



About This Tour: This 3/5 of a mile (one way) tour begins at Rochester's famed **Eastman Theatre and Eastman School of Music (1)** that anchor the city's cultural district. The tour continues through Grove Place — downtown Rochester's tucked away, historic residential neighborhood — and ends at the **Little Theatre (15)**. Along the way, you'll stroll past urban-style restaurants, a bakery, nightclubs, and coffee shops — all contributors to the ambiance of the city's vibrant East End.

Historic Highlights: There's lots of local history on this tour, starting with the Grove Place area, which two pioneer families settled in the 1840s. The Grove Place Preservation District contains distinguished 19th century residential buildings, including the **Ward House (6)** and the **Gibbs Street townhouses (4)**. Then, walking along East Avenue, you will retrace the footsteps of some of Rochester's earliest

pioneers. At the end of this tour, continue east on the avenue until you come to Alexander Street. This is the start of the East Avenue Historic District.

Significant Architecture: A decade of change shows in the classical architectural styles of the 1922 Eastman Theatre in contrast with the 1930s Art Deco facades of **Hallman's Chevrolet (14)** (now Spot Coffee) and the **Little Theatre (15)**.

Special Notes: Grove Place is a district on the National Register of Historic Places. The cluster of buildings on Gibbs and East Avenue is Rochester's only potential National Register district whose nomination was vetoed by its buildings' owners.

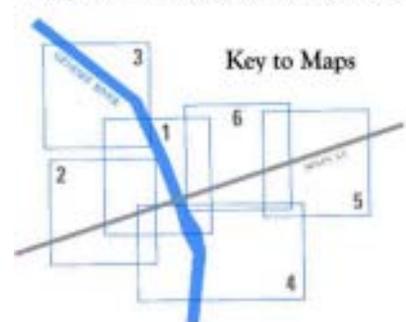
Church: The 1892 **Christ Church (12)**, a National Register-listed building, at 141 East Avenue, 454-3878.

Eating and Entertainment: Little Theatre Café (15), 2 Vine (14), Spot Coffee (14), Eastman Theatre (1), Kilbourn Hall (1) and more.

Major Employers: Eastman School of Music (1), RG&E (9).

Information about our city can be found at the **Greater Rochester Visitors Association**, 45 East Avenue, 546-3070.

Map 5. East End and Cultural District Tour



1. Central City Tour
2. Hundred Acre Tract Tour
3. High Falls-Brown's Race Historic District Tour
4. The Southern Gateways Tour
5. East End and Cultural District Tour
6. Liberty Pole and City East Loop Tour



Eastman Theatre

1. This tour starts at the **Eastman Theatre/School of Music**, at the corner of Main and Gibbs Street, 435 E. Main Street, in the heart of Rochester's Cultural District. It ends with a view of two of Rochester's finest Art Deco structures.

One of Rochester's outstanding architectural monuments, the Eastman Theatre/School of Music is dedicated to "the enrichment of community life," and was made possible by the generosity of George Eastman. Constructed in 1921 and officially opened in 1922, the 3100-seat theater originally featured programs of both classical music and popular motion pictures of the day. Designed by McKim, Mead and White of New York City in collaboration with the Rochester firm of Gordon and Kaelber, the theater was hailed from the start as a masterpiece of elegant and dignified design.

It is an excellent example of Neo-Classical design of Italian Renaissance inspiration and features Beaux Arts massing, a carved facade with recessed Ionic columns and a canopy that extends along the entire length of the building. The rich interiors of the theater include murals by Ezra Winter and Barry Faulkner and the famous painting, *Interlude*, by Maxfield Parrish.

In addition to the main theater, this complex also houses Kilbourn Hall. Located in the Eastman School portion of the building, the 500-seat concert hall is noted for its handsome Renaissance-style interior and excellent acoustics. (Check the Eastman School calendar to see when one of the many free concerts or recitals is being held.)

2. Directly across the street from the Eastman Theatre is **Eastman Place**, 387 E. Main Street. Home of the Sibley Music Library of the Eastman School of Music/University of Rochester, Eastman Place was built in 1988. Rather than attempt to imitate the façade of the theater, the architects, Macon/Chaintreuil & Associates, designed the Eastman Place façade to be concave with structural arches inside.

