



Historic Homes Bike Tour

Route Map





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Directions

	Address	Style	Architect	Year Constructed
★ 1	City Hall - 1707 St. Johns Ave		Frederick Hodgen	1930
Travel East on Hazel				
2	500 Hazel Avenue	Italianate	Highland Park Building Co.	1875
3	461 Hazel Avenue	Italianate	Highland Park Building Co.	1872
4	423 Hazel Avenue	Second Empire	Highland Park Building Co.	1871
Cross over the pedestrian bridge				
5	259 Hazel Avenue	Queen Anne	Unknown	1895
Turn Left (north) on Lake, Lake jogs to the east 1/2 block at Laurel				
6	1923 Lake Avenue	Prairie School	Frank Lloyd Wright	1905
Turn Left (west) on Central				
7	147 Central Avenue	Victorian Gothic	Highland Park Bldg. Co	Unknown
8	326 Central Avenue	Italianate	Highland Park Building Co.	1871
Turn Left (south) on Linden				
9	1635 Linden Avenue	Prairie School	John S. Van Bergen	1925
Turn Left (east) on Sheridan				
10	1499 Sheridan Road	Queen Anne	Architect: Unknown	c 1895
11	1445 Sheridan Road	Prairie School	Frank Lloyd Wright	1903
Turn Left on Waverly				
12	1425 Waverly Road	Colonial Revival	Heun & Wolcott	1930
13	1418 Waverly Road	Georgian Revival	Grunsfeld Ernest Sr.	1932
14	1401 Waverly Road	Miesian	Grunsfeld Jr.	1959
Turn Left on Sheridan				
15	1081 Sheridan Road	Spanish Colonial		1928
Turn Right (northwest) on Cedar				
16	234 Cedar Avenue	Prairie School	John S. Van Bergen	1920
17	441 Cedar Avenue	International Style	Henry Dubin	1929
Turn Right on St Johns 1 block, Right on Beech				
18	370 Beech Street	Miesian	James Speyer/David Haid	1954
Turn Left on Linden, 1 long block, Right on Forest, Stay on Forest, Cross Sheridan				
19	1442 Forest Avenue	Colonial Revival	Robert Seyfarth	1913
Turn Left (west) on Ravine Drive				
20	530 Ravine Drive	Italianate	Unknown	1900
Turn Right (north) on St. Johns and back to City Hall				



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Historic Home Descriptions

★ **Highland Park City Hall ♦ 1707 St. Johns Avenue ♦ 1930**



From 1920-1930 Highland Park's population doubled and the old city hall at the corner of Central and Green Bay was completely inadequate. But there was a problem. There were 16 architects living in Highland Park and they had an informal organization called "The Highland Park Council of Architects." The City Council decided to let the local architects choose who would get the commission. They chose 34 year old Frederick Hodgdon. He was the son of a noted Chicago architect, William Hodgdon.

The limestone building was completed in 1930, on time and below budget. It held all the city offices except the fire department. Park Board, police, jail, Building Department and health department were on the ground floor. In addition to the City Council chamber and a court room, the upper floor had offices for the mayor, city manager, city clerk, collections. The basement had a firing range and gymnasium for the police.

2 **500 Hazel Avenue ♦ 1875**



This house was built by the Highland Park Building Company (HPBC) for Thomas Spencer. The house has its original narrow windows and mansard roof – note the arched dormer. The tall, narrow windows are typical of the Italianate style. Its front entrance originally faced St. Johns, and what is now a parking lot was originally an apple orchard. The Spencers built the house next door at 490 Hazel as a wedding present for their daughter.

3 **461 Hazel Avenue ♦ Elisha Gray House ♦ 1872**



This Italianate style home, built by the Highland Park Building Company for Elisha Gray, is one of Highland Park's most historic structures. Elisha Gray living in Highland Park at the end of the 19th century was a very big deal – it would have been like having Steve Jobs or George Lucas today. He was an electrical engineer, inventor and entrepreneur. In 1872, he started the Western Electric Company at Ridgewood, and Gray on the west side of the train tracks.

