



JACKSONVILLE'S ENDANGERED HISTORIC PROPERTIES

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Most Endangered

Snyder Memorial Methodist Church

226 N. Laura Street



Photo courtesy of Mark Krancer, Kram Kram Photo

Originally known as Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, this church across from City Hall is a fine example of Gothic Revival style. Built in 1902–03, Snyder Memorial Methodist Church was one of the first churches to be rebuilt following the 1901 fire. It was designed by architect J.H.W. Hawkins, and its exterior features detailed carved stone and outstanding stained-glass windows. During the event known as Ax Handle Saturday, the church became a refuge for Black civil rights demonstrators under attack by a white mob. It is owned by the City of Jacksonville but has remained vacant for most of the past decade.

The Laura Street Trio

Forsyth & Laura Streets



The Laura Street Trio consists of two skyscrapers—the Florida Life Building and the Bisbee Building—and the Old Florida National Bank, also known as the Marble Bank. The Marble Bank was designed by architect Edwin H. Glidden in the Classical Revival style and built in 1902. The Bisbee Building was constructed between 1908 and 1909, designed by Henry J. Klutho in the Prairie style. The 11-story Florida Life Building was also designed by Klutho, built between 1911 and 1912, and is the only one of the three that faces Laura Street. After standing vacant for years, the Trio was purchased by the City of Jacksonville in 2002. In 2011, the Atkins Group began renovations to convert the Trio into a Courtyard Marriott Hotel. In April 2025, the City of Jacksonville filed a default motion against Laura Trio LLC, seeking to resume foreclosure proceedings and initiate a public auction of the buildings, citing over \$800,000 in unpaid code violation fines and the owner's failure to respond to the city's complaint.



Endangered Schools

Annie Lytle Public School

1011 Peninsular Place (originally Gilmore Street)



Photo courtesy of Mark Kraviec, Kram Kram Photo

Built in 1917 and designed by architect Rutledge Holmes, **Public School No. 4** originally overlooked Riverside Park before construction of the Interstate 95 and Interstate 10 interchange isolated it. The school's most prominent architectural feature is a Neo-Classical pedimented portico supported by colossal Doric columns at the entrance. Vacant since the 1970s, the building has faced numerous threats of demolition despite its designation as a historic landmark. The Annie Lytle Preservation Group has worked tirelessly to stabilize the structure in hopes of finding a suitable adaptive reuse for the building.

Atlantic Beach Elementary School

275 Sherry Drive



Photo by Michael Dunlop

Public School No. 65 was built in 1940, designed by Max L. Worthley, who also built the duPont Middle School in San Jose. It was funded by the WPA, which paid half of the \$60,000+ cost.

West Riverside Elementary School

2801 Herschel Street



Photo by Wayne Wood

West Riverside Elementary School, located at 2801 Herschel Street, was originally built in 1911 as **Public School No. 12**. Additions to the building were designed by architect Henry J. Klutho in 1916 and 1922. Over time, the school's design evolved, incorporating elements from Neo-Classical Revival, Prairie School, and Mediterranean Revival styles, all of which remain evident today. Situated within a registered historic district, the building benefits from certain protections against demolition.

Fishweir Elementary School

3977 Herschel Street



Photo by Wayne Wood

Public School No. 20 was built on a former cow pasture in 1917 by O.P. Woodcock, with additions by Henry J. Klutho in 1926 and Jefferson D. Powell in 1928 and 1930.

South San Jose / Kings Trail Elementary School

7401 Old Kings Road South



Opened in 1958 as South San Jose, the school was renamed Kings Trail in 1976 during the American Bicentennial to reflect its location on the historic Kings Road dating to the 1770s. The Duval County School Board has announced that Kings Trail (**Public School No. 203**) will permanently close at the end of the current school year. Once surrounded by Skinners Dairy Farm, the site is now bordered by apartment complexes and may be redeveloped.



Annie R. Morgan Elementary School

964 St. Clair Street



Photo by Wayne Wood

Public School No. 21 opened in 1916, one of 12 schools funded by a \$1 million bond issue approved by Duval County voters in 1915. The school is still open, but slated for closure.

Brentwood Elementary School

3750 Springfield Blvd.



Photo by Wayne Wood

Public School No. 15 was built in 1915 and closed in 2021.

Henry F. Kite Elementary School

9430 Lem Turner Road



Photo by Wayne Wood

Riverview Elementary School No. 37 was completed in 1929. Between 1930 and 1960, Henry F. Kite served as the school's principal, and after Kite's retirement, the school was renamed in his honor in 1964. The school permanently closed in 2023.

