

La Grande's Historic Homes

When the Grande Ronde Valley was settled in the 1860s, the area of this tour was mainly open grassy slopes with a few pine trees and wetlands in the flat areas. La Grande's original settlement was several blocks south. The original town site, platted in 1862, included the pioneer campground at what is now Birnie Park. It was bounded by First through Fourth streets and A through D avenues. The Oregon Trail became B Ave., and C Ave. was the commercial street. The first homestead cabin was built at what is now the corner of B Ave. and Cedar St., marked with a memorial monument.

With the arrival of the railroad in 1884, settlement began to shift to the present downtown adjacent to the rail yards. By 1900, homes were being built to the west of downtown. The residential area expanded onto the valley's slopes through the 1920s, seen in transitional architecture along the tour.



307 Washington

Distance

2 miles

Time to Allow

2 hours

Best Time to Tour

The walking tour can be enjoyed any time of year. Wear weather-appropriate clothing and bring water on hot summer days.

Conditions

There are paved sidewalks along most of the tour. Please use caution when crossing roads. There are no restroom facilities along the route.

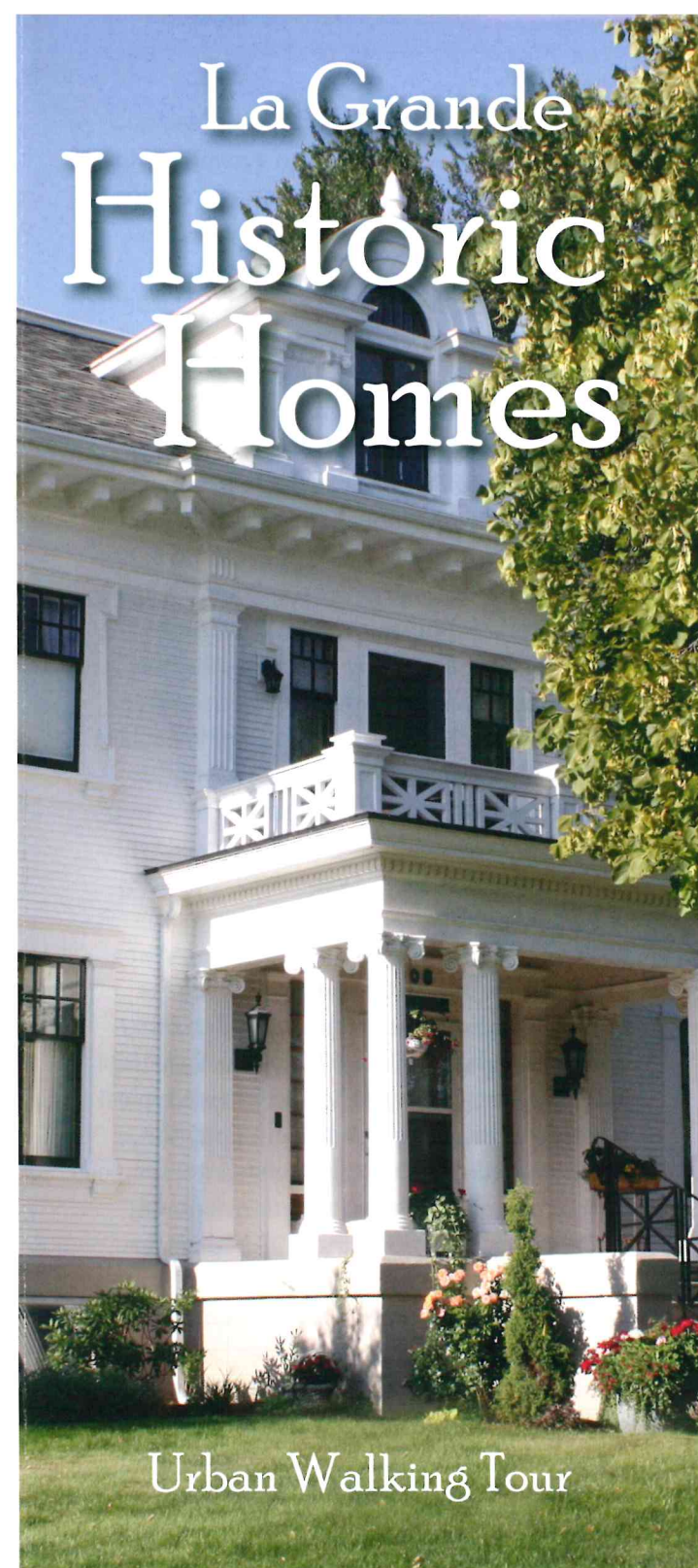


401 Washington



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Online visitor guide - VisitLaGrande.com
Union County trails & recreation - LaGrandeNaturally.com
Visitor & community info - UnionCountyChamber.org



1. Starting at Washington Ave. and Third St., stop at the Grande Ronde Apartments, **1902 Third St.** The apartment house was probably built in the 1920s. A 1930s photo of the building shows that little has changed over the years, although a third story was later added but lost to a fire in the 1960s.

