A Guide to Flint Architecture

Welcome to the revised AIA Guide to Flint Architecture! After more than 15 years we have updated and revamped this guide to showcase the exciting changes to the built environment that reflect the resurgence of Flint and the region. While some buildings have been removed, many have been added, and this revised guide represents the historical buildings that still carry meaning and mark the identity of the city. Many of these historical buildings have been renovated and now have new life and continue the vibrant diversity of the city. New buildings that have been added were carefully selected and represent the future growth of Flint.

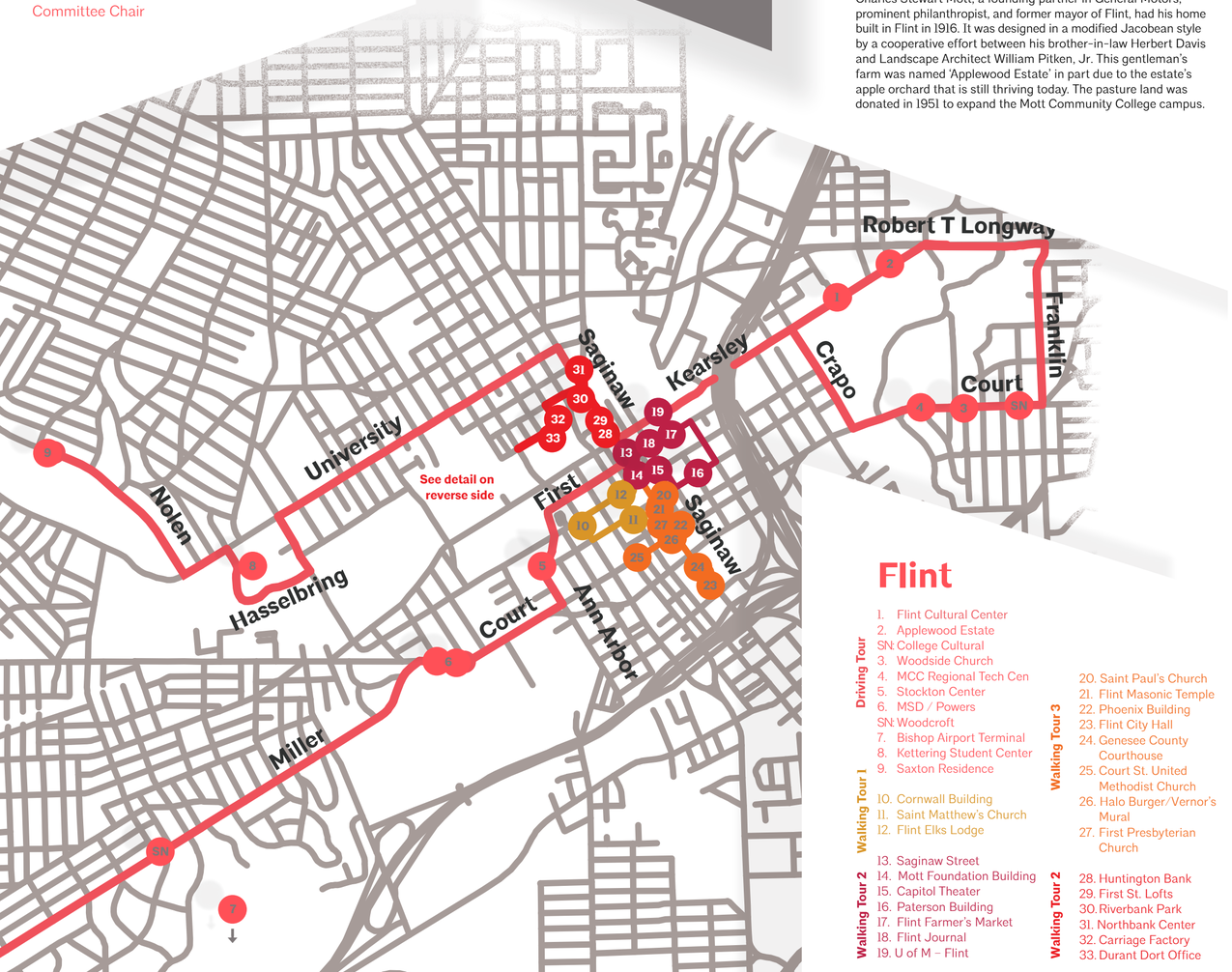
How to use this guide: The fold out guide is divided into one driving route and four walking routes. Each tour route is grouped together with the buildings or landmarks along that route. The four walking tours are all near the downtown Flint area and you can feel free to explore one or all of them. We have added enhanced digital content to this guide. Scan the code on this page or visit **www.aiaflint.com/guide** to watch short videos about the selected buildings and download an interactive PDF.