Between 1867 and his death in 1901, he filed over 100 patents, including a patent for the telephone. His patent was received the same day as Alexander Graham Bell's, although after a lawsuit the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Bell. Originally the house sat on about 5 acres of elegantly landscaped grounds. The house has been altered over the years with the removal of a front porch and a third floor mansard tower, but retains its Victorian character with tall, narrow windows and a front bracketed bay.

4 423 Hazel Avenue ♦ 1871



This house was built by the HPBC. It is the city's best example of the Second Empire Style. Second Empire refers to the reign of Napoleon III in France from 1862-1870, and is characterized by the Mansard roof and the tower. The Mansard roof creates usable living area in what would otherwise be the attic.

The house was built for General and Mrs. Franklin Foster Flint while he was serving at Fort Laramie, Wyoming. This was their retirement home. In the 1880's General Flint served on Highland Park's City Council. He resigned with disgust at the infighting. He told the

newspaper: "Having been fighting most of my life I have decided to take matters quietly and live at peace with all men."

5 259 Hazel Avenue ♦ 1895



The American Queen Anne style has nothing whatsoever to do with the person who was Queen of England at the beginning of the 18th century. Queen Anne houses were built in the 1880's and 1890's. Some of its characteristic elements include, turrets, wrap around porches, a steeply pitched roof, and a façade that is not symmetric. Mostly they were designed not by architects, but by builders using pattern books. Pattern books were used not only for the facades and the floor plans but also for the architectural elements. Because of the Industrial Revolution, many pieces such as balusters, porch posts and

barge boards were mass produced and shipped by rail. This house is one of the largest and best preserved Queen Anne homes in Highland Park.

6 1923 Lake - Mary Adams House ♦ 1905



Frank Lloyd Wright loved getting commissions for big expensive homes, but he was also passionate about creating what he called "a Democratic, American Architecture" and this meant, among other things, affordable. Throughout his career he believed that small is beautiful. This house, designed for Mary McKean Willoughby Adams in 1905, was early in his "Prairie Style" phase and was meant to be inexpensive. Two years later in 1907, Wright used many ideas from the Adams house into the "Fireproof House" designed for The Ladies Home Journal.

Notice the continuous bands of windows, the wide overhangs and the low pitched hipped roof. Wright thought these horizontal elements expressed the prairie and the flat, wide open spaces of the Midwest.

7 147 Central Avenue ♦ Cornelius Field House ♦ 1870



One of the oldest homes in Highland Park, the Cornelius Field House was built in the Gothic Revival style around 1870. Field was Highland Park's second mayor – a prominent local banker, businessman, and an original stockholder in the HPBC. The house sits on four acres of land and overlooks Central Park and Lake Michigan. It is unusual that a property of this size was never subdivided. It gives the viewer today a glimpse of what it was like when Highland Park was known for its country estates.

The property is surrounded by an original decorative wrought iron fence. Behind the house is a former gardener's cottage, its coach house fronts on the next street to the north. Originally it was a two-bedroom Victorian farmhouse. This part of the house has vertical siding, a gable roof and windows with segmental arch lintels and shutters. Note the spindles on the front porch. All of these architectural details are typical of the Gothic Revival style. The addition on the west side was done just a few years after the house was built, transformed it into a nine-room, four-bedroom home. The addition was done in a Second Empire style and has a Mansard roof, a Palladian window, dentil moldings and a delicate porte cochere. The wrap around porch ties the two sections together.

8 1635 Linden Avenue ♦ 1925



Hans and Elsa Lanzl purchased this property as an empty lot and asked the Gsells, who owned the local pharmacy about local architects. On Mr. Gsell's recommendation they commissioned John Van Bergen who had worked for Frank Lloyd Wright and recently moved to Highland Park.

The house is a golden rectangle with a hipped roof and those proportions are repeated on a smaller scale with the front porch; another golden rectangle with a hipped roof. The walls are rough Wisconsin limestone from the ground all the way to the sills on the

second floor windows and the upper portion is stucco with cypress trim.

9 326 Central Avenue ♦ 1871



The Highland Park Building Company built this Italianate style house on spec to show potential buyers what homes could look like. But there was a financial panic in the early 1870's and the house was bought and sold several times until the first occupants moved in in 1877.

