present so that real healing can occur, and we can move forward together as a united community. We’re finally building a place where everyone gets to feel the same sense of belonging and have the same opportunities, and Fort Worth will be at the forefront of an incredible movement by supporting this Center along with the National Juneteenth Museum and the Fort Worth African American Museum and Cultural Center. I can’t imagine a better future for our city than being internationally known as an inclusive, vibrant cultural hub, and we’re on our way there. This work is rightly being led by the groups who have historically been targeted and marginalized, but we all need to show up and play an active supporting role as these projects move forward.”

Taylor Willis, Executive Director of The Welman Project