AIA Flint hopes that this guide will inspire all generations to explore and appreciate the beauty of architecture in Flint, in your hometown, and wherever you may travel throughout the world. The brief explanations of each building are written to define the history and meaning within each of the buildings. On behalf of our entire chapter, the committee members, and sponsors of this effort, I hope you enjoy experiencing the city.

Sincerely,
Kurt Neiswender, AIA
2018-2019 AIA Flint President
AIA Guide to Flint Architecture
Committee Chair

AIA Flint

A Guide to Flint Architecture



Flint

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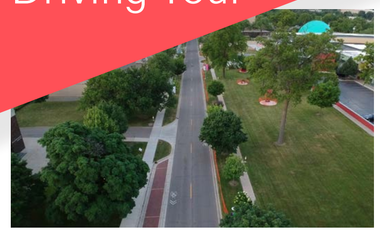
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Driving Tour



1. Flint Cultural Center / Address: 1120 East Kearsley Street
Architect: Smith, Hinchman & Grylls – Master Plan, Whiting Auditorium, Longway Planetarium, and Flint Institute of Arts (Original) **Fredrick Fisher Partners / John K. Costa** (Additions) | **S.A. Nurmia / Louis B. Kingscott** – Flint Public Library (Original) Waterstreet Design (Addition) | **Mackenzie Knuth & Klein** – Bower Theater | **Ellis, Arndt & Truesdell** – Flint Institute of Music | **Gazall-Krapek** – Sloan Museum | **THA Architects Engineers** – Flint Youth Theater, Longway Addition | **Sasaki** – Master Plan Revision

Conceived in a 1950s master plan, the Flint Cultural Center represents an outstanding example of Mid-Century Modern planning and design with its strong geometric shapes, large expanses of glass and opaque panels, and use of modern, sleek materials. Many architects, over several decades, have contributed their interpretation to the Mid-Century Modern style represented here in the diverse collection of buildings which form the campus. Visitors can enjoy the architecture while exploring the museums, art galleries, theaters, planetarium, and library they house.



2. Applewood Estate / Address: 1400 Kearsley Street
Architect: William Pitken, 1916

Charles Stewart Mott, a founding partner in General Motors, prominent philanthropist, and former mayor of Flint, had his home built in Flint in 1916. It was designed in a modified Jacobean style by a cooperative effort between his brother-in-law Herbert Davis and Landscape Architect William Pitken, Jr. This gentleman's farm was named 'Applewood Estate' in part due to the estate's apple orchard that is still thriving today. The pasture land was donated in 1951 to expand the Mott Community College campus.



3. Woodside Church / Address: 1509 East Court Street
Architect: Swanson and Associates, 1950-1952

The architectural engineering of the church was carried out by Swanson and Associates. The design was heavily influenced by mid-century master, Eero Saarinen. The church is a distinctly modern building with a simple yet massive steeple, pedestrian-friendly curved canopy and ground-hugging education wing. The building is now owned by Mott Community College.



4. Mott Community College Regional Technology Center
Address: 1401 East Court Street (near Robert T. Longway Boulevard)
Architect: SSOE, 2001

The Regional Technology Center is a pioneer in the development of technical educational facilities. The contemporary design was achieved on the exterior using glass curtain walls and split-face concrete block. The interior features a 3-story atrium clad in aluminum panels, flowing waves of perforated metal, futuristic sculpted furnishings, art, and splashes of bold color. This state-of-the-art building houses programs that push the boundaries of engineering and fabrication.



