



**About this Tour:** This 3/5 of a mile tour (one way) begins at Rochester’s dramatically renovated Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial and ends at the contemporary Strong Museum.

Your tour route traverses downtown’s interesting crossroads — full of history, commerce and outstanding architecture — if you know where to look.

Starting at the Genesee River’s edge, you’ll view Rochester’s downtown bridges in a new way, admire a public library built on an aqueduct, and visit Rochester’s **Washington Square (10)**, with its Civil War memorial statue of Abraham Lincoln. On the modern side, you’ll find outstanding architecture at **Bausch & Lomb (15)**, world headquarters, and the **Strong Museum (14)**.

**Historic Highlights:** In 1823, the Erie Canal opened in Rochester. When completed in 1825, it connected Albany (and thus New York City) to Buffalo and Lake Erie. Rochester, benefiting greatly, came to be known as America’s first “boomtown.”

On this tour, you can view the inside of the canal’s aqueduct. Rochester celebrated New York State’s emancipation of slaves in 1827 in **Washington Square (10)**. Franklin Roosevelt was nominated for New York State governor in the Naval Armory, now **Geva Theatre (13)**, in 1928. In 1950, Haloid, now **Xerox (12)**, developed an electrophotographic process and put its new copying machines on the market. From a building constructed in 1927-28, Frank Gannett started his publishing empire.

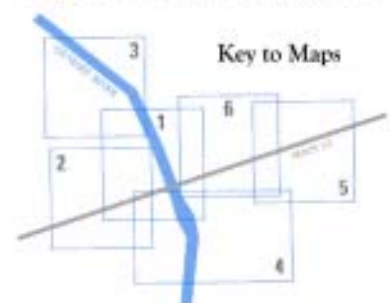
**Significant Architecture:** On this tour are nine historic buildings constructed between 1858 and 1933. They are all listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The oldest is **St. Mary’s Church, (9)** built in 1858. Other buildings show the evolution of architecture during the early 20th century. **The First Universalist Church (11)** is the most important remaining work of prominent local architect Claude Bragdon.

**Eating and Entertainment:** Geva Theatre, Strong Museum, Rochester War Memorial, Dinosaur Bar-B-Que.

**Major Employers** Bausch & Lomb world headquarters, Global Crossing, Frontier, Xerox, Rochester’s Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Nixon Peabody.

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

Map 4. The Southern Gateways 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

1. The tour starts at the corner of Exchange Boulevard and Broad Street. Here is the winged **Times Square Building** (45 Exchange Boulevard), a dramatic example of Art Deco architecture and a monument to progress. It has been a major city landmark since the Genesee Valley Trust Company completed its construction in 1930. The cornerstone of the building, ironically, was laid on October 29, 1929, the day the stock market crashed. Fortunately, the bank survived the Great Depression.



*Times Square Building*

2. Across Broad Street, at 55 Exchange Boulevard, is the Neo-Classical **Gannett Building**, built in 1927-28 as the headquarters and publishing center for the Gannett Company. From this building, founder Frank Gannett gained fame and fortune by purchasing small independent newspapers and developing them into a publishing empire. The building was expanded to include a notable 1949 addition along Broad Street that successfully reflects the original design.

3. The **War Memorial** (also known as the **Blue Cross Arena**), a major site for ice hockey, lacrosse and concerts, was built in 1953 and expanded in 1998. Walk along the War Memorial on Broad Street until you come to stairs down to **War Memorial Park**. (To avoid the stairs, go south on Exchange Boulevard to Court Street). The stairs bring you down below the Broad Street Bridge. At the bottom of the bridge's top tier of arches you are on the Erie Canal Aqueduct and the overlook into its bed.

This aqueduct, built in 1842, was the only one on the Erie Canal to carry both a water trough and a towpath over a river. This canal segment was abandoned in 1920, and subsequently the second tier was added to the bridge as a roadway. From the 1920s to 1956, Rochester's subway system occupied the former canal bed.

The park itself provides a good vantage point from which to view the lower arches that supported the Erie Canal Aqueduct and to enjoy the Genesee River.

*Walk to Court Street.*

Want to jog, hike or bike? From south of Court Street, you can be on dedicated walking and biking paths for hundreds of miles. It's less than four miles to the Erie Canal, by river path to the Ford Street Bridge. Cross the bridge and follow the path south on the river's east bank. Half way (2 miles) you'll be in the center of the University of Rochester. The last half mile is within the Olmsted-designed Genesee Valley Park. The hardy can follow the Erie Canal's towpath to Buffalo and, with some breaks, even to Albany, or almost to Pennsylvania on the Genesee Canal Greenway.

4. At Exchange and Court Streets, is the **Court-Exchange Building**, 142 Exchange Boulevard, (the former National Casket Company Building). This building is a distinctive late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Romanesque Revival industrial building that was sensitively rehabilitated in the 1980s for modern office use.

*Now walk onto the Court Street Bridge.*

5. The bridge, built in 1893, is made of sandstone with low, broadly sprung arches designed not to hinder the flow of the river to the raceways. From the **Court Street Bridge**, you will have another view of the Broad Street Bridge and Erie Canal aqueduct and see why it was necessary to carry boat traffic over the Genesee River.

Looking northeast, you can see the back of the **Rundel Library**. Built over the old Johnson and Seymour

Millrace, it features a series of arches that carry water from the race back into the river.

