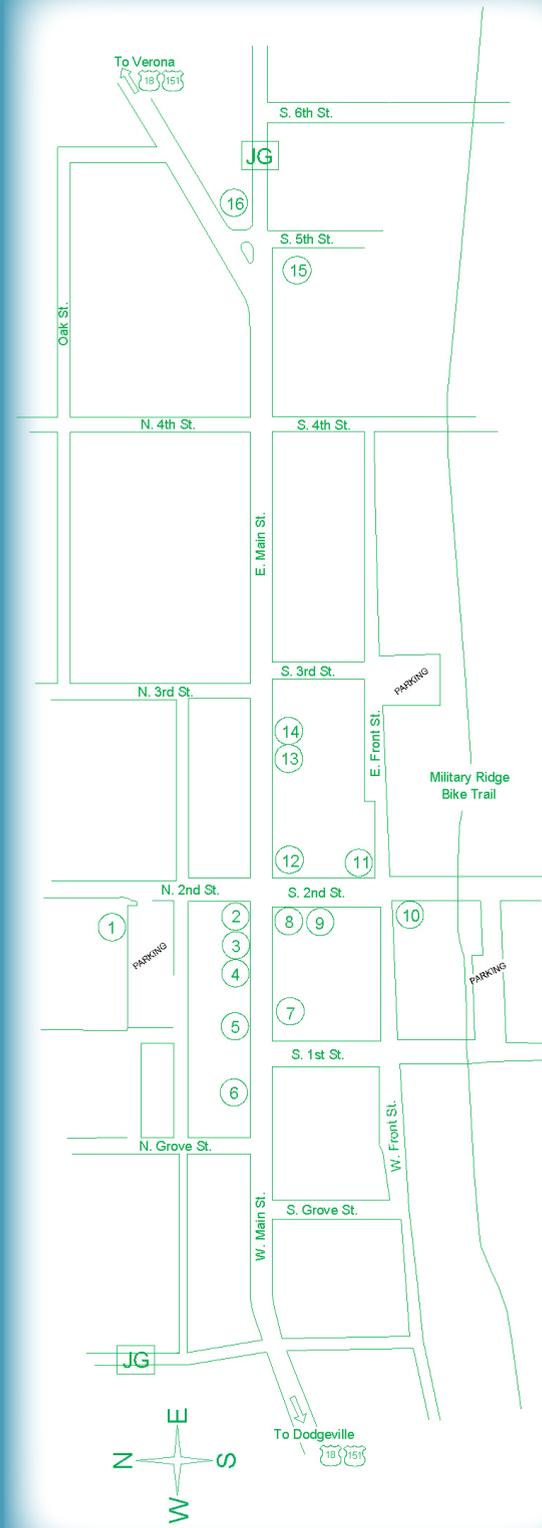


Welcome to Historic Downtown Mount Horeb

A Self-guided Walking Tour

In 1881 the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad completed the rail line through Mount Horeb. The railroad was unable to find a suitable location in the original settlement of Horeb's Corners, which was then at the intersection of what is now Springdale and 8th Streets. They instead built a new depot almost a half mile from that first settlement one block south of Main Street on South First Street. This became the new hub of business activity and most businesses relocated from the Old Town to the new downtown. Many more businesses were built in that area around the turn of the century to the 1920s contributing to the growth of Mount Horeb. After the demise of the railroad in the 1950s, Mount Horeb's downtown continued to be the heart of community business which, even from its earliest days, centered on the farm economy, with dairying and livestock production major factors. Most of the early businesses serviced the needs of farmers who were mostly immigrants, many from Norway and Germany. The architecture and the early uses of the buildings tell the story of Downtown Mount Horeb's early life and times.

Your self-guided tour is approximately one mile and may take about an hour with stops to view. Please take longer to visit the many shops and restaurants Downtown Mount Horeb now has to offer. Enjoy your tour.



