

# **WRIGHT AROUND CHICAGO**

## **BUS COMMENTARY FACT SHEET**

### **FROM ROOKERY TO OAK PARK:**

#### **BACKGROUND – CHICAGO HISTORY**

- As per the City of Chicago's website: "The City of Chicago is located on land that is and has long been a center for Native peoples, having historically served as a trading post for centuries. The area is the traditional homelands of the Anishinaabe, or the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations. Many other Nations consider this area their traditional homeland, including the Myaamia, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac and Fox, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Wea, Kickapoo, and Mascouten."
- From the 1670s to the 1780s, Chicago was explored by French-Canadians and Jesuit missionaries. The first permanent non-indigenous settler of the area was a Haitian-American fur-trader named Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, who settled with his wife Kitihawa of the Potawatomi. Jean Baptiste Point du Sable is often considered the "founder" of modern Chicago as a result.
- From there Chicago grew as a city, as it received its first telegraphs and railroads. It became the largest grain port and meatpacking district in the country. By 1854 the population of Chicago had tripled in size.

#### **THE GREAT CHICAGO FIRE**

- Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1871, the Great Chicago fire started southwest of the city center. By midnight, the fire had jumped the river and moved northward. By 2am it was destroying much of the business district.
- How did the fire happen? Why did it spread so fast? The fire is claimed to have started around 9pm in or around a small barn belonging to the O'Leary family. The most popular tale is that Mrs. O'Leary's cow knocked over a lantern, starting the fire, but the exact cause was never determined by city officials. The fire spread because of the long drought the prior summer, strong winds from the southwest, and a majorly deteriorating water pumping system throughout the city. It also didn't help that 2/3rds of the city's buildings were made from wood, with even more flammable tar and shingle roofs. The fire caused \$200 million in damages and left 100,000 people homeless.
- The O'Leary's were treated terribly by local newspapers, despite some reporters admitting the "cow theory" to be a hoax. The story had become so ingrained in Chicago history that in 1997 Chicago's city council officially exonerated the family...and the cow.

- Chicago rebuilt rather quickly, and the event became an intriguing element of the City's pitch to host the next World's Fair. The City won the bid against New York City, Washington D.C. and St. Louis to host the Columbian Exposition with their tale of a thriving city, rising from the ashes like a phoenix.

## WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION

- The Chicago World's Fair of 1893 drew over 20 million visitors, including a young Frank Lloyd Wright. Here, Wright was exposed to international architecture (especially in Japan's pavilion), new technologies, and the overall sense of "American industrial optimism" heavily promoted by the fair. Wright was also exposed to competing architects. Our friends Burnham and Root were among the main designers of the fair. They envisioned a "White City" of Beaux Arts, French Neoclassical structures. Wright was working as an apprentice with Louis Sullivan at the time. Sullivan claimed that the Fair being so entrenched in neoclassical aesthetics would halt the evolution of American architecture for at least 50 years. Wright worked with Sullivan as a draftsman for the Transportation Building at the Fair, one of the only non-white structures. We can see early on; Frank Lloyd Wright is distancing himself from architectural trends and norms.

- On the SE corner of Jackson and Dearborn is the **Monadnock Building**. Burnham & Root, 1891. Style: Chicago school. Features load-bearing, masonry construction. Tallest load-bearing brick building ever constructed. When completed, it was the largest office building in the world.
- Between Wabash & State on the right: DePaul University Law School



AIC in 1900

- At Adams and Michigan Ave. is the **Art Institute of Chicago**, 111 South Michigan Ave. Designed by Boston firm Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge, 1893, in the Beaux-Arts style for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.
  - It is the second-largest art museum in the U.S., behind only the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

**From Jackson, turn south on Michigan Ave.:**

- On the west side is the **Fine Arts Building**, originally the Studebaker Building, 401 S. Michigan Ave., 1885, Solon S. Beman, Architect. Beman transformed the Studebaker Building into the Fine Arts Building in 1898.
  - Frank Lloyd Wright once held an office in the building, and worked on three projects from it.
- On NE corner of Michigan Ave. and Congress is the **Auditorium Building** (430 S. Michigan Ave.). Adler & Sullivan, 1889.