From the corner of Gibbs Street and E. Main Street you can now visit the Grove Place Historic District (Gibbs, Selden, Windsor and Grove Streets) or continue down Gibbs Street and explore the historic buildings on East Avenue. (To visit East Avenue, start at *.)

Grove Place is a National Register Historic District and a city of Rochester Preservation District.

To explore Grove Place, cross E. Main Street and continue north on Gibbs Street into the Grove Place neighborhood.

The **Grove Place** area was settled in the 1840s by the Ward and Selden families. Two of Rochester's most distinguished pioneer families, they lived and worked for more than a century in the buildings contained within the original homestead area. Known as "The Grove" because of its beautiful trees, about 60% of the original area is encompassed by the Grove Place Preservation District. Among Rochester's earliest residential areas, the Grove Place neighborhood contains a variety of 19th-century residential buildings.

3. On Gibbs Street, go past the YMCA Building. Here you will see the **Eastman School of Music Student Living Center**, 100 Gibbs Street, the University of Rochester's new dormitory.

Designed by architect Herbert F. Newman and Partners, the brick and limestone building, featuring an imposing 213-foot, 16-floor tower, secluded courtyard, and pie-shaped dormitory rooms, is now home to more than 350



Gibbs Street Townhouses At the corner of Gibbs and Selden streets, turn right.

students. The building is on the site of an earlier YMCA building.

Continue north on Gibbs Street past a row of 19th-century houses. On your right are the unique Tudor Revival townhouses.

4. Built in the 1870s, the **townhouses** at 128-152 Gibbs Street are the most elegant and architecturally significant surviving examples of 19th-century rowhouses in Rochester.

5. Starting in the 1980s and in the 1990s, **modern townhouses** have been built in this neighborhood and more are being planned.

At the next corner, Selden and Windsor Streets, turn right onto Windsor Street. Windsor Street features a grouping of modest mid – and late-19th-century houses. When you’re walking, you’ll feel like you’re in the midst of the 19th century.

6. At 18-20 Grove Place you’ll find the magnificent 1850 Italianate **Ward House**. Built for the Ward family, it features an elegant entrance porch and rooftop belvedere. It is the only house remaining from the original “Grove” compound, the ancestral home of the Wards and Seldens. The building is now the home of an accounting firm.



Ward House

Continue south on Windsor Street and you will arrive back at E. Main Street.

7. Note the **Adam Brown Block** (Cathay Pagoda) on the northeast corner of E. Main Street and Windsor Street. Built in 1885, it is attributed to architect Harvey Ellis.

Turn right on E. Main Street, walk past the Metro YMCA and return to the Eastman Theatre.

**Walk south along Gibbs Street toward East Avenue.*

8. Adjacent to the Eastman Theatre is the **Lincoln Building**, 100 East Avenue, designed by Gordon and Kaelber in 1925 with massing and Neo-Classical style complementing the theater.

Continue south on Gibbs Street. When you get to the corner of Gibbs Street and East Avenue look across East Avenue for a view of the Rochester Gas and Electric Company Building, 89 East Avenue.

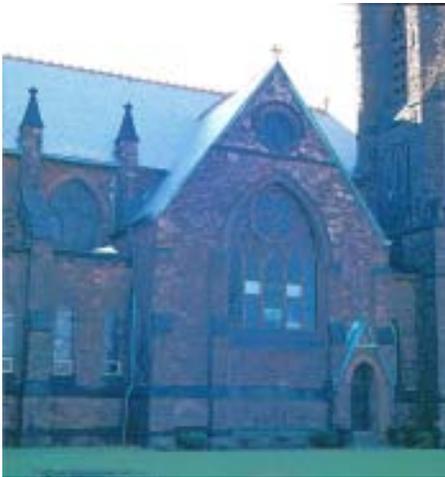
9. This 1926 building was designed by the New York firm of McKim, Mead and White in partnership with the Rochester firm of Gordon and Kaelber. The **RG&E Building**, along with the Eastman Theatre, anchors the collection of 1920s Neo-Classical buildings located in the Gibbs Street/East Avenue area. The 10-story limestone façade features flat, variegated, marble Ionic pilasters on the first floor and a recessed window gallery on the top two floors located behind a row of limestone piers and engaged marble columns.

Turn left (east) onto East Avenue. About halfway down the next block you'll find the Rochester Club Building, 120 East Avenue.

