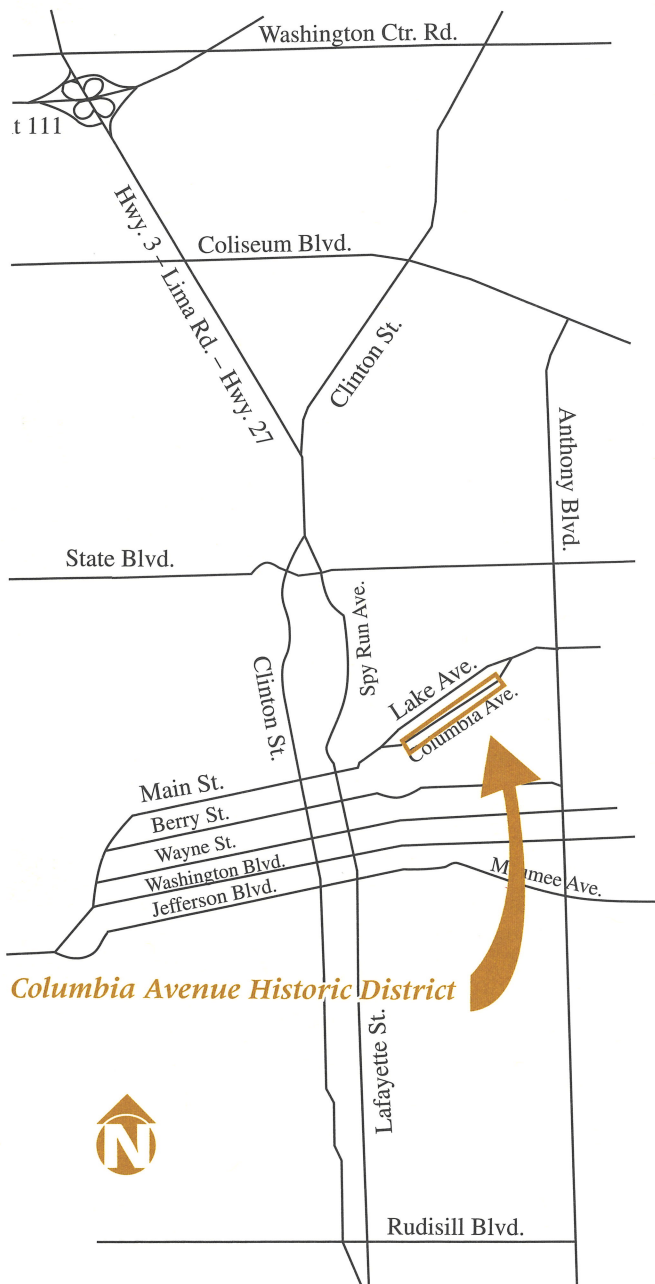


## Location



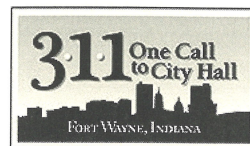
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For more information about historic preservation  
in Fort Wayne, call [260] 427-1127 or visit  
[www.cityoffortwayne.org](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org)



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## Columbia Avenue Historic District



Fort Wayne, Indiana

## Introduction

The Columbia Avenue Local Historic District is significant as a late 19th-early 20th century “streetcar suburb” that clearly demonstrates the early growth of suburban housing developments along the active streetcar lines. Through the efforts of local residents, the historic district was established in 2007.

Local Historic District designation is a tool that residents may use to monitor and control visible changes that occur in historic areas. New housing developments often use covenants and deed restrictions to guide development. Local Historic Designation is a way to apply similar protective tools to existing historic neighborhoods with similar benefits. In both cases, the goal is to guide development in order to protect individual investment and the common good. Upon designation, elements of the property that are subject to public view are protected from inappropriate changes by a design review process which is required before a building permit can be issued or exterior work begins. The historic district guidelines assure that the qualities which make the individual property and the collective district distinctive will be retained.

For more information about Historic Districts please call the Division of Community Development at (260) 427-1127 or visit [www.cityoffortwayne.org/preservation](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/preservation).



