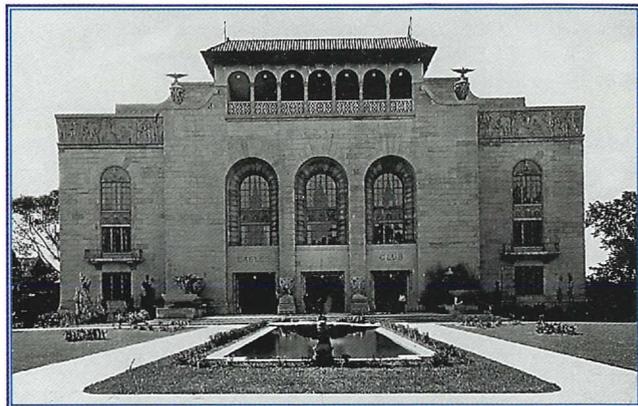


20 Kilbourn Avenue Rowhouse Historic District, Between 14th and 15th Sts. on Kilbourn Ave. NR. The blocks along 14th and 15th Sts. between W. Kilbourn Ave. and W. State St. provide a time capsule of Avenues West architecture, and, in recognition of its significance, a portion has been designated as a National Register Historic District. Tourgoers may want to park and walk this section of the tour. Noteworthy houses in the small historic district include the c. 1883 Victorian Gothic house of Charles Kannenberg, a salesman for Ziegler Candy Co. (937 N. 14th St.); the 1894 towered Queen Anne house of sporting goods merchant John Muenier, designed by Van Ryn and Lesser (931 N. 14th St.); the c. 1873 Italianate Frederick Kraus house (1416 W. Kilbourn Ave.); the 1897 doublehouse with stepped gables in the German Renaissance Revival style of liquor wholesaler Joseph Breslau, designed by Crane and Barkhausen (1425 W. Kilbourn Ave.); and the 1891 German-influenced Queen Anne style house of Breslau's father, Abraham, designed by Edward V. Koch & Co. (1435 W. Kilbourn Ave.). The historic district was named for the handsome rowhouse blocks which add distinction to the area. The two that survive include the striking towered block with rust colored brick designed by Crane and Barkhausen for Conrad Trimbom in 1897 to house four families (1422-1432 W. Kilbourn Ave.) and William Starke's row of 7 townhouses with projecting bays, gables and dormers built in 1897 to the designs of Henry C. Koch (903-919 N. 14th St.). Marquette University has recently rehabbed Trimbom Row into 20 apartments and Starke Row into 55 apartments for students.

The Starke family, which consisted of four brothers who worked in the dredging, docking and tug-boat business, had strong ties to the neighborhood. Christopher Starke built a towered Romanesque house nearby at 1827-29 W. Kilbourn Ave. in 1897 for his daughter, Mathilda and her husband, Charles Baerwald. Christopher Starke's other daughter Emma married Conrad Trimbom, who built Trimbom Row. Christopher's brother, William, built Starke Row, while his niece Ada lived at 939 N. 15th St. in a house with her contractor husband, Arthur H. Vogel.



Above: Eagles Club, 2401 West Wisconsin Avenue, c. late 1920's.
(Courtesy of Milwaukee County Historical Society)



The production of this tour was made possible by a contribution from the Avenues West Business Improvement District.

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Above: Milwaukee Normal School, 1820 West Wells Street, c. late 1890's.
(Courtesy of Milwaukee County Historical Society)

Front cover: Looking South on North 12th Street from West Kilbourn Avenue, 1933. (Courtesy of Milwaukee County Historical Society)

Inside: Looking Northwest along West Wisconsin Avenue from 16th Street, c. 1890's. (Courtesy of Milwaukee County Historical Society)

Brochures in this series include:

- Bay View
- Grant and Sherman Boulevards
- Juneautown: The Heart of Old Milwaukee
- Juneautown: Preservation, Revitalization and Adaptive Reuse
- Kilbourntown
- North Milwaukee
- North Point Neighborhood
- Walker's Point: Commercial and Industrial Buildings Tour
- Walker's Point: Residential Tour
- West End
- Yankee Hill