5. Stockton Center at Spring Grove
Address: 720 Ann Arbor Sreet
Architect: Mr. Oliver, 1972
Restoration Architect: Freeman Greer, 2005

This Victorian Italianate was constructed in 1872 for Colonel Thomas Stockton and his wife Maria. The original house structure is two stories on the east elevation built into a bluff, which allows for a lower level walkout to the west. The interior has original plaster detailing and wood floors. From 1921 to 1936 it served as the St. Joseph Hospital. It now operates as an office building and a small museum. After restoration it became listed on both the State and Local Historic Registers.



6. Michigan School for the Deaf and Powers Catholic High School (Faye Hall) / Address: 1505 West Court Street
Architect: Unknown, Faye Hall – 1913-1914 (Original) / **Gazall Lewis & Associates Architects, 2013** (Additions) | New Michigan School for the Deaf – **Gazall Lewis & Associates, 2012** | Michigan School for the Deaf – Superintendents Cottage, **Unknown**, 1884

The former site of the Michigan School for the Deaf and Blind has been transformed into a state-of-the-art high school campus. Faye Hall now houses Powers Catholic classrooms and has been restored to much of its original design. A modern expansion houses gymnasium, library, cafeteria, and chapel. An abundance of natural light and views provide outstanding learning in a historic setting. The new MSD K-12 school building includes a Cafetorium, Gymnasium, Collaborative Media Center, 2-story classroom wing, and is accessible to the existing dormitory via enclosed hall. The superintendent's cottage is the oldest building on the campus. All of the woodwork was done by the students at the school's cabinet shop. The 2 ½-story brick Queen Anne Style design rests on a fieldstone foundation, a large porch wraps into a porte-cochere. Various bays and balconies feature decorated windows, gable ornaments, and detailed wood brackets.



SN. Significant Neighborhoods
Address: Woodcroft – Miller Road & Parkside
College Cultural – Court Street East of Crapo
Architect: Various, 1927-1950s

Woodcroft: In 1927, a horse-riding stable located on this property was sold and the land subdivided. The neighborhood grew to the west, with the earliest houses built near the corner of Miller Road and Parkside Drive in 1928. Residents of the neighborhood included Flint business leaders and General Motors executives.
CC: The East Court Street area offers an array of architectural styles dating from the 1920s through the 1960s. Many ranch style homes share the tree-lined streets with the Colonial and Tudor Revival homes. You can also see one of the few remaining Lustron Homes at 2205 East Court Street.



7. Bishop Airport Terminal
Address: G-3425 West Bristol Road
Architect: Reynolds, Smith, and Hills, Inc., 1993

Flight is the theme for the new terminal: the roof consists of a series of air foils representing the shape of an airliner's wings. the ticket and baggage claim areas are within a large, glass-enclosed space. Passengers take an escalator up to a lounge, restaurant, and shops. Through the glass enclosed walkway passengers reach their boarding gates.



8. Kettering University Student Center
Address: 1700 West Third Street
Architect: TMP Associates Inc., 1969

This building serves as the student social center of Kettering University. This large building floats over the plaza as it steps down in a series of terraces. Paired brick pillars support the top two stories. Glass walls open the first floors to views of the plaza. A concrete band marks the roofline. A carillon is set atop a steel and brick tower at the northeast corner.



9. Millard F. Saxton Residence / Address: 2470 Nolen Dr.
Architect: Alden B. Dow, 1946
Restoration Consulting: Sedgewick & Ferweda Architects, 2014-2018

The Millard F. Saxton residence is the only Dow-designed home in Flint and Genesee County. Alden B. Dow was a disciple of famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright, and his modern minimalist style makes this home stand out amongst its more traditionally-designed neighbors. The house features a concrete slab floor with radiant heat, modern for its time. The home has been recently restored by Millard's grandson, Mr. David Schon.





Walking Tour 1



Address: 624 South Grand Traverse Street
Architect: Elijah Meyer, 1883

This home was designed in a style that appears transitional between Italianate and Queen Anne for Er Milner, a successful lumberman in Flint. The beautifully detailed building is richly ornamented with fine woodworking inside and out. The elaborately carved front doors are made of solid walnut. The windows are framed with shutters made of Honduran mahogany. Elijah Meyer was also architect of the Michigan State Capitol in Lansing.