*Architectural detail at 910 Columbia Avenue, Fort Wayne, Indiana.*

## History

In 1890, the Fort Wayne Land and Improvement Company purchased a large tract of land from Jessie Taber Loree and her husband for \$75,000 to develop the Lakeside Park Addition. With apple orchards, fields, and woodland areas this land was largely undeveloped. Forming a peninsula at the intersection of the St. Joseph, Maumee, and St. Mary's Rivers, the area was subject to flooding so dikes were built along the river banks. By 1894 the addition's streets were in place. While the streets were laid out in a grid pattern, the plan did not align itself with the existing Fort Wayne grid. Instead, the new development followed the existing natural features by having the main streets running parallel to the Maumee River. At the easternmost end, a parcel of land was given to the City for use as a park. In 1908 additional land was donated by the Forest Park Company and the parcel was eventually developed into what is now Lakeside Park. The Lakeside Street Railway extended a new street car line east from Calhoun Street along Columbia Street, across the river, and out Columbia Avenue to Crescent. With these improvements in place the Lakeside Park Addition began to fully develop as Fort Wayne's first suburb.

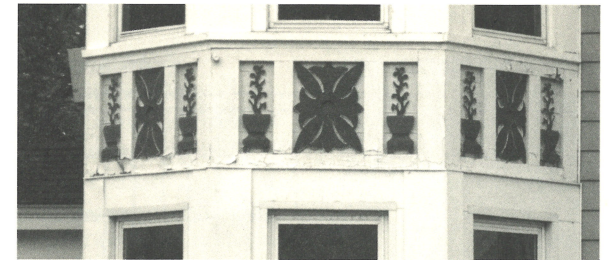
Residential areas that develop along the streetcar lines are typically referred to as “streetcar suburbs.” Because the streetcars made numerous stops spaced at short intervals, developers platted rectilinear subdivisions where homes, generally on narrow lots, were built within a five to ten minute walk of the streetcar stops. The easy commute meant that those who otherwise would spend all their time in the city could now enjoy living in a quiet residential area far removed from the hustle and bustle of downtown. It's interesting to note that by 1918 there were 11 houses in the district that were constructed as duplexes or double-houses. The variety of housing options originally provided in the Lakeside Park Addition is the same as that promoted in current urban developments.

Primarily constructed between 1893 and 1925, the houses in this district vary from large, two-story homes to one-story cottages and represent the popular architectural styles of the time: Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and American Foursquare. The homes have uniform setbacks with modest front yards and narrow side yards. Streets are bordered by green park strips and concrete sidewalks. Mature trees fill the neighborhood.

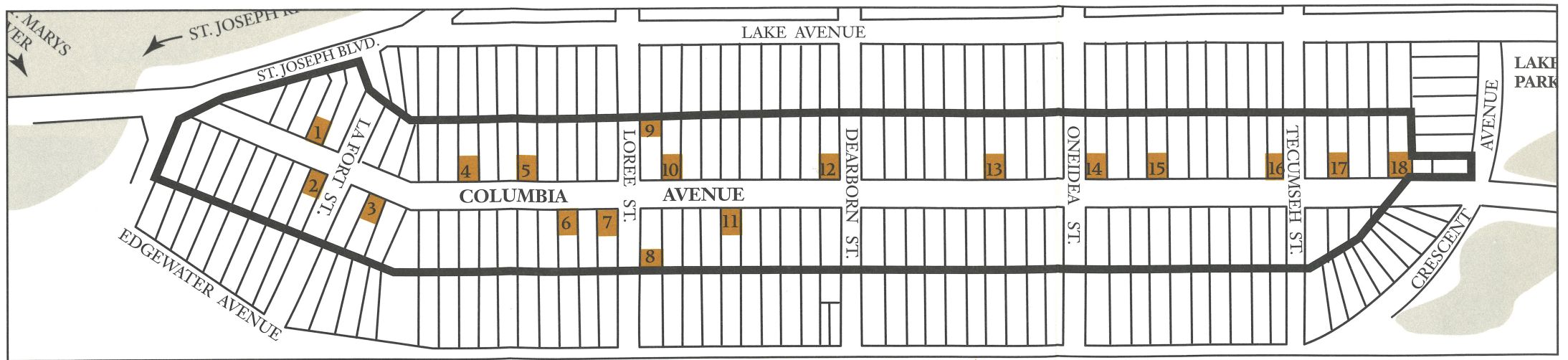
The consistency among the houses in terms of scale, materials, setback, and other character-defining features creates a pleasing rhythm along the streets. Although most homes have experienced some degree of alteration during their lifetime, a close study of the architecture reveals that the original builders often repeated plans or design elements several times down the length of the street... much like suburban developments do today. While modified, the Queen Anne at 853 Columbia with its unique floral band on the tower-like corner bay illustrates the many unusual details that have survived in the district. Delightful examples of original decorative detailing remain to be discovered, including examples of rare “carpenter's lace.”

The newest building in the district was constructed in 2000 at 1133 Columbia to serve as additional office space for McComb's Funeral Home. However, this building was designed to blend into the neighborhood by repeating common design elements seen throughout the district.