Key to symbols:

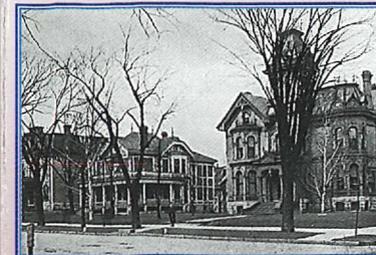
- NR** National Register of Historic Places
- ML** Milwaukee Landmark
- HPC** Designated by the Historic Preservation Commission of Milwaukee, successor to the Milwaukee Landmarks Commission

Milwaukee Historic Buildings Tour

Avenues West



A self-guided
driving tour of
historic
buildings in the
Avenues West
neighborhood



Avenues West

The Avenues West tour focuses on the neighborhood bounded by I-43 on the east, North 27th Street on the west, Clybourn Street on the south, and Highland Avenue on the north. Today it is a neighborhood of startling contrasts: high rise apartment buildings and turn-of-the-century rowhouses; old Victorian mansions and modern office buildings; huge institutional complexes and diminutive workers' cottages.

Wisconsin Avenue has always figured prominently in the neighborhood's history. Ordered built by the U.S. Congress and completed in 1839, Wisconsin Avenue served as one of the Wisconsin territory's earliest highways. Beginning in the 1850s, prosperous pioneers established large country estates along the Milwaukee portion of the thoroughfare, then known as Spring Street. An intensive period of mansion building followed in the 1880s and 1890s as the large country estates were subdivided into smaller parcels. The name of the street was changed to Grand Avenue to reflect the splendor of the homes that lined it. Throughout the 19th century, wealthy English-speaking residents from New England, New York, and the British Isles clustered along Wisconsin Avenue, although increasing numbers of affluent Germans began to build homes there in the late 1880s and 1890s. Other prosperous German-Americans settled thickly in the blocks north of Kilbourn Avenue.

In contrast to the spacious Wisconsin Avenue estates, the subdivisions platted east of 18th Street and north of Wells Street followed the traditional grid street pattern of narrow lots on rectangular blocks. The mix of different social and economic classes, which was typical of 19th century neighborhoods, is evident from the juxtaposition of substantial upper middle class houses next to small workers' cottages. Health care and humanitarian institutions, like Milwaukee Hospital and the Little Sisters of the Poor Home for the Aged, located in the area at an early date presaging the institutional growth that was to transform the neighborhood in the 20th century.

By the turn of the century, the neighborhood had evolved from open fields to a dense urban landscape. In the 20th century, the housing demands of the ever-growing population, the advent of the automobile, the increased traffic resulting from the construction of the Grand Avenue Viaduct, the explosive growth of institutions and the westward expansion of the Central Business District transformed the Avenues West area. As the rich moved away to newly fashionable areas, their mansions were used as rooming houses, fraternity houses, institutions, or put to commercial use, sometimes with storefronts tacked onto their facades. Many fell victim to apartment building construction. Fledgling institutions were attracted by the convenient location and availability of large, affordable buildings. By the 1940's, six hospitals as well as Marquette University had campuses in the neighborhood. Clubs were attracted to the area, too, including the Kilbourn Masonic Lodge (1911) and the Eagles Club (1927).

Even more dramatic changes have occurred since the 1960s with the construction of the I-43 freeway and the creation of urban renewal projects that cleared the blocks along Highland Avenue as well as an additional 35 acres to allow for Marquette University's expansion. Old health care institutions gobbled-up adjacent residential blocks only to later merge with other facilities or to relocate out of the area. Many of the old hospital buildings have since been razed. Population changes have occurred as well with African-Americans, Southeast Asians, and students now residing in the neighborhood.

Today, in spite of decades of change, it is still possible to sample the rich history and architecture of Avenues West by viewing the many fine houses, churches, clubs, and institutional buildings that dot the area.

