



WALKING TOUR of DOWNTOWN



Paterson's Downtown Commercial District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999. In 1902, a fire devastated most of Paterson's downtown area. City Hall was partially destroyed, but was restored in 1902-1903 with assistance from its original architects. The people of Paterson rebuilt the city with determination and strength, using the wealth of the City's prosperous industrial industry.



1. City Hall (c.1894-96)

The heart of the Downtown District is City Hall. With its Beaux-Arts design, stained glass windows, and 164-foot clock tower – ornately detailed with sculpted wreaths, shields, urns and eagles – is undoubtedly Paterson's most significant building. The building was designed by the architectural firm of Carrere and Hastings. The firm also designed the New York City Main Public Library and the Frick Museum and Estate on Fifth Avenue in New York City. The City Hall tower is a reproduction of the Hotel de Ville in Lyon, the silk center of France.



2. 140 Market St. (c. 1903)

This six-story, steel-frame building at the corner of Market Street and Veterans Place was historically the Citizen's Trust Company. Built in a classicized Beaux-Arts style, embellished with foliage, its monumentality is enhanced by arched windows over the doors supported by pilasters and use of beveled blocks of gray granite on its facade.



3. 146-148 Market Street (1910)

Presently Chase bank, this well-preserved limestone Beaux-Arts gem, historically the Franklin Trust Company, is a key building in the City's financial district. A bronze bust of Benjamin Franklin by Paterson sculptor Gaetano Federici is in the pediment over the main door.

4. 9 Colt Street (1895)

Presently First Union, this fully developed Beaux-Arts style building features elaborate ornamentation on its marble, limestone and brick facade. Historically this building was the Second National Bank. Now only five stories tall, it originally carried a steep, two-story mansard roof with tall chimneys, dormers and end towers that were removed in the 1920's. Notice the fluted Corinthian columns spanning the third and fourth floor of the building's front facade.

5. 167-169 Market Street (1902-10)

Historically the Second National Bank addition; presently First Union, this limestone Greek Revival/Beaux-Arts building has colossal fluted Doric Columns, bronze medallions, floral plaques and a bronze entrance frame and window grates. The interior has murals of Paterson's industrial history.

6. 124-126 Market Street (1905)

Originally the Silk City Trust Company, this six-story granite building is another key architectural gem in the post-fire rebuilding of Paterson's downtown. It has colossal granite block pilasters and arched window bays with lion's head keystones.

From City Hall Plaza, walk west to the intersection of Market and Main Streets. From this view one sees where the financial district meets the shopping district. On each corner of this intersection is an architecturally significant building.



7. 260-262 Main Street (1925)

This brick and limestone building on the southwest corner of Main and Market Streets is known as the Mainmark building. With its decorative geometric and floral forms it exemplifies the Art Deco style of architecture popular at the time. The name "Mainmark" is inscribed above the second story corner bay.

8. 231-235 Main Street (1890)

This six-story tan brick building was originally the Paterson Savings Institution. With its brick and terra cotta facade, a massive but continuously ornamented wall surface is broken by tall, arched window bays. Its angled corner bay features elongated keystones and voussoirs. As an example of fireproof construction, this building suffered only minor damage in the 1902 fire and was critical in containing the fire from spreading further south.

9. 253-255 Main Street (1920)

This three-story building at the southeast corner of Main and Market Streets has glazed terra cotta pilasters and Gothic features. In its highly ornate style, it is another key building of the Downtown Commercial Historic District. Notice the panels decorated with heraldic shields and the cornice that is studded with small smiling faces.

10. 242-244 Main Street (1920)

This six-story building is named the "Elbow" building because it bends like the shape of an elbow. Notice the eclectic and Gothicized ornament decorating its facade. The terra cotta colonettes are studded with a repeated floral motif and topped with lion's heads. The building's name appears twice over the Market St. doorway and on the cornice at the corner.

Market Street, between Main and Cianci Streets, is a 19th century commercial neighborhood on a smaller scale that includes rows of patterned brick buildings with residences on many of the building's upper floors. Here, one may find mostly individually owned service oriented businesses, restaurants, travel agencies, personal care salons; businesses that do not need the larger, more grandiose spaces found on Main Street.

11. 74 Market Street (1885)

This Italianate building on the corner of Market and Cianci Streets has a varied brick pattern on its facade. The arched window molds, terra cotta belt courses and pressed metal cornice represent the intricate ornamentation of its time.

12. 79-81 Market Street (1885)

This three-story red brick Italianate is an excellent example of a commercial with residential use building typical to this neighborhood block. It has a wide overhanging wood cornice with scrolled brackets and straight sandstone lintels and sills.

13. 100 Prospect Street (1897)

The blue-gray limestone Burhans Building on the corner of Market Street was untouched by the 1902 fire and remains today in good condition. An elaborate classicized pressed-metal cornice, arched windows and a swag-embellished frieze marks a small-scale version of the more monumental buildings to be built to its west after the fire.