2. 900 Main Ave. This Victorian home is in the Eastlake substyle, with the typical witch's hat turret and the asymmetrical styling. The triangular pediment over the porch shows a Georgian Colonial influence. The home now has modern siding.

Several homes along Main Ave. reflect the Victorian style, which originated in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, marked by a time of extravagance and prosperity in the developed nations. The style reflected technological advances: nails could be mass produced, the mechanized wood lathe quickly turned extensively used columns and posts, and shingles and other decorative elements could be cut with accuracy and speed.

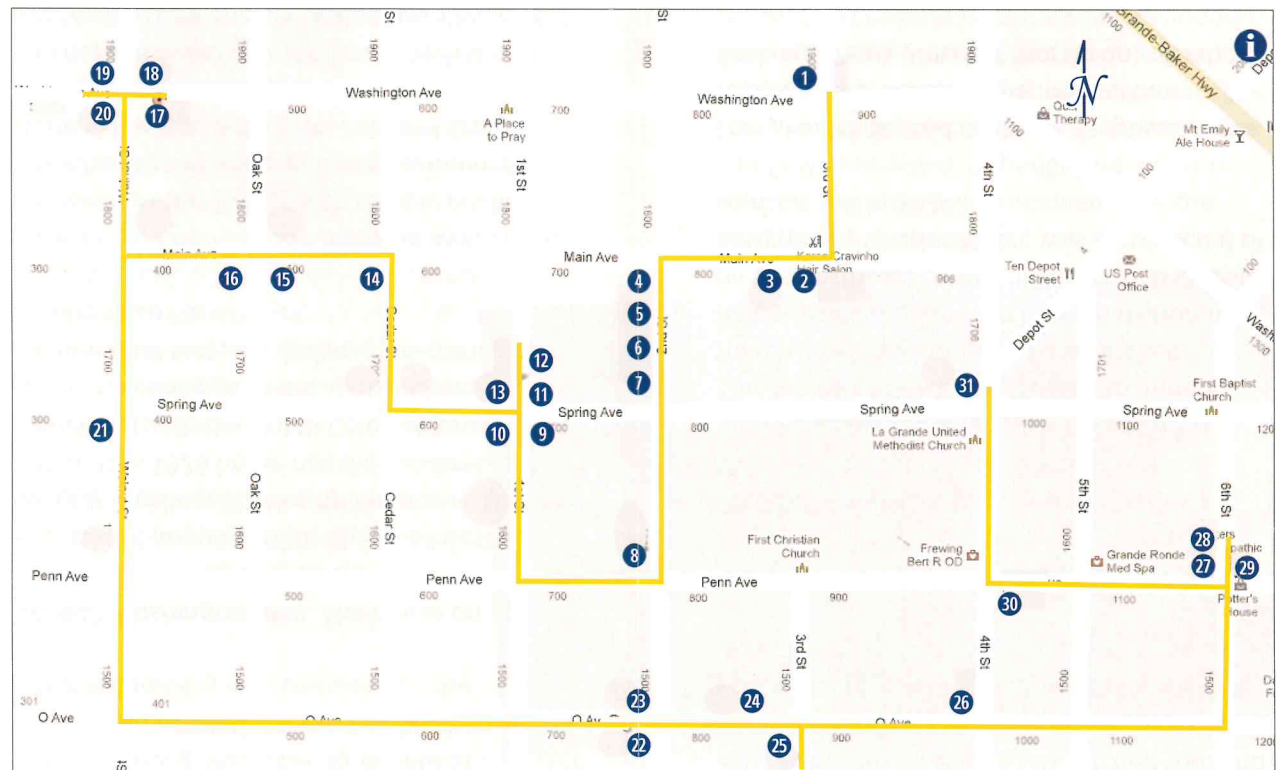
3. 806 Main Ave. This restored Victorian was built in 1892 for the Charles Conkey family for \$1,800. Recently restored, it is a good example of the grace and dignity embodied in Victorian houses. This beautiful home has a bay window, fish scale siding with sunburst pattern, turned porch posts, and stick work porch railing typical of the turn-of-the-century Queen Anne style. Victorian architects found inspiration in the past. For example, the round tower with the conical roof found on some Queen Anne designs suggests French chateau architecture, and the porch reflects a period of fascination with Japanese motifs.