1 Sinai Samaritan Medical Center, 948 N. 12th St. The need to serve the special religious, medical and dietary needs of Jewish patients led to the chartering of Jewish Hospital in 1903. It soon became a non-denominational facility renamed Mount Sinai Hospital and moved to this site in 1914. The original brick and stone Neoclassical style building was located at 948 N. 12th Street and was designed by the prominent architecture firm of E. Brielmaier & Sons, who were best known for designing churches. Today, this site is at the center of a multi-building medical complex and is the sole remaining downtown hospital. Since 1987, when Mount Sinai merged with Good Samaritan Hospital, it has been known as Sinai Samaritan Medical Center.

2 Kilbourn Masonic Temple, 827 N. 11th St. (1911) Architect: H. P. Schnetzky & Son. NR. Kilbourn Lodge No. 3, which occupies this building, holds the distinction of being Milwaukee's oldest lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. It was chartered in 1844. A peek at the rear of the present building reveals that this clubhouse incorporates the old house that occupied this lot when the Masons bought it. Architect Schnetzky utilized monumental, 2-story pilasters with Ionic capitals set on a raised base and a facade crowned with a triangular pediment to give the building's new front a temple-like, classical appearance.

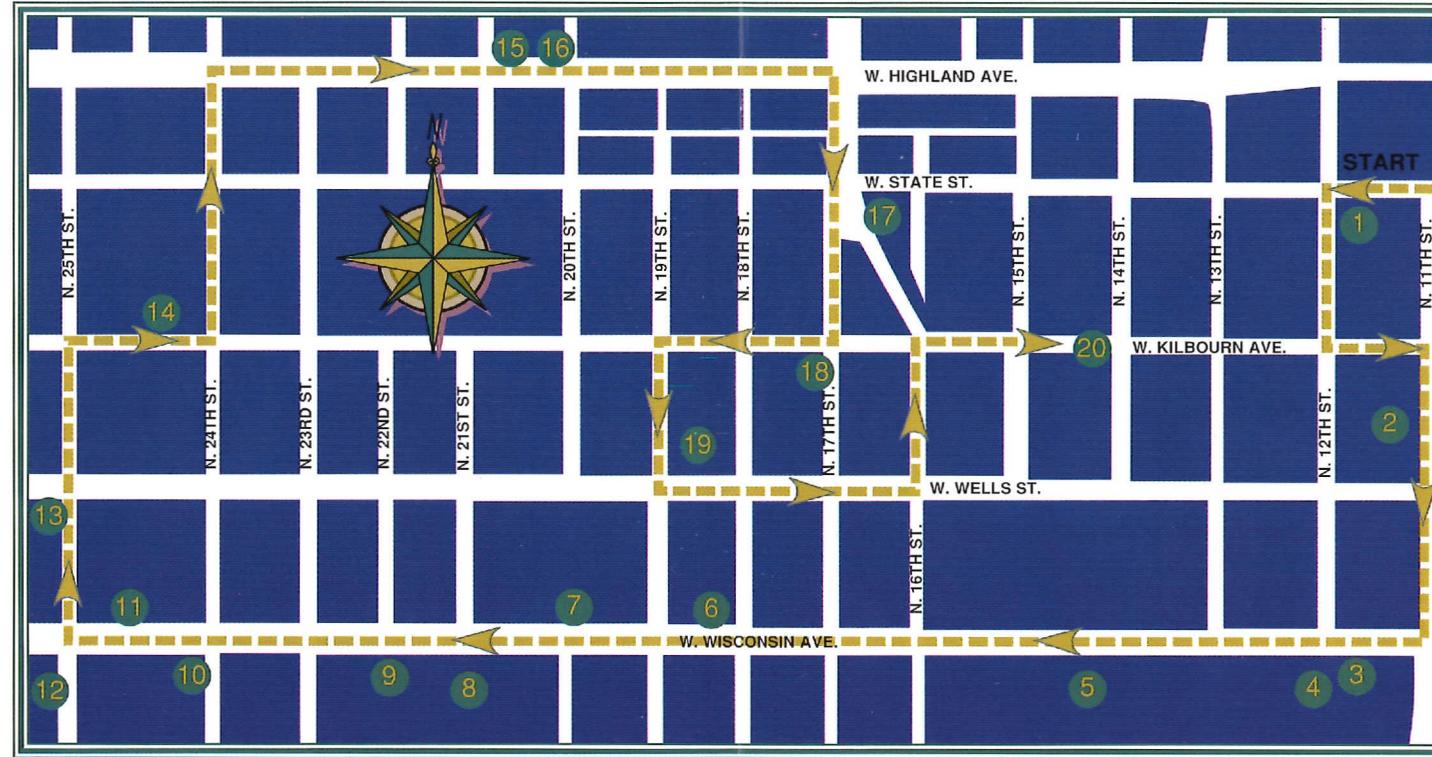
3 Johnston Hall, Marquette University, 1121 W. Wisconsin Ave. (1906-1907) Architect: Charles D. Crane. NR. Named in honor of benefactor and baking magnate Robert A. Johnston, this building signaled Marquette's transition from a college to a university. It was the school's first structure on Wisconsin Avenue and formed the nucleus of the present large campus. While the interior is one of the earliest in the city to use reinforced concrete for the structural members and as an interior finish, the exterior uses traditional Neo-Gothic forms such as crockets, finials and pointed arches to complement the architecture of Gesu Church next door.

