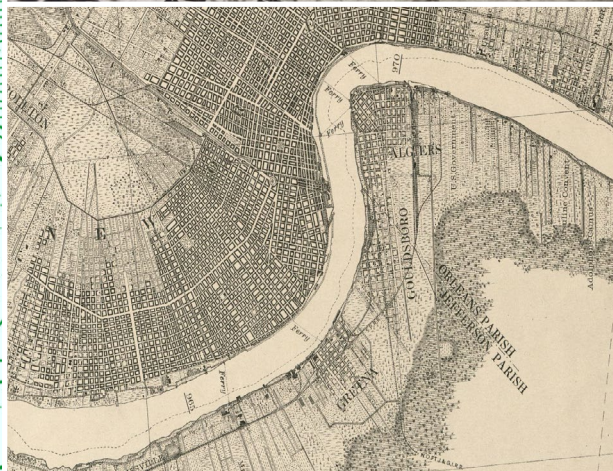
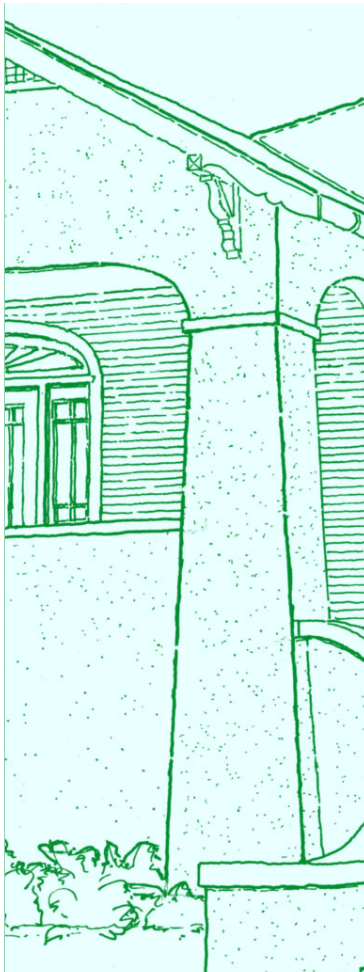




HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

Historic District Commission
City of Gretna, Louisiana



A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

As mayor of the City of Gretna, and on behalf of all the elected officials, please allow us this opportunity to say thank you for investing your resources into the continued preservation of Gretna's historic districts. We are proud of our rich heritage and believe that this publication of the Historic District Design Guidelines will insure the beauty and integrity of our historic neighborhoods for generations to come.

We also want to extend our appreciation to the HDC (Historic District Commission), Clio Associates and all others who participated in seeing this project come to fruition. We believe that because of your efforts, the City of Gretna will enjoy a streetscape forever reminiscent of days long ago.



Belinda C. Constant
Mayor

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the following committees, organizations, and individuals who made these guidelines possible.

City of Gretna

Mayor's Office, Mayor Belinda Constant

City Council

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Chris Züfle

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All photos, text, design, and illustrations in these guidelines were prepared by Clio Associates LLC unless otherwise noted.

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CLIO
ASSOCIATES

On the cover, clockwise from left: Craftsman raised bungalow (drawing by Clio Associates LLC); William Dietrich White House, 1920 (photograph courtesy of Ruth Züfle); Front Street, c. 1900 (Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans); Gretna City Hall and the Jefferson Memorial Arch, 2013 (photograph by Clio Associates LLC); Mississippi River Commission, Mississippi River, Sheet Number 28 [New Orleans and Vicinity] (Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University)

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GUIDELINES INTRODUCTION

1



INTRODUCTION

Protected and well-maintained historic districts are valuable cultural resources, engines for economic development, and a positive influence on property values and neighborhood stability. The Historic District Commission oversees all exterior work done in Gretna's two local historic districts, Mechanikham-Gretna and McDonoghville, including but not limited to such work as major repairs and alterations, the installation of new windows and doors, the erection of fences and carports, and the placement of solar panels. These design guidelines provide information on the history of the districts, architectural types and styles found in Gretna, and recommendations for the proper maintenance and treatment of properties in the district. All of the recommendations reflect the HDC's review criteria, and it is therefore important for all residents, contractors, and architects who are planning exterior work to consult this document prior to submitting a historic district permit application.

