



Florida Trust for Historic Preservation
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PRESS RELEASE

Florida Trust for Historic Preservation Announces this year's 11 to Save, Most Endangered Historic Places in Florida

The annual list provides a voice for important historic resources in communities around the state, and drives the organization's education and advocacy initiatives for the year

Tallahassee, Fla., July 17, 2024 – Last week, the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation announced the 2024 Florida's 11 to Save, a list of the most threatened historic places in the state, at the 2024 Preservation on Main Street conference hosted in collaboration with Florida Main Street.

Each year, the Florida Trust announces its 11 to Save sites, which are nominated by the public and reflect the historic places that matter to local communities. The program is designed to increase the public's awareness of the urgent need to save Florida's historic resources, highlight the breadth of the state's unique history, inspire collaborations and empower local preservationists and community groups in their work to preserve Florida's rich history.

The 2024 11 to Save represents endangered historic resources in Broward, Charlotte, Duval, Escambia, Leon, Manatee, Marion, Miami-Dade, Pinellas, Sarasota and Volusia counties, covering hundreds of years of history and a variety of cultural resources.

"The 2024 Florida's 11 to Save reflect the extraordinary breadth and depth of stories that make up the cultural mosaic of our state," said Florida Trust Board President Mike Cosden. "By safeguarding these sites, we're not just preserving buildings and landscapes, but also the diverse histories and voices that contribute to our shared heritage. We look forward to working with people around the state to protect these important historic places."

Inclusion in Florida's 11 to Save is a starting point for the Florida Trust's advocacy and education efforts and is intended to be part of a collaborative effort to identify custom solutions for each property. Listings are not in any order of importance.



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Blanchard House Museum
Punta Gorda, Charlotte County
Built 1925



The Blanchard House, a Florida Craftsman bungalow built in 1925 for local fisherman Joseph Blanchard and his wife Minnie, is a symbol of Punta Gorda's cultural heritage. Located at the former site of Gollman's Bar, a gathering place for African Americans, the museum honors their contributions and celebrates African American history and culture in the region. Acquired in 1997 by Bernice A. Russell, who envisioned a local African American history museum, the house became the Blanchard House Museum of African American History and Culture of Charlotte County in 2004.

The site suffered significant damage from Hurricane Ian in September 2022. Closed due to roof damage and mold growth since September 28 of that year, the nominator hopes inclusion on the 11 to Save will promote awareness and funding for its restoration.

Central Elementary School
Ocala, Marion County
Built 1907



Built in 1907, Historic Central Elementary School was one of the few brick-and-mortar schools of its time and the first to be constructed in Ocala. Named Central due to its location adjacent to the existing area in downtown Ocala, the school currently is vacant. The School Board, who until recently occupied the space, has now outgrown it and is seeking a new location.

There have been ongoing conversations on the development and use of this property, including construction of new offices. Currently, community members are concerned the building could be demolished without community engagement. The nominator hopes that its placement on the 11 to Save list will raise awareness and stimulate the public to support preservation efforts.



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Greater El-Beth-El Divine Holiness Church
Jacksonville, Duval County
Built 1911



The Greater El-Beth-El Divine Holiness Church is a testament to Jacksonville’s cultural and historical heritage, particularly within the African American community. Constructed in 1911, this church has served as a cornerstone in the old Hanstown community, which, along with Sugar Hill, fostered vibrant African American life for over a century. Originally built with rusticated block walls crafted by its own members, the church symbolizes the community’s self-reliance and determination during its formative years.

The Church continues to play a pivotal role in the community, with ongoing efforts to preserve its architectural integrity and historical significance. Over time, repairs have altered its original architectural features. The structure’s roof has suffered significant deterioration, allowing water ingress that damaged interior plaster and acoustic ceiling tiles. Additionally, much of the building’s once abundant stained art glass has been lost due to this roof deterioration. The nominator hopes that inclusion on the 11 to Save will increase efforts to stabilize the structure and encourage more community support to save and restore it.

John A. Gibson School
Pensacola, Escambia County
Built 1921



Born in 1827 in Nassau, Bahamas, John A. Gibson arrived in Pensacola in 1872 and became a leader in the city’s new post-war education system, also serving as a city alderman in 1879, 1882 and 1885. Named in his honor, the John A. Gibson School opened in 1921 to serve Pensacola’s African American community.

After closing in 1974, the school became the headquarters of the Escambia County Head Start Program. The last tenant, the Community Action Program Committee’s Head Start program, ceased operations there in December 2023 due to severe damage from Hurricane Sally. The nominator hopes to raise awareness of African American history in the community and promote the a restoration and adaptive use plan.



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Orange City Shuffleboard Club
Orange City, Volusia County
Built 1918



Built in 1918, the building functioned as Orange City's inaugural Town Hall, coinciding with the town's first municipal votes by women. Now owned by the City, the building was moved to its current site to serve as the Orange City Shuffleboard Club's clubhouse, founded in 1944. Recognized since 2004 as a contributing structure to the National Register Historic District, there are ongoing discussions regarding the future of this site. Last year, these discussions included options to demolish the

shuffleboard courts and the building for a parking lot. Earlier this year, the City postponed this option to provide opportunities to conduct more analysis for parking needs and site restoration.

The site has historically served as a social gathering place and recreational facility benefiting all Orange City resident and enriching the district's heritage, as it tells so many of the community's stories. The nominator hopes inclusion on the 11 to Save will increase community awareness of this historically designated site to create momentum toward restoration in place.