Columbia Avenue is the primary eastern route from the downtown area carrying thousands of cars per day. Upon crossing the bridge and driving along Columbia Avenue with its mature trees and consistent late 19th-early 20th century homes, the character of this early suburban development is immediately evident.



*Architectural detail at 853 Columbia Avenue, Fort Wayne, Indiana.*



## Columbia Avenue Historic District

Please respect the occupants' privacy by viewing all listed homes from the street.

### 725 Columbia Avenue Queen Anne/Colonial Revival, c.1906

This home has the symmetry and rectangular form of the Colonial Revival style but the steep roof and decorative details in the front gable are hold-overs from the Queen Anne style.

Notice how the masons used a different mortar color to highlight the decorative brickwork at the corners and over the windows. The darker brick porch piers and balustrade wall are later additions.



### 730 Columbia Avenue Queen Anne/Free Classic, c.1895

Masonry examples of the Queen Anne style typically rely on the use of decorative brickwork, contrasting stone details, or terra cotta tiles to provide interest to the wall surfaces. This home has bands of bright limestone to connect the carved stone lintels over the doors and windows. The slender Tuscan columns on the large wrap-around porch and generally simplified detailing are characteristic of Free Classic homes.



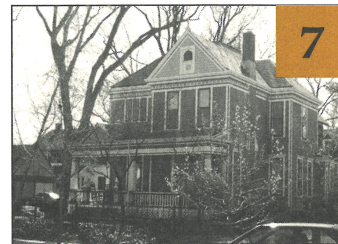
### 806 Columbia Avenue Queen Anne, c.1900

Queen Anne style homes typically have a steep hipped roof with large cross-gables and complex plans with lots of nooks and crannies. The unusual



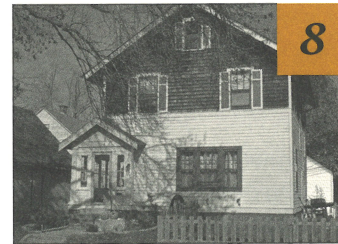
### William D. & Emma Henderson House 854 Columbia Avenue Queen Anne, c.1895

The Queen Anne style of architecture is known for its exuberant detailing and variety of shapes and textures. With its steep roof and rare iron cresting, decorative shingle work in the gables, unusual paneled frieze, variety of windows, and beautifully detailed porch, this home exhibits all the best features of its style. A large, restored carriage barn is located behind the house. Mr. Henderson dealt in hay, grain and seeds.



### Howard L. & Vallie Ford House 918 Loree Street Craftsman, c.1925

This home features a broad gabled roof with open eaves and exposed rafter tails. This detail is repeated at the unusual entry porch which cuts into the corner of the house. The use of stained wood shingle siding on the upper floor and smooth clapboard siding on the first is characteristic of the style as is the use of windows with multiple panes in the upper sash. Mr. Ford manufactured metal weather stripping.



### Frank G. & Bessie Roberts House 1012 Loree Street Tudor Revival, c.1925

During the first half of the twentieth century, builders



### 1025 Columbia Avenue Queen Anne/Free Classic, c.1900

Although the irregular plan, picturesque massing, and steep, complex roof are clearly Queen Anne features, the simplified classical detailing of this home illustrates the growing influence of the Colonial Revival style. The wide bands of simply divided trim and slender Tuscan porch columns put this house in the Free Classic category. The polygonal corner of the porch with its peaked roof is a rare feature.



### 1101- 1103 Columbia Ave. American Foursquare Duplex, c.1910

Following the complex plans of the Queen Anne style, the simple square plan of the American Foursquare, which used all available space, was considered to be the best blend of practicality, simplicity, and value in a family home. Exteriors are box-like, with two full stories, a hipped roof with a front facing dormer, and a comfortable porch. The porch of this double house features unusual concrete columns.



### Howard & Merica Shordon House 1115 Columbia Avenue Queen Anne, c.1905

Members of the Shordon family



decorative siding in the gables, the decorative verge boards and brackets, and the cut-away bays are all ways of adding interest and variety to the architecture. The wrap-around porch, with its rock face block walls, was added circa 1915. The square porch columns are set on decorative concrete pedestals, which is a very unique feature.

**825 Columbia Avenue  
Queen Anne, c.1895**

The large, round tower with its peaked roof and metal finial is an outstanding feature and the first thing you notice about this classic Queen Anne style home. However, the main entry with its decorative sidelights and transom glass; the classical columns on the wrap-around porch; and the small pediment over porch steps, which is decorated with "carpenters lace," are all notable features.