To find out if your building is located within a local historic district, consult the map in Part 2: History of the Districts or visit the City of Gretna's website, www.gretnala.com.

>>What is a historic resource? A historic resource is a structure, site, or monument that is at least fifty years old and is determined to have historical significance, which is defined by its architectural or cultural value. For example, a building might be important because of its connection to an illustrious political figure or historic event, or it might be a town's last surviving example of a Creole cottage. Eligible historic resources may be individually designated as historic landmarks for their local, state, or national significance.

>>What is a historic district? A historic district is a designated grouping of historic resources. While not every building in a historic district is individually significant, many historic buildings in a concentrated area give a block or a neighborhood a historic character that is significant as a whole.

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- The Purpose of Design Guidelines - 4
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties - 5
- Historic Designation - 6
- Historic District Commission (HDC) - 6
- HDC Review Process - 7

>>Is my building considered historic? If your building is located within the boundaries of one of Gretna's two historic districts and it is over fifty years old, it is most likely considered historic. However, *all* buildings within the historic districts—regardless of their age, style, or condition—are subject to the same HDC review process as historic buildings. This is because every property in a historic district, whether built one hundred years ago or yesterday, impacts the look and feel of its surrounding district. The HDC review process is designed to protect and enhance historic Gretna's character and integrity through the stewardship of not only the buildings themselves, but the districts' overall scale and streetscapes as well.

THE PURPOSE OF DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines are intended to manage change in a historic district. Although change is a natural part of any neighborhood, in historic districts it is important to make appropriate modifications that maintain the district's historic integrity and sense of place. Changes made to a single property affect neighboring properties, the streetscape, and the district as a whole. Therefore, all exterior work should be architecturally compatible with the building itself and with its surroundings. This includes issues such as the scale of a new addition, the type of fence erected at a property line, or the installation of new windows on a historic shotgun.

Design guidelines provide recommendations that are meant to protect and maintain a district's integrity. They encourage preservation over replacement and modifications that are sensitive to a building's history. The goal is to repair and retain—rather than replace—such defining details as historic building materials, ornamentation, openings, height, massing, and scale. Once these elements are lost, they are often difficult if not impossible to retrieve. Modern replacement materials rarely have the same level of craftsmanship and quality as their historic counterparts. That said, guidelines are also written with the knowledge that historic districts are dynamic, changing places that are always adapting to the demands and desires of modern life. This balance of meeting modern needs and protecting historic significance informs all of the guidelines' recommendations.

The recommendations in these guidelines adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (see opposite page) and are intended as a supplement to any determinations made by the HDC.



Gretna celebrates its centennial birthday.



A historic streetscape in the McDonoghville historic district



A historic streetscape in the Gretna-Mechanikham historic district

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

According to the National Park Service, “the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are common sense historic preservation principles in non-technical language. They promote historic preservation best practices that will help to protect our nation’s irreplaceable cultural resources.” These guidelines adhere to the following list of standards:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

For more information, visit: <http://www.nps.gov/history/tps/standards.htm>.

HISTORIC DESIGNATION

>>What is local designation?

Historic resources and historic districts may be locally designated by a governing authority such as a city council or an authorized preservation commission. Designated properties and districts are subject to locally determined regulations and restrictions. Gretna-Mechanikham and McDonoghville are both local historic districts and all exterior work must be reviewed by the HDC.

>>What is the National Register of Historic Places?

Historic resources and historic districts may be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the federal government's list of structures, sites, monuments, areas, and districts that are worthy of preservation. National Register designation is determined by the National Park Service in partnership with a state historic preservation office (SHPO), which reviews all applications. Designation requires that all federal projects consider the impact of their project on registered properties or districts, but National Register properties and districts are not subject to local or federal regulations or restrictions. Gretna City Hall, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Most Holy Sacrament Convent/Infant Jesus College, David Crockett Firehall, Jefferson Memorial Arch, and the Kerner House (1012 Monroe Street) are all individually listed properties on the National Register. In addition, the Gretna National Register Historic District is a smaller district within the boundaries of the local Gretna-Mechanikham district.