14. 77 Prospect Street (1885)

This building, which houses The American Federation of Musicians, was originally Washington Engine Company No.3 – the first volunteer fire company in Paterson to have a steam engine. It is a two-and-a-half-story, 5-bay brick Romanesque Revival architectural style, and even though the facade has been stuccoed over, its characteristic details still remain visible.

Main Street, between Market and Van Houten Streets, boasts some of the City's most important architecture in conjunction with its commercial success. Some of the historic character has been affected by modern storefront alterations, but the exquisite architectural details are still present.

15. 225-229 Main Street (1920)

The same architect who designed the Elbow building – Fred Wesley Wentworth, designed this iron and terra cotta Arts and Crafts style building. The building's facade is ornamented with metal panels of floral motifs and topped by an ornate, emerald-green pediment of glazed terra cotta. This building is an example of the second wave of Paterson's post-fire construction.

16. 201-207 Main Street (1902)

On the southeast corner of Ellison Street, this three-story, Romanesque Revival style building was historically the National Building. It has rounded corner bay windows. Lion's head panels and foliate moldings that decorate this building's terra-cotta facade.

17. 186-196 Main Street (1902)

Diagonally across from the National Building is what was historically the Quackenbush Department Store building. This is a massive and lavishly decorated Beaux-Arts block with double-scroll capitals, lion's heads, medallions, shields, swags and floral motifs. Louis Spitz, who was owner of the legendary Quackenbush, was also a silk mill owner in Paterson and a founder of the Preakness Country Club.

Continue West on Main Street to the Broadway/West Broadway intersection.

18. 1-7 Broadway (1925-31) & 2-6 Broadway (1920)

Both buildings have triangular-plans and are contrasting examples to the style of the older post-fire buildings surrounding City Hall and on Main Street. Originally a bank, 1-7 Broadway is built out of limestone in the Art Deco style. Notice the eagle and shield that decorate the entrance bay. 2-6 Broadway, also built with limestone and reflecting early Art Deco style, has classical details, an ornate Neo-Baroque broken pediment over the angled corner bay and vegetal motifs on keystones over the windows.

Walk East on Broadway to Washington Street.

19. 60-62 Broadway (1910)

This building was drastically altered in the early 1930's with a new Art Deco facade of polychromed terra cotta. It has a variety of geometric, floral and abstract motifs, including an obelisk and sunbeam image atop its central bay. Walking north onto Washington Street will bring you into the market area where fresh fish, vegetables, Jamaican specialties, meats, a bakery and other food items are available. Enjoy the atmosphere, the architecture, and after shopping, walk south on Washington St. towards City Hall to continue the tour.

Between Broadway and Fair Street on Washington is a "street market" district where many 19th century Italianate or Romanesque styles grace buildings used today for the everyday purveying of live poultry, fish and produce. This area has also attracted artists that have found loft spaces for use as art and dance studios.

20. 83 Broadway (1880)

At one time Paterson had a number of newspapers. Historically this building housed the Morning Call, a newspaper established by Edward B. Haines in 1885, which was Paterson's first morning daily. This is a four-story, beige brick, Romanesque building with arched window surrounds, terra-cotta capitals and terra-cotta frieze bands. The main entrance has brick pilasters and rusticated brownstone capitals. This is a key building in the Downtown Commercial Historic District.



21. 111-117 Washington Street (1905)

Situated on the site of Peter Colt's home, which was later used as City Hall, this building housed the police headquarters and the City Recorder's Court. Built out of limestone in the Beaux-Arts style, it has exaggerated keystones, scrolled brackets and a second-story balustraded balcony. Notice the main entrance with its scrolled keystone flanked by lanterns. Along the cornice are eighteen lion's heads that wrap around from the facade to the building's side.

22. 144 Washington Street (1902)

With its dated 1902 center parapet gable, the Romaine Building was built in an eclectic Beaux-Arts style with Romanesque elements. It was originally topped by a balustraded parapet and is a key reference in the rebuilding of Paterson's downtown after the fire of 1902.

From Washington Street, walk east on Ellison, past City Hall Plaza, north towards Church Street.

Ellison Street, between Washington and Church Streets, is an area that was historically a part of the financial district surrounding City Hall. This streetscape retains much of its historic character and still conveys a sense of the district's architectural profile during its period of significance.

23. 121 Ellison Street (1903)

The Walton building, a small, ornate, Neo-Baroque interpretation of Beaux-Arts design is another post-fire gem in the district. Notice the Washington Street entrance with its elaborate door surround and oval overdoor. The window bays are framed by sandstone molding and there are decorative sandstone panels with swags and shields between the first and second stories.

