

NAPERVILLE

Historic Walking Tour – Downtown



Brief Summary of Naperville's Past

In 1831, Captain Joseph Naper traveled from Ashtabula, Ohio, to the fertile soil of Illinois, approximately 30 miles west of Chicago, near the DuPage River. He brought along several families and individuals as well as plans and provisions for establishing a community. By early 1832, Naper's Settlement had 180 people dwelling in it, along with a trading house, mills and a school. The following year saw a post office and frame homes erected.

Naperville's early development was possible because a road connecting Chicago and Ottawa, and the Galena Road (now Aurora Avenue), passed through town. Naperville was home to the county seat from 1839 until 1867, when Wheaton contested and gained the rights. Completion of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad through Naperville in 1864 helped spur growth and was responsible for opening the Chicago market to the town's already flourishing nurseries, breweries and quarries. The railroad also enabled the Naperville Lounge Company (later Kroehler Manufacturing Company) to grow into one of the world's largest furniture manufacturers.

The downtown area contains Naperville's oldest commercial buildings. Most homes in this tour area are frame, two-story single-family dwellings, though some of masonry can be found. The earliest homes are Greek Revival in style, but throughout the area, the Italianate Style predominates. Other architectural styles include Queen Anne, National Folk, Prairie School, Richardsonian Romanesque, Gothic and Classical Revival.

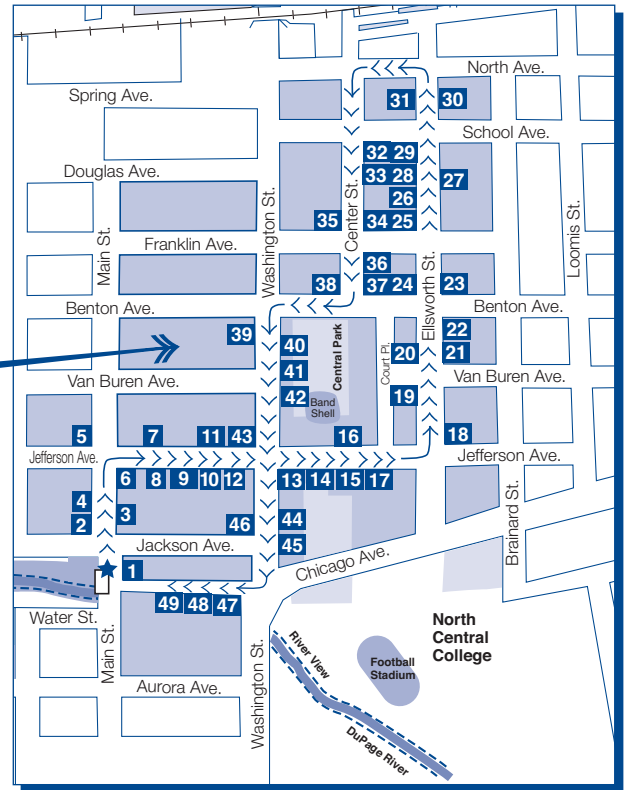
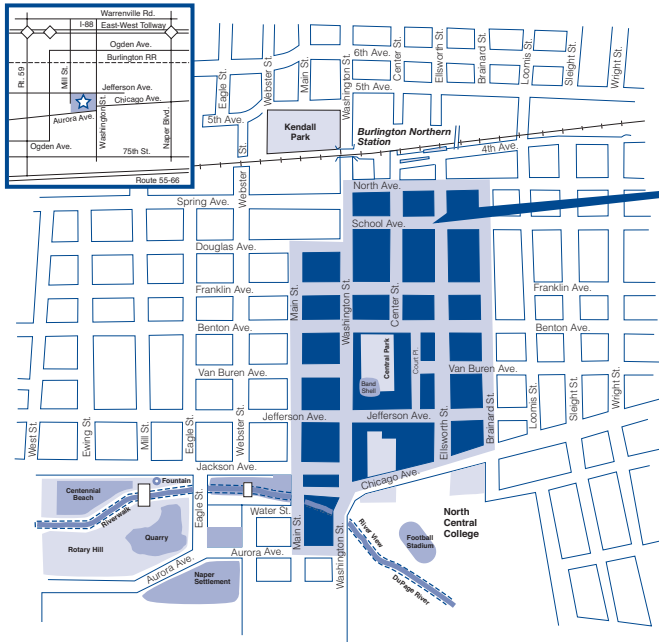
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Additional brochures highlighting Naperville's east and west side historic architecture are available. Stop by for free copies, or call for more information.