>>What are the benefits of historic designation?

There are many potential benefits to local and national historic designation, including:

- Formal recognition of a place's cultural or architectural significance
- Increased opportunity for tourism and civic promotion
- A distinct sense of identity
- Bolstered community pride
- Increased property values
- Neighborhood stability
- Awareness of the built environment
- Eligibility for state and federal tax incentives and grant programs (see Part 8: Glossary & Additional Resources for more information).

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION (HDC)

The Historic District Commission (HDC) is a 7-member appointed board that is responsible for maintaining the historic character of Gretna's local historic districts. All commission members are recommended by the city council and appointed by the mayor.

The HDC reviews all substantive exterior changes to all historic and non-historic properties within the historic districts to determine whether the requested changes are aesthetically compatible with both the structure and its historic surroundings. A substantive exterior change is defined as any work that alters the historic or architectural character of a property. This may include structural alterations such as additions and foundation work; the replacement of windows and doors; the replacement of siding; the modification of historic details such as brackets, porches, and columns; and the addition of site amenities, such as fences and sheds. A copy of the HDC's governing ordinance is located in Part 9: Appendix.

The purpose of the HDC is:

- To promote the preservation of historic districts, buildings, and landmarks for the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public through preservation, protection, and regulation of such districts, buildings, and landmarks within the city
- To safeguard the cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history of the city
- To preserve and enhance the environmental quality of neighborhoods
- To strengthen the city's economic base by the stimulation of the tourist industry
- To establish and improve property values
- To foster economic development
- To manage growth.

HDC APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Exterior work on all of the **historic and non-historic buildings** that are located within the boundaries of Gretna's historic districts must be reviewed and approved by the HDC before the project begins. If you plan to do exterior work on any building within the districts' boundaries, please consult the following steps before beginning your project.

1. Consult the relevant sections of these guidelines. This document is designed to provide recommendations for the appropriate treatments of Gretna's historic buildings and districts. They reflect the criteria that the HDC uses in its decision-making process and will help the applicant better prepare for the review process.

2. Visit the Department of Building & Regulatory Inspections at City Hall. There, you will be asked to fill out a building permit application and provide staff with preliminary information about the proposed project. If possible, bring photos of your building as well as photos or images of the work to be done. For example, if you would like to install a new front door on your residence, bring images of the door you have in mind, either a photo of another house in your neighborhood or a printout from a website or catalog. However, **do not** purchase any replacement materials before they have been approved.

3. Fill out a historic district permit application and provide all required materials. If the building is located within the boundaries of a historic district, fill out a historic district permit application in addition to the building permit application. Be sure to include all required materials with the application (which can include photographs, sketches, comparable examples, etc.). Applications must be submitted **14 days** before the next HDC meeting in order to be included on the agenda. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. A \$50 processing fee is due at the time of submission.

4. Provide additional information if needed. The City reviews each filed application and makes a preliminary determination of its completeness before adding it to the HDC agenda. If the City or the HDC determines that an application is incomplete, the applicant must provide the additional required information before the application process can proceed.

5. Attend the HDC meeting. The building owner and/or a representative (e.g., contractor or architect) is required to attend the HDC meeting at which the project will be discussed. If the building owner sends a representative to the meeting in his

place, the owner is still responsible for the HDC's determination. If neither the applicant nor a representative is in attendance, the application may be deferred to the following month's HDC meeting and the project will be delayed.

6. HDC approves. If the HDC approves the project, the applicant will receive this decision in writing at the HDC meeting and will receive a **certificate of appropriateness** within 48 hours. The certificate of appropriateness serves as evidence of HDC approval. The applicant must then secure any additional required permits from the relevant departments at City Hall before the project may proceed.

7. HDC approves with modifications. If the HDC approves the project with modifications, the applicant will receive this decision in writing at the HDC meeting and will receive a **certificate of appropriateness** within 48 hours that specifies the HDC's required modifications. The applicant must then secure any additional required permits from the relevant departments at City Hall before the project may proceed.