Mount Horeb
Landmarks Foundation
138 East Main Street • Mount Horeb, WI 53572

Historic Downtown Self-Guided Walking Tour

Mount Horeb Wisconsin



Mount Horeb Self-Guided Walking Tour



1) 110 N. 2nd Street District #1 School 1889 The oldest remaining school house in Mount Horeb. This brick 2 story, with its two over two sash windows and arched window heads, served students on the west side of town until 1919 and was originally located on West Main along with another larger school building. It was moved to this site in 2002 and named a Mount Horeb Historic Site. The restoration of the building is a project of the Mount Horeb Landmarks Foundation, Inc.

2) 138 E Main Street Bank/Municipal Building 1924-25 This brick NeoClassical Revival building was built for the Mount Horeb Bank, but has been the village's municipal building since 1943. Notice the fine NeoClassical details, executed in stone, including the framing on the front door and the decorative blocks representing dairying and farming, a large part of Mount Horeb's heritage. The Mount Horeb Bank was the first local bank, founded in 1891 and closed in 1932 when it was absorbed by the State Bank of Mount Horeb.

3) 132 East Main Street Strand Theater Building 1928 Erected over four years from 1922 to 1928 to house the Strand Theater. Construction was begun for Fred Luder, Jr. in 1922, but was discontinued when he died. In 1928 Joseph Buechner bought the property and completed the construction. The theater, which had a dance hall on the second floor, closed about 1970 and became an antique store. The second story displays the influence of the Mediterranean Revival style with grouped windows and running arches.

4) 128 East Main Street Ayen Building/Olson Restaurant and Bakery 1905 Has continuously been a restaurant since 1911. The building of rock faced concrete block was built by Thomas Ayen, an active local contractor at the turn of the century who had an influence on local architecture. In 1911 Otto Olson, a butter maker, opened a restaurant in the building and Olson's Restaurant and Bakery was run by the Olson family until 1957. Since then the restaurant has had several owners and has become a local institution.

5) 114-118 East Main Street Louis/Bakken Building 1886/1912 A classic Boomtown Front, this commercial building was built in two sections. Notice the original clapboard siding and the Italianate influenced second story window hoods. The west section was built in 1886 for Lewis H. Louis, who is said to be the first tailor in town. The east storefront was built to house John and Ray Bakken's barbershop in 1912 and it was used as a barbershop for many years. Other uses have been a cigar and tobacco shop, grocery store and restaurant, and a produce company from about 1919 to 1928, which sold farm products such as eggs, butter, poultry, game, hides and furs.

6) 100 West Main Street Allan Ruste & Company Hardware Store 1882 This utilitarian frame building was built to house the Allan Ruste and Company hardware store. In 1909 Robert Beat began operating the business as Mount Horeb Hardware, and the property was under the ownership of the Beat family until 2000. Many of the original exterior features were restored and it became the Mount Horeb Mustard Museum and now Duluth Trading.

7) 101-103 East Main Street A. Hoff Company General Store 1916-1917 This Modern Broadfront commercial building retains a high degree of integrity and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Designed by Madison architect Martin Schneider, this brick building housed the Hoff General Store, which was co-founded by Norwegian immigrant Andrew Hoff in 1886 in another building on this site. In 1929, Hoff bought out Dahle Brothers Department store making Hoff's the largest department store in Mount Horeb, and it remained so until it closed in 1984.

8) 109-117 East Main Street Opera Block 1895 An outstanding Queen Anne commercial building, the Mount Horeb Opera House is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Designed by Madison architects Gordon and Paunack, it was built for the Mount Horeb Opera Block Company and immediately became the community center with theater, dances, high school sports and, later, silent movies. Notice the Queen Anne details, including a corner tower with conical roof, patterned brickwork and gabled dormers.

9) 100 South Second Street Kittleson and Company Hardware/Historical Society 1889 This restored frame Boomtown Front commercial building was built to house the Kittleson and Company hardware store and continued to be a hardware store for 90 years. In 1996 it became the Mount Horeb Historical Society Museum.

Compiled by Mount Horeb Landmarks Foundation, Inc. 138 East Main Street • Mount Horeb, WI 53572 • www.mounthoreblandmarks.com. A non-profit organized to advocate for historic preservation in Mount Horeb.



