

2015 MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES IN ILLINOIS



1 Arnold-Crowe House
Chicago | Cook County



2 Black Hawk Statue
Oregon | Ogle County



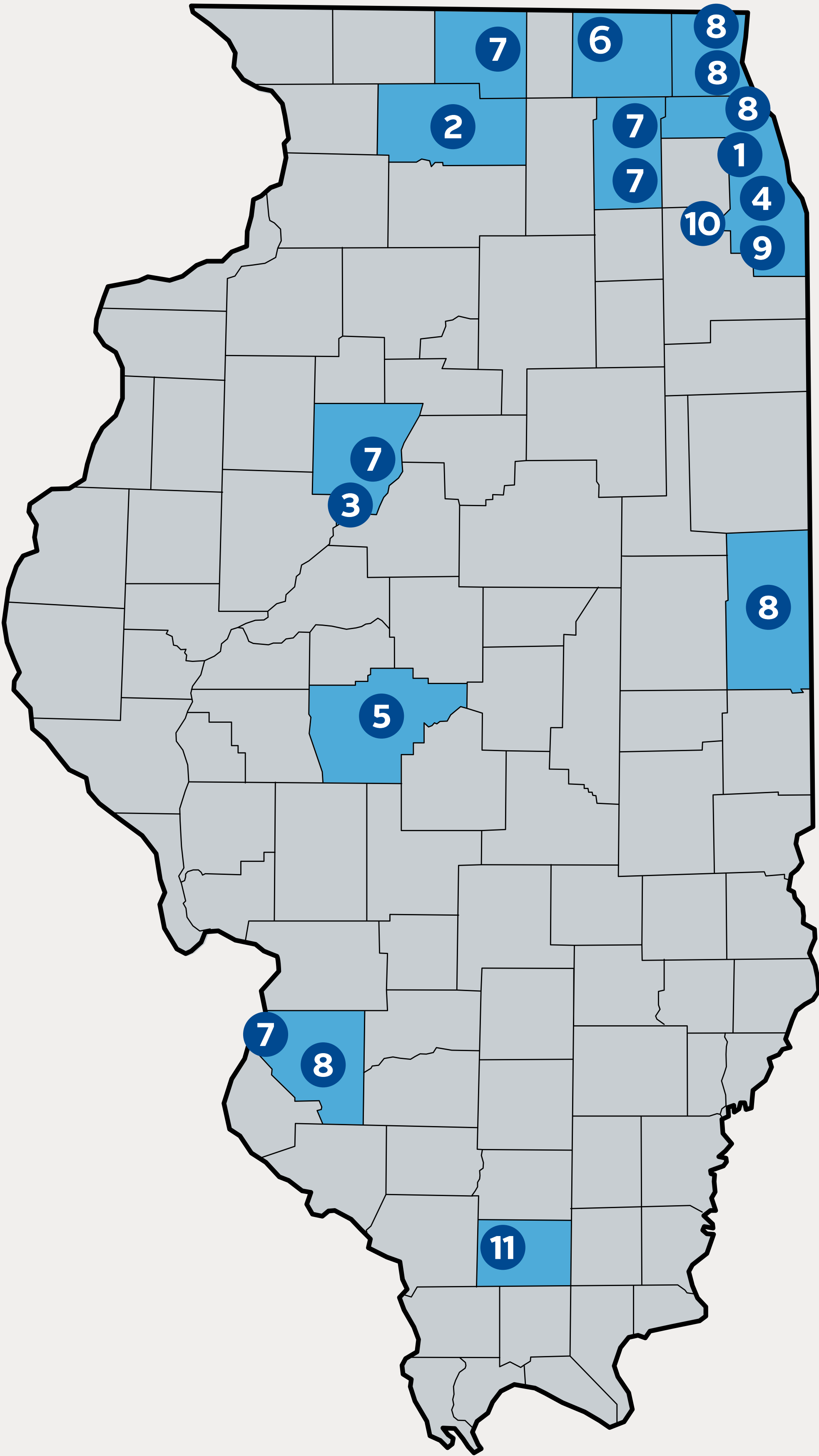
3 Bowen Building,
Peoria State Hospital
Bartonville | Peoria County