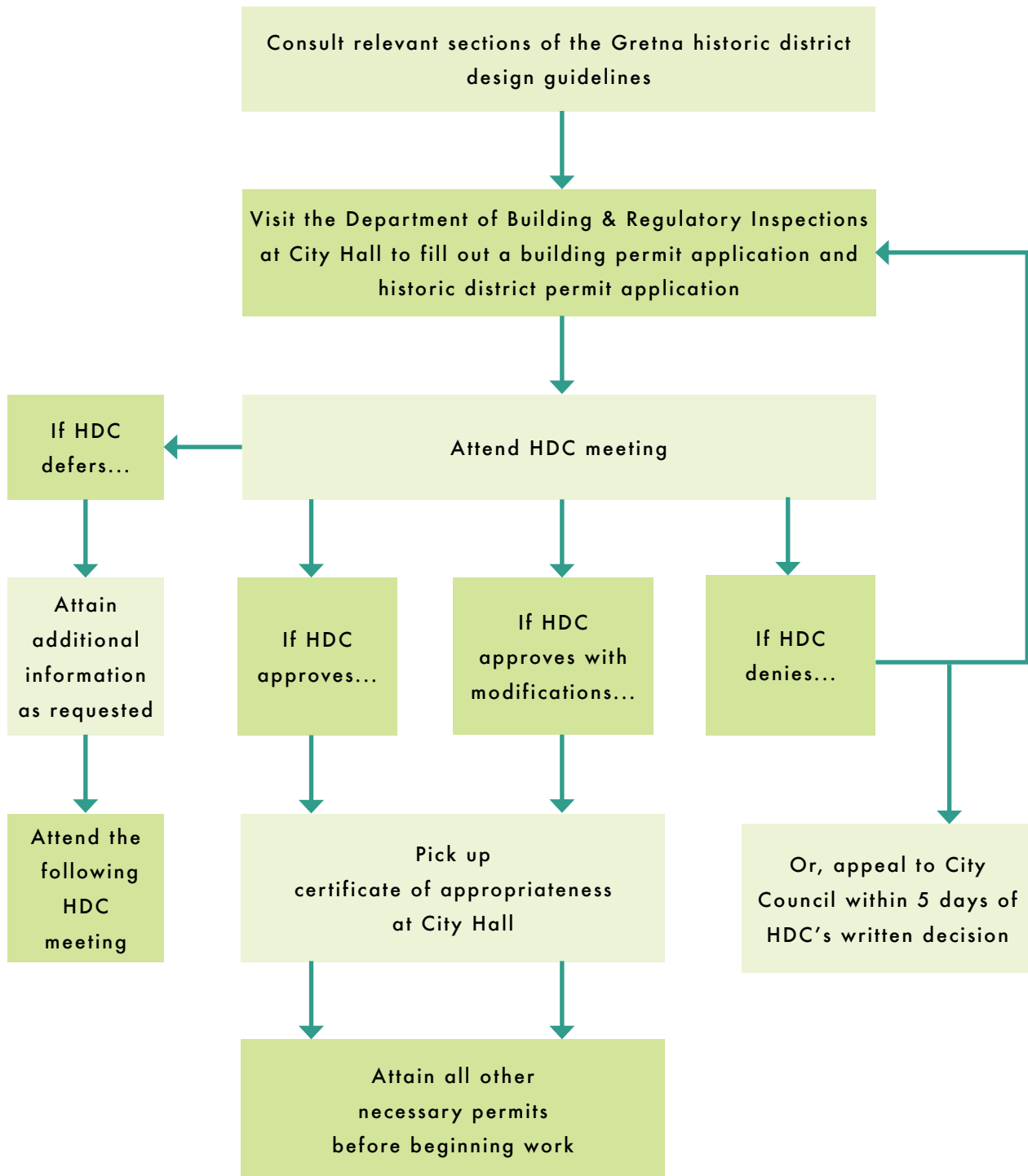
8. HDC defers. If the HDC requires additional information and determines that the application is therefore incomplete, it may change the hearing to a preliminary conference and make recommendations for a complete application to be considered at the next meeting of the HDC.