#### From Michigan Ave., turn west at Congress:

- The north side of Congress shows a different façade of the Auditorium Building complex. The massive exterior arches of the **Auditorium Theatre** provide a preview of the arched fireplace configuration in the living room of Wright's 1889 Oak Park home, showing Sullivan's influence on Wright's work.
  - FLW worked for Adler & Sullivan from 1887 to early 1893.
- Further west at Congress Parkway and State Street is the **Harold Washington Library Center**, completed 1991. Architect Thomas Beeby, (Hammond, Beeby & Babka). Postmodern with Beaux-Arts references. *The largest public library in the world.*



#### • Stock Exchange



- The original Stock Exchange was one of Adler & Sullivan's most celebrated commercial buildings
- Despite efforts to preserve it, the original Stock Exchange was razed in the early 1970s, with the Art Institute saving and preserving the entry arch and original trading floor
- The new building was designed by architectural firm Skidmore Owings & Merrill
- The arched shape of the windows are meant to pay homage to the original Adler & Sullivan designed Stock Exchange

#### Continuing west on Congress Parkway, then the Eisenhower Expressway:



• Spanning Congress Parkway is the (unoccupied) **U.S. Post Office**. Architect, Daniel Burnham, by successor firm Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, 1921. Added to *National Register of Historic Places*, 2001. *Filming site for various movies, including Batman Begins, 2004, The Dark Knight, 2007, Transformers: Dark of the Moon,*

2010.

- Add Chicago/Oak Park History during this drive
- Intro FLW and his Chicago years
- Continue driving west on the Eisenhower to Oak Park.
- **Exit to the right at Harlem.** Take Harlem north to Chicago Ave.
- **From Harlem, turn east on Chicago Ave.:**
  - FLW Home & Studio will be on the right (corner Forest and Chicago).

## OAK PARK:

### BACKGROUND – OAK PARK HISTORY

- **In 1835** an Englishman named **Joseph Kettlestrings** purchased 172 acres of land just west of Chicago's marshy terrain and established a farm. This farm was locally known as "Oak Ridge".
  - **Geography at the time:** High ground, groves of hardwood trees
  - Lake St was a preexisting trail from the indigenous peoples who lived in the region, running from Lake Michigan to Elgin (Fox River).
- When the first post office in town was set up, they could not use the name "Oak Ridge" as it was already taken, so the name was changed to Oak Park
- Today OP has 52K residents – 5 SQ MI
- Two major developments boosted the population and dramatic growth:
  - **The construction of the railroad, a direct line to downtown.**
    - By 1850, the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad (after that, the Chicago & Northwestern and now Union Pacific) was constructed as far as Elgin, IL and passed through the settlement area.
  - **The Great Chicago Fire of 1871.**
    - The City of Chicago Council adopted its first code in 1875, four years after the Great Chicago Fire, to administer code with the goal to reduce fire and disease. After the fire, laws were passed to prevent the same thing from happening again. Materials like brick, limestone,

marble and terracotta tile became the preferred building materials and wood was banned as a material in the downtown area.

- **By 1890** OP had water & sewer systems; telephone lines to Chicago, electricity was available; fire hydrants & fire equipment were available. Safer location for new homes, country living growing in popularity: a place for rising upper middle class that wanted a quieter, cleaner lifestyle than in the city.
- OP characterized by progressive attitude (1880's version): Library Association as an emphasis on learning, and good schools.
- **NO Saloons**, OP was referred to as "Saints Rest" as there were a great number of churches (today 39 churches) and a strict **prohibition on alcohol**. Restaurants and hotels in Oak Park could not serve alcohol **until 1973**. Grocery stores could not sell it **until 2002**
- Homes were built on spec, with grander ones designed by architects, others designed by contractors from pattern books.
- In 1968, Oak Park passed The Open Housing Ordinance which helped devise strategies to integrate the village rather than re-segregate. Today, Oak Park remains ethnically diverse and is known for its socially liberal politics with 80% or higher voter turnout in every presidential election since 2000.
- One of North America's four continental divides runs through Oak Park. This divide, a slight rise running north-south through the village, separates the Saint Lawrence River watershed from the Mississippi River watershed, and is marked by one plaque on Lake Street at Forest Avenue and another in the northwest corner of Taylor Park.
- **Notable Oak Park residents:**
  - Ernest Hemingway (author)
  - Ray Kroc (founder of McDonald's)
  - Edgar Rice Burroughs (author, *Tarzan*)
  - Percy Julian (scientist)
  - Roberta Raymond (actress, sociologist, Civil Rights Advocate)
  - Ludacris (rapper)
  - John Mahoney (actor)
  - Betty White (actress)
  - Dan Castellaneta (actor/voice actor, *The Simpsons*)
  - Cecily Strong (actress/comedian, *Saturday Night Live*)