The yellow brick came from a local brickyard. Originally the house had a large, wrap around front porch but it retains its bracketed eaves and widow's walk. The elongated windows with the low arch are typical of the Italianate style. The house became a museum in 1969 when it was purchased by Jean Butz and given to the Highland

Park Historical Society. The house was sold it in 2015 and it is now a private residence.

10 1499 Sheridan Road ♦ 1893



This Queen Anne style house, built in 1893, this is one of the oldest houses on Sheridan Road in Highland Park. The property used to encompass the entire block. It has some unusual features for a Queen Anne house. The round bays instead of being capped with a tower has an overhanging triangular pediment with an arched window. It also has some classical details – note the Ionic columns at the front entrance.

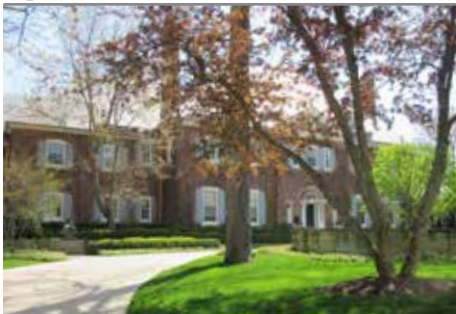
11 1445 Sheridan Road ♦ Ward Willits House ♦ 1903



The Willits House is one of the most important of Wright's first Prairie-style houses. Wright was known for bridging the gap between architecture and nature, which makes this house fascinating because it is a full expression of Wright's interest in reconnecting with nature and Wright's equal interest in Japanese architecture.

The Willits House is the first house in true Prairie style and marks the full development of Wright's wood frame and stucco system of construction. The plan of the house is a windmill style, with the four wings extending from the fireplace in the central core, and the movement from each wing follows a diagonal line. Wing two contains the great living room with high windows and a walled terrace. The dining room, extended by a large porch, comprises the third wing; the fourth, towards the rear of the house, contains the kitchen and servants' quarters. Wright incorporates diagonals into several other places in his design – the dining room has a prow-shaped end bay and another prow-shaped projection, the reception room has a similar prow-shaped bay, the art glass light over the entry stairway is rotated 45 degrees, again emphasizing the diagonal, and the terminating piers of the porte cochere are offset from the end wall by 45 degrees.

12 1425 Waverly Road ♦ Ernest Loeb House ♦ 1930



This Georgian Revival house was designed by Arthur Heun for the Ernest Loeb family. The design includes a brick exterior, a fanlight above the front door, a pediment at the roofline above the entrance, and a hip roof. Ernest Loeb's brother Allan built a house directly behind 1425 which has since been torn down. A decade or so earlier, Heun designed two houses for Ernest's father, Albert Loeb, one in Chicago and a summer home in Michigan. The two brothers commissioned Jens Jensen to landscape their properties. Although the landscape has been altered, you can see the curved paths and

native plantings that characterize Jensen's designs. The brothers built their homes in Highland Park six years after their younger brother Richard made the family name notorious.

13 1418 Waverly Road ♦ 1932



This is an excellent example of a Georgian Revival house. It was designed by Ernest Grunsfeld who studied architecture at the Ecole Des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Grunsfeld's larger commissions included Sinai Temple and the Adler Planetarium in Chicago. The Georgian Revival is characterized by its formal, symmetrical façade and a beautifully detailed front entry. Note the round windows flanking the front door. The front yard of the house immediately to the east was used in the 1986 movie *Lucas*.

14 1401 Waverly Road ♦ 1959



From the street, when the trees are leafed out, it's very difficult to see the house, set far back on the lot. That's by design. The home has expansive views of the ravine and Lake Michigan but presents a private face to the street. The mature landscaping by noted 1950's landscape designer, Gertrude Kuh reinforces the private aspect. This is one of the hallmarks of Modernist homes; they are more private and inward turning than their predecessors.

This one story house was designed by Ernest Grunsfeld's son, Tony Grunsfeld. Like his father, he became known for designing elegant homes for wealthy North Shore clients. But unlike his father, who worked with historical styles, Tony Grunsfeld designed in a modernist style, influenced by Mies Van der Rohe. In an Art Institute interview in 2004, Grunsfeld said "I think houses are very private. That's where you go hide, that's where you're with your family, where you can take your shoes off and be comfortable."

Tony Grunsfeld's son John defied family tradition. Instead of becoming an architect, he studied physics, became an astronaut and later was NASA's Chief Scientist.