11. Saint Matthew's Church



Address: 706 Beach Street
Architect: Unknown, 1919

This Catholic Church, designed in the Romanesque style, is built with red-brown brick with limestone trim which accents the door and window openings, and a red tile gable roof. Windows on the sides of the church have arched tops, a key feature of the Romanesque style. The main entrance features a large stone rose-window that faces east.



12. Flint Elks Lodge
Address: 142 West Second Street
Architect: Malcolmson and Higginbotham, Snyder, H.V. & Son, 1913-1914

Listed on the National Register of Historic Sites, this lodge was the gathering place for many of Flint's leading industrialists. The Italianate Style, popular during the early 20th century, is expressed by brick walls, glazed tile, and a hip roof with copper gutters. The symmetrical central entrance features large half round windows set in square plaster panels. Fanlight windows adorn the west side of the building. Interior changes have been sensitive to the building's character, and many original features remain.

AIA Flint

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Flint Guide to Architecture

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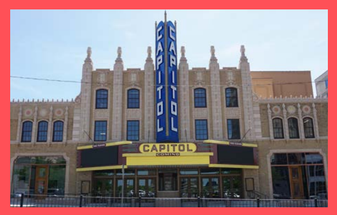
13. Saginaw Street
Address: Saginaw Street
Architect: Saginaw Street – Native Americans | Arches – Freeman Greer, 2002-2008

Dating back at least 300 years, Saginaw Street is one of the oldest thoroughfares in the United States to bear its original name. The road was upgraded in 1829 from a Native American trail to a military road that linked Detroit with ports to the north. The first brick surface was laid in 1899 and rebuilt in 1936. The road surface has been gravel, logs, planks, and one-foot thick wood blocks. In 2002 the Flint – Vehicle City Arches were rebuilt to original specification and the lights were turned on for the first time since 1919.



14. Mott Foundation Building
Address: 503 South Saginaw Street
Architect: Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, 1929-30
Restoration: THA Architects Engineers

Flint's first and most prominent Art Deco high rise was designed by Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, now SmithGroup. Art Deco took on a distinct character of its own in America. Utilizing the latest advances in technology and materials, the style was hallmarked by geometric shapes and streamlined simplicity. The extent of the Art Deco influence can be seen in everything from the stylized limestone reliefs to the interior handrail brackets.



15. Capitol Theater
Address: 140 East Second Street
Architect: John Eberson, 1927-1928
Restoration Architect: DLR Group | Westlake Reed Leskosky, 2018

Originally designed by John Eberson, known for his "atmospheric" interiors, the Capitol's theme was a Roman garden, complete with a sky-blue ceiling with twinkling stars at night. Facades of palaces, castles, and hanging gardens adorn the theater's interior. The exterior is comprised of buff colored brick set off by terra cotta piers, and copper-clad storefronts. Restoration work has brought the theater back to life inside and out.

Walking Tour 2



16. Paterson Building
Address: 635 South Saginaw St.
Architect: Unknown, Year Unkown

This 3-story masonry structure exhibits the flair of the Art Deco period, with stylized geometric trim and floral-patterned panels. Strong vertical piers emerge, rising to a decorative stone cornice. Storefront glazing spans between piers. Windows and doors are embellished with ornately carved stone panels. Art Deco lettering is carved into the stone above the building's entrance.



17. Flint Farmers' Market
Address: 300 East First Street
Architect: Dario Designs, 2004
Adaptive Reuse Architect: FUNchitecture, 2014

The adaptive reuse of the abandoned Flint Journal's printing and press facility created a new farmers' market for the city of Flint. The new market provides an exciting year-round venue for shopping; educational classes on gardening, health and nutrition, and a flexible venue for entertainment and events. The 4-story atrium, now features seating above and below. The Flint Farmers' Market is a must-see on any visit to Michigan.