6. Looking south, you can see the **Court Street Dam**, a dam-keepers house and an RG&E hydrostation. Built in 1926, the dam regulates the river's upstream water level and permits the present-day Erie Canal to cross the Genesee River in Genesee Valley Park.

7. As you leave the bridge, you'll also see the **Lehigh Valley Railroad Station**, 99 Court Street. Constructed in 1905, the station retains many of its original architectural details, including decorative brickwork and interior wainscoting. This unusual building, located some 40 feet above the riverbed, with its Norman Chateau-style tower, rests on stone piers and iron girders that span the former Erie Canal bed. Before being rerouted, the Erie Canal traveled into Rochester along what is now I-490 and then along South Avenue to Broad Street.

*Continue to the corner of South Avenue and Court Street. At this intersection is the Rundel Memorial Library.*

8. Situated on the east bank of the Genesee River on South Avenue between Court and Broad Streets is the **Rundel Memorial Building** (115 South Avenue), part of Rochester's Central Library. Built in 1933-1936, it was designed by the Rochester firm of Gordon and Kaelber in the Modernistic style popular for public buildings at that time. Constructed of limestone and granite, the semi-classical façade features Art Deco details and bas-relief sculpture by Ulysses Ricci. The library was chosen by the New York State Association of Architects in 1981 as one of the seven most important architectural works built in the state between 1931 and 1961. When the library needed to expand, a new building was constructed across the street was linked with Rundel via an underground passage.



*Rundel Memorial Building*

*From the library, continue to walk east on Court Street. You'll pass the new headquarters for Rochester's Blue Cross, and come to a small park next to St. Mary's Church, 15 St. Mary's Place.*

9. The parish of **St. Mary's**, founded in 1834 by Irish immigrants, is the oldest in the Rochester Catholic Diocese. The cornerstone of the present building was laid in 1858. By the 1870s, the parish had grown considerably and a rectory, a convent, an elementary school and an industrial training school for orphans were constructed along the west side of St. Mary's Place between Court Street and Woodbury Blvd. The 19<sup>th</sup>-century Romanesque Revival church is characterized by its round arches, stained-glass windows and corbelled brackets. The bell tower was erected in 1940.

10. Bounded by Court Street, St. Mary's Place, Woodbury Boulevard and Clinton Avenue, **Washington Square** could be called Rochester's first village green. It began as part of an 80-acre tract of land owned by eastside promoter Elisha Johnson and his partner, Orson Seymour. The square was given to the village by Johnson in 1822. It was here in 1827 that Rochester celebrated New York State's decision to end slavery. Subsequently, the park was renamed "Washington Square" to honor George Washington. The Soldiers and Sailors Monument dominating the square, erected as a memorial to those who served in the Civil War, is topped by a bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln.

*Look north from Washington Square at the granite clad Bausch & Lomb Building, completed in 1995 with a glass-enclosed winter garden facing Washington Square and a 65-foot high steel sculpture by local artist Albert Paley.*



*Washington Square Park*

*Continue on Court Street to Clinton Avenue. You'll have an excellent view of the First Universalist Church, 150 South Clinton Avenue.*

11. Constructed in 1908, the **First Universalist Church**, at the northeast corner of Washington Square, is the most important remaining work of prominent local architect Claude Bragdon. Its central plan, stained-glass windows, ceramic tile and terra cotta details recall Lombard-style churches of northern Italy. The interior, enhanced by furniture and lighting fixtures designed by Bragdon, is noteworthy for its use of structural steel as a design element.



*First Universalist Church*

*Next to the church is another contemporary building, the Frontier Telephone Building.*

12. In 1950, a Rochester company, then called Haloid, developed an electrophotographic process and put its new copying machines on the market. Now known as Xerox Corporation, its large office building is located across Court Street at **Xerox Square**, 100 S. Clinton Avenue. Completed in 1967, Xerox Square incorporates a 30-story tower, and a connected four-story building and plaza.

*Turn right on Clinton Avenue, or walk through Washington Square to Woodbury Boulevard.*



*Xerox Square*

13. You'll see **Geva Theatre**, 75 Woodbury Boulevard. Designed by Andrew Jackson Warner, the former armory was built in 1871 as the state arsenal and headquarters of the infantry militia. In 1907, the City acquired the building for use as a convention center. The 4,000 seat hall hosted campaign rallies for William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, William Taft and Franklin Roosevelt, and world-famous musicians including Enrico Caruso, Fritz Kreisler, Anton Paderewski, and Sergei Rachmaninoff. During the Depression, it was used as a distribution center for food, clothing and cash. In 1984, Geva, Rochester's professional theater company, acquired the building and renovated it as a 500-seat theater. In 2000, Geva opened its smaller performance space, Nextstage.

*Go one block east on Woodbury Boulevard and you'll come to Manhattan Square Park and the Margaret Woodbury Strong Museum.*

14. The **Strong Museum**, at One Manhattan Square off Chestnut Street, features hands-on history activities for families and more than 500,000 objects including toys, miniatures, doll houses, and the world's most comprehensive collection of dolls, most from the collections of founder Margaret Woodbury Strong. Opened in 1982 and expanded in 1997, the museum's entrance atrium features two historic structures, the vintage diner (built in 1956 by the Fodero Dining Car Company) and a restored carousel by the Herschell Carrousel Factory.