9. HDC denies. If the HDC denies the project, the applicant will receive this decision in writing at the HDC meeting and must revise the project and restart the historic district permit application process. The applicant may appeal the decision of the HDC directly to the City Council. Appeals must be made in writing to the clerk's office within 5 days of receipt of the HDC's written decision. City Council has the power to affirm, reverse, or modify any of the HDC's decisions by majority vote.

The HDC does not review paint color, ordinary repairs, or standard maintenance that prevents the deterioration, damage, or decay of a building. However, such repairs and maintenance must restore the building to its appearance prior to the onset of the problem, not alter its appearance. If the appearance is to be altered, the HDC must review the work.

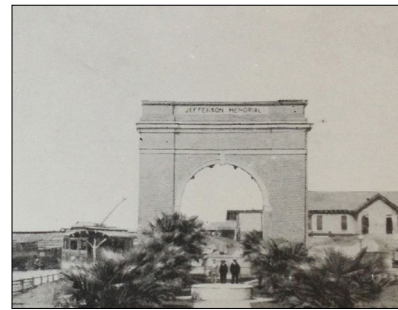
For additional information, please contact the Department of Building & Regulatory Inspections, (504) 363-1563.

HDC APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS



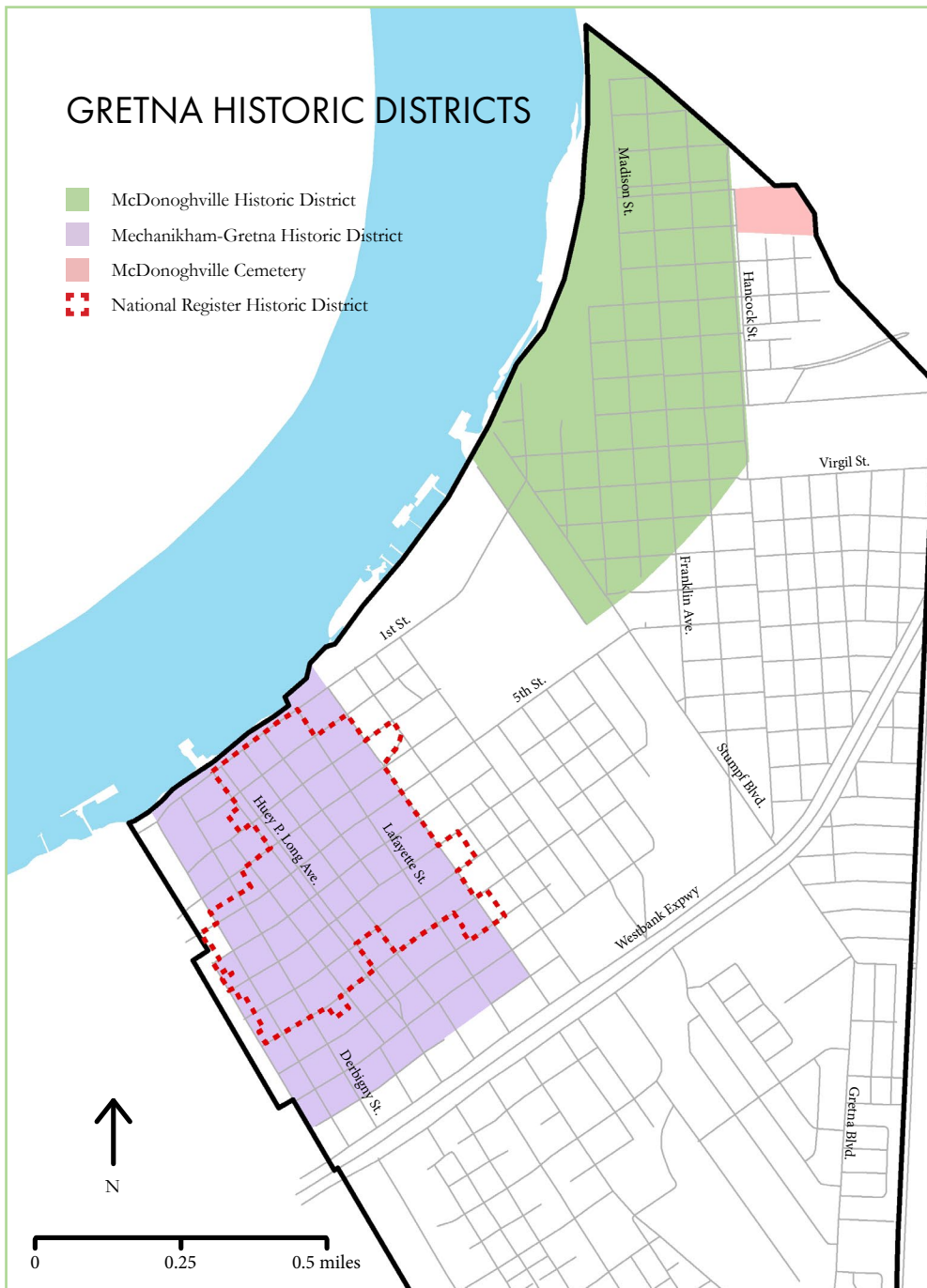
HISTORY OF THE DISTRICTS

2



GRETNA HISTORIC DISTRICTS

- McDonoghville Historic District
- Mechanikham-Gretna Historic District
- McDonoghville Cemetery
- National Register Historic District



MECHANIKHAM-GRETNA HISTORIC DISTRICT

Local designation: 1997

Boundaries: East side of Gulf Drive and north side of Sixth Street to the west side of Dolhonde Street on the west; north side of Twelfth Street on the south; east side of Amelia Avenue on the east; and the Mississippi River on the north.

National Register designation: 1985

Boundaries: Roughly bounded on the north by 1st Street; on the south by 9th Street, on the east by Amelia Avenue, and on the west by Dolhonde Street. In the southeastern corner, the district extends further south for approximately one block to 10th Street.

MCDONOGHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Local designation: 2005

