
11. Howard Opera House (1879), 81 Church Street

Built as an opulent opera house, the city's first performing arts center was financed by John Purple Howard, an innkeeper's son who amassed a fortune in Broadway Hotels. The ground floor has always housed a retail store. The somewhat restrained Italianate Renaissance style building has carved French horns and mask on the cornice, a reminder of its original use.



12. Oasis Diner (1953) 189 Bank Street

Manufactured by the Mountain View Diner Company of Singas, NJ, and shipped intact on a railroad flatcar, the Streamline Moderne style diner was designated and built with modern materials for its time—stainless steel, enameled sheet metal and glass.

13. First Congregational Church (1842), 38 Winooski Ave.

An imposing Greek Revival church which anchors the east end of Cherry Street. Although the Greek temple front was often used in church design, there are almost no vertical forms in Classical Greek architecture in use for steeples. The builder, Henry Searle, solved this problem by reproducing the Athenian monument of Lysicrates for the bell tower, the only one like it in the United States.

14. Masonic Temple (1897), 5 Church Street

A massive superblock housing shops, lodge facilities and apartments, designed by Wilson Brothers of Philadelphia, whom also did Wilson Hall at UVM. Romanesque Revival style topped by a pyramidal hipped roof; the pyramid is the Masonic symbol.

15. Richardson Building (1895), 2 Church Street

Built as a Real Estate investment for a partner in Wells Richardson Patent Medicines. Its NY architects, Withers and Dickson termed its Chateausque style "Scoto-French," making use of the minarets, dormers, chimneys and iron balconies. The use of the building has remained as the first two floors being used as retail space and apartments above.

16. Unitarian Meeting House (1816), 152 Pearl St.

Designed by Boston Architect Peter Banner and built by local craftsmen, the church reflects the Federal style's English origins. This building, the Masonic Temple, and Richardson Building, dissimilar but compatible buildings, form the head of the Church Street National Register Historic District.



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Want a Tour Guide ?

Preservation Burlington provides tour upon request for the Downtown Tours. We meet at the Church Street entrance of City Hall.

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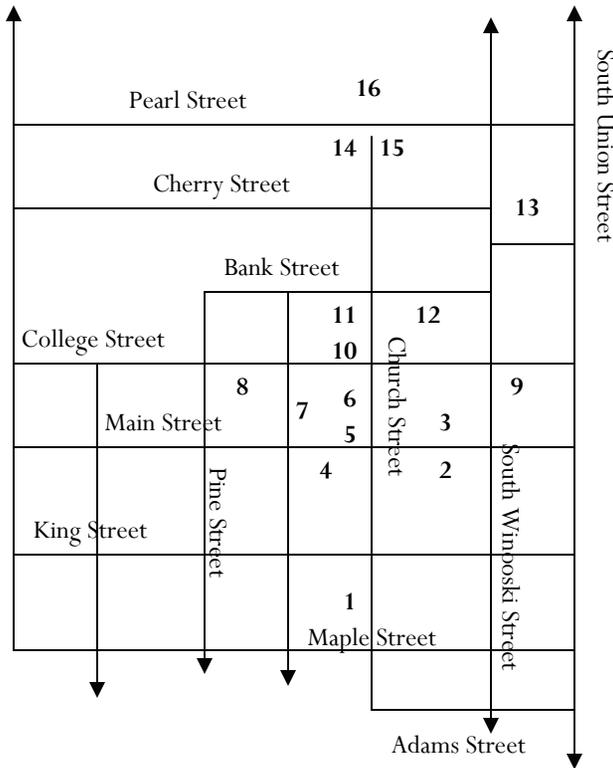
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**Downtown Walking Tour
Burlington, Vermont**



Looking to the future with respect
for the past...

Downtown Map



1. Wilson Hotel (c. 1815), 189 Church Street

The Wilson Hotel was formerly the home of Samuel Mills, the publisher of the city's first successful newspaper, The Sentinel. The graceful Federal-style proportions and fanlighted front door, now at a second floor level due to lowering the grade on Church Street, speak of a long ago refinement.

2. Chittenden Co. Courthouse (1906), 175 Main St.

Built as the U.S. Customs House and Post Office, it now serves as the county courthouse. The courthouse was constructed in the Beaux Arts style with Albert Whittekind interior carvings. Whittekind came to Burlington to execute the carvings for the Billings Library and eventually made Burlington his permanent home. Customs duties were collected in the city since its earliest days.

3. Main Street Buildings

Across the street from the Courthouse are several distinctive buildings ranging from the 19th Century Italianate commercial style (now home of Smokejack's) on the corner of Church and Main, to a rare local example of the geometric Art Deco style on the corner of Winooski and Main (Mr. Mikes Pizza and Mirabelle's).

4. Flynn Theater (1930), 153 Main Street

Vermont's premier Art Deco movie house recalls the elaborate settings popular for the silver screen. It is the last of the large screen movie houses in downtown Burlington and it still retains most of the original interior fixtures and decoration from the box office to the balcony. Now operated by the Flynn Center for Performing Arts, the theater has been restored to its original grandeur.

5. Burlington City Hall (1928)

Designed by the leading New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White, the building replaced the inadequate city hall which was built in 1853. This Beaux Arts style building marks the southern entry way to the Church Street Marketplace.



6. Ethan Allen Fire Station (1887), 135 Church St.

Next to City Hall stands a Romanesque Revival firehouse with arched window openings and an 85' hose drying tower. It housed equipment and elegant social parlors of the Ethan Allen Fire Company in an era when volunteer fire companies were popular social clubs. The city took over fire protection in the 1890's. The efforts of interested citizens saved the building from the wrecker's ball in 1969. The building

is now home to the Firehouse Art Gallery, a program of Burlington City Arts.

7. City Hall Park

By 1800, what was then called Courthouse Square was the heart of Burlington's retail district. Conveniently located on the route to Winooski Falls and on a major route from the South, it boasted a courthouse, jail, two inns, and a growing number of shops. The great hotels once dominating life in the square are long gone. The last was the Hotel Vermont (1913) on the southeast corner of Main and St. Paul, which is now an apartment building.

8. Main Office of Wells and Richardson (1883), 127 College St.

The entire city block bordered by College, St. Paul, Main and Pine Streets is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of the 19th Century commercial character of the buildings. Wells Richardson Co. built several structures between 1874 and 1907. This company was a wholesale drug manufacturer whose patent medicines, Diamond Dyes, and other products were so popular that the companies opened offices in Montreal, London and Sydney. Passage of the Pure Food Drug Act in 1906 irreversibly changed the company's fortunes when the sale of some of its most successful products were discontinued.



9. Fletcher Free Library (1904), 235 College Street

Considered for demolition, the library was closed in 1974 due to structural problems. Residents organized a committee to save the building that resulted in its restoration and the addition of a new wing. The original building was constructed on the site of a ravine that once bisected the downtown. At one time, The Vermont Central Railroad's tracks ran the length of the ravine. As the city grew, the ravine was filled, primarily with sawdust, which eventually cause structural problems for this and other buildings along its path.

10. Abrahams Block (c. 1830, 1945 façade), 111 Church Street

This building was originally designed as a typical Federal style commercial building, which is still evidenced by its parapet roof-line. In 1945 Louis S. Newton, a local architect, designed its present Art Deco façade of enameled sheet metal with glass block windows. Recently Leunig's, a restaurant on the street level, covered the lettering for Abraham's with their own name.