## **FROM OAK PARK TO HYDE PARK:**

**From Home & Studio, drive east on Chicago Ave. to Oak Park Ave. Turn north on Oak Park Ave.:**

**From Oak Park Ave., turn east on Augusta:**

- 509 N Oak Park Ave – Fiddelke 1904, one of larger pieces of property in Oak Park at 1.3 acres.
- **Adams House (1913)** is on the left at Euclid and Augusta. FLW, 1913. Prairie style. Wright's last commission in Oak Park.
- Visible from the SW corner of Augusta and East Ave. is the **Martin House**, 636 East Ave. FLW, 1903. Prairie style.
- **Continue east on Augusta and turn south on Fair Oaks** (600 block), which features three E.E. Roberts houses, six houses by Tallmadge & Watson, and also Watson's own residence. Then at 520 Fair Oaks, on the SE corner of Fair Oaks and Iowa, facing Iowa is the **Fricke House**, FLW 1901, early Prairie style.
- **Turn west on Iowa** to East Ave.
- **Turn south on East Ave.:**
- On the east side of street:
  - **Goodrich House** at 534 East Ave.
  - **Cheney House** at 520 East Ave.
- **Turn west on Chicago Ave.**
- **Turn south on Oak Park Ave.:**
  - **Birthplace Home of Ernest Hemingway** on west side of street, at 339 N. Oak Park Ave. Architect Wesley A. Arnold, 1890; Queen Anne style.
  - **Hemingway Museum**, east side of street, 220 N. Oak Park Ave. at Ontario. Originally designed as the First Church of Christ, Scientist by Architect, Leon Stanhope, 1914. Greek Revival.
  - **Oak Park Club**, Holmes & Flinn extending east on Oak Park Ave. and south on Ontario St. Official address at 721 Ontario St. (Now condominiums.)
  - **YMCA** on east side of Oak Park Ave. near Lake St.; Pond & Pond, Architects. (Now condominiums.) The **Gymnasium** addition was designed by E.E. Roberts (Now condominiums.)



**From Oak Park Avenue, turn west on Lake Street:**

- The newly redesigned and landscaped **Scoville Park** is on the right. Project by Altamanu, Inc., Landscape Architecture. Work completed 2013.
- Overlooking Scoville Park is the **Oak Park Public Library**, Nagle, Hartray, Danker, Kagan, McKay 2003, 834 Lake St. 3<sup>rd</sup> library on the site.
- **On the SE corner of Lake and Kenilworth:**
  - **Unity Temple**, FLW, 1906. Congregation: Unitarian Universalist.

- Modern in style, with interior Prairie features. By unifying aesthetic intent with structure through use of a single material (reinforced concrete), Wright has created what many architects consider to be the first truly modern building in the world.
- *Added to the National Register of Historic Places, 1970.*
- *Designated a National Historic Landmark, 1970.*
- **On the SW corner of Lake St. and Kenilworth:**
  - **Main Oak Park Post Office.**
  - Charles E. White, Architect, 1933.
  - Art Deco in style.
  - White worked in Wright's Oak Park Studio for several years.
- **From Lake St., turn north on Forest Ave.:**
  - **Van Keuren** row houses, 1887, on the east side.
  - Immediately north of the row houses is the **Thomas House**, FLW, 1901, Wright's first Prairie House in Oak Park.
- Continue west on Forest and **turn south on Harlem.**
- **From Harlem, turn east onto the Eisenhower** for continuation of Drive 2 from the Home & Studio to Robie House.
  - Former **Marshall Fields** building at corner of Lake and Harlem, first suburban store 1929
  - **Elevated Train** – Green line first one, only completely elevated train
  - **East/West streets** same as downtown Chicago (Madison, Lake, etc.)
  - Left ramps in Oak Park only – completed because railroad would not give up right of way.