Whitehouse Elementary School

3750 Springfield Blvd.



Photo by George Lansing Taylor, Jr., courtesy of the University of North Florida Digital Commons

Opened as **Public School No. 51** in 1926 with five classrooms and a library, serving Grades 1–8. The elaborate architecture on the front side of the building remains intact. From 1955–1968, 18 more classrooms were added. In 1987, the original building was renovated and a new building added to provide office space. The original structure was again renovated in 2011, adding a cafetorium and four more classrooms.

Ortega Elementary School

4010 Baltic Street



Photo by Wayne Wood

Public School No. 16 was built in 1923, designed by Mark & Sheftall in the Mediterranean Revival style, replacing the original school building circa 1914. Under Duval County Public Schools' revised Master Facilities Plan, Ortega Elementary School is scheduled to close in July 2030, with its students merging into a newly constructed Venetia Elementary School.



Endangered Religious Structures

Mount Olive A.M.E. Church

841 Franklin Street



The first sanctuary of Mount Olive A.M.E. Church was a small wooden building constructed on this site in 1887, facing Pippin Street. By 1920, the congregation had outgrown the original structure. A.L. Lewis, building committee chairman, selected plans drawn by Richard L. Brown, Jacksonville's first Black architect, who died in 1948 at age 94. Building committee chair Abraham Lincoln Lewis (1865–1947) was the influential Jacksonville business leader who founded the Afro American Life Insurance Company and the community of American Beach.

Mount Calvary Baptist Church

301 Spruce Street



Photo courtesy of Mark Krancer, Kram Kran Photo

Mount Calvary Baptist Church began in the Brooklyn neighborhood in 1892 with a one-story wooden building built on this site for its African American congregation. The building had remained unchanged for fifty years when the church's ninth pastor, Reverend William Hill, arrived in 1942. Hill envisioned a grand building that would reflect the role of the church as an anchor for the Brooklyn community. He asked Black architect James Edward Hutchins to design the new church. It was constructed by craftsmen who were members of the congregation, led by contractor Tom Thompson. Completed in 1949, this Gothic Revival brick sanctuary with twin square towers served the congregation another 50 years, until it moved from Brooklyn to a new location in 1999. Vacant ever since, this is the largest remaining building from Brooklyn's historic Black community, and finding an adaptive reuse for it is a priority.



Endangered Historic Dwellings

Wesley Manor (Westminster Woods)

25 State Road 13



Photo from the Wayne Wood Collection

Designed by famed Jacksonville architect Robert C. Broward, Wesley Manor was the largest commission of his career and one of his most innovative. Wesley Manor is an important example of the Mid-century Modern style of architecture practiced by Broward and his contemporaries in Jacksonville. Built as a senior-living facility attentive to the needs of its residents, the original buildings have no need for stairs and have works of art by local artists integrated throughout. A 2015 St. Johns County PUD calls for the demolition and replacement of nearly all of the Broward structures.

Victorian Duplexes

316 and 320 Jefferson Street



Two-story twin duplexes were built in 1906, according to the Jacksonville Property Appraiser. Demonstrating the persuasive influence of the Queen Anne style, the angled two-tier balconies and octagonal cupolas, gable roofs with decorative shingles, single siding, plaster interior walls, and soft pine flooring turned rather ordinary frame buildings into charming structures at the turn of the 20th century. Usable space is approximately 870 square feet per floor. Owned by Clara White Mission since 2014.

Post Civil War Cottage

328 Chelsea Street (originally Cedar, then Charles Street)



Photo courtesy of Mark Krancer, Kram Kran Photo

A large contingent of Black Union soldiers came to Jacksonville in 1864 during the town's fourth occupation of the Civil War. A garrison of both white and Black Federal soldiers were stationed in Brooklyn for several years after the war as part of a military occupation to restore order. In 1868, Miles Price platted Brooklyn and began selling lots. Some of the Black Union veterans remained or returned to live in this neighborhood and were joined by other former slaves, making the northwestern portion of Brooklyn a Black residential community. This is the last of numerous two- and three-room small wooden cottages constructed after the war in this part of Brooklyn, providing an important link with Jacksonville's Reconstruction era.

Dr. Horace R. Drew Mansion

245 W. Third Street



Photo courtesy of Mark Krancer, Kram Kran Photo

Dr. Horace R. Drew, a physician and grandson of Jacksonville pioneer Columbus Drew, was the first owner and occupant of this house built around 1909. The exotic residence exhibits one of the most inventive uses of concrete blocks as a building material in Jacksonville. The eclectic design borrows elements from the Tudor Revival, Queen Anne, and Spanish Colonial Revival styles. It is one of the most significant residences in the Springfield Historic District, and in recent years it has been badly deteriorating. 245 West 3rd ST LLC was in the process of restoring the Drew mansion overlooking Klutho Park, but little work has been done for several years.