4. Turn left (south) onto Second St. at Main and walk to 1710 Second St., a restored yellow and white Eastlake (1895) on the southwest corner. This tree-shaded block of Second St. is the most attractive in the older part of La Grande, and little has changed since the 1920s.

5. 1708 Second St. A 1908 Sears & Roebuck house is a very slightly modified example of the first-offered "mail order" home. Beginning in the late 1930s, Sears & Roebuck sold a variety of house plans in popular styles and, in many cases, sold them in kit form, including everything but the masonry. At the same time, they offered molds so that contractors could cast their own concrete blocks on site. These came in several patterns, and this house utilizes them in the foundation.

6. 1706 Second St. This is a fine example of a Craftsman Bungalow, a design that came out of California and was popular from 1903 through 1928. Built around 1918, this house is particularly attractive and is larger than it appears from the front. Some of the original glazing has been replaced with picture windows; otherwise, it is mostly unaltered.

7. 1704 Second St. The Bohnenkamp House is positioned on the corner of Second St. and Spring Ave. The house, built for La Grande businessman W. H. Bohnenkamp in 1907, is an eclectic work displaying many Victorian features as well as the broad porch and Ionic columns of Colonials. Other notable features are the turret, gabled roof, fine brickwork, and stone pediments over the windows. Many



consider this the finest house of its period in La Grande. It was converted to apartments during World War I, which have retained many of the elements of the 1920s.

8. 1602 Second St. Completely restored, this three-story house at the northwest corner of Second St. and Penn Ave. is a 1906 American Foursquare with an exterior Classic Revival treatment. The home was built by bank cashier Walter Brenholts, who lived in the home from 1906 to 1912. After changing hands five more times over the decades, the home was completely restored from 2003 through 2005, with new exterior colors to match original paints. A new garage was added, built in an architectural style to match the home. Interior features include japanned copper hardware, original dark-stained moldings, a living room fireplace with inglenook benches, turned balustrade on an open newel stairway, patterned copper kitchen ceiling, hardwood floors throughout, and four tiled bathrooms.

Turn right (west) onto Penn, proceed one block, then turn right (north) onto First St.

9. 702 Spring Ave. On the corner of Spring and First St. is a large two-and-a-half story Queen Anne with colonial wraparound porches. Built in 1907, the home has fish scale siding and leaded glass windows.

10. 1610 First St. This Craftsman home exhibits features typical of the style: low pitched roof, exposed roof rafters, broad eaves, and horizontal siding.

11 & 12. Two Dutch colonial houses, side-by-side at **1701 and 1703 First St.**, have trademark gambrel roof. The house at 1703 First still boasts leaded glass windows and hasn't seen as much modernization as its neighbor.

Return to Spring Ave. and turn right (west). Continue along Spring through a neighborhood of mixed architectural styles, dating from the 1920s through the 1940s or later.

13. 601 Spring Ave. Built in the 1940s, this home sports its original "Pop Bottle Stucco," a fascinating mixture of pebbles and crushed glass. Turn right (north) onto Cedar St.

14. 1712 Cedar St. While not a designated Historic Home, this house is a nice example of the Bungalow style, which came into favor in the early 1900s to describe the first affordable working man's house—a sharp contrast to the mansions of the wealthy. Bungalow homes feature wide eaves, covered porches, and shingle siding. This house has a wonderful lava and basalt retaining wall on the Cedar and Main sides that is worth a closer look.

Proceed west on Main Ave.

15 & 16. 504 and 408 Main Ave. Located at the intersection of Main and Oak St., these homes are across the street from each other and are good examples of Bungalow style. 504 Main is a classic Bungalow, having such typical features as the river rock stone foundation, a low pitched gable roof with wide eaves, a board covered porch supported by tapering columns, and shingle siding. 408 Main is an "upscale" Bungalow; probably more accurately termed a Craftsman-style house. Built in 1928, it has a second story with a gabled dormer window and horizontal siding, but still retains some of the classic Bungalow styling in its broad covered porch.

Continue along Main Ave. to Walnut St., turn right (north). Continue one block to Washington.

17. 402 Washington Ave. The house on the corner of Washington and Walnut is a fine example of popular 1920s styles, all designed by local architect Charles Miller (active 1919-1940). This 1926 home has the gambrel roof associated with the Dutch Colonial houses, but like many buildings of the 1920s adopts other architectural features. Miller characterized it as a Norman Farmhouse.