4 Gesu Roman Catholic Church, 1145 W. Wisconsin Ave. (1893-1894) Architect: Henry C. Koch. NR, HPC. Although today the public generally associates it with Marquette University, Gesu Church actually predates the neighboring college on this block and had its origins in the merger of two older Catholic parishes. Architect Koch based his design for Gesu Church on medieval French Gothic cathedrals. The limestone clad church has monumental towers of unequal height with soaring polygonal spires and finials, lancet windows, carved stone crockets, and a 28-foot-diameter rose window. The handsome stone entrance vestibule was added in 1902.

5 St. Joan of Arc Chapel Marquette University Campus, 601-605 North 14th St. (1412-1432; 1927 reconstruction; 1965 reconstruction) Tucked away in a plaza ringed by the academic buildings of Marquette University is an unusual relic of Medieval Europe. The small stone Gothic style chapel was built in France in the 15th century to serve the noble families of the village of Chasse. Centuries later it fell into ruin. American heiress Gertrude Hill Gavin had the chapel disassembled and shipped stone by stone to her Long Island, New York estate where it was rebuilt in 1927. A later owner of Ms. Gavin's estate donated the chapel to Marquette University. The chapel was again dismantled and shipped to Milwaukee. The rebuilt structure was dedicated to St. Joan of Arc on May 26, 1966.

6 Sovereign Apartments, 1810 W. Wisconsin Ave. (1929) Architect: Bruce Uthus. NR. The winning combination of style, efficiency and location has made the Sovereign Apartments a popular address for over 60 years. The blocky, geometric, Art Deco form of the facade is enlivened by vertical piers framing terra cotta plaques and by a zigzag patterned frieze near the roofline. The Sovereign is one of Milwaukee's handsomest Art Deco buildings and embodies the elegance and sophistication of the jazz age.

7 Captain Frederick Pabst Mansion, 2000 W. Wisconsin Ave. (1890-1892) Architect: Ferry & Clas. ML, NR, HPC. The mansion built for beer baron Captain Frederick Pabst is the crown jewel of Milwaukee's rich legacy of Germanic-inspired residential architecture. Inspired by the houses of the wealthy merchant classes in Germany, Pabst's German Renaissance Revival residence incorporates the traditional German shaped gables ornamented with exquisite terra cotta work in the form of S and C scrolls, floral detail, and even grotesque heads. Pabst died in 1904, followed by his widow Marie in 1906. The mansion was then sold to the Catholic Archdiocese for use as the Archbishop's residence, which it remained until the mid-1970s. Since 1978, Wisconsin Heritages has operated the restored and exquisitely furnished mansion as a house museum.



