

AIA Houston

# Architectural Guide

Third Edition

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# Houston



**R-6** Compaq Computer Corporation Administration Building



**R-7** St. Mary's Episcopal Church



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**R-10** Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts



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**R-6**  
**Compaq Computer Corporation Administration Building**

20555 Tomball Parkway  
1998, Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum

Between its founding in 1982 and its absorption into Hewlett Packard in 2002, Compaq emerged as a major producer of personal computers. The Spencer Partnership of Houston designed most of the numerous office buildings, manufacturing plants, and parking garages Compaq constructed between 1984–1988 on its 80-acre site at Cypress Crossing. The office buildings, clusters of cubes rotated so that their corners touch, are linked by an extensive network of air-conditioned, elevated pedestrian bridges. SLA was the landscape architect. Compaq's 10-story headquarters by Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum, facing the Tomball Parkway-Louetta intersection on the diagonal, is a sleekly detailed pair of 10-story slabs joined at the middle. The entire "campus" is insulated by vegetation; even interior streets within the corporate park seem blank because the buildings are all inward turning. In 2010 HP sold much of the Spencer-designed portion of the complex to Lone Star College, which adapted it to become its University Park campus. Trammell Crow Properties bought the administration building and its garage. Just south of the ex-Compaq campus, facing Tomball Parkway, is Chasewood Technology Park. The 5-story **Chasewood Building** (2008, Ziegler Cooper) at 20329 Tomball Parkway reiterates the horizontal sleekness of Compaq's Administration Building.

**R-7**  
**St. Mary's Episcopal Church**

15415 North Eldridge Parkway  
1988, Gregory Harper Associates with Gerald Moorhead

The parish house of this suburban church consists of a relaxed collision of shapes and low-budget materials.

**R-8**  
**Cypress Creek Family YMCA**

19915 Tomball Parkway  
2010, Brave/Architecture

Fernando Brave's building, closest to the Tomball Parkway-Maranatha intersection, is an annex to a large, much-added-to YMCA complex. Buff brick and dark metal siding articulate different programmatic components.

**R-9**  
**Houston Texas Temple, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints Church**

15725 Champion Forest Drive  
2000, Spencer Partnership

This temple, a Mormon administrative and cult center, steps forward and rises up in symmetrical tiers to a three-staged tower and spire 159 feet tall. Its cast stone and granite facing reflects the sunlight, enhancing a sense of stateliness. However the nervous verticality, improvised classical detail, and hermeticism of the temple's architecture give it a stage-set quality shared with other contemporary architectural efforts to evoke the solemnity and dignity of historical models.

**R-10**  
**Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts**

6815 Cypresswood Drive  
2008, Stern and Bucek Architects

The Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts, a non-collecting museum, opened in 2008 in an ex-Harris County library branch amid a complex of county-owned buildings shared with the **Barbara Bush Branch of the Harris County Public Library** (2002, Morris Architects), **Cypress Creek Christian Church**, and the **Centrum**, a performance space. The metal panel infill system with which Stern and Bucek faced the recessed front of the museum stands out when juxtaposed to the 1976 building by Clovis Heimsath Associates that frames it.

**R-11**  
**Northwoods Presbyterian Church**

3320 FM 1960 West  
1983, Charles Tapley Associates

Farm-to-Market Road (FM) 1960 merges with Texas Highway 6 to loop from Humble, on the northeast, around and through Sugar Land on the southwest, at a distance of about 18 miles from the center of Houston. In the late 1970s it became the axial ring of what was then Houston's most recent phase of concentric expansion. As the main street of northwest Harris County (only a small segment presently lies within Houston's city limits), FM 1960 has attracted the usual mad array of shopping centers, public institutions, mid-rise office buildings, and convenience stops. In the midst of this very evidently non-master-planned setting, Northwoods Presbyterian, designed by Tapley and Gerald Moorhead, introduces a welcome note of calm. Its rust-colored stucco walls, steeply-pitched copper roof, greenish-gray pine-shingled gables, and rotated square windows, cleverly filled with diagonal arrays of gray, bronze, and gold reflective solar glass instead of stained glass, are quietly but intensely colorful. The effect is serene and unselfish; the interior is spacious and austere.



**R-9** Houston Texas Temple, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints Church