

ENDANGERED CINCINNATI

NEGLECT IN OVER-THE-RHINE

Rothenberg School

241 East Clifton Avenue
Over-the-Rhine Historic District
1914
Collegiate Tudor style
Garber & Woodward, architects

The future of one of Cincinnati's most outstanding public school buildings is caught in the push-and-pull of shifting demographics, declining school-age populations, and competing revitalization plans. Cincinnati Public Schools initially planned to renovate Rothenberg, but then devised a plan to build a new school at Fourteenth and Walnut streets. This plan was later put on hold due to neighborhood opposition and declining enrollment. In the meantime, Rothenberg was closed and its pupils transferred elsewhere. Rothenberg remains vacant, its future uncertain.



St. Paul's German Evangelical Church

Fifteenth and Race streets
Over-the-Rhine Historic District
c. 1850
Greek Revival style with Gothic Revival elements
Architect unknown

One of several churches in Over-the-Rhine abandoned by their congregations, St. Paul's is a ghostly ruin. Emergency stabilization carried out in the 1980s gave the building a short-term reprieve. Two decades later, however, the building is once again in severely dilapidated condition, with rotten framing and bulging brick walls. Several proposals have been floated for reuse of the building, but none has been adopted. If not rescued soon, the church will likely face the same fate as so many buildings in OTR: demolition, and replacement by a vacant lot.



Kauffman Building

1721-1725 Vine Street
Over-the-Rhine Historic District
1879
Neo-Grec style
George Rapp, architect

A ghostly presence on upper Vine Street, the Kauffman Building is Over-the-Rhine's most visible symbol of urban blight. A series of fires has reduced the 1879 landmark, vacant for 18 years, to a condemned, gutted shell. Built as an investment by the Kauffman Brewery, the George Rapp-designed Neo-Grec edifice is one of the oldest apartment houses in the city. The magnitude of the reconstruction, and the challenges of development in OTR, have deterred investors. But if the crumbling façade is not stabilized soon, the building will be lost, leaving a huge gash in the fabric of the struggling neighborhood.