18. Flint Journal (Original)
Address: 200 East First Street
Architect: Albert Kahn, 1924

Above each of the arched windows along Harrison Street are relief figures representing knowledge, research, and literature. Along First Street, the reliefs represent science, art, music, printing, and engraving. Below the upper floor windows are reliefs of prominent printers and the attributes of a free press. In 1978, a mural by Blue Sky, titled, "Overflow Parking", was painted on the east façade. This building has been renovated into loft apartments and classrooms for the Michigan State University Extension.



19. University of Michigan – Flint /
Address: 303 Kearsley Street
Architect: Various

In 1956, the University of Michigan – Flint was established as the Flint College of the University of Michigan. It moved to its present site in 1976. Many local and internationally recognized architects have been represented in the campus' growth, including: French Hall & Theater, Sedgewick Sellers, Flint; University Center, Ulrich Franzen, New York, New York and THA Architects Engineers, Flint; Recreation Center and Murchie Science Building, William Kessler and Associates, Detroit; landscape and site master plan, SmithGroup JJR, Ann Arbor; Thompson Library, Gunnar Birkerts, Birmingham, Michigan; William S. White Building, SSOE, Troy, Michigan; University Pavillion Architect: Collaborative Inc.

Walking Tour 3



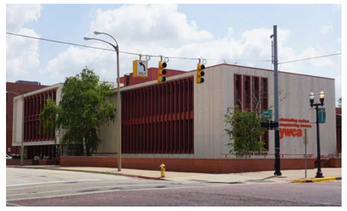
20. Saint Paul's Episcopal Church
Address: 711 South Saginaw Street
Architect: Gaden Lloyd, 1873

This Gothic revival structure is constructed of native limestone from a quarry in Flushing, MI. Builder W.A. Patterson hand-wrought the iron cross which crowns its spire. In 1915 a new parish house and the Five Sisters Chapel were added to the church grounds. The church contains many Tiffany Co. stained glass windows. The structure's original deteriorating slate roof was replaced in 2000.



21. Flint Masonic Temple
Address: 755 Saginaw Street
Architect: H.B. Clement, 1911

In the spring of 1905, representatives of the five Masonic bodies in Flint met to draft articles of incorporation for the Masonic Temple Association. The Masons spent two years raising $10,000 to purchase this site and $79,000 for construction. With its cornerstone laid on October 22, 1909, the Temple was opened for Masonic activities by March of 1911. It is design in the Renaissance Revival style by architect Hugh B. Clement. The Temple is a National Registered Historic Site, in addition to having state and local historic designation.



22. Phoenix Building
Address: 801 South Saginaw St.
Architect: George Pelham, 1966

The law practice of Palavin, Palavin & Powers chose the name of their new office building when they were forced to rebuild after a fire. The building design is divided into two elements: the first, are two cubes with large glass areas on both north and south sides, the second, a sunken plaza woven between the two cubes. Italian marble contrasts red-orange window frames. This building is now home to the Young Women's Christian Association.



23. Flint City Hall / Address: 1101 South Saginaw Street
Architect: Bevester and Associates, Inc., 1955

The International Style is expressed through a structural grid and large expanses of glass. The glass curtain walls are panelized and set in from the structure. The structural grid is faced with marble. The marble caps the building at either end, and more glass curtain walls serve as the front and back entrances. An auditorium dome, covered walkways, brick tower, and public lawn complete the mid-century modernist vision for a forward-thinking city.



24. Genesee County Courthouse
Address: 920 South Saginaw Street
Architect: Fredrick D. Mason Associates, 1925-1926
Addition: CHMP | Viletta, 2000

The courthouse is a 5-story example of the massive Neo-Classical Revival style. This concrete frame building is faced in Indiana limestone and is divided into three horizontal bands: A classical cornice tops a 2-story high base. Above that are monumental Ionic columns that extend across the central section. These columns support a high classical entablature that is finished at the roof in a heavy parapet.



25. Court Street United Methodist Church
Address: 225 West Court Street
Architect: Nelson G. Lyons, 1893-1894
Addition: Cazall Reno Architects, 1988

The church you see today is the fourth building that has been built for the United Methodist Church in Flint over the past 150 years. The New Gothic Style building was constructed of brick, with a slate roof and cut-stone trimmings. The sanctuary seats 1,200 and is one of Flint's largest. It also contains eight stained glass windows depicting the Beatitudes, including the lamp of knowledge, an open book, scales of justice, and the Ten Commandments.