24. 125-131 Ellison Street (1902)

This building designed by Carrère and Hastings reflects the architectural influence of City Hall. Historically the First National Bank, it presently houses City offices. Its massive rusticated ground story commands the northeast corner of Washington and Ellison Streets and the interior decorative elements of the ground floor have been well preserved. Columns frame the exaggerated keystoned arched entry and window bays.

25. 131-135 Ellison Street (1910)

Adjacent to the First National Bank, this relatively smaller scale classicizing brick building is also a key architectural example characteristic of the Ellison Streetscape. Notice the brick balustrade roofline and colossal fluted sandstone pilasters. This building historically was the First National Bank of New Jersey.

26. 137-141 Ellison Street (1903)

Historically the old YMCA and then Fiber Optics, this building also once served as a City Hall Annex. This brick, granite and sandstone Beaux-Arts building replaced the 1892 original YMCA at this site. Take a special note of the keystoned arch with a knight's head bust, flanked by stepped pilasters at the main entrance. A second door is ornamented with shields, swags and wreaths.

27. 5 Colt Street (1903)

This white brick and limestone Baroque Revival/Beaux-Arts building is known simply as The Colt and at one time was home to various social organizations. Its facade is heavily embellished with brackets, garlands and intertwining serpents. Even though the large arched bays on the ground floor have been altered, the Colt remains an impressive site in the district.

Continue east on Ellison to where it intersects with Church St. At this intersection, three key buildings reflect post-fire rebuilding styles and architectural influences.

28. 35-37 Church Street (1909)

On the northeast corner, this Baroque Revival brick building is presently used as office space but historically was the YWCA. The first floor windows are surrounded in sandstone and hints of early Art Deco style can be seen in the window pediments.

29. 31-33 Church Street (1929)

This red brick and marble Colonial revival building, just to the north of the old YWCA, are the offices for the Board of Education. The colossal columns on the facade support a pediment with a centered oval window. A design with swag ornamentation over the entrance bears the inscription of its 1926 date.

30. 32 Church Street (1897)

This opulent, Italian Renaissance-revival palazzo, on the northwest corner of Church and Ellison Streets, was designed by Paterson architect John W. Ferguson and built by Charles E. Edwards at a cost of \$100,000. Five years later it was partially destroyed in the Great Fire. This was where the most prestigious private club in Paterson – the Hamilton Club – would meet. The Hamilton Club was founded by Garret Hobart (Vice-President under McKinley from 1897-1899), in 1890. The Hamilton Club Cultural Center of Passaic County Community College presently occupies the site and exhibits the recently restored Hamilton Club Art Collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century art. The sculpture of Gaetano Federici is on rotating display as well as exhibitions by area artists.

31. 149-151 Ellison Street (1908)

This limestone Beaux-Arts and Classical revival building with a cornerstone marked “BPOE 60” was originally the Elks Club. Just west of the Hamilton Club, it has a slightly contrasting image – befitting the status of the Elks being a rival social club to the Hamilton. The building has a second-story balcony and ionic columns on the upper two stories.

32. 39-51 Church Street (1920-25)

Jacob Fabian, the first entrepreneur to bring a moving picture house to Passaic County in 1914, opened the Fabian Theater at the southeast corner of Church and Ellison in 1925. This nine-story brick building in Sullivanesque style was designed by Fred Wesley Wentworth and is the last to remain of Mr. Fabian’s Paterson theaters. The movie palace boasted 3,500 seats and contained a huge theater organ. Its interior is highly decorated with murals and tile floors. A fine old theater, the Fabian could still be restored to much of its original elegance, as many grand old theaters around the country have been in recent years.

Continue walking south on Church Street until you reach Market Street, which is just about full circle on the Downtown Tour. Walk east on Market Street.

33. 180 Market Street (1902-03)

The most purely Gothicized building erected in the post-fire reconstruction is historically the Free Masons Hall and was occupied by them until the 1920’s. It has steeply pitched side gables and a pointed-arch fourth-story window grouping.

34. 199 Market Street (1902)

An architecturally eclectic classicizing building, this three-story red brick, limestone and masonry facade has a center bay lunette inscribed with its 1902 date and ornamented with floral design and cornucopia.

35. 203-207 Market Street (1902)

The original headquarters of the Passaic County Republican League was housed here –The Blackburn Building. The facade has colossal pilasters dividing the rows of eight windows on its second and third floors. This limestone Romanesque revival building is inscribed with its 1902 date on the cornice.

36. 150-156 Market Street (1902)

The Margand, also known historically as the United Bank Building, is a six-story, seven-bay sandstone Beaux-Arts building directly opposite City Hall. It is another example of post-fire rebuilding of the downtown district. Notice the ornate dormers set into its mansard roof and the colossal rusticated piers. Its second story has a bracketed balcony. The name Margand is over the main entrance door.

Although the walking tour ends here, the historic architecture of Paterson does not. We hope this tour inspires further exploration of Paterson's architectural and historic sites.