

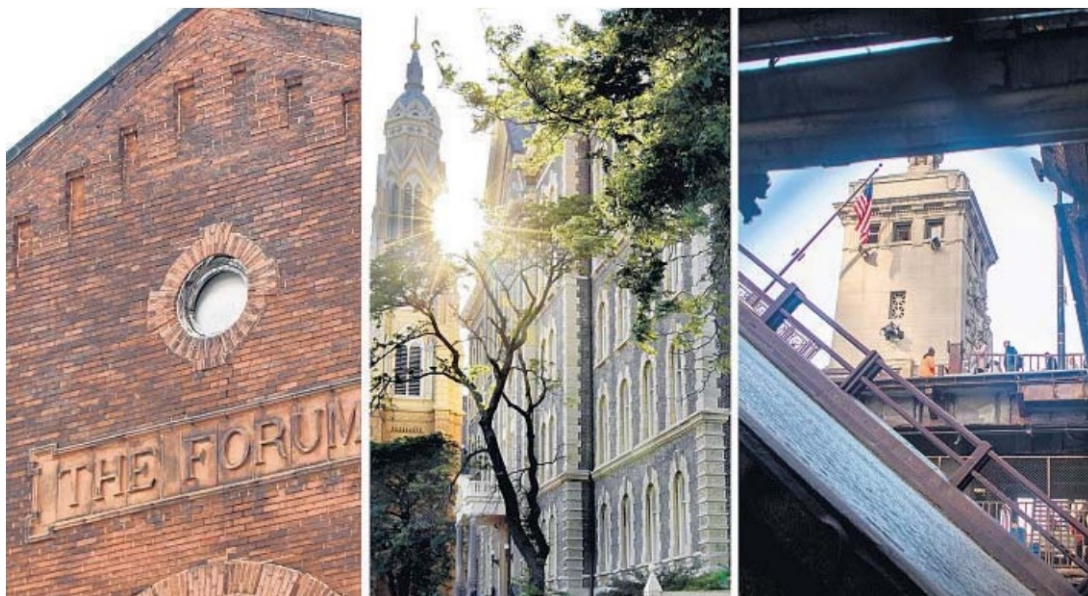
OPEN HOUSE CHICAGO 2021

Architecture buffs, this is your chance to see inside, for one weekend only.

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Isaiah Israel Temple, now KAM Isaiah Israel, at Greenwood and Hyde Park Blvd. in Chicago in 1924. The Temple is the home of the oldest Jewish congregation in the midwest.



The Forum, left, St. Ignatius College Prep and the McCormick Bridgehouse are some of the sites that are part of Open House Chicago 2021 this weekend.

Architecture buffs, urban explorers, amateur sociologists, historic preservationists and anyone looking for a good excuse to go for a walk should grab some comfortable shoes. The year's best opportunity to explore the architectural diversity of the city's neighborhoods and select neighboring suburbs is back with a slate of in-person site visits scheduled for the weekend of Oct. 16-17. After going virtual last year, Chicago Architecture Center's Open House Chicago 2021 features upward of 100 venues that will open their doors to the public for behind-the-scenes viewing and educational tours. The annual free event complements a monthlong program that involves self-guided trails, outdoor tours and more via the Open House Chicago mobile app.

Scattered across the North, South and West sides, the chosen locations encompass everything from private clubs and religious sites to cutting-edge skyscrapers and cultural buildings. In a city where racial segregation and

socioeconomic division remain formidable barriers, the sites provide an opportunity for residents and visitors alike to immerse themselves in Chicago's rich cultural fabric — including areas more often overlooked or dismissed.

By going beyond the obvious, Open House Chicago functions as a historical primer and provides a glimpse into the everyday mechanisms that make the City That Works work. Here are 10 recommendations, plus 10 other places nearby, to start your adventure.

KAM Isaiah Israel, 5080 S. Greenwood Ave.:

Inspired by Byzantine structures and an ancient synagogue in Israel, and distinguished with a curved balcony and sweeping arches that give the interior a wide-open feel, the home of the oldest Jewish congregation in the Midwest bears more than passing resemblance to several of the city's theater palaces. Towering columns, a domed ceiling, intricate tiling and a midcentury chapel further belie the more reserved exterior. Bonus: Former President Barack Obama's Kenwood house is a stone's throw away.

Nearby: Hyde Park Union Church, 5600 S. Woodlawn Ave.

The Forum, 318 E. 43rd St.: Barely saved a decade ago from city-ordered demolition — a fate that befell many structures in Chicago's "Black Metropolis" — this 1897 edifice once held big-name concerts, union meetings and political assemblies before shuttering for more than 40 years. Step on what's thought to be the oldest hardwood ballroom-dance floor in the city, hear the echoes of Nat King Cole and envision the rebirth of a majestic structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places as it awaits full restoration.

Nearby: First Church of Deliverance, 4315 S. Wabash Ave.

The Plant, 1400 W. 46th

St.: Located in a former Peer Foods meatpacking facility erected in 1925, the Plant has evolved into one of the city's most creative and collaborative work spaces. The small-business incubator houses a variety of sustainability-oriented companies, including indoor farms, breweries, a bakery and food distributors. Don't miss the smokehouse bathrooms, Packingtown Museum and in-progress renewable energy project, or the gorgeous taproom (and tasty barrel-aged sours) at Whiner Beer.

