

# Frank Lloyd Wright & the American City Today

Call for Papers | Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy Annual Conference

September 25-29, 2024 | Detroit, Michigan

Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture asks us to live in an ever-emerging America and to consider our relationships with each other in terms of the natural and cultural landscapes in enriching ways. As his conceptions of "The Living City" developed across the decades, he came to see the automobile and modern means of communication as tools to rethink the historical tension between the city and the suburbs in American life, "taking the city to the country" he wrote. Not as "decentralization," but "re-integration." Detroit and our experiences with its urbanized landscape offer us a chance to investigate such conceptions of the American city and their relevance to our lives today. As a prototypical American metropolis, the "Motor City" embodies the spectrum of modern change, from early trading center to industrial colossus, through postwar suburban expansion, decline, racial strife, and current revitalization.

Wright, and many others in his milieu, were vitally interested in settlement patterns, natural and productive landscapes, as well as various approaches to affordable housing in the context of the push-pull of cities and their hinterlands. By the 1930s, his Broadacre City vision built upon earlier civic explorations extending the notion of the city block, as he adapted his ideas to a series of landscapes, scales and social contexts. The relationships with the American landscape explored by the small-scale farming, networked communities and great cultural centers of Broadacre City are examples of a wide range of American urban planning approaches in the twentieth century worthy of comparison.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy invites paper proposals that address the relationships of Wright's work and legacy to historical and contemporary issues of American landscapes, cities and suburbs through a critical lens. We especially invite submissions from individual or collective experience about living through historic cultural shifts or currently working to advance new paradigms of living and working in contemporary cities.

Topics might engage opportunities & limitations of automobility and its effects on settlement patterns & quality of life such as:

- Histories of individual Wright-designed projects and how their stories relate to the history and people of Detroit;
- Different models of ownership and stewardship for housing and landscapes including urban infill, food production, or forms of cooperative endeavor;
- Challenges of infrastructure, energy, housing, food, and climate change, including highway removal and urban rebuilding;
- Seasonal migrations such as those made annually by the Fellowship and family vacations as engagements with the natural world made possible by the automobile;
- The recentering of nature in the urban fabric or vice-versa as "reintegration."

In addition to the topics mentioned above, proposals could explore further relationships to Wright buildings, sites, and people local to Detroit and its broader region. Proposals related to other cities, regions and contexts with this focus will be given equal consideration.

**How to submit:** Proposals should present fresh material and/or interpretations. They should be submitted as an abstract of no more than one page, PDF, single-spaced, with a working title and the author's name at the top. The text should concisely describe the focus and scope of a 20-minute presentation. The proposal should be accompanied by a one-page biography/curriculum vitae that includes: author's full name, title and affiliation (if applicable), mailing address, email address and telephone number. Please note any extraordinary audio-visual needs. PDF files are preferred and filenames should include the author's name. **Proposals must be received no later than March 11, 2024.** Notification of proposals selected for the conference will be sent in early April 2024. You may also be invited to develop your proposal into an article for publication in *SaveWright* magazine. **Please submit proposals online at [savewright.org/proposals](https://savewright.org/proposals)**