18 & 19. 401 and 307 Washington Ave. These homes from the 1920s, with steeply pitched Jerkinhead gable roofs and large prominent stone chimneys, reflect the Arts and Crafts movement's emphasis on fine craftsmanship and natural materials. The house at 307 is in the Mediterranean style with decorative cast iron railings that evoke southern France or Italy. 401 reflects a Tudor motif with stucco and a decorative half-timbered effect.

20. 1812 Walnut St. This Craftsman house is probably also a Charles Miller design. Its quality of restrained elegance is typical of his work.

Proceed south on Walnut.

21. 1612 Walnut St. One of La Grande's landmarks, Stange Manor was built in 1924 for August Stange, owner of Mt. Emily Lumber Company, La Grande's largest lumber mill. (The mill, again called Mt. Emily Lumber, is now owned and operated by Boise Cascade, L.L.C.) Standing on a one-acre lot, the 7,800-square-foot home was designed by Charles Miller, his first major commission. The late Colonial Revival house combines Georgian and Federal elements. Constructed of select lumber from Stange's own mill, it also contains other fine materials, some imported from Europe. Typical Georgian colonial features shown here are Palladian windows over the main portico entry, symmetrical elongated windows on either side of the entry, and arched dormer windows in the attic. The upstairs has four bathrooms, one for each sleeping area, which was very extravagant in that era. A fountain, made from imported Italian tiles, was installed in the main floor sunroom. The basement includes a ballroom lined with blue pine paneling and a stage complete with floodlights and curtains. A central vacuum system was installed during original construction, also unusual for the era.

Proceed to O Ave., turn left (east) onto O.

22. 708 O Ave. Built around 1915, this is a fine example of residential Classical Revival architecture. It is symmetrical in design, having a paneled door with sidelights and a gabled roof. Some of the most interesting details include the rounded oculus window in the attic and the Ionic columns at the entry porch with a triangular pediment above.

23. 709 O Ave. This house is a modified version of the Prairie Style originated by American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, whose first works of this style appeared in 1900.

24. 803 O Ave. This handsomely restored house from the same period appears to be a Sears & Roebuck design.

Continue along O Ave. to Third St. Turn right (south) onto Third.

25. 1408 Third St. With a low pitched roof and horizontally-oriented ribbon windows, this Prairie home, built in 1905, probably seemed very radical at the time.

Return to O Ave. and continue east.

26. 1502 Fourth St. Designed by Charles Miller in 1924, this house incorporates many elements of an English Tudor Cottage. The gabled roof has rolled eaves to imitate thatch, leaded windows, and an arched, heavy planked door. (The Episcopal Church on the northeast corner of Fourth and O, also designed by Charles Miller, was constructed of volcanic tuff in 1924.)

Cross Fourth St. and continue east two blocks to Sixth St., proceed to the intersection of Sixth and Penn. Turn left (north) onto Sixth St.

27. 1602 Sixth St. Built in 1902 for John Anthony, a Swiss-born baker and confectioner, this one-and-a-half story late Queen Anne period cottage includes Stick and Eastlake elements. The porch and simpler decorative elements suggest the Colonial Revival period.

28. 1606 Sixth St. is an elaborate one-story Eastlake home built in 1890 and was also John Anthony's residence. This house displays the symmetry and finer detailing indicative of an Italian influence. Although the house has double entries it was not a duplex. Music lessons were given in the home and the right-hand door accessed the studio. Both Anthony homes are on the National Register of Historic Places.

29. 1601 Sixth St. This charming late Colonial Revival home was built in 1907, and is now the residence and studio/gallery of a potter. The current owners restored the interior and added a beautifully designed garden, adding to the home's storybook appeal.

Proceed east along Penn Ave.

30. 1006 Penn Ave. While never a home, the building at this address is one of the most important public buildings in La Grande and spurred nearby residential growth. Built in 1913, this is one of two libraries built in Union County with grants from Andrew Carnegie. The building served as the La Grande Public Library until a new facility was completed in 2006. This building is now home to the local art center.

Turn right (north) onto Fourth St. and proceed to the corner of Spring Ave.

31. 1702 Fourth St. This Georgian Colonial house dates to around 1918. It displays the symmetrical chimneys, double-hung windows, decorative roof brackets, and front door with sidelights and transom that were typical of the era. Now a commercial building, the structure is largely unchanged, although some of the baluster work has been removed from the third floor and roof peak.



709 O Ave.