

The Tour

The tour covers six historic railroad sites in Evanston. It starts at Depot Square at Front Street and 10th Street. On the 300 days a year when the sun is shining in Evanston, this is a great 3.5-mile walk that takes about two hours to complete. It is also a nice drive.

1 Depot Square

The Union Pacific Passenger Depot was constructed in 1900, replacing a wooden structure just to the northwest. The building is architecturally unique among depots on the UP line in Wyoming. On the inside were separate waiting rooms for men and women. The Depot served passengers until Amtrak service was discontinued in Wyoming. This public building now is used for community events and private parties.

2 Roundhouse and Railyards

Union Pacific built this 28-stall brick roundhouse in 1912 to service steam locomotives running between Green River, Wyoming, and Ogden, Utah. It replaced a smaller stone roundhouse. Other buildings in the railyards include the recently restored machine shop and the powerhouse where steam heat was generated for the complex. This is the last remaining complete roundhouse on the old Union Pacific line between Omaha and Sacramento. Restoration is underway.

3 Railroad Worker Housing

Many of the houses along Main Street facing the Roundhouse and Railyards were built between 1895 and 1910. The modest homes were owned by railroad workers, in contrast to the larger homes higher up the hill in the historic residential district where engineers and company officials lived.

4 Ice Ponds

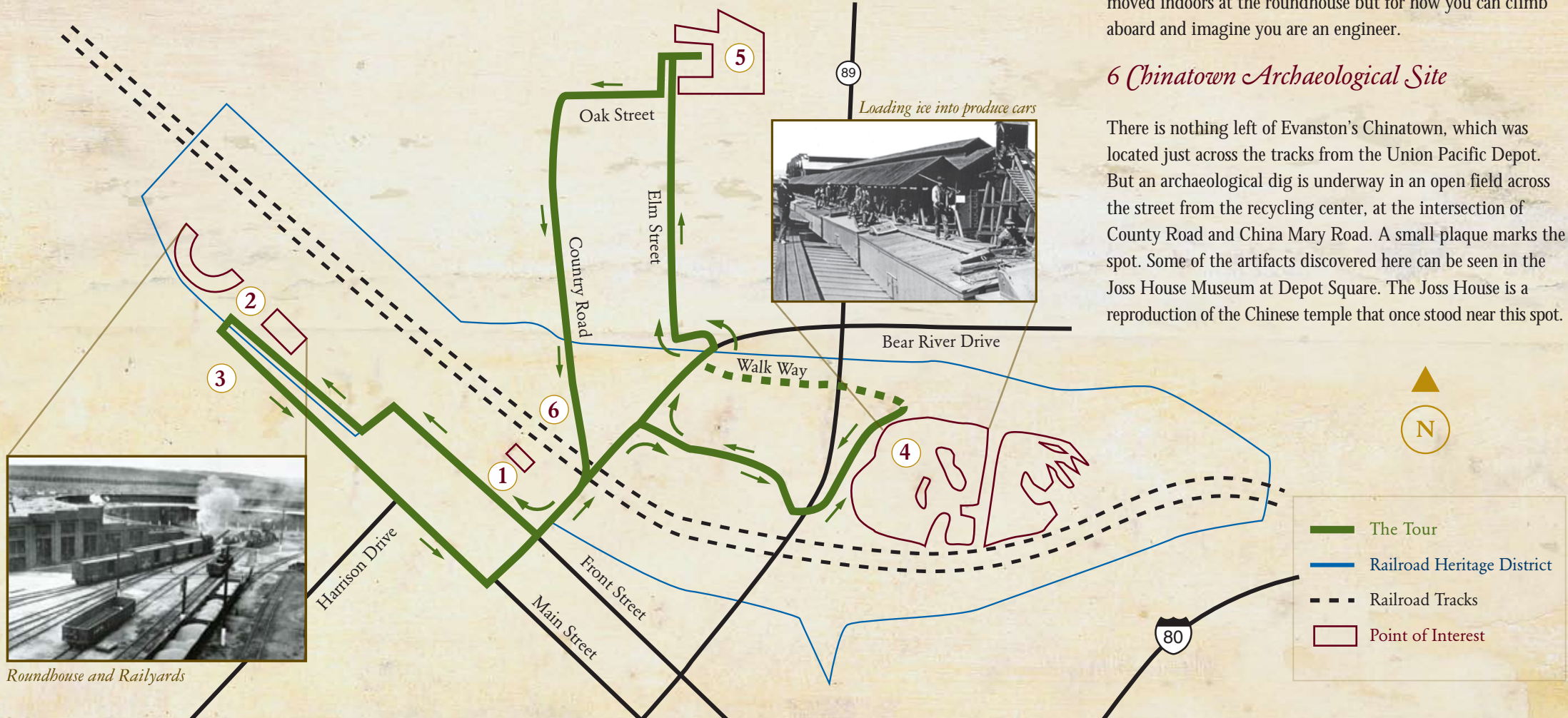
In the late 1890s, Pacific Fruit Express teamed with Union Pacific to create a series of icing stations along the UP line so produce being shipped from the West Coast could be kept chilled. Evanston was one of those stations. The Bear River was diverted into two ponds where ice was harvested in the winter and stored in several long narrow "ice houses." The icing operations were abandoned in the early 1920s when electric refrigerator cars came into use. The ponds were restored in the late 1980s to serve as a recreation area.

5 Old Steam Engine at Railroad Park

A 1915 steam engine is the main attraction in Railroad Park, located near the corners of Elm and Oak streets in north Evanston. There also are two boxcars, one of which has been converted into a picnic area. The engine eventually may be moved indoors at the roundhouse but for now you can climb aboard and imagine you are an engineer.

6 Chinatown Archaeological Site

There is nothing left of Evanston's Chinatown, which was located just across the tracks from the Union Pacific Depot. But an archaeological dig is underway in an open field across the street from the recycling center, at the intersection of County Road and China Mary Road. A small plaque marks the spot. Some of the artifacts discovered here can be seen in the Joss House Museum at Depot Square. The Joss House is a reproduction of the Chinese temple that once stood near this spot.



Roundhouse and Railyards

Loading ice into produce cars