



# CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

## Historic District Landmarks Commission

### Treme Historic District



*Designated 1998*  
*Jurisdiction: New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission*  
*The boundaries of the Treme Historic District run along N. Rampart St to St. Bernard Avenue, St. Bernard Avenue to N. Claiborne Avenue, N. Claiborne Avenue to a line running behind the lots facing the uptown side of Esplanade Avenue, up that line to N. Broad Street, N. Broad Street to Orleans Avenue, Orleans Avenue to N. Villere St., N. Villere St. to St. Philip St., and St. Philip Street back to N. Rampart Street.*

*The area of the District between North Claiborne Avenue and North Rampart Street is subject to the full control of the HDLC. The area above North Claiborne is subject only to control of demolition and demolition by neglect.*

Faubourg Treme’s early population was largely composed of immigrants and free people of color, including refugees from Saint-Domingue (now Haiti), black and white, who fled to New Orleans in 1810. Many Treme families proudly trace their roots in the neighborhood back four generations or more, and the District continues to reflect their distinctive culture. The Backstreet Cultural Museum showcases aspects of the musical and cultural heritage of the area, including Mardi Gras Indian regalia and information about the city’s social aid and pleasure clubs.

The origins of the District can be traced to the earliest years of New Orleans when a brickyard owned by the Company of the Indies was established outside of the city near Bayou Road and today’s Claiborne Avenue. This land became part of the plantation lands acquired by Claude Treme. Treme subdivided this land for development in the 1790s. Faubourg Treme was incorporated into New Orleans in 1812.

The development of Esplanade Avenue past N. Rampart Street began in 1835. By the mid-1850’s, the wealth and cultural influence of American society dominated the architectural expression of the entire city. Wealthy

Creoles built structures of Anglo-American style including massive houses, often lavishly decorated, along and near Esplanade Avenue during this period.

The District contains a number of outstanding early Creole cottages dating from the 1830s, as well as larger scale townhouses from the 1840s. Treme saw continued development in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, with many double shotguns built in the 1880s and 1890s. Large scale houses can also be found scattered throughout the area. The most dominant house type in the District above North Claiborne is the late 19<sup>th</sup> century shotgun cottage.

After the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, large scale development projects caused the destruction of residential and neighborhood uses in the District. At the Villere and St. Phillip Street boundaries of the District, Armstrong Park, whose development began in the 1960s, occupies twelve former residential blocks of the original Faubourg Treme.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Information taken from the Esplanade Ridge National Register of Historic Places Nomination, HDLC materials and *New Orleans Architecture Vol. V: The Esplanade Ridge*.



*St. Augustine's was the first racially integrated church built in New Orleans*



*The Backstreet Cultural Museum highlights the heritage of the area*



*The Meilleur-Goldthwaite House is now the African American Museum*

## LOCAL CULTURE

- A significant District landmark is St. Augustine Roman Catholic Church, designed by J.N.B. dePouilly and built in 1841 as the City's first racially integrated church
- The Backstreet Cultural Museum is dedicated to celebrating the unique heritage of the Tremé neighborhood

- The Meilleur-Goldthwaite House, built in 1829 at 1418 Gov. Nicholls Street, is a center hall residence that is an example of the small suburban farms that were once common in the area
- Esplanade Avenue, the grand street bisecting the District, has a wide neutral ground graced with mature oaks



*Shotgun residences are common throughout the District*



*Creole Cottages are typically built without setbacks*



*The Circle Food Store building once anchored a thriving commercial center*

## URBAN FORM

### Setting/Landscape

- Most residences are set along the front property line, with no front yard or street plantings
- The grander homes of Esplanade Avenue were set on large lots with small setbacks from the street, often marked by a wrought iron fence
- Most residential lots were built with a small rear yard, often containing a small outbuilding or shed
- Off-street parking is rare in the District, with residences typically set close to the front and side property lines

### Massing/Form

- The majority of residences are 1-story shotguns with some larger 3-story townhouses and grand homes along Esplanade Avenue

### Styles/Types

- Below North Claiborne, the architecture is dominated by Creole Cottages, townhouses and shotguns

- The District contains a number of outstanding early Creole cottages dating from the 1830s
- Larger scale c. 1840s townhouses can be found on Gov. Nicholls Street
- The dominant house type in the district above North Claiborne is the late 19<sup>th</sup> century shotgun cottage

### Public Spaces

- The construction of the elevated portion of I-10 over North Claiborne Avenue bisected the District and destroyed what was once a thriving mixed use corridor along North Claiborne Avenue
- Armstrong Park, which is located on land that was formerly occupied by residences that were part of Tremé, forms the uptown side of the District

### Commercial/Industrial

- Commercial buildings are generally found along larger streets such as North Rampart and North Claiborne Avenues

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