

WYOMING'S VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Wyoming's "Village" Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1986, contains approximately three hundred 19th and early 20th century homes. These properties are clustered on the east side of Springfield Pike and located within the original village boundaries of Wyoming.

United by towering trees and green expanses, the Historic District's varied architecture provides a living history spanning almost 200 years. A cross section of earlier Wyoming is represented through modest to large residences, and simple to elaborate architecture. Also included are commercial areas and a former servant area.



Wyoming's place in Ohio history is a very strong example of suburban development through multiple and accessible transportation routes. The New Road (1806), the Miami-Erie Canal (1828), the Hamilton, Springfield and Carthage Toll Road (1834), the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton Railway (1851), and the Streetcar (1900) all directly enabled Wyoming to develop into a very early suburb with continuing phases of growth.

Wealthy industrialists from Lockland and then later, Cincinnati, came to what was to become the Village of Wyoming in order to live beyond the smell and soot of 19th century industrialization.

Historically, most of Wyoming's early pioneers were Revolutionary War Veterans who came west to the Northwest Territory to make a new life for themselves and their families. They settled on farms in the Maketewah Valley (now called the Mill Creek) circa 1800.



The next wave of settlers were the entrepreneurial owners of thriving mills along the Miami-Erie Canal in Lockland, then the industrial center of Southwestern Ohio. They moved to Wyoming in the 1830's - 1860's, and commuted by horse or carriage to their Lockland mills.

Wyoming's largest residential growth began in 1851 with the construction of the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton Railway. The railroad changed the journey to Cincinnati from a full day's ride by horseback or canal to a 24 minute ride on the train. This was a sweeping cultural change. Overnight, places such as Wyoming and Glendale became "railroad communities" where people could live far from where they worked by commuting on the train.

Then in 1859, Isaac Riddle made the first tract of large land available for subdividing when he sold his wife's family farm. Additionally, as the first generation of settlers reached old age, some of those farms were sold and subdivided. The result was dramatic population growth and new home construction over the next 30 years. Wyoming's population grew from 890 people in 1880 to 1,800 people in 1892.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the invention of the streetcar spurred yet another growth phase and brought new commuter access to Wyoming via the tracks built along Springfield Pike. Both large and small early 20th century residences began mixing in with the Victorian homes, creating an unusual mix of architecture styles which is uniquely "Wyoming".



Wyoming's character was best described in 1882 by Judson Harmon, former Wyoming Mayor, Ohio Superior Court Justice, and Ohio Governor: "There are thousands of villages in the land whose history is like the history of our own...ours differs only in its suburban situation and charter so happily blending city and country that we avoid most of the discomforts of both...Wealth is enjoyed without arrogance or vain display and honest poverty is no disgrace."

WYOMING VOLUNTEERS ACHIEVED HISTORIC DESIGNATION

The listing of Wyoming's Village Historic District and 18 homes outside of the District were made possible by a group of dedicated Wyoming volunteers. We thank Dick Evans for initiating the idea; Jenni McCauley for chairing the effort, and completing the nomination; and committee members: Nancy Achterman, Marilyn Braun, Jan Byer, Lee Crooks, Eileen Dennis, Pat Jackson, Susan Long, Chuck Olson, Lynn Ruckman, Bette Sherman, Anne Stein, Kathleen Tamarkin, Presley Thompson, John Zoller, Jane Link, Dick Halberstadt, Albert Delgado & Ken Hiller for duty above and beyond.

In addition, The Ohio History Connection and consultant Loren Gannon provided critical guidance. In 1986, almost six years after the project began, the Village District and 18 individual homes were listed on the National Register.

WHAT IS A DISTRICT?

A district is a collection of buildings with significant architectural and historical significance. The collection merits preservation and is important as a group.



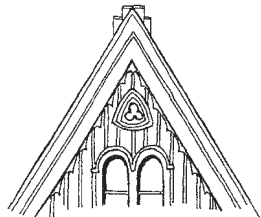
WHAT IS THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES?

The National Register is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. It is part of a national program to recognize and protect our historical and archeological resources. Properties listed to be preserved include districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects. It is administered by the National Park Service which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

In Ohio, the National Register is administered through the Ohio Historic Preservation Office in Columbus, which nominates sites to the National Register. The Preservation Office provides a database of all Ohio properties on the National Register and an inventory of historically significant properties.

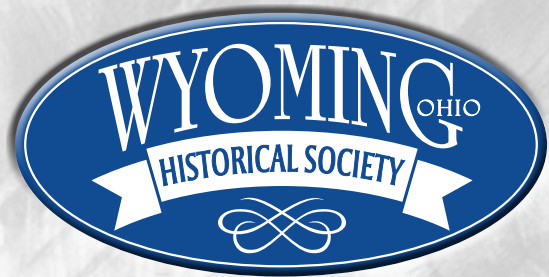
Wyoming's historic "Village District" was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in September 1986.