Naper Settlement
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DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

Introduction

By the Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce

A walk through downtown Naperville is truly a walk through our history. In 1831, Captain Joseph Naper brought his family to what is now the southeast corner of Mill Street and Jefferson Avenue, and the city now known as Naperville has continued to grow ever since. No tour of Naperville would be complete without taking in the sites of our downtown, which began as a collection of unpaved crossroads. It is here that Naperville's

commerce began, with stately banks, retail shops and elegant homes lining the streets. As our community continued to grow, so did business in the downtown.

Today, you can still enjoy the quaint feeling of yesteryear while taking in the excitement of modern shopping, entertainment and conveniences. Come and see why downtown Naperville is known for "city style and small town smiles!"

“NHS” featured after the building’s address signifies that the structure has received a plaque for historic or architectural significance from the Naperville Heritage Society.



1 **244 S. Main St.**

Sullivan’s Steakhouse, site of the original Pre-Emption House

Built in 1834, the original Pre-Emption House stood at this site, as the first hotel and tavern west of Chicago. The building was added onto over the years as it served as county courthouse, sample room for local breweries and marketplace for monthly horse trading. Prior to the Homestead Act, lawyers met there to help settlers file land claims by “pre-empting” 160 acres at \$1.25 an acre. The building was demolished in 1946 to make way for new development. It was reconstructed at 523 S. Webster St. in 1997, matching the original plans, materials, and detailing. Today, the Pre-Emption House serves as the visitor center and gateway to Naper Settlement, a 19th century outdoor history museum.



Pre-Emption House at its original location, 1917



2 **233 S. Main St.**
c. 1865

This block of buildings dating from mid 1860, is a remnant of Naperville’s agricultural past. Richard Peck ran a buggy and plow factory in the 1860s and a series of liveries, blacksmiths and machine shops followed over the years.



3 **216-218 S. Main St. NHS**
Naper's General Store
Built by Joseph Naper
1847-49

Joseph Naper was the town's founder. This store represents but one of his many enterprises, and is the only one remaining within the downtown area. It has been in use as a store since it was erected. The third floor hall held Masonic Lodge meetings beginning in 1851, and served as a public meeting place for many years. The limestone most likely was transported from Lemont, as the building pre-dates the opening of the Naperville quarries.



4 **223 S. Main St.**
1930s Commercial Deco
Facade

Neo-classic and geometric elements predominate the Art Deco Style. This building design, like Numbers 9 and 39 were very popular for their smooth textures, flowing lines, and simple motifs.



5 **103 S. Main St.**
c. 1864

This building was once home to C. A. Nadelhoffer's General Store, the "leading dry goods and grocery outlet on the west end of town." When Nadelhoffer closed the store in 1900, a bowling alley was added and thereafter a series of taverns. The classic corner entrance is framed with iron pillars and pilasters.



6 **42 W. Jefferson Ave.**
Knoch's Cigar Store and
Factory
c. 1870

The second story of this commercial building still retains the ornamentation, which identifies it as Italianate Style. The round arched windows with ornate "eyebrow" hoods, wide eaves with heavy brackets, and dentil molding are characteristics of this style. The

original cast iron columns are visible on the Main St. side of the structure. The building housed Knoch's Cigar Store and Factory from 1901 to 1931.



7 **33-35 W. Jefferson Ave.**
c. 1890

The elaborate decoration and the two bay windows are elements of the Queen Anne Style used in this commercial building built by Ed Shaefer. He ran a barbershop in the west half, while the east half was long occupied by a series of milliners, who did a thriving business in ladies' hats.



8 **34 W. Jefferson Ave.**
Masonic Temple
1916

Built for the Ancient and Free Masonic orders of Naperville including, the Euclid Lodge #65, Lodge #13, and the Aletha Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. The first floor once served as a movie theatre and two small shops. Of particular note are the Masonic inscriptions found on the decorative keystones.



9 **28 W. Jefferson Ave. NHS**
Western United Gas and
Electric Co.
1906; remodeled 1932

This building, built in 1906, was remodeled in 1932 in the Art Deco Style. The geometric patterns in the limestone facade, as well as the fluted pilasters on either side of the entrance, are among the details that make this a rare example of the 1930s Art Deco Style in downtown Naperville.



10 18 W. Jefferson Ave.
First National Bank/
Naperville City Hall
1891

This limestone building was originally used as the First National Bank, with the Masonic Hall on the second floor. The city of Naperville purchased the building in 1917 for use as the city hall. It is an example of the Richardsonian Romanesque Style popularized by architect Henry H. Richardson. The two arches and massive use of stone are typical aspects of the style.

