

Understanding Historic preservation

Historic preservation is the conservation of districts, areas, places, buildings, structures and works of art with historical, community, architectural or aesthetic value. Landmarks promote the city's unique identity and rich culture, fostering a sense of community for residents and tourists alike.

For proposed landmarks in the City of Chicago, the Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks releases a recommendation. Landmarks must meet at least two of the following criteria:

- Value as example of city, state or national heritage;
- Location on a site of a significant historic event;
- Identification with a significant person;
- Exemplary architecture;
- Work of a significant architect or designer;
- Representation of a significant theme; or
- A unique or distinctive visual feature.

If approved, the landmark's owner must grant consent and a public hearing is scheduled to determine if designating the structure as a landmark is in the community's best interest, and the city council must approve.

In an effort to preserve the original character of a landmark, all relevant building permits must be city approved. Property tax exemptions, loans and grants are available to help preserve the architectural safety of landmarks.

Resources

The City of Chicago's Historic Preservation Division
» webapps.cityofchicago.org/LandmarksWeb

Preservation Chicago
» preservationchicago.org

Landmarks Illinois
» landmarks.org/chicago_modern.htm

Historic preservation programs

National Register of Historic Places

Properties are evaluated based on age and significance. Once on the register, properties have access to federal preservation grants, investment tax credits and alternative safety code guidelines. There are no restrictions on use of properties based on listing.

- » 243 buildings, 6 structures and 1 object listed in the City of Chicago
- » 12 districts listed in the City of Chicago

Federal historic preservation tax incentives

20% tax credits are available to certified historic structures and 10% credits are available to non-historic buildings placed in service before 1936, though it applies only to non-residential use.

City of Chicago landmarks

Once designated by the Historical and Architectural Landmarks Commission, any alteration, relocation or demolition of an affected property must be reviewed under the permitting process. Demolition requires city council approval. Current landmarks include the Uptown Theater, Wrigley Field and the Dearborn Street Station.

- » 369 properties listed in the City of Chicago
- » 53 districts listed in the City of Chicago

Chicago Historic Resources Survey (CHRS)

The CHRS analyzed all buildings in Chicago completed before 1940 and was released in 1995. The survey identified 17,371 properties that were deemed to have some importance, and were categorized on a color scale based on importance. "Red" properties were deemed to have citywide importance, and "orange" properties were deemed to have neighborhood importance. Both "red" and "orange" properties are subject to the 2003 Demolition-Delay Ordinance.

- » About 300 Chicago properties categorized as "Red"
- » About 9,600 Chicago properties categorized as "Orange"

Historic preservation in Uptown

Uptown Chicago's growth into a dense district of the City of Chicago began in the early 1900s, when the Northwestern Elevated Railroad completed its terminal at Montrose and Broadway. That line, which evolved into today's Red and Purple Lines, brought commercial, residential and especially hotel uses into the Uptown district.

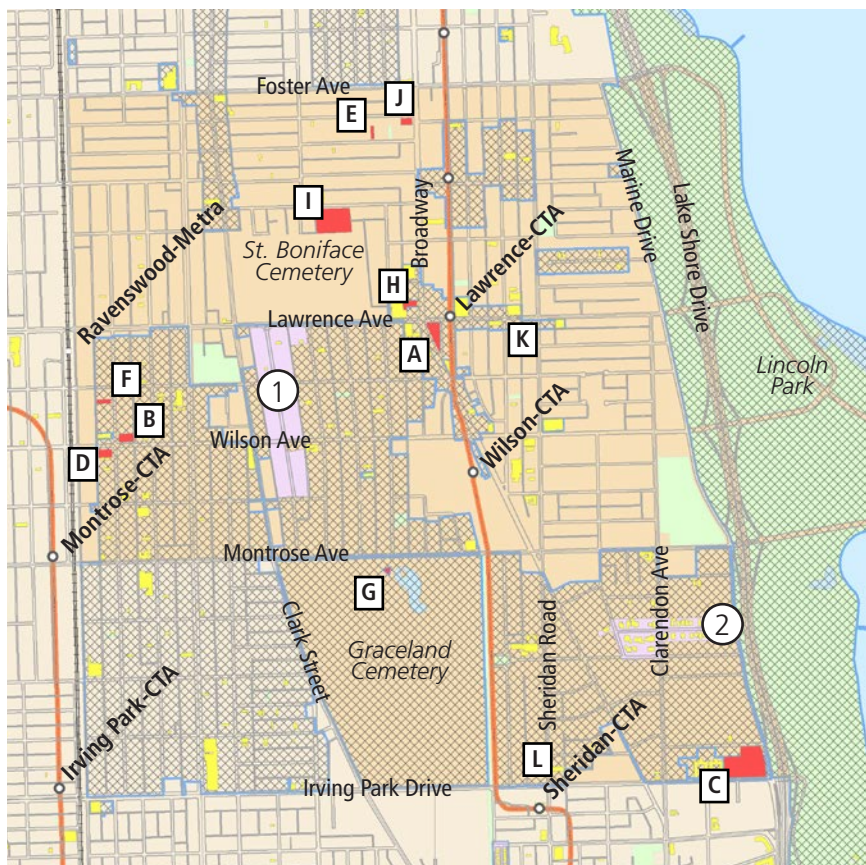
Uptown became the center of one of the nation's most important entertainment districts. Films were produced at Essanay Studios, jazz was played at the Green Mill, and plays were produced at the Uptown Theater. By the 1920s, the community was thriving with new construction, leaving much of the built legacy that we see today.

In the decades since, Uptown's growth slowed but it

became a center of progressive movements fighting for access to affordable housing, homelessness assistance and other social causes. Yet many of Uptown's historic buildings remain the landmarks in the community.

Uptown Theater: Built in 1925, Uptown Theatre is the largest and most lavish theatre in Chicago. Uptown Theatre officially closed in the 1980s due to a decline in revenue, but the City of Chicago is currently working to renovate and restore the structure.

Essanay Studios: Founded in 1907, the Studios were instrumental to Chicago's motion film history. Essanay Studios relocated to California in 1913 and sold the building to Wilding Pictures. The studio is currently home to St. Augustine College and was designated a Chicago Landmark on March 26, 1996.



Historic preservation in Uptown

- National Register designated areas
 - City of Chicago Landmark Districts
 - ① **Dover Street District (est. 2007)**
 - ② **Hutchinson Street (est. 1977)**
 - City of Chicago Landmark buildings
 - A Sheridan Trust and Savings (1924)**
 - B Abbott House (1891)**
 - C Immaculata High School (1922)**
 - D All Saints Church (1883)**
 - E Bachman House (1948)**
 - F Carl Sandburg House (1886)**
 - G Getty Tomb (1890)**
 - H Uptown Theater (1925)**
 - I Essanay Studios (1908)**
 - J Schlitz Brewery-Tied House (1904)**
 - K ICA/Mutual Insurance (1921)**
 - L 4013 N. Sheridan**
 - Red and Orange-rated buildings
- 153 buildings in Uptown**

Source: City of Chicago