The digital shift in the economy has had an interesting impact on the built environment in Minneapolis' north warehouse district. The city's warehouses, long devoid of grain, flour, and produce are now filling with new residences. This neighborhood is now being reinvigorated by an explosion of growth. New housing, galleries, and restaurants are moving into the warehouse district after decades of decline and neglect.

The Bookmen campus is comprised of three phases including the Bookmen Lofts, a renovation of an existing warehouse into residential units; the Bookmen Stacks, a new 9-story residential development; and a restaurant housed in a new one-story building. The Bookmen Stacks is built upon an underground parking structure built as part of Phase II that is shared with the Lofts. The parking structure has a state-of-the-art green roof system that creates a landscaped courtyard serving the entire Bookmen campus. The roof also recycles rainwater from the buildings for irrigation while minimizing runoff from the block. The campus is designed to complement the surrounding historic North Loop District through the use of materials and massing reminiscent the surrounding context re-interpreted to reflect the contemporary time and forces under which it was designed and built. The entire campus development is a model for how to restore, build new and provide sustainable green space.
THE BOOKMEN LOFTS

This project involved converting a 100,000 square foot book warehouse into 57 residential lofts. The historic Bookman building was at the center of the railroad yards, produce warehouses and wholesale markets in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Minneapolis was the world leader in milling. The neighborhood has a rich history of architecture, commerce, and politics.

The new lofts in the Bookman building embrace the existing concrete floors, beams and columns by leaving the material exposed where possible. Therefore, the inserted layer of contemporary living spaces creates an interesting dichotomy between new and old.
The Bookmen Stacks is a 9-story, 45-unit contemporary residential development for the Minneapolis Warehouse District. Located next to the Bookmen Lofts, the Stacks is built upon an underground parking structure with green roof courtyard that is shared with the Lofts. This landscaped courtyard serves as a gathering space for the entire Bookmen campus.

Although, like most of the warehouses in the district, the primary structural element is concrete, the Stacks building stands in stark contrast to its brick-clad neighbors. The Stacks employ an exposed structural pre-cast concrete truss system, the largest of its kind in the country, that allows alternate floors to remain free of interior columns. The concrete structure is visible from the outside through a transparent glazing system that wraps the exterior. Surrounding the building’s base is a folded zinc panel system with large punched window openings. The zinc cladding continues on the west elevation and leans out toward the Bookmen Lofts as it rises up on the north side of the building.