



The Kendall Building is a five-story brick structure next to Monument Park.

Photo by Andy Terzes

Tribal firm buys downtown building

By [Ehren Wynder](#)

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A tribal economic development firm has acquired a mixed-use building in the heart of downtown.

Waséyabek Development Company, the non-gaming arm of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi, closed on the purchase of the five-story Kendall Building in Grand Rapids, at 16 Monroe Center St. NW, in October.

The firm had been leasing a space in the building.

Waséyabek President Diedra Mitchell said the firm moved its economic development arm to downtown Grand Rapids in August 2017 to increase its efficiency and build its brand on behalf of the Nottawaseppi.

Mitchell added the purchase fit Waséyabek's acquisition strategy as it continues to build its business portfolio.

"The space itself has room for us to grow as we expand our federal division and is warm and open with plenty of sunlight and glass in a combination of rustic and industrial," Mitchell said.

"The style fits our culture and mirrors our philosophy for working with one another and our partners, which is transparent, respectful and authentic."

In addition to buying and developing businesses to create opportunities for tribal members, Waséyabek also operates businesses that offer products and services to the federal government.

Waséyabek purchased the Kendall Building for from 616 Lofts, LLC, which previously leased Waséyabek a 3,123-square-foot office space on the building's second floor. The sale price wasn't disclosed.

Other tenants and uses in the building are Osteria Rosa, an Italian restaurant on the first floor, and 12 apartments on the top three floors.

As the new owner of the Kendall Building, Waséyabek has no plans to modify the mixed uses of the building, Mitchell said.

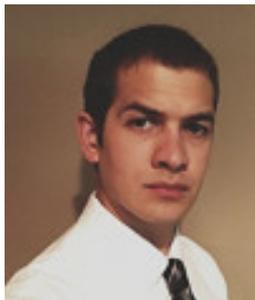
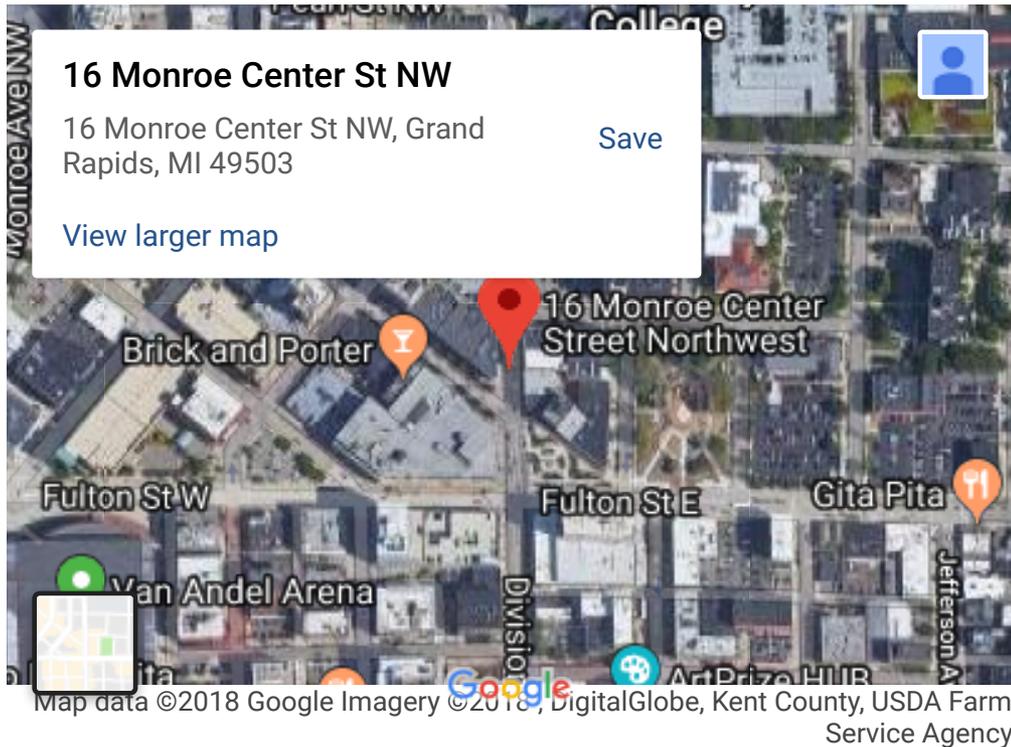
"Osteria Rosa is an ideal long-term tenant," Mitchell said. "Not only is it a great place to eat and meet after work, but they have an incredible staff that has catered events in our office with items not typically on the menu. We really couldn't ask for a better location."

Waséyabek does intend to do a small interior build out of its office, adding more individual offices in the process. Mitchell predicted construction would begin in the first quarter of 2019 and take four to five weeks. The firm has not

yet selected a contractor.

NAI Wisinski of West Michigan represented Waséyabek in the purchase.

Waséyabek Development Company was formed in 2011 to diversify the Nottawaseppi economy beyond the gaming industry.



Ehren Wynder

Ehren Wynder is a Grand Rapids Business Journal staff reporter who covers real estate, construction and architecture, retail, beverages, transportation, energy, technology and city government. Email Ehren at ewynder at grbj dot com. Follow him on Twitter @ehren_wynder