The District includes more than three hundred buildings in the heart of Wyoming and has been described by the Ohio Historical Preservation Office as "a one-of-a-kind community with an extremely impressive array of architecture."



Lovely old trees and wide expanses of green lawns have blended the vertical lines of nineteenth century styles with the more horizontal lines of twentieth century architecture. The community which evolved has special charm and historical significance.

The Cincinnati Preservation Association says, "Wyoming is known for its lovely naturalistic landscaping and for high standards of design, preservation, and amenities. Its development has been remarkably thoughtful and consistent. Wyoming remains today a veritable museum of residential architecture."



WYOMING'S "VILLAGE" HISTORIC DISTRICT WYOMING, OHIO



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THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

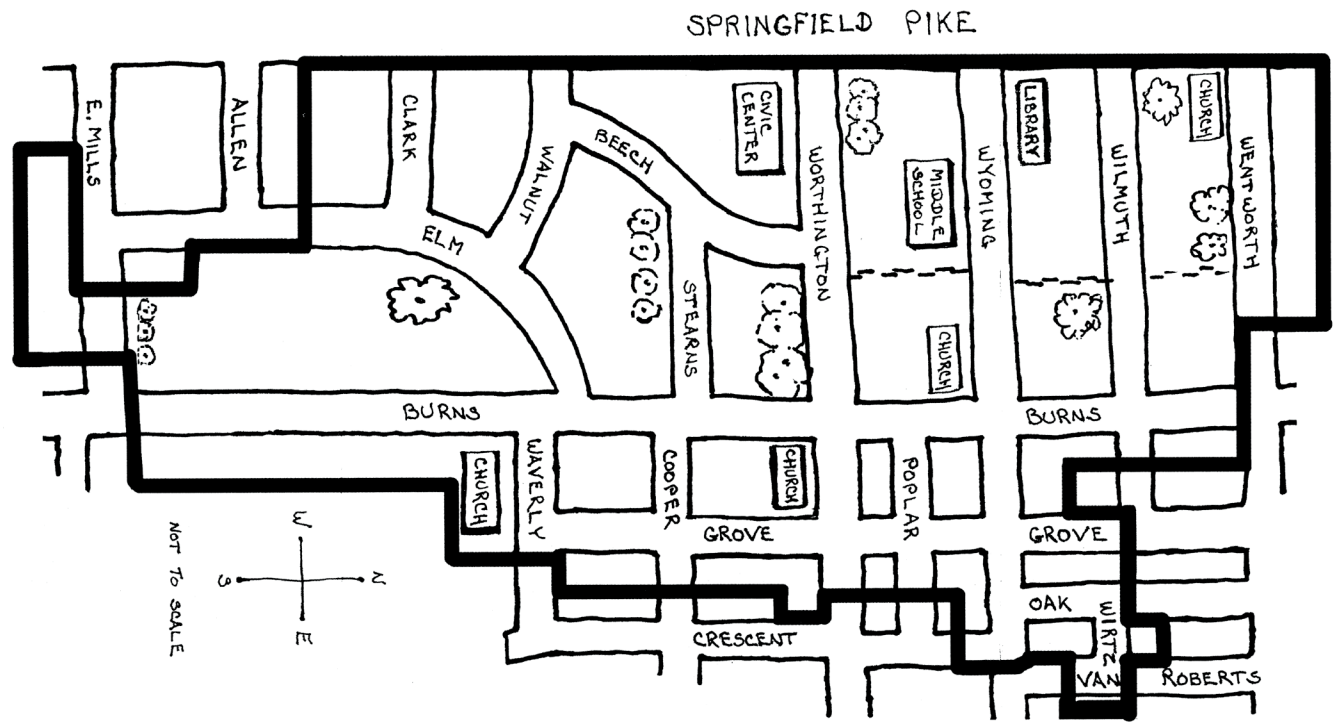
Wyoming is listed on the National Register of Historic Places because its historic environment is significant to the architectural history of Southwestern Ohio. Wyoming's progression of nineteenth and early twentieth century styles set amongst grand trees and green spaces creates a unique character developed primarily due to three key factors: rural atmosphere, stability and leadership.

Rural atmosphere is the first key to the architectural character of Wyoming. Farms were the norm until 1851 and the coming of the railroad. Then, as the old farms slowly became available for sale, development began. Houses were built on 2-10 acre lots with many trees left intact.

Later in the early half of the 1900s, these big lots were again divided and newer architectural styles were built between the Victorian houses. The resulting diverse architectural mix is Wyoming's most striking and unusual characteristic. In fact, the number of 19th and early 20th century homes is fairly equal in the District. Where at first glance this may seem surprising, look closer; it is only that the gingerbread and tall proportions of the Victorian architecture dominate the smaller scale and horizontal proportions of the later styles.