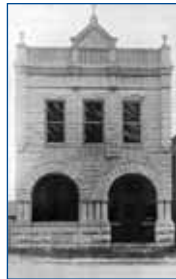


Photo taken in 1917



11 15 W. Jefferson Ave.
Carl Broeker & Co.
1927

Terra cotta, as used on this two-story building's facade, was a popular material used in retail buildings of the 1920s. It was valued for its ability to easily clean, as well as the variety of classical moldings and decorative elements that were possible. Also note the original bronze gargoyle lighting fixtures. This building housed Carl Broeker & Co., the first three-floor department store in DuPage County, from 1927 until 1982.



12 6 W. Jefferson Ave.
George Boettger Building
1875

This building was built for George Boettger, a Prussian immigrant, who ran a butcher shop. Later, his son William G. Boettger would manage a "provisions store" at this location. The second story was used as a residence by both families.



13 204 S. Washington St.
Built by Capt. Morris
Sleight
c. 1858 NHS

This Greek Revival commercial building was built by pioneer real estate dealer Morris Sleight and had been a hardware store through most of its early years. Christian Scherer and George Yost opened their tinsmithing business here in the early 1880s. Specializing in stoves, they took down and stored coal-burning stoves in the spring, polished them and replaced them in the fall.



14 16 E. Jefferson Ave.
c. 1905

Originally built for Fox Valley Cleaners, a dry cleaning and tailoring business, this ornamental concrete block building has changed little from its early 20th century appearance.



15 20 E. Jefferson Ave.
1903

This brick commercial building, crowned by a classical cornice, was constructed as the headquarters of the Naperville Lounge Company, the predecessor of Kroehler Manufacturing Company.



16 43 E. Jefferson Ave. NHS
Jefferson Hill
1845

The original section of this house was built in 1845, as a one-story cottage owned by the Kendall family. Later in the 19th century, inspired by the popular classical revival and the Columbian Exposition, the second story and portico were added. The Ionic columns and fan light over the door create an impressive entrance. These, as well as the dentil molding and pediment, are highlights of the Classical Revival Style. Francis A. Kendall, of the second generation to have lived in the house, was mayor of Naperville in 1917.



17 **48 E. Jefferson Ave. NHS**
Dr. Ruliff L. Truitt
Residence
1916
Harry Robinson, Architect

Harry Robinson, chief draftsman for Frank Lloyd Wright during World War I, designed this house, along with 401 E. Highland and 144 S. Sleight. Characteristics of the Prairie School of Architecture evident in this house include the low-pitched roof with projecting eaves, stained glass casement windows grouped into horizontal bands, and stucco finish highlighted by dark wood trim. Dr. Truitt was one of the city's most prominent physicians, who practiced for over fifty years and was instrumental in establishing the city's hospital.



18 **209 E. Jefferson Ave.**
132 N. Ellsworth St.
Benjamin F. Brown
Residence **NHS**
1865

Jefferson Ave. entrance

Originally red brick, the main portion of this house is typical of the boxy, shuttered buildings of the Civil War period found in this area. Greek Revival detailing includes the sidelights and fan light at the front entrance. The balconied wing on the east side is a later addition. This house was made into a duplex with one entrance from Jefferson Ave. and the other from Ellsworth St.



Ellsworth St. entrance

19 **105 N. Ellsworth St.**
Hillegas/White Residence
1870 **NHS**



This Italianate Style brick home was built for William Hillegas, an early hardware merchant. The home was later purchased by North Central College English professor, founder and editor of the *Naperville SUN* newspaper, Harold E. White. Professor White redesigned the entry of the

home using classical columns salvaged from the Judge Goodwin home. This house was parged with a thin layer of mortar coating designed to protect the underlying masonry. Of the few remaining examples of this technique in Naperville, only one house was completed with black beading, the Martin Mitchell Mansion at Naper Settlement.



20 **31 S. Ellsworth St.**
Central Baptist
Church/North Central
College
1909

This church, with elements of Gothic Revival and Romanesque Styles, was built for the Grace United Evangelical Church. Later, the Central Baptist congregation worshipped here. In 2006, the building was purchased by North Central College.



21
22 S. Ellsworth St.
c. 1870

These three houses of varying ages and styles have all had their front porches altered. The cast concrete Ionic columns were added later, probably around 1920. Concrete columns weathered better and came in a variety of styles as seen throughout Naperville's neighborhoods.



22 **6 S. Ellsworth St.**
c. 1864

This brick and limestone corner store was built using elements of Queen Anne and Italianate detailing. The round, shingled corner bay originally had a turret or "witch's cap" on top. In 1875, Louis Halberstadt bought the building and opened the first of a series of butcher shops.