Boundaries: East side of Ocean Avenue from the river to the 4th Street right-of-way; west side of Hancock Street; the Orleans Parish line; and the Mississippi River.

The material in this section is based in part on Dr. Mary Grace Curry's *Gretna: A Sesquicentennial Salute* and Betsy Swanson's *Historic Jefferson Parish: From Shore to Shore*.

MECHANIKHAM-GRETNA HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Mechanikham-Gretna Historic District has the highest concentration of historic structures in Jefferson Parish. Named for two of the city of Gretna's earliest communities, Mechanikham and Gretna, the district is predominantly residential in character and maintains a quiet, small-town feel despite the fact that it has been the seat of Jefferson Parish government since 1884. Pockets of commercial activity are found along the Mississippi River, Lafayette Street, and on the northern end of Huey P. Long Avenue, Gretna's historic central commons. The largest homes in the district are also located on this tree-lined avenue, which turns residential beyond the Fourth Street railroad tracks. The regular street grid surrounding the commons features a relatively dense concentration of modest late-19th and early-20th-century homes, primarily shotguns and bungalows, as well as a handful of commercial and industrial structures. The district's oldest remaining buildings, which include a few examples of Creole cottages and the David Crockett Firehall (1859), are found on the north end of the district near the river where the two settlements originated.

Mechanikham was established in 1836 when wealthy landowner Nicholas Noel Destrehan hired surveyor Benjamin Buisson to divide his long and narrow swath of land on the river into lots. Buisson's original symmetrical plan created a two-block-wide settlement with Huey P. Long Avenue (originally Copernicus Avenue) at the center and one street on either side (now Newton and Weyer streets). Mechanikham quickly became home to many German immigrants who played a vital role in the city's development and whose descendants became some of Gretna's most prominent citizens.