10. The 1860 building, originally the home of Rochester Mayor A. Carter Wilder, was rebuilt as the **Rochester Club** in 1888. In 1911 the building was expanded and remodeled to its present Classical Revival appearance. One wall of the original residence can still be seen along Swan Street.

Directly across the street is 111 East Avenue.

11. Modeled after Chicago's Surf Hotel, the **111 East Avenue Commons**, now apartments, was for many years Rochester's premier downtown hotel. It was designed by the local firm of Gordon and Kaelber in collaboration with John Armstrong of Chicago and opened in 1925 as the Sagamore Hotel. In the 1940s, it was Rochester's Sheraton Hotel. The nine-story Classical Revival building is notable for its distinctive terra cotta details.



Christ Church

Continue on East Avenue and you will be at Christ Church (141 East Avenue).

12. The original **Christ Church** was constructed here in 1855 on the site of an old East Avenue nursery (a large honey locust tree from that nursery still grows on the front lawn). By 1892 the congregation had outgrown the small building and it was replaced by the present English Gothic Revival structure designed by Robert Gibson, a British architect. The sanctuary and a portion of the nave of the original church were retained to serve as a chapel. The church sanctuary, one of the most beautiful in the Rochester area, is of Tiffany design and is enhanced by two opalescent glass windows. The high altar of white Italian marble is backed by a mosaic wall created by the Tiffany Studio. The tower was added in 1902, and in 1973 six bells, acquired from the University of Rochester, were installed.

Look to the right down Broadway.

13. The Classical Revival **University Club of Rochester**, now the Inn on Broadway, was built in 1929 on what was then called William Street. Frank Day was the architect. Note the pilasters with Ionic capitals, roof balustrade, and balcony with wrought iron railing. Distinctive interior features include a second-floor dining room, which has wall murals showing scenes of the Rochester area.

Continue east on East Avenue.

14. On the next block is **Hallman's Chevrolet Building** (200 East Avenue). Beyond it is the Little Theatre. These are among Rochester's best examples of Art Deco architecture.

Hallman's Chevrolet boasts original details of gleaming black structural glass, stainless steel, a large arched window and 1930s neon signs and clock. The interior retains most of its unique Art Deco details. Constructed early in the 1920s, the building was completely remodeled in the 1930s to produce the exterior seen today.

Hallman's showroom has been successfully adapted into a coffee shop, while other Hallman facilities have been

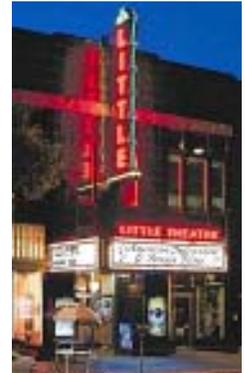


Hallman's Chevrolet, 1980. Photo, John Danicle, Jr.

converted into a restaurant, loft apartments and even a bakery.

A block further down East Avenue is the Little Theatre, (240 East Avenue).

15. The **Little Theatre** was designed by architect Edgar Phillips. Note the Art Deco sign marquee and black glazed exterior. The frieze is an intricate pattern of silver baked on terra cotta. The Little Theatre opened in 1929 with the silent film, *Cyrano De Bergerac*. At the onset of talkies, the Little Theatre management began showing foreign language and art films and continued doing so for 35 years. In 1982, the Little Theatre was restored by its new owners and reopened with its original art film philosophy.



Little Theatre. Photo, Andy Olenick.

The end of the Cultural Center Tour could be the beginning of a tour of the East Avenue Historic District.

East Avenue Historic District: The end of the Cultural District Tour could be the beginning of a tour of the East Avenue Historic District. Walk east on East Avenue, until you come to Alexander Street. This district is the largest historic district in the city, extending 1 ½ miles along East Avenue and its adjacent side streets and including over 700 buildings. It ends at Colby Street.

In addition to its grace and grandeur, its towering beeches and broad lawns, the East Avenue Historic District provides a three-dimensional history of a century of American architecture. In the years after the Civil War, merchants prospered, public taste flourished, and building styles were diverse, eclectic and ambitious. Nowhere in Rochester is the result of these changes more apparent than on East Avenue.



George Eastman House, 900 East Avenue

Cited as one of the greatest catalogs of 19th and early 20th-century urban residential architecture in New York state, Rochester's mile-and-a-half-long East Avenue Historic District is lined with an extraordinarily consistent array of elegant buildings. Unlike similar streets in other cities, East Avenue still retains much of its original character.