4 Central Park Theater
Chicago | Cook County



5 Condell House
Springfield | Sangamon County



6 William H. Coventry
House & Barn
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LANDMARKS ILLINOIS

2015 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois

ARNOLD-CROWE HOUSE

3329 W. Washington Blvd., Chicago (Cook County)

The Arnold-Crowe House in Chicago's East Garfield Park neighborhood is distinctive for its architecture and its connection to two noted Chicagoans, but deterioration has left this 1904 mansion vulnerable to demolition. Designed with Gothic and Moorish Revival influence, the Arnold-Crowe House is a prominent home built on Washington Boulevard and Garfield Park for Adolph Arnold, a successful meatpacker and co-founder of the Schwinn Bicycle Company. The mansion's next resident was Robert E. Crowe, the prosecutor in the dramatic Leopold and Loeb trial. Later, the Arnold-Crowe House served as the headquarters for a builders' union and then became a church. Vacant for many years, the home's structural integrity is at risk due to persistent water infiltration. A successful local entrepreneur with a strong investment interest in Chicago's west side purchased the house in 2011 with plans to rehabilitate it as his home. Unfortunately, due to the high rate of foreclosures in the immediate area, he was unable to secure the necessary bank financing. In the meantime, a city inspection resulted in a demolition court case, despite its significant rating in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey. The owner has received offers for the property, but fears for the house's fate given the lack of financing options as banks continue to withhold lending in neighborhoods of disinvestment.

BLACK HAWK STATUE

Lowden State Park, 1411 N. River Rd., Oregon (Ogle County)

Nestled within trees lining the east side of the Rock River, the iconic Black Hawk statue stands nearly fifty-feet-tall on a high bluff overlooking Lowden State Park. Designed by noted Chicago sculptor Lorado Taft, Black Hawk has attracted generations of Illinoisans since its dedication in 1911. Despite several repairs and patches over the decades, the statue is in desperate need of full conservation to avoid the loss of its original details. Friends of the Black Hawk Statue Committee have galvanized financial and pro-bono support for the \$825,000 restoration price tag. However, the bleak outlook for next year's IDNR budget, along with bureaucratic contracting procedures have already delayed the scheduled restoration by nearly a year. A successful restoration of this treasured Illinois monument will likely require pressure from financial contributors, local officials, and the public.

BOWEN BUILDING, PEORIA STATE HOSPITAL

4125 W. Pfeiffer Rd., Bartonville (Peoria County)

The Bowen Building, the centerpiece of the National Register-listed Peoria State Hospital complex, has been largely unoccupied since the closure of the hospital in 1973. Sited on a hill in Bartonville, the complex was the result of the Illinois General Assembly's 1895 provision for a state insane asylum. Since the closure of the Peoria State Hospital, efforts to rehabilitate the 1902, 3-story limestone Bowen Building have been unsuccessful. The non-profit Save the Bowen Foundation has facilitated the reopening of the building in recent years for group tours, but is unable to achieve a major rehabilitation. The foundation needs to find a developer for the project in 2015 to avoid condemnation and demolition. Eligible for federal historic tax credits, the foundation is hopeful that the iconic Bowen Building can be saved.

CENTRAL PARK THEATER

3535 W. Roosevelt Rd., Chicago (Cook County)

The 1917 Central Park Theater, by noted architecture firm Rapp and Rapp, was one of the nation's first "movie palaces." Located on the once-bustling Roosevelt Road corridor in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood, the theater was designed in the style of a European opera house, a model that soon became the norm in movie house design. The theater has weathered shifting neighborhood demographics and long bouts of disinvestment. The building is currently in court for numerous code violations and the small church that owns it cannot afford the critical repairs needed. It is anticipated that the building will soon be put on the market, thus facing reuse and financing challenges endemic in the North Lawndale community.

CONDELL HOUSE

605 S. 4th St., Springfield (Sangamon County)

Built in 1842, the Condell House is one of Springfield's oldest surviving structures but is currently facing a City-ordered demolition unless a new owner can be found. The house, located in the Governor's Mansion Historic Zoning District, features Greek Revival detailing and a deep setback from the street. Despite its significance to the Springfield community, the Condell House has remained largely vacant and a victim of steady deterioration since 1985. Last year, the house was placed on the City of Springfield's "demolition delay" list, allowing for a final period of time to find an alternative solution. Local advocates, along with the Springfield Historic Sites Commission, continue to seek a new owner with the capacity to repair the historic house. The Condell House has the opportunity to be a participant in the ongoing revitalization of its immediate neighborhood if a new owner is found to save this vital part of Springfield's history.

WILLIAM H. COVENTRY HOUSE & BARN

7704 Rt. 14 N., Harvard (McHenry County)

Currently for sale as part of a 287 acre, commercially-zoned tract, the 1855 William H. Coventry House & Barn were rehabilitated in 1994 by Motorola as housing for visiting executives. Closed in 2003 and under different ownership, the former Motorola campus and Coventry buildings have deteriorated significantly, diminishing their property value and placing the historic residence and barn in danger. Local volunteers have made minor repairs, but without full access to this privately-owned property, any further stabilization is difficult. New and dedicated ownership is needed of this historic parcel, which can be divided from the larger campus. The City of Harvard, Harvard Economic Development Corp. and the McHenry County Historical Society are working together to identify possible buyers or solutions that would ensure the preservation of the historic Coventry property.