The community of Gretna was established two years later when the St. Mary's Market Steam Ferry Company purchased and divided a four-block-wide stretch immediately downriver from Mechanikham. Gretna's streets were regularly laid in the same manner as Mechanikham, and its cross streets were numbered as they are today. An essential feature of the new development was its dedicated ferry landing located directly across the river from St. Mary's Market in New Orleans. In 1839, the company marketed its new land to the butchers, gardeners, and dairymen of the market as "decidedly the most desirable of any site in the neighborhood of New Orleans for health and salubrity of climate, being free from the epidemics of the city." One of these "epidemics" was no doubt the city's number of noxious slaughterhouses, which were forbidden in Gretna.

Although Mechanikham and Gretna maintained separate identities on maps for much of the 19th century, the name Gretna was often used early on to refer to both settlements. Together, they grew into a sizeable community with an economy fueled by dairies and farms, the river's shipbuilding industry, and several manufacturing efforts. Less than a decade after Gretna was founded, it was home to hundreds of residences and several shops, many of them housed in Creole cottages, as well as a hotel, coffee houses, three steam sawmills, a brickyard, a foundry, and a carriage factory. The first school was open by 1845. Yet despite the community's remarkable rate of development, Gretna was distinctly rustic. A guidebook published the same year, *Norman's*

PUBLIC AUCTION.
GRETNA.

THE TOWN OF GRETNA, situated opposite the city of Lafayette, will be sold at Auction by **BEARD & KENIG** and **HEWLETT & CENAS**, on Thursday the 26th inst., at 12 o'clock, at Banks' Arcade, Magazine street. The town comprises 44 squares, and will be sold in lots to suit purchasers.

The location of Gretna is decidedly the most desirable of any site in the neighborhood of New Orleans for health and salubrity of climate, being free from the epidemics of the city, and having the facility of a regular steam Ferry conveyance to the centre of business.

To the merchant, the mechanic, as well as the unencumbered, wishing for retirement and economy, the inducements are too apparent to need enumeration.