Endangered Businesses

Scottish Rite Masonic Temple

965 Hubbard Street



Roy A. Benjamin was the associate architect on this Egyptian Revival style building designed by Hyman W. Witcover. Built from 1924 to 1926 at a cost of nearly \$300,000, it was the first permanent home of the Jacksonville Scottish Rite Mason, a group formed in 1892. Still in use by the Masons, the building is in serious need of repair, including leaks in the roof.

Independent Life Building

233 W. Duval Street



KBJ Architects designed the Independent Life and Accident Insurance Co. building, which was completed in 1955. Independent Life relocated its offices in 1975 to what is now 1 Independent Square. The Jacksonville Electric Authority acquired the Duval Street building in 1976 and vacated it in the 1990s. Plans were announced in 2019 to convert the 19-story, 180,000-square-foot structure into 135 apartment units, with the adaptive reuse also including a 21,000-square-foot ground-floor grocery store and a 10,000-square-foot rooftop restaurant and lounge. The building was designated a local landmark in 2020.

Ambassador Hotel

420 N. Julia Street



The Ambassador Hotel, located at 420 N. Julia Street, was completed in 1923 at a cost of \$300,000. In 1924, it was described as "Jacksonville's first big downtown apartment building." Renamed the Ambassador Hotel in 1955, the building received its National Historic designation in 1983. Because of its historic classification, the façade of the structure must remain unchanged. Today, the building is undergoing renovation by AXIS Hotels LLC for conversion into a LaQuinta Inn & Suites.

Arlington Federal Savings & Loan

930 University Blvd.



Photo courtesy of Tim Gilmore / JustPsychoGeo

Built in 1961, the 5,068-square-foot bank sits on 1.65 acres and was one of the last buildings designed by Edwin T. Reeder, a Miami-based architect. Known for its distinctive Mid-Century Modern lattice-work facade and stone surfaces that resemble waves, the building stands out as a unique architectural example of its era. The Jacksonville Historical Society, in partnership with Old Arlington Inc., successfully applied for and secured its designation as a local historic landmark.



Eartha M.M. White Youth Recreation Center

4850 Moncrief Road



Originally built in 1938 as a residence/museum in the Bungalow architectural style, the building included two adjacent columns with Corinthian capitals, reportedly rescued from a demolished downtown building. It is also one of few buildings and houses remaining from the period when Moncrief Springs was a popular resort for the African American community.

Claude Nolan Cadillac Building

937 N. Main Street



Built in 1912, this was an important Prairie-style building designed by architect Henry J. Klutho for Claude Nolan, who started this Cadillac dealership in 1907 and was one of this city's most well-known innovators. In addition to founding the oldest automobile business in Jacksonville, Nolan is also credited with originating the idea of selling automobiles on installments in 1910, a practice that was soon adopted by the entire automotive industry.

JAX Brewing Company

1429 West 16th Street



In 1913, German-born William Ostner, a brewer from St. Louis, moved to Jacksonville to start his own brewery on West 16th Street near Myrtle Street—just a few blocks from present-day Stanton College Preparatory School. It became only the second brewery to open in Florida, and the popularity of Ostner's JAX beer led to the expansion of the facility over the years. Anticipating the repeal of Prohibition, the Jacksonville Brewing Company began preparations months in advance and was ready to resume operations within a week of the 21st Amendment's ratification on December 5, 1933, which re-legalized the sale of alcoholic beverages.

Universal Marion / JEA Building

21 W. Church Street



Built in 1963 and designed by the prominent New York firm Ketchum & Sharp, this 19-story skyscraper is one of the masterpieces of Downtown Jacksonville's Mid-Century Modern architecture. Its original major tenant was the Universal Marion Company of Miami, which owned two Florida newspapers and produced films through a subsidiary. Ivey's Department Store occupied much of the two lower floors. At the time of its construction, it was the tallest building on the Northbank and the second tallest in the city after the Prudential Building. The top floor once featured a revolving restaurant called The Embers, and the building remains highly recognizable today for its distinctive hexagonal "honeycomb" windows. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is also a contributing property in the Downtown Jacksonville Historic District. In early 2023, JEA vacated the building for new headquarters and placed the structure on the market.

