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New City

If you are interested in Chicago's industrial heritage, [New City](#) has something special to offer. A good starting point, and perhaps it's best known landmark, is the [Union Stock Yards Gate](#), located in the area known as Back of the Yards. If it wasn't for the steer's head proudly protruding above the arch, this ornate neo-Gothic entrance would look in place in front of a French chateau. The gate dates from 1879, and the head is a likeness of the steer that won the American Fat Stock Show in 1878. After more than a century of service, the stock yards closed in 1971. Gone are the animal pens and the sounds of their doomed inhabitants. The gate remains as a monument to the past, isolated within what is now a modern industrial park.

At the Northern boundary of New City, on Pershing Street, there is another industrial treat: The Central Manufacturing District. This was the first American industrial park, established in 1905, and is much more interesting than its modern descendents. A string of Edwardian brick factories and warehouses bordering the southern end of McKinley Park are worth admiring, together with a now abandoned [vintage clock tower](#). To see more of this industrial architecture it is worth wandering into the neighboring community of [McKinley Park](#) to the area just north of Pershing Avenue and east of Ashland Avenue.

There is more to New City than its industrial past. At its southern end is [Sherman Park](#), which consists of a large tree-rimmed island surrounded by a moat which is traversed by four bridges. At the northern end of the park there is a classic [1905 field house](#), along with swimming pool and [tennis courts](#). At the southern boundary of the park is West Garfield Boulevard. There are nice vintage houses along the Boulevard, particularly on the northern side of the street, to the east of the park. My favorite is a [neo-Tudor mansion](#) which is whimsically decorated with a large number of winged gargoyles. James O'Leary's chateausque 1901 mansion can also be found along the Boulevard - he was the gambling king whose mother owned the famous cow that is said to have started the great fire of Chicago in 1871 by kicking over a lantern.

Finally, New City offers some architecturally interesting churches. Notable examples are [Saint John of God](#), a renaissance style Roman Catholic Church at the northern end of Sherman Park, [and Holy Cross Immaculate Heart of Mary Church](#) on South Wood Street, an even more ornate Catholic Church. There are also plenty of smaller scale architecturally less elaborate churches in the neighborhood. One that I

like is the [New Life Community Church](#) which overlooks Davis Square Park; a simple brick affair that proudly boasts a bright red awning and an onion dome that supports an Eastern Orthodox Cross.

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