**On the Eisenhower and Congress Parkway, to Michigan Ave. talking points include:**

- The Interstate Highway system
  - The interstate highway system was foreshadowed by Daniel Burnham's 1909 plan for Chicago
    - Daniel Burnham was sought out after his involvement with the World Columbian Exposition
    - His plan focused on improving the lakefront and adapting to the automobile boom and relieving the congestion it was causing, especially in the city's West Side
  - **This highway, the Interstate 290, is the Eisenhower**, often called "The Ike," after President Dwight Eisenhower, who signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act

of 1956 and came up with the original concept for the Interstate Highway System

- In Chicago, construction of the Eisenhower displaced 13,000 people and destroyed 400 businesses
- 100 buildings in Oak Park were demolished, and in neighboring Forest Park 3,500 graves were relocated
- Despite all of this, congestion was not improved, and the Eisenhower regularly ranks amongst the top 3 most congested highways in America
- Rush Hospital (Perkins & Will, completed 2012)
- UIC, designed between 1963-68 by Walter Netsch, Architect, SOM. Style: Brutalism.
- (We again pass the Post Office spanning Congress Parkway and the Auditorium Theatre on the NE corner of Congress and Michigan Ave.; same info as earlier)

**The following structures will be passed now and on the return trip, so pick which to talk about on the way in and briefly point out some that you will talk about on the way back:**

- **McCormick Place**
  - Largest convention center in North America
  - Consists of 4 interconnected buildings and one indoor arena
    - First existing building opened in 1971, with additional structures added in 1986, 1996, and 2007. Wintrust Arena was added in 2017.
- **Soldier Field**
  - Originally built in 1925 in a neoclassical design and listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1987
  - Controversial renovation in 2003 designed by Dirk Lohan (a grandson of Mies van de Rohe)
    - Facadism: the exterior was preserved while the interior was demolished and renovated, leading to the ultimate renovation looking to many as if a UFO had landed on Soldier Field
    - The renovation received mixed reviews from architectural critics and professionals to locals and laymen alike, with Lohan defending the restoration by arguing that the original stadium was historically significant, but wasn't an *architectural* landmark
      - A federal advisory committee seemingly disagreed with Lohan's opinion when they unanimously voted to delist Soldier Field as a National Historic Landmark due to the renovation
      - Nevertheless, the renovation has received accolades, including from the American Institute of Architects who awarded it for

“design excellence,” and others have defended the renovation as a practical necessity due to the aging and cramped state of Soldier Field prior to the renovation

- In 2012, Soldier Field became the first NFL stadium to achieve “Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design” or LEED status

- **Burnham Park**

- Named for Daniel Burnham, the 6 mile long park runs along Lake Michigan, beginning at Northerly Island, running through the communities of Near South, Douglas, Oakland, Kenwood, and Hyde Park
- Chicagoans are very protective of their lakefront,

- **Buckingham Fountain**, 1927 Architects Bennett, Parsons, Frost

- Donated to the city by Kate Buckingham in memory of her brother Clarence Buckingham
- One of the largest fountains in the world, inspired by the Latona Fountain at Versailles
- Operates 8 AM – 11 PM mid-April through mid-October; water shows every hour on the hour lasting 20 minutes with music and lights, starting at dusk

- **Field Museum**, 1909-1912 Architect William Anderson. Largest building of Georgia Marble in the world. Named after Marshall Field, I.

- Originally housed in the Fine Arts Building at the World Columbian Exhibition, the only building planned to be permanent
- Building on the current site began in 1915 and took almost 6 years to complete, costing 7 million dollars
- Architect Daniel Burnham initially planned it, but the actual architect was William Anderson

- **Shedd Aquarium**, 1929, Graham, Anderson, Probst & White. Shedd was chairman of board at Marshall Fields. Designed to harmonize with the Field Museum.

- Beaux Arts style building, chief architect Ernest Graham
- Decorated with multitude of aquatic elements
- Remained unchanged for decades until 1991 addition of Oceanarium and 2003 addition of Wild Reef, with another expansion underway

- **Adler Planetarium**, 1931 architect Ernest A Grunsfeld, Jr.