Orchard Villa Elementary School
Miami, Miami-Dade County
Built 1948



Orchard Villa was the first elementary school in the entire state of Florida to begin integrating its students. Located in Miami, Orchard Villa is a small concrete elementary school nestled within a residential community.

Its existence is threatened by the development and growing number of competing charter schools in the city. Unlike several neighboring elementary and K-8 magnet schools, Orchard Villa is small and tucked away

in a residential neighborhood, not easily visible from main streets. The nominator hopes that listing it on the 11 to Save will raise awareness of this historic school.



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Plumb House
Clearwater, Pinellas County
Built 1896



The Plumb House is a two-story wood-frame vernacular home built in 1896. Originally serving as both a hardware store and apartments for the Belleview Hotel, it became unnecessary once construction of the hotel ended in 1898. It was subsequently purchased by C.S. Reynolds, a Baptist priest and newspaper owner, who relocated it closer to downtown Clearwater. Reynolds transformed it into a single-family home for his sister, Jennie Plumb, who became the first paid teacher in what is now Pinellas County.

A member of the Plumb family resided in the home until 1983. In that year, the home was donated and moved to a city park, where it remains today. Over the years, the house has faced maintenance challenges and needs repair. Currently, the City is considering demolition of the house. The nominator hopes listing will help raise awareness about the house's significance and build momentum for a comprehensive restoration project.

Railroad Square Art District
Tallahassee, Leon County
Built c. 1940



Railroad Square Art District in Tallahassee is a hub of local commercial arts and cultural establishments, along with creative local businesses housed in WWII-era warehouses. The district faces uncertainty after two tornadoes struck on May 10, 2024, significantly damaging buildings around the city.

The tornadoes impacted the iconic metal warehouses that display public art and affected about 100 businesses and artists. Compounding these challenges, the owners can no longer privately manage the district after 20 years and are seeking a public or nonprofit entity to adopt this endeavor, a preferred alternative to a private development. The district's future hinges on a blend of ownership involving nonprofits, local government and private entities. The nominator aims to raise awareness about these challenges and the potential loss of the Railroad Square Arts District.



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Tarpon River Bend District
Ft. Lauderdale, Broward County
Established c. 1920

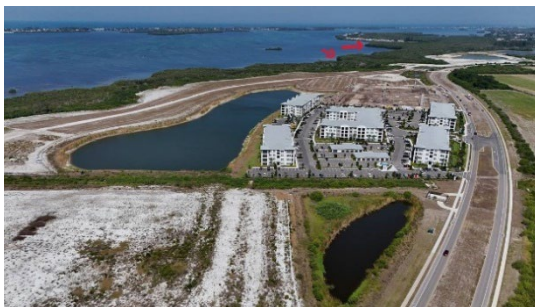


The Tarpon River Bend District is home to a significant concentration of historic structures dating from Fort Lauderdale's South Side development period, spanning 1922 to 1955. The district holds importance in education, community planning and development, entertainment, recreation and commerce, underscoring its role in Fort Lauderdale's growth south of the New River. Notable public facilities of historic significance within the district include Florence C. Hardy Park, the South Side School, the city's second fire station and the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant. The diverse array of facilities

and structures within the district exemplifies the Spanish Eclectic and Mediterranean Revival architectural styles, showcasing community life in Fort Lauderdale during the early to mid-20th century.

Today, the Tarpon River District faces significant development pressure. The nominator hopes inclusion on the 11 to Save list can mobilize resources, attract attention from preservationists and galvanize community support to protect these sites.

Ancient Indigenous Burial Mounds on Tidy Island
Bradenton, Manatee County
Dating from 450 CE to 1500 CE



The Ancient Indigenous Burial Mounds on Tidy Island in Sarasota Bay are sacred archaeological sites dating back to the Weeden Island Period (450-1000 CE) and the Safety Harbor Period (1000-1500 CE). They provide tangible links to Sarasota Bay's ancient inhabitants, offering insights into burial practices, rituals and social structures through preserved artifacts like ceramics, animal bones and shells.

These mounds are poignant reminders of Native peoples' presence before European settlements and are crucial for understanding tribes such as the Calusa and Tocobaga. Despite preservation efforts, the proposed nearby construction of over 500 single-family homes, 2,300 multi-family units and extensive commercial spaces poses a new threat. This activity could disturb centuries-old artifacts and compromise the ability to gain insight into the area's Native occupation. The nominator hopes to raise awareness of the site's importance, increase resources for documentation and protect the mounds from encroaching development.



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Warm Mineral Springs Spa and Cyclorama
North Port, Sarasota County
Built 1960



Designed by noted Architect Jack West for Florida's quadricentennial celebration, the Warm Mineral Springs Spa and Cyclorama was completed in 1960. Originally intended as exhibit space, the Spa and Cyclorama later served as a bathhouse, gift shop, real estate office and restaurant. Warm Mineral Springs holds significant archaeological, recreational, historical, geological and cultural importance for the community. It is locally listed as a historic landmark and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in November 1977.

In late September 2022, Hurricane Ian damaged the Warm Mineral Springs Spa and Cyclorama. Following the storm, options for restoration were explored; however, the City Commission strongly objected to the associated costs and voted to investigate demolition. The nominator hopes that increased awareness will foster discussion and encourage solutions that prioritize the building's restoration and preservation.

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About the Florida Trust

The Florida Trust for Historic Preservation is the state's nonprofit dedicated to protecting Florida's extraordinary heritage and history. Founded in 1978, the Florida Trust has collaborated to save irreplaceable Florida treasures like the Historic Florida Capitol and is a statewide partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Learn more at www.FloridaTrust.org.