



NEWS RELEASE

Landmarks Illinois Announces 2025 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois

2025-05-01

Significant sites in Cook, Cumberland, DuPage, Iroquois, Jackson, Kane, Livingston, Logan, Madison, McHenry and St. Clair Counties require immediate attention and preservation resources

Chicago, May 01, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Landmarks Illinois has announced its **2025 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois**, calling attention to 10 culturally and architecturally significant sites across the state. The places on this year's list all face uncertain futures due to a variety of threats, including vacancy, neglect, deferred maintenance, demolition, underutilization and lack of landmark protection.

"This year's Most Endangered list is wide-ranging, not only in the kinds of troubling threats these places face, but

A SEMINAL MOMENT

and building types. Yet all celebrate cultural heritage and our communities,” said Bonnie McDonald, President & heightened responsibility this year to speak out and protect our state and nation. As these irreplaceable sites face being serve and honor our past, knowing that our history has the

Test2

power to shape a more inclusive future.”

2025 MOST ENDANGERED SITES

The 2025 Most Endangered sites are located in the following counties: Cook, Cumberland, DuPage, Iroquois, Jackson, Kane, Livingston, Logan, Madison, McHenry and St. Clair.

Visit our website to learn more about each site. A digital press packet, which includes local contacts for each endangered property, is also available on our website. Photos are **available for download here** and at the top of the press release.

Chicago Vocational High School

Chicago, Cook County

The immense campus, built between 1938 and 1941 in Chicago’s Avalon Park neighborhood, is home to the city’s largest non-skyscraper example of Art Deco design. The school’s “Anthony Wing,” which formerly housed the heavy industry vocational programs, sits empty while the rest of the Chicago Public School-owned building is significantly underutilized in light of dwindling enrollment.

JJ Walser House

Chicago, Cook County

Built in 1903, this private residence on the busy Central Avenue in Chicago’s Austin neighborhood is a significant example of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Prairie-period work and was the longtime home of the Teague family. Today, it sits vacant and in foreclosure, with mounting maintenance needs. A new owner is needed to bring the house back to life as a cultural anchor for Austin.

Outdoor Theater at the South Shore Cultural Center

Chicago, Cook County

Years of nonuse and deferred maintenance have taken a toll on the former outdoor theater, constructed in 1920, which is part of the current and otherwise thriving South Shore Cultural Center. Its owner, the Chicago Park District, would like to make necessary repairs to the theater to bring it back into use, but a lack of funds has consistently delayed such work, leaving the theater to continue deteriorating.

Spivey Building

A SEMINAL MOMENT

ent to a period in which East St. Louis experienced
once housed the East St. Louis Journal and other thriving
vacancy and deferred maintenance.

Test3

Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church Lincoln, Logan County

Built in 1880 by a congregation comprised of formerly enslaved people and their descendants, the church is an enduring, tangible reminder of local 19th-century African American history. It has sat vacant and deteriorating ever since it closed its doors in 2012 and requires significant repairs to ensure its survival and rebirth as a place of storytelling.

Fordon Horse Barn Oak Brook, DuPage County

The historic barn, built c. 1930, stands as a lasting reminder of an era when Oak Brook was the polo capital of the United States. The property owner, the Oak Brook Park District, is pursuing demolition despite master plans through 2030 identifying the preservation of park district cultural and historical resources as a priority.

W.A. McConnell Farmstead Richmond, McHenry County

Deferred maintenance and neglect threaten many of the outbuildings, including numerous barns, at this historic farmstead founded in 1837 by the first non-native settler of present-day Richmond. Proper funding is necessary so that the property owner, the McHenry County Conservation District, can make the essential repairs and protect the farmstead from further deterioration.

Meramec Caverns Barns Statewide, including in Cumberland, Jackson, Livingston and Madison Counties

Numerous historic barns in Illinois feature mural advertisements for "Meramec Caverns," a cave network and tourist attraction located near Route 66 in Stanton, Missouri. An estimated 400 barn murals once existed across 14 states, and the majority that remain are in deteriorated condition. Landmarks Illinois is aware of a handful left in Illinois, including ones near Glenn and Cayuga, Illinois, that face imminent danger.

Judge William D. Barry House St. Charles, Kane County

Built in 1844 by active citizen and Illinois attorney Judge William D. Barry, the Greek Revival-style home sits prominently in St. Charles' Downtown Central Historic District. The current owner, Baker Memorial United

A SEMINAL
MOMENT

me to create a parking lot, erasing history and the

The historic opera house, built in 1884, is located prominently on Watseka's Main Street and was once a community hub for the arts and retail business. The City of Watseka purchased the vacant and deteriorating building in 2023. However, deferred maintenance has made restoration difficult and expensive. As a result, the city has discussed demolishing it for use as a parking lot or selling the building.

2025 WATCH SITE

In an unprecedented move, Landmarks Illinois has added a "Watch Site" to the Most Endangered list this year. The designation means we will monitor potential threats to the future of these places to ensure their preservation.

Federally owned historic buildings in Illinois

Statewide, including Chicago, Carbondale and East St. Louis in Cook, Jackson & St. Clair Counties

Illinois is home to a handful of architecturally significant, federally owned buildings managed by the General Services Administration. Among these are three Modernist buildings the federal government has previously identified as wanting to sell: the U.S. Post Office and the Kluczynski Federal Building in Chicago, the Senator Paul Simon Federal Building in Carbondale, and the East St. Louis Federal Building. All three lack local landmark designation that would protect them against demolition or inappropriate redevelopment if sold to private developers.

Considering the rapid changes occurring under the Trump Administration, we feel it is imperative to monitor potential threats to these and other Illinois federally owned buildings that stand as prominent community markers and play key roles in civic and economic life. **Read more about this listing at our website.**

ABOUT THE MOST ENDANGERED PROGRAM

The annual Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois is Landmarks Illinois' longest-running advocacy program. Launched in 1995, the annual list aims to enhance advocacy efforts and build support for the eventual preservation of each property. Learn more about our Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois and view previous Most Endangered lists on our website.

The 2025 Most Endangered list was announced during a live, virtual press conference led by Bonnie McDonald, President and CEO of Landmarks Illinois. To watch a recording, please visit **Landmarks Illinois' YouTube page.**



is a membership-based, historic preservation nonprofit
and empower stakeholders to save places that matter to them
ces and access to strategic partnerships. For more

Test5

PHOTOS OF 2025 MOST ENDANGERED SITES ARE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD HERE

Attachments

- Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church
- Spivey Building

Kendra Parzen
Landmarks Illinois
312-995-2347
kparzen@landmarks.org

Source: Landmarks Illinois

text