26. Halo Burger and Vernor's Mural
Address: 800 South Saginaw Street
Architect: Unknown, 1929
Mural Artists: John Gonsowski and Keith Martin, 1932

Originally built as a Vernor's "Soda Pop Shop," Halo Burger's stucco exterior, red tile insets, and roof are typical of Mission Style architecture. The parking lot was once the Vernor's Gardens outdoor dining area. The Vernor's mural on the wall facing the building was completed in 1932 and depicts the characteristic Vernor's gnomes making their ginger ale and preserving it in wooden barrels, working against a backdrop of castles.



27. First Presbyterian Church
Address: 746 South Saginaw Street
Architect: Lawrence Valk, 1884,
Church House 1928, Classrooms, 1954.
Addition: SSOE, 1984

The original building was constructed from some of the finest materials available for a total of $46,000. Built of Ionia Limestone from the Bayport quarry near Sebewaing, Michigan, the exterior is trimmed in select limestone and relief accents in terra cotta. The interior is finished with expertly hand-crafted ash, cherry, and basswood to compliment the Tiffany Co. stained glass windows. It still stands today as one of Flint's oldest church congregations.

Walking Tour 4



28. Huntington Bank (formerly: Citizens Bank)
Address: 328 South Saginaw Street
Architect: Unknown, 1928

Designed in the Greek Revival style, the granite sculpted elements of the buildings include volutes, festoons, medallions, and Grecian urns located on the corners. The weather ball, added in 1956, has endured through various ownership acquisitions, and remains a recognized landmark for Flint locals and an orientation point for the City.

29. First Street Lofts
Address: 1101 South Saginaw Street
Architect: Bevester and Associates, Inc., 1955
Restoration Architect: GAV Associates; Freeman Greer, 2002

First Street Lofts is a seven-story Classical Revival building. The building is located on a corner lot and has a decorative entrance on each primary facade. The facade facing Saginaw has an elaborate, deeply recessed central entryway topped with an arched window and a carved eagle sculpture. The entry is marked by large Ionic piers.



30. Riverbank Park
Address: Saginaw Street at the Flint River
Architect: Lawrence Halprin, 1977-1978

Internationally acclaimed architect and urban planner Lawrence Halprin designed the miles of park, fountains, bridges, falls, a fish ladder, and an amphitheater as part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control project. Working from conceptual designs developed with input from the public, Halprin executed the design in his trademark style of layering bold flat surfaces of concrete, softened by landscape and water features, which invite human interaction and play.



31. Northbank Center
Address: 432 North Saginaw Street
Architect: Davis, McGrath & Kiessling, 1922-1923
Restoration: Gerald J. Yurk and Associates

The design of this building followed classical three-part design. The architect was inspired by the Temple of the Four Winds in Athens, Greece. The upper two floors which top the building are accentuated with a copper-clad penthouse with great views of Flint. The building is now owned by the University of Michigan – Flint and houses various offices and classroom spaces.



32. Durant Dort Carriage Factory
Address: 310 Water Street
Architect: Unknown, 1886
Restoration: Gerald Yurk & Associates
Renovation: SmithGroup, 2017

The larger of the buildings, a two-story brick structure, was constructed in 1887–1888. The smaller one-story structure was the original factory for the company that would eventually become General Motors. The red brick masonry walls, heavy timber framing and evenly spaced double-hung windows were common characteristics of industrial architecture until the early 1900s. Now known as Factory 1 it is open to the public by appointment only, and has a car gallery, archives, and conference spaces.



33. Durant Dort Office Building
Address: 315 West Water Street
Architect: Unknown, 1896
Restoration: Chambers & Chambers | SSOE

The original company office building is a rectangular, 2 ½-story brick structure, topped by a hip roof with pedimented dormers. Exterior ornamentation is simple; a sandstone water table along the base of first story windows and a bay window on the east end balances a modest paired column entrance porch. Recognized as the birthplace of General Motors, it is designated as a National Landmark Historic Structure.

Walking Tour Map



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