

Frogtown was settled between the 1860's and the 1880's as Saint Paul expanded and settlement spread beyond the limits of present day downtown. A major factor in the area's settlement was the construction of the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, now Burlington Northern, which was built in the early 1880's. Residential development of Frogtown followed an east to west pattern as Poles, Scandinavians, Germans, and Irish found jobs in the railroad shops and related industries and built closely-sited modest wood frame and brick houses. The streets extending westward between Rice and Dale Streets are lined with a concentration of working class housing built primarily in the 1880's. They represent many of St. Paul's most important examples of Victorian working class construction. Much of the residential development west of Dale Street occurred in the 1890's.



Greek Revival 1825-1860

Greek Revival was the first architectural style to appear in the upper Midwest. It translated Greek Temple design into wood-framed vernacular house construction.

Common features of a **Greek Revival** house:

Roof: front-gabled simple roof form with wide frieze

Windows: double-hung with multi-paned pattern

Walls: typically narrow lap siding with wide corner, window and door trim

Porch: typically have canopies over front doorways set off-center on facades



Italianate 1850-1890

The Italianate style was originally developed in England and is an interpretation of the Italian country villas of the Renaissance that became very popular in America.

Common features of a **Italianate** house:

Roof: overhanging eaves supported by large, decorative brackets

Windows: tall and narrow, often with arched tops and window ornament

Walls: usually brick or wood siding, and usually with a symmetrical facade

Porch: where found, they are usually small with square posts



Stick 1860-1890

The introduction of industrialized lumber for the first time in history producing machine-cut decorative elements made Stick Victorian the go-to architectural style during the late nineteenth century urban housing booms. Stick houses are often detailed in the Queen Anne style.

Common features of a **Stick** house:

Roof: steep-pitched roofs, usually with gables facing the street, occasional side dormers

Windows: tall rectangular double-hung units with somewhat wide trim

Walls: narrow lap siding accented with corner boards and window trim

Porch: built across the front façade with square or lathe-turned columns and railing parts, often decorative spindlework between column tops

Most residential buildings in Frogtown are built in vernacular versions of architectural styles; a simple shape with a minimum of ornament on the facade, where it most readily is apparent. Their design imitates “high style” architecture using local carpentry methods and available materials.



Folk Victorian 1870-1910

Folk Victorian appeared almost exclusively for vernacular usage in simple box structures with gabled roofs, featuring minimal decorative elements concentrated at porches and tops of front gables. This style of house is often incorporates Italiante and Queen Anne details.

Common features of a **Folk Victorian** house:

Roof: front gabled with occasional side wings

Windows: double-hung type with simple trim

Walls: undifferentiated by elaboration

Porch: functional design, often with lathe-turned columns and railing parts, sometimes spindlework at upper porch columns



Queen Anne 1880-1910

Popular during the late 19th-century, the Queen Anne style house is asymmetrical and displays a variety of pre-cut detailing.

Common features of a **Queen Anne** house:

Roof: steeply pitched, irregular, multiple gables

Windows: stained glass is common

Walls: elaborate style using a variety of colors, textures, shapes and details

Porch: sometimes turn posts and trim, sometimes classical columns



Foursquare 1895-1930

The Foursquare type of house is often detailed in the Craftsman and Colonial Revival styles. Foursquares are characterized by their simple floor plans, divided into four rectangular areas.

Common features of a **Foursquare** house:

Roof: pyramid-shaped roof

Windows: large central dormer

Walls: brick, stone or wood siding

Porch: full-width or wrap-around porch

Discovering your house style:

Frogtown

The Frogtown neighborhood has been largely unappreciated for its architectural value. This is unfortunate since the area continues to be one of the city's most intact working class neighborhoods with a large number of historically and architecturally significant buildings deserving preservation.

AND - although many original features have been obscured by unsympathetic additions or materials, many remain - waiting to be rediscovered!



Colonial Revival 1895-1940

Reflecting American traditions and a desire for simplicity, the Colonial Revival house style was based loosely on the Federal and Georgian styles.

Common features of a **Colonial Revival** house:

- Roof:** hipped, gabled or gambrel style, dormers
- Windows:** double-hung, sometimes found in pairs, symmetrical
- Walls:** usually brick or wood with simple, classic detailing
- Porch:** pillars and classical columns



Craftsman/Bungalow 1900-1930

The Craftsman style's many features consist of roomy interiors with simple floor plans, many built-in shelves and fireplaces. Bungalow-type houses are often detailed in the Craftsman style.

Common features of a **Craftsman / Bungalow** house:

- Roof:** low-hipped roof with deep overhanging and exposed rafter ends
- Walls:** brick, stone, or wood shingle siding
- Porch:** full-width or wrap-around porch with square taper columns, often tucked under roof

Did You Know?

Theories on the origin of the name "Frogtown" run the gamut from it being an ethnic slur aimed at the French who first settled this area, to and adaption of the name the Austro-Hungarians in the area had for it Froschburg (frog city), to the fact that the couplers on the railroad cars were called "frogs" and so many railroad workers lived in the area. However, the most popular belief among historians, is that Archbishop John Ireland coined the term over 100 years ago. It is said that while standing in Calvary Cemetery he looked across a large section of marshland filled with croaking frogs and said "That sounds like a frog town". The land was particularly marshy and, indeed, likely contained a high frog population.

Frogtown history notes excerpted from the Ramsey County Historical Society

<http://www.rchs.com/neighborhoods/frogtown.htm>