Stability is the second key architectural characteristic. Known as an independent well-managed and progressive town, Wyoming's reputation has continually attracted new residents, enabling every architectural period to be represented.

Leadership is the third key architectural characteristic. Wyoming's residents have always been the leaders of the day. They planted trees throughout the Village, built one of the first water works in the country, put in the first sidewalks in Ohio, developed a Civic Center before there were any and established a school district that is a national example of excellence. A village filled with successful entrepreneurs, business and community leaders insisted on high quality in design and construction and then later, in renovation and additions. Today that quality is an integral part of the Historic District.



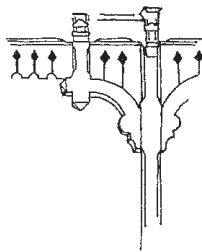
DOMINANT ARCHITECTURAL STYLES IN THE DISTRICT

A style of architecture is determined by the shape, arrangement, type of materials and the ornamentation of the following five basic features of every house: structural frame, roof, siding, windows and doors. Let's explore the dominant styles which help to create Wyoming's unique charm, the dates the styles were popular and a few examples. In general, 19th century architecture has vertical proportions and 20th century has horizontal proportions.

19TH CENTURY STYLES

ITALIANATE (1860's and 70's)

Ornate brackets under wide overhanging roofs, with decorative moldings above the windows. Examples: 313 Burns, 124 Wentworth, 310 Wyoming Avenue.

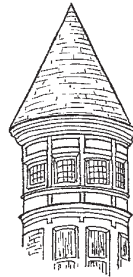


EASTLAKE (1880's)

Design panels, lathe-turned porch posts and spindles which were mass produced. Named after an interior designer, this style was also adapted to home exteriors. Examples: 335 Beech, 212 Worthington, Wyoming Baptist Church.

QUEEN ANNE (1885-1900)

An unusually wide variety of materials were used in each home, often with many gables, a tower or turret and porches which wrapped around a corner. Often the windows had small panes of colored glass around the perimeter. Examples: 216 Wilmuth, 201 Worthington, 212 Wyoming Avenue.

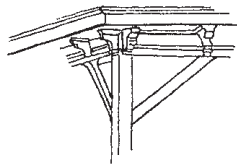


SHINGLE (1890's)

Wood shingles generally covered the entire exterior. An outgrowth of Queen Anne, but roofs were lower pitched, giving a less vertical look. Examples: 28 Burns, 320 Grove, 120 Wyoming Avenue.

VICTORIAN VERNACULAR

Simpler buildings whose tall windows, proportions and regional ornamentation typify the last half of the 19th century but do not fit into any particular style. Examples: 225 Burns, 515 Van Roberts, 501-508 Wirtz Way.



20TH CENTURY STYLES

AMERICAN FOUR SQUARE (1900-1910)

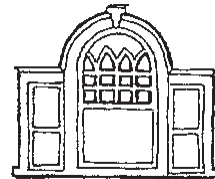
Characterized by a symmetrical square plan with a hipped roof and simple Colonial detailing. Wood, which had been readily available from nearby Lockland lumber mills, gave way to brick. Examples: 103 Elm, 312 Poplar, 104 Wyoming Avenue.

BUNGALOID (1910-1930)

Brick and stucco were popular for bungalow construction and sometimes stone for accent. Low pitched gable roofs and one and a half story height were a complete departure from the vertical look of the previous century. Examples: 126 Burns, 204 Elm, 205 Wentworth.

COLONIAL REVIVAL (1905-1930)

A nostalgic return to America's roots with simpler, symmetrical and more formal proportions like the 1700's. Porches and entrances displayed classical motifs, and white was the favorite paint choice. Examples: 205 Grove, 128 Wilmuth, 307 Wyoming Avenue.



TUDOR REVIVAL (1910-1940)

Half timbering gave the effect of exposed structural beams between brick, stucco or stone areas. Unlike the well-balanced Colonial Revivals, their plan was irregular and unsymmetrical. Steep roofs were often slate covered and multi-paned windows were often the casement type. Examples: 510 Springfield Pike, 6 Wentworth Avenue.

ECLECTIC MIXTURES

Houses with mixed characteristics taken from different styles. Because Wyoming's relative wealth and progressive attitude, remodeling and expansion added elements of new styles through the years. An 1860's house might have been remodeled in 1880, 1900 and 1930 with features in the then current style added each time. Examples: 116 Stearns, 206 Worthington Avenue.

WEBSITES

National Register of Historic Places – <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm>
Ohio Historic Preservation Office – <https://www.ohiohistory.org/preserve/state-historic-preservation-office>
Wyoming Historical Society – <https://wyomingohio.gov/about-wyoming/the-wyoming-historical-society>

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