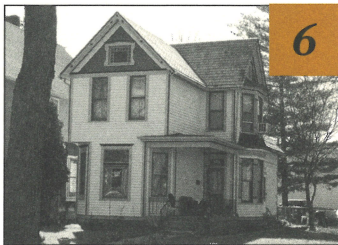
**835 Columbia Avenue  
Queen Anne, c.1895**

With its prominent front gable and cross-shape plan, this house represents a very popular housing type that was repeated throughout the city. The builders typically used variations in the decorative details to distinguish the individual homes. This house features decorative shingle siding in the front gable, and decorative trim around the large front window and also the gable window. The small entry porch is a later replacement.



**846 Columbia Avenue  
Queen Anne, c.1895**

This house has the same popular front gabled, cross-shape plan as 835 Columbia. However, the variation in its' architectural details make this house truly distinctive. The builder used three patterns of sawn wood shingles in the front gable; added decorative designs to highlight the verge boards; and placed a multi-pane Queen Anne window in the front gable. He also used cut-away corners on the front of the house, and added stacked bay windows on the west side.



drew on a variety of European styles to create homes that evoked a romantic image.

In this home the grouped windows and low shed dormer, large chimney, and steep gable that sweeps down to a wing wall with an arched doorway are all elements that serve to impart an English cottage feeling. Early owners Frank and Bessie Roberts were both reporters and editors for The Journal Gazette. Bessie was also a prominent historian, author, and schoolteacher.

**Dr. Charles R. &  
Catherine Dancer House  
905 Columbia Avenue  
Neoclassical, c.1902**

Early owner Charles Dancer was a prominent physician who was appointed as Fort Wayne's first medical examiner in 1911. Although it has the two-story columns which are a character defining feature of the Neoclassical style, this unique house is not a typical example due to its lack of symmetry. The two-story porch is balanced by an unusual bay window that wraps around the opposite corner. The large, gabled dormer with its central arched window is a marvelous feature that is seen in many variations throughout the district.



**Mason Long House  
922 Columbia Avenue  
Colonial Revival, c.1890**

This early example of the Colonial Revival style has a classic symmetrical façade dominated by a very large gabled dormer with an arched window, and numerous modillions under the eaves. The same detailing continues under the eaves of the house. Mason Long was a very colorful figure who had a career as a gambler before finding religion, writing a book about his conversion, touring as an evangelist, operating a temperance coffee house, and working as a stockbroker.



**Ellis & Anna  
Gaston House  
937 Columbia Avenue  
Queen Anne/Free Classic,  
c.1905**

Free Classic homes use the steep roof and irregular massing of the Queen Anne style but substitute restrained classical design elements for the wild variety of shapes and textures common to the Queen Anne style. This large, elegant house has several sharp gables decorated with plain wood shingle siding; windows topped by very deep trim with and crown molding; and a porch with Tuscan columns and a balustrade of narrow, square spindles.



lived in this house for 60 years. The roof is very steep, the plan complex, and the detailing simple but beautifully executed. Diamond windows highlight the gables which are finished with wave cut siding. Decorative brackets and raised dots highlight the trim. The porch features a small pediment with vertical siding, Tuscan columns, and a balustrade of turned spindles.

**1137 Columbia Avenue  
Queen Anne, c.1895**

Like most examples of this architectural style this home is a visual delight with its complex roof line, various gables, and corner tower topped by a metal finial. The wrap-around porch flares out around the base of the tower and features low arches, interesting moldings on the columns, and a delicate spindle balustrade. The gable on the second-floor porch has one of the best examples of the delicate scroll cut decoration known as "carpenter's lace."



**1205 Columbia Avenue  
Eclectic, c.1910**

While a home may be a pure example of a particular style, it is very common for a basic design to be modified until it is unique. This home has the low hipped roof, box-like shape, and deep porch of the American Foursquare style but the plan has been stretched, the roof has no dormers, and the eaves are shallow and have large crown moldings. The two-story bay is also unusual. The second floor features leaded glass windows flanking a paneled box bay. The original roof was most likely tile.



**Henry & Mary  
Freistroffer House  
1217 Columbia Avenue  
Craftsman Bungalow, c.1915**

Henry Freistroffer came to Allen County in 1858. He opened a blacksmith shop on Pearl St. and in 1884 built the building at 207 W. Main Street that still bears his name. In 1913 he built the adjoining building at 712 S. Harrison Street. His brick bungalow features a gabled dormer with brackets; low arches at the recessed porch, leaded glass windows, and an iron railing and window box with bands of oak leaves. His grandson, also named Henry, operated Henry's on Main Street which is still run by the family.