- Max Adler was chairman of Sears & Roebuck.
- America’s first planetarium and the first planetarium in the western hemisphere
- 3 full size theaters, extensive space science exhibitions, and one of the world’s most important antique astronomical instrument collections on display
- National Historic Landmark

- **Museum of Science and Industry**, architects Burnham & Atwood.
  - One of few remaining structures from the World Columbian Exhibition in 1893 as the Fine Arts Building. Reconstructed in the 1930s when the MSI moved in.
    - Unlike other structures in the “White City,” which were composed of a mixture of plaster, cement, and jute fiber painted white to look like carved marble
  - First museum in North America to feature interactive exhibits
- **Midway Plaisance** – Fredrick Law Olmsted, 1893, Landscape Architect for World Columbian Exposition.
  - Like a midway at a carnival today – beer gardens, games, ferris wheel. Ferris wheel designed for the WCE by Ferris as the new/neat attraction to compete with the Eiffel Tower from the Paris World Fair in 1889.
- **Barack Obama Presidential Library** – Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects and Interactive Design Architects
  - Construction began in 2021 and is slated to open in 2026
  - It will be the first fully digital Presidential Library
- **Rockefeller Chapel**, 1925-1928 architect Bertram Goodhue. John D. Rockefeller was benefactor. Non-denominational chapel. Carillon has 72 bells and 100 tons of bronze, the largest single musical instrument of its time.
- Robie House, 5757 S. Woodlawn

## FROM HYDE PARK TO ROOKERY:

### North on Woodlawn

- Co-op Bookstore
- Mrs. William Rainey Harper House (5728 S. Woodlawn), c. 1909, Howard Van Doren Shaw. Tudor style. There are nearly 30 HVDS structures in Hyde Park and Kenwood.
- Arthur J. Mason House (5715 S. Woodlawn), c. 1904, Howard Van Doren Shaw. Eclectic mix of Georgian and Art Nouveau; today UC Hillel House.
- Edgar Johnson Goodspeed (5706 S. Woodlawn), c. 1906, Howard Van Doren Shaw. Federal Style.

### 55th and Woodlawn

- St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 1922-24, F. Barry Byrne

### Approaching 51st and Woodlawn

- Heller House (5152 S. Woodlawn), 1897, FLW
- This residence signals Wright's turn away from Sullivan's richly ornamented style. That change is immediately visible on the home's facade: the top floor is wrapped with Italianate pillars and panels that depict gowned maidens; the second floor has brick striping and more abstracted pillars; and the rectilinear mass of the ground floor anticipates Wright's later Prairie-style homes.

### Hyde Park Blvd and Woodlawn

- We are now entering into President Obama's neighborhood, Kenwood. His home is two blocks west. At the NE corner of 49th and Woodlawn (4855 S. Woodlawn) is a house owned by Louis Farrakhan. The mansion was built in 1971 by Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad. Muhammad Ali also lived on this block.

### East on 48th to Kenwood (turn right on 48th, turn right on Kenwood; brief pull-over)

- Blossom House (4858 S Kenwood), 1892, FLW
- Bootleg. Wright added the garage in 1907, distinct Prairie style.
- McArthur House (4852 S Kenwood), 1892, FLW Bootleg.

### West on 49th to Woodlawn (right on Woodlawn, right on 47th, merge onto LSD)

- **1200 E 47th**
- Masjid Al-Faatir, 1987
  - The first free-standing mosque in Chicago, now one of 70. Founded by Jabir Herbert Muhammad (son of Elijah Muhammad) and Muhammad Ali. Accommodates up to 3,000.

### RETURNING TO ROOKERY

- On the left, between Clark and Dearborn, is Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's **Federal Plaza, 1974**, including the **Kluczynski Office Building** and the one-story **U.S. Post Office (Loop Station)**, as well as **Calder's Flamingo sculpture** (painted steel); and on the east side of Dearborn, the **Everett McKinley Dirksen United States Courthouse** (all components completed between 1959 and 1974).



Style: International.

*Mies known for: "Less is More;" "God is in the Details."*