15 1081 Sheridan Road ♦ 1928



This house is an excellent example of the Spanish Revival Style. The architect is unknown but it is similar to the work of Edwin Clark who designed Plaza del Lago and the Brookfield Zoo. The Spanish Revival style first emerged in the late 1880s as part of a conscious movement by Americans living in Southern California to connect with their Hispanic heritage. In the 1920's when historical building styles were all the rage, the style spread to other areas of the country and became popular for large suburban homes.

The Spanish Revival style is a rich and often highly decorative style. This house includes some of the style's most recognizable features; red tile roof, arched windows and doors, and decorative wrought iron work at balconies and balconettes. Note the arched windows and wrought iron work.

The future of this house is uncertain since the owner applied for a demolition permit in 2018.

16 234 Cedar Avenue ♦ 1920



Architect John Van Bergen designed this to be both his home and studio. Like any architect in that circumstance, his house would be a major marketing tool. Potential clients should walk in and be excited by the possibilities. The tall windows in the front flood the two story living room with light. In 1946 when they sold the house, the buyer commissioned Van Bergen to design an attached garage.

17 441 Cedar Avenue ♦ The Dubin House ♦ 1929



Architect Henry Dubin built this for his own family. It is one of the best examples of the International Style of architecture in Highland Park. In 1928, Dubin went to Europe and was very impressed by The Bauhaus Architects, Gropius and LeCorbusier. When he returned to Chicago he was determined to build his own home in this new, forward looking style. He designed it with both fire safety and cost savings in mind. The house exhibits the taut lines, decks and window treatment allowing maximum light and air in the best of the Bauhaus-design fashion. It was known as “The Battledock House” because of

its steel construction. The front yard’s natural, wooded landscaping reflect the ideas of Dubin’s friend May T. Watts who also lived in Ravinia.

18 370 Beech Street ♦ The Ben Rose House ♦ 1953



This International Style house by A. James Speyer, shows the intellectual honesty, precision and love of nature that characterize the best of the Modernist movement. In 1974, Speyer’s protege, David Haid, designed a complementary glass pavilion to house their antique auto collection. The pavilion is dramatically cantilevered over the ravine. To protect the steep slopes, local building codes no longer allow this kind of construction. Most famously, the house and pavilion were used in John Hugh’s 1986 film, *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off*.

The most striking aspect of A. James Speyer’s architecture is how closely he follows Mies van der Rohe’s International Style. This is not surprising since Speyer came to Chicago specifically to study with Mies. It is unusual because there are few single family homes in a pure International Style.

The International Style started in Germany and France before and after the First World War. Four slogans sum up the revolutionary nature of the style: ornament is a crime, truth to materials, form follows function and the house is a machine for living. The style wanted to transcend both historical and geographic references. In contrast to the Prairie School that wanted a building to uniquely reflect its place, the International Style wanted a style that reflected one world. The common characteristics include: a simple form with no ornament, the preferred materials are glass, steel and concrete and the building’s structure should be exposed. All in all these are not the design tenets that characterize America’s post World War 2 housing boom and all of these can be seen in this house.

19 1442 Forest Avenue ♦ 1913



This Colonial Revival house was designed by Robert Seyfarth. Seyfarth designed homes in historical styles but always added something to make it unique. This house has the strictly symmetrical façade typical of the Colonial Revival but that is dominated by the twin sun porches and the striking hip roof that slopes from the third story peak down to the first floor. This roof line has nothing to do with Colonial revival but rather is reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts designs of William Morris' and Phillip Webb in the mid 19th century. The twin chimneys reinforce the formal symmetry.

Unlike the typical Colonial Revival that has the roof over the front door coming out from the house, this house has an inset front doorway. The archway over the front door is typical of the Colonial style, but the oversized, carved brackets are unique to Seyfarth. The floor to ceiling, double-hung windows on the ground floor are another trademark of Seyfarth, as is the inset dormer on the south side of the house.

20 530 Ravine Drive



This Italianate house has a prominent location at the corner of Ravine and St. Johns but not much is known about its history. It probably dates from the 1870's (since that's when the Italianate style was popular). In the 1920's and 30's it housed a restaurant.