Nearby: Plant Chicago, 4459 S. Marshfield Ave.

Working Bikes, 2434 S.

Western Ave.: Apart from the attractive red-brick exterior, the main attraction of this late 1800s two-story warehouse — whose former tenants included a pulley company, chair company and borax factory — lies on the inside. Hundreds of donated bikes of all styles, shapes, colors and makes line the upper and lower floors, all waiting to be refurbished and resold/ redistributed to the local and global community by one of the city's leading bike cooperatives and repair shops. Saturday only.

Nearby: Harmony Community Church & Sounding Boards Garden, 1908 S. Millard Ave.

Nichols Tower at Homan Square, 906 S. Homan Ave.; Charles H. Shaw Technology and Learning Center, 931 S. Homan Ave.: Among the only survivors of the original Sears, Roebuck & Co. complex, these neighboring buildings link the past with the present. Known as the first "Sears Tower," the refurbished Nichols Tower doubles as a community center and event space whose 14th floor offers 360-degree views of the city. The LEED Platinum-certified Shaw Center began its life as a power plant before transforming into DRW College Prep courtesy of a \$40-million restoration that involves original Tiffany brick and a geothermal heating-cooling system. Saturday only.

Nearby: Central Park Theater, 3535 W. Roosevelt Road

St. Ignatius College Prep, 1076 W. Roosevelt Road; Church of the Holy Family, 1080 W. Roosevelt Road: The lavish woodwork gracing the Brunswick Room, Foglia Library and entrance doors is reason enough to tour one of the city's prestigious college-prep academies. There's also the fact the five-story building predates the Great Chicago Fire and houses a "Chicago gallery" of architectural artifacts. Steps away, the Church of the Holy Family claims an even older history. Its many treasures include the oldest stained glass windows in Chicago, an 1870 Mitchell Organ with hand-carved surround and a 52-foot-high wood altar.

Nearby: St. Basil Greek Orthodox Church, 733 S. Ashland Ave.

ERIS Brewing & Cider House, 4240 W. Irving

Park Road: A staple in Old Irving Park — a tight-knit neighborhood whose grand homes and leafy streets beckon exploration — the female-owned ERIS Brewing & Cider House occupies a former Masonic Temple building completed in 1911. Visible from the I-94 expressway, its imposing brick facade gives way to 20-foot-tall ceilings and an industrial-chic interior that salvaged many original architectural elements. ERIS brews its beverages on the premises, which also hosts a spacious restaurant with excellent food.

Nearby: Muslim Community Center, 4380 N. Elston Ave.

Sky-Line Club, 307 N.

Michigan Ave.: Imagine what it's like to be a member of one of the city's oldest private clubs, grab a seat outside and enjoy bird's-eye views from the 24th-floor open-air terrace perched atop the landmarked Old Republic Building. Sky-Line Club's dignified interior includes a pub-themed main dining room consisting of a fully reconstructed ale house shipped over from Southern England nearly a century ago as well as an elegant library, original paintings and various updates completed in 2013.

Nearby: McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum, 376 N. Michigan Ave.

Chicago Filmmakers, 5720 N. Ridge Ave.:

Repurposed in 2017 as a 75-person movie theater, administrative office and classroom facility for Chicago Filmmakers, this former 1928 Chicago firehouse — declared a historic landmark in 2008 — shows how a thoughtful rehabilitation can serve the greater community. From the geometric brown brick and terra-cotta patterns on the facade to the ornate stone medallion complementing the slanted green roof, it looks as striking on the exterior as it does on the interior.

Nearby: St. Ita Catholic Church, 5500 N. Broadway Ave.

Indian Boundary Cultural Center, 2500 W.

Lunt Ave.: Chicago is awash in beautiful park buildings. Few are more eye-opening than this Tudor Revival field house tucked away in West Rogers Park. Completed in 1929, it almost met a disastrous end after an electrical fire but emerged better than ever after a thorough restoration. Home to dance, theater and painting lessons, as well as music and art productions, it anchors a tranquil park ringed on the east side by several condominium buildings previously featured by Open House Chicago. Sunday only.

Nearby: Tree House Humane Society, 7225 N. Western Ave.

Though the amount of in-person sites is scaled down from pre-pandemic levels, this fall's program feels more manageable.

Unlike some previous years, no buildings require advance registration or timed entrances. And while a handful of sites are only open for one of the two days, such limitations make it easier to create a schedule using geographical proximity as a guideline.

A few more veteran tips: Arrive early at places likely to be crowded (i.e., Loop and West Loop destinations) and allow extra time to explore an area's surroundings. Grab lunch at a local restaurant, admire nearby housing styles (many areas offer the chance to view Chicago's trademark bungalows and greystones) and browse shops to get a feel for the neighborhood and the people who live there. Most importantly, venture beyond normal boundaries.

Open House Chicago runs Oct. 16-17, free. Select sites are only accessible to Chicago Architecture Center members. All locations follow Illinois Department of Public Health guidelines and require masks indoors. Individual sites may have additional requirements for entry, such as proof of vaccination, a negative COVID-19 test or other measures. Full list of locations and hours, plus the Open House Chicago app and more information, at www.architecture.org