Photo taken in 1917



23 6 N. Ellsworth St.
SS. Peter and Paul
Catholic Church
1925
Herman J. Gaul, Architect

Soaring 230 feet, the spire on the southwest corner of this Gothic Revival church creates an asymmetrical composition with a much lower spire on the north face. The triple-arched entrance is characteristic of Gothic basilicas.

Above the central portal is a large window, which lights the nave. The church replaced the original SS. Peter and Paul structure, which was destroyed by fire in 1922. This area was once called "Piety Hill" because of its concentration of church edifices.



24 5 N. Ellsworth St.
SS. Peter and Paul
Grade School
Wenker Hall
1892

Originally called Carolus Hall in honor of former pastor Reverend John Peter Carolus, the "new and modern" building had four rooms on the main floor with a capacity of 60 pupils each. A large parish hall was located on the second floor for "amusements, social gatherings and meetings of the church societies." After a devastating fire in 1911, the building was remodeled and called Wenker Hall in honor of Reverend August Wenker, long-time and beloved pastor.



25 105 N. Ellsworth St. NHS
Samuel Barr Residence
1874

This clapboard Folk House has the massing and details of the Greek Revival Style, but the pedimented window hoods of the 1870s Italianate.



26 125 N. Ellsworth St.
c. 1870

Built about four years earlier than Number 27, this house has more elaborate detailing. The ornate pediment window hoods and brackets above the posts on the porch are hallmarks of the Italianate Style. This house is a classic example of the "ell" or gable front, wing floor plan.



27 130 N. Ellsworth St.
1872

The gable-roofed portion of the house on the north side is the original house, built in 1872. The round-hooded windows with limestone keystones, as well as the scroll-cut pendant brackets under the eaves, are elements of the Italianate Style. The turreted, angled section on the south side is a recent 1990s addition, which matches the original brick and limestone house as closely as possible in materials and detailing. The porch, with its Ionic columns, was added on the side of the house in 1903, where the addition now stands. The porch was reconstructed in the front of the house.



28 135 N. Ellsworth St.
Mary Elizabeth Sporlein
c. 1867 NHS

This property is an example of a typical working-class dwelling. Built in 1867 for Simon and Mary Elizabeth Sporlein, this house was deeded in Mary's name only. It is believed that Mary purchased this property from the estate of her first husband for their son, John Lawler. Mary was a domestic servant.



29 151 N. Ellsworth St. NHS
Charles L. Schwartz
Residence
1896

The vertical and horizontal boards of this structure are elements of the Stick Style, less elaborate than Queen Anne Style and popular in the late 19th century.



30 214 N. Ellsworth St. NHS
Daniel Helm Residence
1869

This Folk House is a type common to Naperville though uncommon in brick. The covered front porch was a later addition.



31 223 N. Ellsworth St.
William Henry Patterson
Residence
1908

This Queen Anne Style house has simplified classical detailing. The original owner, William Henry Patterson, was born in 1847 to one of the original farm families of Wheatland Township, where he was the president of the first rural YMCA in the world.



32 154 N. Center St. NHS
David Frost Residence
1868

This simple clapboard covered house can be identified as an I-house. Like the one-story Hall & Parlor plan, two-story I-houses were designed based on local preferences and building materials. The I-house could be elaborated with varying patterns of porches, chimneys, and rearward extensions.



33 142 N. Center St. NHS
Jack Frost Residence
1875

Built by Jack Frost, who was a merchant and grain commissioner, this house is also of the Italianate Style, which was popular in 1870s Naperville. The wide wrap-around porch is a later addition.



34 108 N. Center St.
c. 1870

This house features the boxy shape, heavy roof brackets and elongated windows with decorative hoods, typical of the Italianate Style, so called because it looked to the country villas of northern Italy for inspiration. The front and side porches were later additions. Note the historic brick sidewalks, which may still be found throughout the downtown area.



35 107 N. Center St.
Wesley United Methodist
Church
1925

This structure was built for the First Methodist Episcopal Church congregation, which was founded in Naperville in 1832. The heavy Romanesque Style walls, towers and buttresses contrast the Gothic-arched window and door trim. The church suffered a fire in 1955 and re-opened in 1956.



36 30 N. Center St. NHS
Evangelical United
Brethren Church
1912
Foltz & Brand, Architects

Built as the First Evangelical Church, this structure shows Gothic Style elements popular in church design at the time, including a gable-roofed sanctuary lit by a large arched window, and two crenellated towers. The structure is of brick with limestone used in the monumental base as well as the door and window trim. The three-story school building on the south side was added in 1925.



