

## Akron Beacon Journal

# Demolition begins on former Goodyear Middle School, East High in Akron



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Akron Beacon Journal

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### Key Points AI-assisted summary ⓘ

Akron's 107-year-old East High School building, which served various purposes over the years, is being demolished.

Originally built in 1918, the building has housed high school, junior high, middle school and elementary students.

After being vacant for several years and suffering vandalism, the building was sold and is being razed by Eslich Wrecking.

The site will be redeveloped into affordable housing units called The Heights.

Akron's original East High School, later known as Goodyear Junior High, Goodyear Middle School and briefly Seiberling Elementary, is tumbling to the ground.

An [Eslich Wrecking](#) crew has begun knocking down the 107-year-old structure at 49 N. Martha Ave.

Smashed bricks cascaded to the ground with a loud crash as an excavator clawed away at the east side of the structure July 9. The remnants of shredded classrooms lay exposed like a dollhouse. Letters of the alphabet, carefully posted on a wall by a teacher from yesteryear, got ripped down by heavy machinery.

The brick-and-stone building was constructed in 1918 as Akron's original East High School. It cost \$461,217 to build — more than \$9.5 million in today's money — and was designed by architect T. Ralph Ridley.

After contracts were awarded in 1917, the Beacon Journal noted that the hilltop structure was “expected to be one of the finest school buildings in the state when completed.” Carmichael Construction Co. served as builder.

When the school opened in the fall of 1919, amenities included a swimming pool, gymnasium and modern cafeteria. But it didn't include any high school students!

Akron was bursting at the seams. As rubber companies lured factory workers from across the country, the city's population surged from 69,067 in 1910 to 208,435 in 1920.

When East opened, the Akron school board decided it temporarily needed the space as a grade school to relieve congestion at Fraunfelter, Robinson and Kent schools.

Teenagers finally arrived a year later.

Generations of students would graduate from East. This was the backdrop for city championships, pep assemblies, school dances, club meetings, variety shows, study halls and lots and lots of learning.

Crowding persisted for 25 years. Enrollment topped 1,400 students, which was twice as many as the structure was designed to handle.

The building became Goodyear Junior High School in 1955 following the relocation of East to a \$2.3 million site at 80 Brittain Road. Then in the early 1980s, the district converted the junior high to a middle school.

In 2008, Goodyear Middle School abandoned the 159,000-square-foot building after [Akron Public Schools](#) approved the combination of the [high school](#) and [middle school](#) into a remodeled complex known as East Community Learning Center, which opened on Brittain Road in 2010.

Seiberling Elementary's 500 pupils used the building from 2011 to 2014 as it awaited completion of a [new school at 400 Brittain Road](#). The construction was part of the district's \$800 million project to rebuild or renovate public schools.

So the building ended as it began: A temporary space for elementary students.

The vacant structure was auctioned for \$77,000 in 2019 to Leroy Stowers, who sold it for the same price to [Industrial Commercial Properties](#), which operates the East End with [Industrial Realty Group](#).

In recent years, vandals and arsonists have caused extensive damage.

In September 2024, Akron City Council voted to authorize IRG to raze the building. Eslich began the job after completing the nearby demolition of the former East Akron YMCA on Goodyear Boulevard.

IRG plans to develop the former school site for The Heights, a 160-unit affordable housing complex on North Martha Avenue.

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**More:** [Former East Akron YMCA building is getting torn down](#)