Endangered Public Buildings

Charles E. Bennett Federal Building

400 W. Bay Street



Completed in 1966, the Charles E. Bennett Federal Building is an 11-story structure that has long served as a fixture in downtown Jacksonville. The building was named for U.S. Representative Charles E. Bennett, who served Florida from 1949 to 1993 and was known as the “conscience of Congress” for his dedication to ethics in government. Renovated in 2004, the upgrades included the removal of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint, along with improvements to interior finishes, HVAC, and electrical systems to enhance indoor air quality and energy efficiency. A defining architectural feature of the building is *Evolution of Government*, a 550-foot-long concrete and aggregate relief sculpture created by Albert Vrana and commissioned through the Fine Arts in New Federal Buildings Program. In early 2025, the General Services Administration listed the building for potential sale as a “non-core” property. Although the list was later removed from the agency’s website, the building’s future remains uncertain. It currently houses federal offices including the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Labor.

Old Duval County Armory

851 N. Market Street



Photo courtesy of Mark Krancer, Kram Kram Photo

Completed in 1916, the Duval County armory was designed by architects Talley & Summer to serve as a facility for local National Guard troops. The building’s monumental, fortress-like appearance features battlemented towers, parapets, and a dramatic arched entrance at the center of the façade. A carved stone shield bearing the emblem of the Florida National Guard crowns the central pavilion. In 1962, the armory was renamed the Maxwell G. Snyder Armory in honor of the commanding general of the National Guard’s 48th Armored Division.

Genovar's Hall

644 W. Ashley Street



Photo courtesy of Mark Krancer, Kram Kram Photo

Constructed around 1895 by Sebastian Genovar to house his grocery business and later a saloon, this building sits at the intersection of Ashley and Jefferson streets—once the heart of nightlife for LaVilla’s African American community during the jazz era of the 1920s and ‘30s. Its dual significance as a rare pre-1901 Fire structure and a landmark from the swing-era music scene of Black Jacksonville makes it a vital piece of the city’s cultural history and a building in urgent need of restoration.

Sad Losses: Historic and Architecturally Significant Buildings Demolished

Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant

1900 Wambolt Street



Photo from the Wayne Wood Collection

The Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant was constructed in 1924 and designed by renowned industrial architect Albert Kahn. The plant was instrumental in assembling Ford Model T and Model A vehicles and remained operational until the late 1960s.

Fleming Bowden Residence / Fairbanks Road Residences

3323 Loretto Road / 3301 and 3318 Fairbanks Road



The 1907 Fleming Bowden Residence, situated on a 23.6-acre farmstead in Mandarin, was a two-story farmhouse built for Fleming H. Bowden, a local blacksmith, vegetable peddler, and longtime Duval County Supervisor of Elections. The home, with its wraparound veranda, was an example of early 20th-century rural residential architecture in Jacksonville. Nearby, the early 1900s homes at 3301 and 3318 Fairbanks Road were part of the same historic landscape. In January 2024, the property was sold for \$7.15 million to accommodate a planned residential subdivision. Prior to redevelopment, proposals to preserve or relocate the structures were considered but not pursued, and the buildings were subsequently demolished as part of the project.



Success Stories: Historic and Architecturally Significant Buildings Restored, Repurposed or Renovated

Jessie Ball DuPont Center

40 E. Adams Street



The former Haydon Burns Library, built in 1965 at a cost of \$3.7 million, was considered state-of-the-art at the time. Designed by local architect Taylor Hardwick, the 126,000-square-foot, three-story building served Jacksonville's library patrons until its closure in 2005. In 2013, the duPont Fund purchased the decommissioned and deteriorating structure for \$2 million and launched a two-year, \$25 million renovation led by KBJ Architects. Completed in 2015, the revitalized building now serves as a hub for local nonprofit organizations and stands as a model for the adaptive reuse of historic structures.

Elena Flats

122 E. Duval Street



Built in 1909, Elena Flats is one of the last remaining historic structures from what was once a vibrant downtown rooming house district developed after the Great Fire of 1901. Originally serving middle-class workers, it was converted in the 1950s into a rooming house for Jones College students. By the late 1970s, the building had been subdivided into as many as 25 rooms, and over the following decades, it suffered from neglect and deterioration. Last used for nightly and weekly rentals in the early 2000s, the nearly 7,000-square-foot building was purchased in 2015 by investors Jack Meeks and JoAnn Tredennick. After securing historic tax credits and investing nearly \$3 million in restoration, Elena Flats has been brought back to life as a fully restored quadplex.

Bostwick Building / Cowford Chophouse

101 E. Bay Street



Originally built in 1902 for the First National Bank and expanded in 1919 by Guaranty Trust and Savings Bank, this historic building has seen several transformations over the years. Following a series of bank failures, the Bostwick family purchased the property in the 1930s. From 1944 to 1960, renowned architect Henry J. Klutho maintained his office in the building. In 2013, after the owners fell behind on property taxes and sought approval for demolition, the City of Jacksonville won a foreclosure suit and forced the sale. The Forking Amazing Restaurant Group acquired the building in 2014 and opened the Cowford Chophouse in 2017, preserving a key piece of downtown's architectural heritage.