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HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN THE RIVER EDGE REDEVELOPMENT ZONES

Elgin (Kane County), Aurora (Kane County), Peoria (Peoria County), East St. Louis (St. Clair County), Rockford (Winnebago County)

Set to expire on January 1, 2017, the River Edge Redevelopment Zone (RERZ) Historic Tax Credit was created to revive and redevelop challenged historic properties in five river-adjacent Illinois cities. [SB 1642 - the River Edge HTC extension bill](#) – calls for the extension of this critical financing program. If not extended, many historic buildings in these cities will not be redeveloped and put back on the tax rolls. The Elgin Tower Building, the Hobbs Building, Madison Theater, the Murphy Building, and the Ziock Building are historic commercial buildings important to their business districts, but all require the RERZ incentive to make good financial sense for rehabilitation. The historic tax credits offered in the RERZ districts have catalyzed significant revitalization in Rockford and Peoria, but more time is needed for other critical projects to be completed.

MID-CENTURY MODERN HOUSES

Statewide

The staggering number of mid-century modern houses up for sale and vulnerable as tear-downs in the Chicago area or unable to sell throughout Illinois underlines the challenge of marketing unique homes from the 1940s-1970s. The open floor plans, small kitchens, seemingly outdated materials in many mid-century houses lead many realtors to view them as less desirable and list them for their land value. Many nationally significant architects who were based here designed these homes, including Edward Dart, A. James Speyer, and Keck & Keck. The increasing loss of mid-century modern residential buildings will continue unless they are identified and protected by local landmark commissions and owners.

SCHULZE BAKERY

40 E. Garfield Blvd., Chicago (Cook County)

Once the highest-producing baking company in the country, the Schulze Bakery in Chicago's Washington Park neighborhood was built in 1914. Local firm John Ahlschlager & Son designed the plant to efficiently accommodate the programmatic requirements of large-scale industrial baking while still employing highly decorative terra cotta ornament and detail on the exterior. While the building retains a high degree of its historic integrity, it has stood vacant since 2005, leaving it prone to deterioration and damage by vandals. The owners are committed to renovating and reusing the building but without the assistance of a state historic tax credit (SB 1250), the financing continues to be very difficult and the owners may need to sell the historically rich plant. For large-scale historic buildings like Schulze, an added financial incentive for rehabilitation is greatly needed.

ST. JAMES ACADEMY

220 Illinois St., Lemont (Cook County)

Built in 1883 in a simple Italianate style, the historic St. James Academy (now known as St. Patrick School) is one of just a dozen limestone structures still standing in the historic quarry town of Lemont. Classes were held in the St. James building until 1963, when a new school building was constructed nearby. Low enrollment prompted the Archdiocese to merge St. Patrick School with another school in 2003, so that the old St. James building was left without a purpose. Periodic inspections by the Archdiocese revealed structural support problems, but these have not been addressed in at least a decade, and breaches in the roof have led to severe water deterioration inside the school. Although the Village of Lemont designated St. James Academy a local landmark, the parish today views the historic building as an unusable drain on their budget and has applied for a demo permit. Local preservationists are working with the Village to explore opportunities for the right developer to rehabilitate and reuse the building.

THATCHCOT HOUSE

515 S. 13th St., Herrin (Williamson County)

The whimsical Thatchcot House in Herrin has fallen on difficult times since a fire in 2000 severely damaged its interior, but its storied history and significance in the community bolsters hope that a preservation solution remains possible. Hal and Violet Trovillion and local builder J.H. Kuehner collaborated to transform the traditional 1915 bungalow into an interpretation of an English thatched cottage to serve as their residence and the headquarters of Trovillion Press, their publishing company. The fire severely damaged Thatchcot's interior, and the current owners have been unable to restore the house's unique interior and landscape while the insurance payment remains disputed. Until sufficient funding is acquired or an alternative solution determined, the charming "thatched cottage" of Herrin remains vacant, boarded, and threatened by continued deterioration.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Governor Rauner's proposed FY2016 budget zeroes out funding for the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) Preservation Services Division, our State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). It is unclear whether funding will be restored, the Division will be moved to another agency, or the administration proposes to cut preservation altogether. The Federal Government requires each state to maintain a SHPO to manage federally-mandated programs like Section 106 regulatory review, Certified Local Government (CLG) grants, the National Register of Historic Places and the administration of the Federal Historic Tax Credit program. Federal funds flow into Illinois to pay for these services. The SHPO staff last year alone assisted private developers and property owners with Federal Historic Tax Credit rehabilitation projects totaling \$726.6 million in private investment – a higher total than in any other state. Landmarks Illinois is advocating to restore state funding for the SHPO to maintain its vital role in managing regulatory review and incentive programs.