8 Sylvester Pettibone House, 2051 W. Wisconsin Ave. (c. 1857) Architect: unknown. Avenue West's oldest known building, built in the late 1850s, was once the farmhouse on the 250-acre property of pioneer settler Sylvester Pettibone. In addition to farming, Pettibone also graded the city's earliest streets, operated a lime kiln, and worked as a bridgetender during his varied career. The much-remodeled house's round-headed windows and blocky forms are about the only evidence of its 1850s Italianate beginnings. Later owners enlarged the house with a 3-story east wing and added the pedimented roof to give it a "Colonial" look. The current porch dates from a 1961 remodeling.

9 Grand Avenue Congregational Church, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave. (1888) Architect: E. T. Mix & Co. NR, HPC. The unusual non-churchy design of this church was deliberately intended to express the congregation's commitment to the important secular and social issues of its day, such as temperance. Architect Mix eliminated the traditional church tower and substituted an enormous arched window as the main focal point of the facade. This motif, as well as the overall heaviness and ground-hugging quality of the building are all features borrowed from the Romanesque Revival style. The semicircular auditorium with its magnificent beamed ceiling was once the largest of any Protestant church in the city with a seating capacity of between 1,200 and 1,500 persons.

10 Eagles Club, 2401 W. Wisconsin Ave. (1925-1927) Architect: Russell Barr Williamson. NR, HPC. As a product of the exuberant Roaring Twenties, Milwaukee's Eagle Club is a reminder of the days when fraternal clubs were at their height of popularity. Architect Williamson inventively combined motifs drawn from the Mediterranean Revival, including arched windows and twisted columns, with an Assyrian-inspired sculptural frieze along the top of the building that incorporates figures with eagles' heads. The interior features club rooms, health facilities, and the famous oval "Million Dollar Ballroom," the largest ballroom in Milwaukee. Founded in 1901, Milwaukee's aerie was once the largest Eagles Lodge in the country with over 16,000 members, but declining membership forced its closure in 1988. The building now chiefly houses concerts and special entertainment events in the Million Dollar Ballroom.

11 Grand Avenue Middle School/Milwaukee County Dispensary and Emergency Hospital, 2430 W. Wisconsin Ave. (1927) Architect: Van Ryn & DeGelleke. NR. These parklike grounds once surrounded the fabulous mansion of Pabst Brewing Company executive Emil Schandein which was built here in 1888. Milwaukee County subsequently bought the Schandein house and replaced it with the city's first public, 24-hour emergency hospital in 1927. In addition to providing emergency medical care to the injured, nationally significant research was done here on the development and use of high pressure oxygen in treating various medical conditions. The handsome Classical Revival style structure has corner quoins, and plaques with classical swags. The hospital closed in 1983, and the building has since been enlarged and remodeled for use as a public school in a textbook case of sensitively adapting an old landmark to a new use.

12 Central United Methodist Church, 2501 W. Wisconsin Ave. (1980-1982) Architect: William Wenzler. Nested into the earth like a piece of futuristic sculpture, Central United Methodist is perhaps Milwaukee's most unusual place of worship. The forward-looking congregation wanted an energy efficient, non-traditional church that incorporated the latest in earth-sheltered technology including poured concrete construction, solar panels, and having the walls above grade covered with natural plant materials including grass and wild flowers. Central United Methodist grew out of the 1969 merger of Grand Avenue Methodist-Episcopal Church, the city's oldest Methodist congregation (estab. 1837) and the Wesley Methodist-Episcopal Church (estab. 1888). The present church was built on the site of the 1905 Wesley Church, which was razed to make way for this building.

13 Fred Sivyer House, 761 N. 25th St. (1888) Architect: unknown. NR. Queen Anne style houses like this one exploited the almost endless decorative possibilities of wood shingles, panels, clapboards and gingerbread trim. No two elevations of this building are alike, but the front facing 25th Street is the most notable for its dramatic composition, wide array of decorative windows, and rich display of fancy wood shingling. Fred W. Sivyer (1848-1910) was a native Milwaukeean who founded a corporation that later became the Northwestern Malleable Iron Company.

