

## Fourth Lake Ridge Historic District

Topography, more than anything else, dictated the development of the Fourth Lake Ridge area. The original plat of Madison, drawn in 1836, covered the narrow isthmus that separates Lakes Monona and Mendota, two in a series of four connected lakes originally referred to by European settlers as First, Second, Third, and Fourth lakes. These lakes and the ridge-like drumlins along their shores were the result of glacial action. The glacial feature known as the Fourth Lake Ridge runs along the shore of Lake Mendota from James Madison Park to Giddings Park. The historic district encompasses the length of the ridge between the two parks and between the Lake Mendota shoreline on the north to the rear lot lines on the south side of Gorham Street.

Settlement of the ridge was initiated in the early 1850s, but proceeded slowly. The Leitch House built at 752 East Gorham Street in 1857, is perhaps the finest example of residential Gothic Revival in Wisconsin. At the time, the ridge was perceived as being inconveniently remote from downtown, which was concentrated around the Capitol Square. In the 1890s, when new industries were attracting more people to the City, a streetcar was laid just three blocks from the ridge, and the sparse neighborhood experienced a surge of settlement. By 1900 most of the original lots were occupied. Subdivision of these lots after 1900 increased the density of the neighborhood and allowed construction of many houses in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century styles.

This area retains its pre-World War II appearance and scale despite profound changes that have altered the City since the war. It retains some of the City's best examples of early twentieth century house styles including Italianate, Queen Anne, Shingle, Bungalow, American Foursquare, Craftsman, and Prairie style, and features designs by several of Madison's twentieth century master architects, including Claude and Starck, Cora Tuttle, Henry T. Dysland, and Frank Riley.