The Debs Store

1478 Florida Avenue



The Debs Store served as the heart of Jacksonville's Historic Eastside for nearly 80 years. Built in 1913 for Edward D. Mixson, it was purchased in 1927 by Lebanese immigrant Nicolas Debs, who opened a family-run grocery business. His sons, Nick and Gene, operated the store until 2011. In recent years, Nicolas' grandson, Joe Debs, partnered with LIFT JAX to restore the building as a neighborhood grocery store serving the under-resourced Eastside. Reopened as The Corner at Debs in September 2024, it now houses a fresh food market, along with career and financial services for area residents.

John Gorrie Junior High School / John Gorrie a condominium

2525 College Street



Named for the inventor of mechanical cooling, John Gorrie Junior High School was built in 1923 by the architectural firm Greeley & Benjamin. Listed on both the local and National Register of Historic Places, the school stood unoccupied from the 1970s and fell into neglect. In 2009, philanthropist Delores Barr Weaver purchased the building and launched a two-year restoration project, transforming the former classrooms into spacious residential condominiums while preserving the building's historic character.

Seminole Building / Sweet Pete's

400 N. Hogan Street



Built in 1903 by Rutledge Holmes and Arthur Gilkes, this 22,000-square-foot building served for decades as the Seminole Club, a private men's club in downtown Jacksonville. It was renovated in 1975 to include elevators, but closed in 1989 and again in 2004. Designated a historic structure in 2006, the building underwent a major renovation in 2014, including the transformation of an old basketball court into a candy production area. Today, it is home to the Sweet Pete's candy company and a restaurant, blending historic charm with vibrant new use.

Barnett Bank Building

112 W. Adams Street



Designed by a New York architectural firm during a major Jacksonville building boom, this 18-story structure was completed in 1926 and became the city's tallest building at the time. In 2013, Southeast Development Group acquired the building—along with the neighboring Laura Street Trio—and began a full rehabilitation in 2017. Completed in just two years, the \$53 million project now houses a commercial bank, a local newspaper, the downtown campus of the University of North Florida, and residential apartments, showcasing a successful example of historic preservation and mixed-use redevelopment.

Brewster Hospital

843 W. Monroe Street



Originally built in 1885 as a private residence for Hans Christian Peters, a Jacksonville meat cutter and dealer, the Brewster Hospital building later became associated with the city's first hospital for African Americans, named in honor of early benefactor Mrs. George A. Brewster. Vacant since 1966, the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. In 2005, the City of Jacksonville relocated the structure from 915 W. Monroe Street to its current site and invested \$1.2 million in its rehabilitation for adaptive reuse. Since 2020, the North Florida Land Trust has served as the building's primary tenant.

Florida Baptist Convention Building

218 W. Church Street



Built between 1924 and 1925, this was the last downtown office building designed by renowned architect Henry J. Klutho and is now recognized as a historic landmark. Notably, it was the first building of its kind in the country constructed for a state Baptist organization. A fifth floor was added just a year after its completion. Vacant for nearly 30 years, the reinforced concrete structure had fallen into severe disrepair before being purchased in 2020 by JWB Real Estate. The building has since been restored and converted into a mixed-use space featuring restaurant and retail suites, along with 24 studio and one-bedroom apartments.

Works in Progress: Historic and Architecturally Significant Buildings Undergoing Restoration, Repurposing or Renovation

Federal Reserve Building

424 N. Hogan Street



Built in 1923 by Henrietta Dozier, Jacksonville's first female architect, the Federal Reserve Building is a three-story, 18,430-square-foot structure designed in the Renaissance Revival style. It served as a branch of the Federal Reserve Bank and is now listed as a National Historic Landmark. Abandoned for over 40 years, the building was purchased in 2020 by JWB Real Estate Capital and is being redeveloped as a mixed-use space featuring restaurant, business, and event venues.

Fire Station Museum

620 E. Bay Street



On April 20, 1886, the Jacksonville City Council established a professional fire department, initially composed of three stations and 17 men. Station 3, known as the Catherine Street Fire Station, was located at 500 E. Bay Street and was staffed entirely by African American firefighters. After the station was disbanded in 1933, the building was repurposed for use as a fire department workshop and later as a storage facility. It was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and converted into the Jacksonville Fire Museum in 1982. The structure was relocated to Metropolitan Park in 1994 and moved again to Bay Street in 2022.