14 Joseph B. Kalvelage House, 2432 W. Kilbourn Ave. (1896) Architect: Otto Strack. ML, NR. Exquisite Old World craftsmanship is the hallmark of the Kalvelage Schloss, one of the finest examples of a German Baroque Revival mansion in America. The mansion, with its wealth of decorative terra cotta window trim and rich wrought iron railings, was intended to resemble an 18th century German palace. It is one of the most ornate houses in the city. The house's European-trained architect, Otto Strack, made the porch the focal point of the facade by patterning the eight life-sized, half-male figures, or Atlantes, on the porch after those found at the famous 18th century Zwinger Palace in Dresden, Germany. Joseph B. Kalvelage earned his fortune as an executive in his father-in-law's plumbing fixture company, Hoffmann and Billings. He lived here until his wife died in 1918. Later occupants included the Ku Klux Klan, the Roger Williams Hospital, and a rooming house, but it is now again used as a single family residence.

15 Rehoboth Apostolic Church/Highland Avenue Methodist Church, 1102 N. 21st St. (1891-1894) Architect: Crane and Barkhausen. NR. The congregation of this 19th century German-American church proudly looked to its European homeland for architectural inspiration for this building. The stepped gable, arcaded corbel frieze, and rust-colored brick are hallmarks of the German Renaissance Revival style which borrowed design elements from German buildings constructed between the 15th and 18th centuries. Established in 1846, First German Methodist was the mother church of German Methodism in Wisconsin. The congregation Anglicized its name to the Highland Avenue Methodist church when it moved to this building, which it occupied until disbanding in the 1960s.

16 Victor Schlitz House/Highland Community School, 2004 W. Highland Ave. (1890) Architect: Charles Gombert. NR. Eyecatching Moorish arches on the porch, a tower that rises from the center of the facade, the profusion of gables and dormers plus a beautifully modeled terra-cotta woman's head on the chimney make this the quintessential ornate Victorian house. Victor Schlitz, a nephew of Joseph Schlitz, owner of the Schlitz Brewery, operated his own wholesale wine and liquor business on Old World Third Street.

17 St. George Melkite Catholic Church, 1617 W. State St. (1917) Architect: E. Brielmaier & Sons. ML, NR. The exotic metal domes and the eyecatching scrolled curves of the front express St. George's Middle Eastern heritage. The church was inspired by the architecture of the Byzantine Empire which can be found throughout Eastern Europe, Asia Minor and the Middle East. St. George's was established in 1911 by Syrian and Syrian-Lebanese immigrants who practiced a form of Catholicism similar to the rites of the Eastern Orthodox Church. It is the only Middle Eastern Melkite Rite Catholic Church in Wisconsin.

18 Thomas D. Cook Doublehouse, 853 N. 17th St. (1878) Architect: unknown. NR. A pair of fierce dragons carved in the front gable have guarded this unique doublehouse for over a century. Combining features of both the Swiss Chalet and the Victorian Gothic styles, the richly ornamented house features windows with pointed tops, banding at the first and second stories and a sawtooth patterned fascia board below the eaves. Pioneer stone mason Thomas D. Cook built this doublehouse, which consists of two side-by-side townhouses, as rental property.

19 Milwaukee Normal School, 1820 W. Wells St. (1885), (east addition 1894), (west addition 1918), (north addition 1932) Architect: Edward Townsend Mix (1885 portion). NR. This rambling building with its various additions originally housed the Milwaukee Normal School, the teacher-training college that later grew into today's U.W.-Milwaukee. Later occupants have included the city-run Girls Trade & Technical School (1909-1955), and Wells Junior High School (1955-1979), each of which has made a significant contribution to the city's educational history. Architect Mix looked to contemporary English Queen Anne buildings for inspiration when he designed this one-of-a-kind structure, distinctive for its dramatic center gable with curving sides and pedimented top supported by pilasters that enframe a circular window.