

NORA

WEST PALM



\$1B DEVELOPMENT. 14 BUILDINGS. ONE BOLD TRANSFORMATION.

There's something pretty special about a project that doesn't start with a blank site.

At Nora District in West Palm Beach, the existing buildings weren't something to work around. They were part of the reason the project existed in the first place.

Short for North Railroad Avenue, Nora is transforming a once-underutilized industrial corridor just north of downtown West Palm Beach into a 40-acre, walkable mixed-use district. Led by LCA Architecture, NDT Development, Place Projects, and Wheelock Street Capital, the larger vision brings together restored 1920s-era warehouses, new architecture, restaurants, retail, wellness, creative office space, hospitality, residences, and public spaces.

And if the concept feels a little familiar, there's a reason. Place Projects' Joe Furst was an early developer in Miami's Wynwood neighborhood, bringing some serious adaptive-reuse experience to the team. Development partners began assembling properties for Nora in 2019, ultimately turning a fragmented collection of parcels and industrial buildings into the foundation for an entirely new neighborhood.





The overall Nora vision has been described as a nearly \$1 billion redevelopment, with future phases continuing to add hotel, residential, office, and commercial uses. But before all of that could happen, somebody had to figure out how to make nearly century-old buildings work for what comes next.

That's where we came in.

Old Buildings. New Expectations.

Jezerinac Group served as the structural engineer for over 150,000 SF retail and office portion of Nora, encompassing 14 buildings: three new construction and eleven adaptive reuse structures. The oldest dates back to 1925!

Which, structurally speaking, means you don't exactly get to open the original Revit model.

Adaptive reuse is part engineering, part investigation, and occasionally part detective work. Existing conditions don't always match drawings. Materials and construction methods reflect a different era. And when a building has been standing for over 100 years, it has usually collected a few surprises along the way.

The goal at Nora wasn't to erase those imperfections. It was to preserve the character that made the buildings worth saving while giving them the structural performance needed for an entirely new life.

Our team used a combination of CMU, structural steel, and composite deck systems to retrofit, reinforce, and adapt the existing structures while also integrating the new construction into the district.

That balance mattered.

Nora's identity comes directly from its history. The official master plan intentionally combines restored industrial buildings with contemporary architecture rather than replacing the old with the new. Today, those structures form a pedestrian-oriented commercial district filled with restaurants, shops, wellness concepts, offices, and gathering spaces.



THE DETAILS YOU DON'T SEE ARE KIND OF THE POINT

On a project like this, some of the best structural work is the work nobody notices.

Visitors should see the character of the original buildings, the storefronts, exposed materials, landscaping, and activity along North Railroad Avenue. They probably shouldn't be thinking about how a new structural system was connected to a building from the 1920s.

We'll take that as a compliment.

Our structural solutions worked around the architecture, not the other way around. Existing elements were evaluated and reinforced, new openings and altered spaces were carefully coordinated, and new structural systems were integrated into buildings constructed under very different standards nearly a century ago.

WHERE ADAPTIVE REUSE GETS INTERESTING

Our involvement didn't stop when the drawings went out the door. Jezerinac Group remained heavily engaged throughout construction, working closely with the design and construction teams as existing conditions were uncovered.

With adaptive reuse, there's always an element of discovery. Existing buildings have a way of revealing their history once construction gets underway.

Field conditions called for quick conversations, practical solutions, and a team willing to work through the details together. At Nora, preserving the existing buildings wasn't a side note to the project. It was the project.



A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD BUILT ON AN OLD ONE

Today, Nora has moved from renderings and construction fencing to an active part of West Palm Beach, with more than 100,000 SF of retail and 55,000 SF of creative office space. And it's just getting started, with future phases continuing the district's larger residential, hospitality, and commercial vision.

For us at JG, Nora is a great example of what adaptive reuse can be when preservation and progress aren't treated as competing ideas.

Sometimes the right structural solution isn't tearing something down and starting over. It's understanding what's already there, strengthening what needs a little help, and making room for what comes next.

Over 100 years later, these buildings are still doing exactly what good structures should do: adapting, evolving, and serving the community around them. We're proud to have helped give them their next chapter.