37 **105 E. Benton Ave. NHS**
Victor Fredenhagen
Residence
1855

The brick gable-roofed section is the original house built in 1855 in the Greek Revival Style. Placing the entry on the front-facing gable was a basic plan element of Greek Revival. The prominent cornice with its corner returns, as well as the pedimented entry with its pilasters and sidelights (designed to resemble a miniature temple) are details of the style.



Central Park

The first DuPage County courthouse stood approximately where the bandstand is today. After the county seat was moved to Wheaton in 1868, the building was auctioned off for salvage. Today the park is used for summer concerts and picnics both public and private. The stage is used by the Naperville Municipal Band, a tradition that dates to 1859, and local performers.



38 **25 E. Benton Ave.**
First Congregational
United Church of Christ
1905-06
M.J. Morehouse, Architect

This church was the first one organized in DuPage County. The present structure replaced the original church, which was built in 1845. Built of limestone, this Gothic church features a crenellated four-square tower. The parish house on the west side was added in 1930.



39 **5 S. Washington St.**
United States Post Office
1939-40
Louis A. Simon,
Supervising Architect

The Neo-Classical Style of the post office is typical of government structures designed during the Depression era. The composition is classically symmetrical and monumental. The ancient elements of column, entablature, and cornice used on the limestone and brick facade are stripped of their decorative features, in deference to the modern trends of the late 1930s.



40 **14 S. Washington St.**
German Evangelical
People's Church/
Naperville Woman's Club
1899 **NHS**

This building is an example of adaptive re-use. As the number of solely German-speaking worshipers began to decline, the members of the German Evangelical People's Church joined other Evangelical congregations and sold their building. Since 1924, the Naperville Woman's Club has occupied this site.



41 **34 S. Washington St.**
Young Men's Christian
Association (YMCA)
1910

Discussion for the organization of a "Y" in Naperville began in 1909. Due to the moral and financial support of Peter Kroehler, founder of Kroehler Manufacturing Company, plans, funds, and a site were secured to build a YMCA in Naperville. Built at a cost of \$26,400, the building was furnished with a gym, swimming pool (which doubled as an auditorium), a reading room, and meeting rooms. The building has had many renovations and additions.



42 110 S. Washington St.
Nichols Library
1897
M.E. Bell, Architect

The brick and limestone Nichols Library is another example of the Richardsonian Romanesque Style, which became popular for public buildings in the late 19th century. In his will, professor and author James L. Nichols bequeathed \$10,000 to the city for the establishment of Naperville's first public library.



43 135 S. Washington St.
Reuss State Bank
1860

Built in 1860 as the Reuss clothing store, this commercial building shows elements of the Italianate Style, with its elongated windows and rounded window hood moldings. The impressive granite corner entrance was added in 1897 when the building became the Reuss State Bank, and reveals the influence of the Richardsonian Romanesque with its massive stone blocks and strong, singular column.



44 214 S. Washington St.
Built by Fred Kailer
1897

This brick two-part commercial building with limestone detailing originally housed Fred Kailer's clothing and shoe business, with the Nichols Publishing Company located on the second floor.



45 232 S. Washington St.
Daniel Strubler Residence
1854 **NHS**

Daniel Strubler, born in Naperville in 1837, was a blacksmith who lived here with his family. The sites of the three buildings to the south of this house were once blacksmith, wagon and buggy shops. The large number of livery stables and blacksmith shops in Naperville during this era were needed for the modes of transportation (wagon parts, horseshoes) as well as for the farming tools necessary to the agricultural activity in the area.



46 235/239 S. Washington St.
Beidelman Furniture
1928

Beidelman's was the site of Fred Long's undertaking and furniture business. Oliver and Arthur Beidelman took over Long's business in 1911. They tore the old building down and built this large three-story store and funeral chapel. The Gothic Style windows were once crowned with a large ornate pediment.



47 14 W. Chicago Ave.
Hillegas & Reiche
1882

This commercial structure was built for the William H. Hillegas and Louis Reiche hardware store. In 1897 Hillegas Hardware Store made claim as "the oldest hardware and implement house of Naperville." Reiche later started his own hardware business. The ornamental brick masonry is typical of the era.



48 28 W. Chicago Ave.
Christopher Knoch
Tailor Shop
1851

This building was the tailor shop and residence of Christopher Knoch. Before clothing was mass-produced, the tailor and dressmakers in town played an important role in clothing the people in the community.



Photo taken c. 1880



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