10) 108 South Second Street Reilly Brothers Farm Implement Store 1912 First the Reilly Brothers and then the Martinson family sold agricultural equipment in this brick commercial building until 1970. In the 1970's the Treu Ford dealership operated as Fairway Ford and since that time the building has housed several small businesses. Now completely restored it is ready for the next 100 years.

11) 105 South Second Street Mount Horeb Co-operative Cheese Factory 1916 For all of its history this brick Craftsman building has been used for the production of classic Wisconsin products: cheese, ice cream, butter, and beer. The building was erected for the Mount Horeb Co-operative Creamery Company which was formed in 1879 in Mount Horeb's "Old Town" and processed milk from area farms. It was a long lived cooperative, selling to Ryser Brothers, another cheese company, in 1945. In 1996 it became a brewery and pub.

12) 201-207 East Main Street O.B. Dahle and Son General Store 1887 This brick commercial building was constructed in three sections, the first corner building in 1887 to house the O.B. Dahle and Son General Store. The addition to the east was added in 1904 and the front façade of the 1887 building was redone in 1920. Dahle General Store was founded in 1852 in Daleyville with a second store opened in Mount Vernon. In 1887 the Dahle brothers came to Mount Horeb and sold out A. Hoff in 1929. The first local electric light plant operated in the basement of this building, beginning in 1897.

13) 215 East Main Street Gesme Funeral Parlor 1922 This Modern Broadfront, with its decorative brick work and Gesme date stone, was erected for James Gesme Funeral Parlor. Gesme had first established a furniture store and undertaking business further west on Main Street in 1894. This building was used to display caskets and prepare for visitations. Around 1945 the business was moved to Academy Street and the Gesme family remained in the undertaking business until about 1960.

14) 217 East Main Bunnell Blacksmith Shop 1867 This Boomtown Front building was originally located in Mount Horeb's Old Town on the corner of Springdale and Eighth Streets and is the sole surviving Old Town building moved uptown. It was moved further west on Main Street in 1881, and then to make space for the first Mount Horeb bank, the building was moved to this site in 1892. It remained a blacksmith shop until 1966.

15) 409 East Main Street Dahle House/Buckner Hospital 1895 This intact example of Queen Anne style was built by local contractors Thomas Ayen and Andrew Holum as the retirement home of O.B. Dahle. In 1922, Dr. Homer Buckner opened a 22-bed hospital in the building which he maintained until about 1940.

16) 504 East Main Street Veri-Best Hatchery 1928 On the triangle between Main and Springdale Street this brick commercial building housed William Bilse's business, the Veri-Best Hatchery. This chick hatchery, on the west end of the building, was open until the 1950's, and the building also had two other businesses, a Shell service station on the east end and a grocery store in the middle.

17) 308 East Main Street Krogh House 1893 This Queen Anne house was built by local contractor, the Kleven Brothers, for local hardware store owner and postmaster P.G. Krogh. Note the round tower with conical roof, wrap around porch with turned posts and balusters.

18) 214 East Main Street Elef Severson House 1910 A good example of the Mount Horeb Foursquare, a design unique to Mount Horeb, with its low pitch hip roof with deck, protruding chimney and large triangular dormers. Derived from the Colonial Revival style, this frame design is a boxy, two-story with a one story full-façade front porch. There are several examples of this style along Main Street.

Information from Mount Horeb, Wisconsin: An intensive survey of the Historic Resources of the Commercially-Zoned Downtown authored by Elizabeth Miller for the Village of Mount Horeb Historic Preservation Commission and Mount Horeb Presettlement to 1886, a History Celebrating Mount Horeb's Quasiquicentennial, © published by the Mount Horeb Area Historical Society, Inc. Historical photographs are courtesy of the Mount Horeb Area Historical Society, Inc. This self-guided walking tour has been funded by a grant from Mount Horeb Community Foundation. This walking tour intends to point out the many different architectural styles and the various uses of the buildings in downtown Mount Horeb. There are other buildings not included in the tour which have equal historical significance.