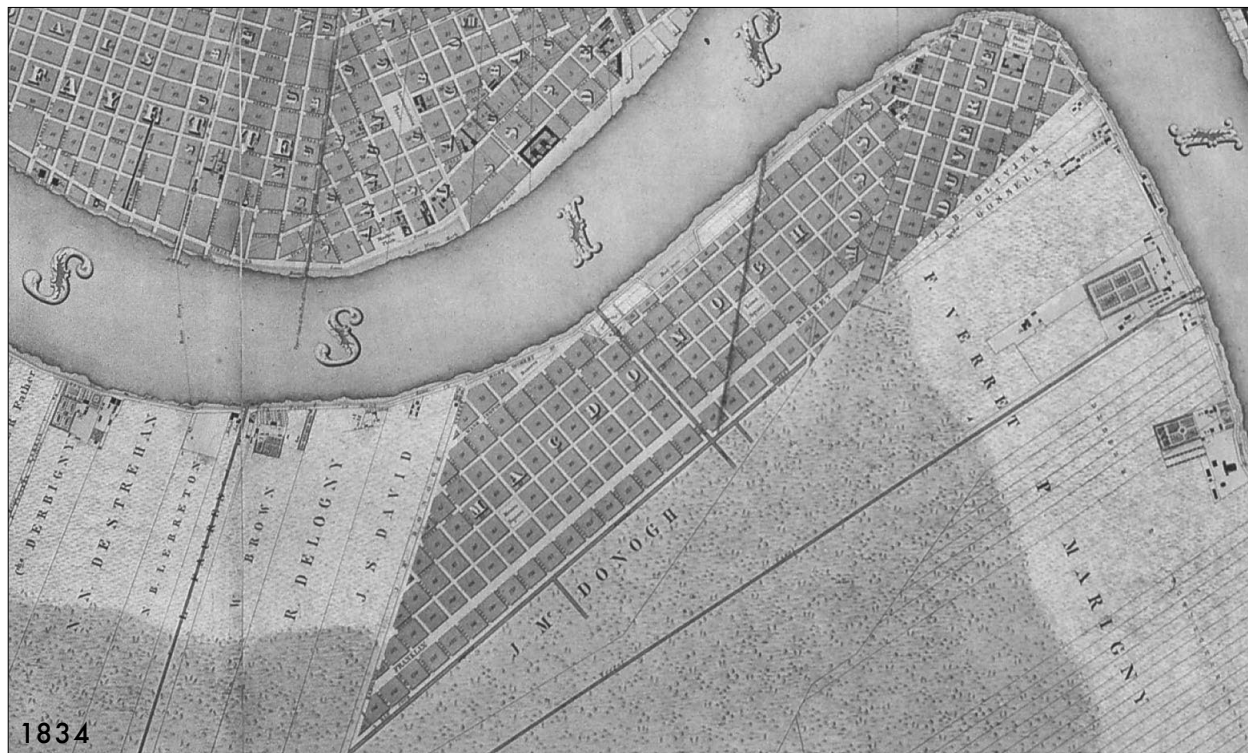
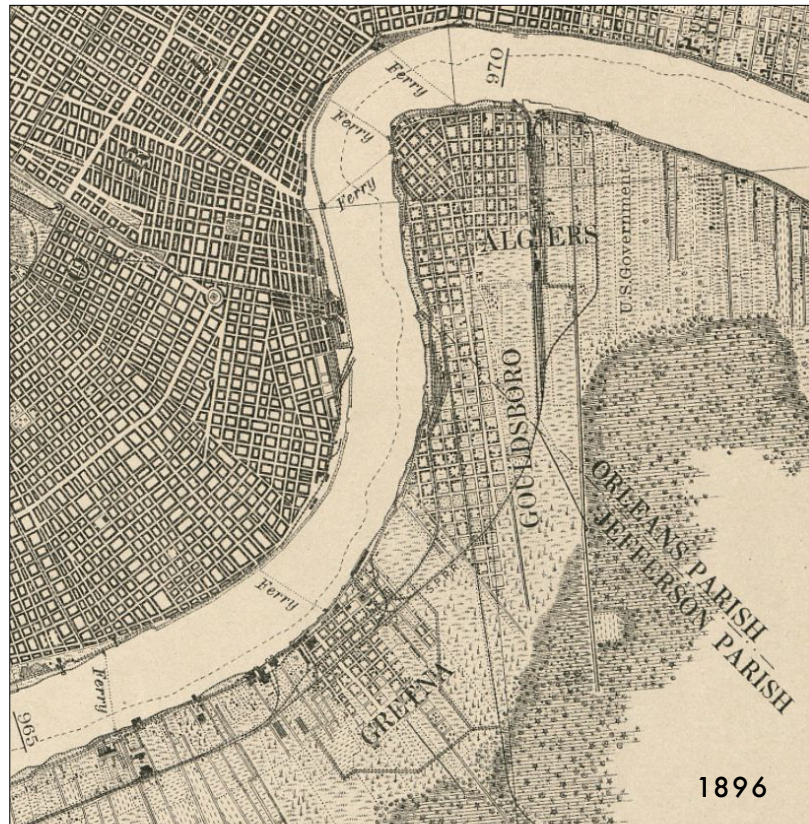
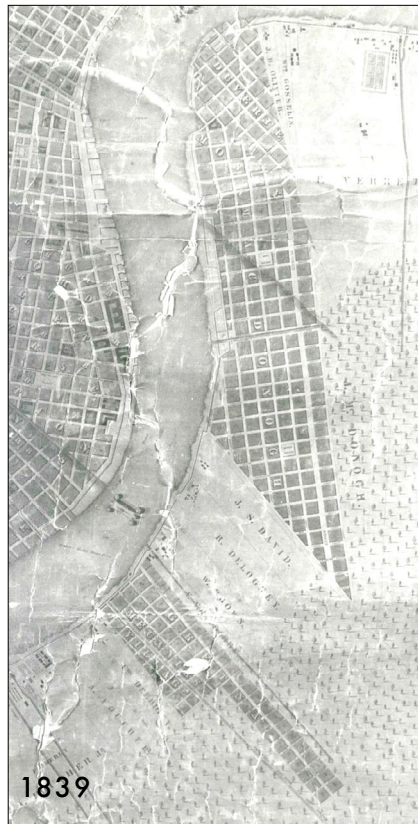
To the Market Gardiner, Butcher and Dairy Man, it is truly advantageous, having the facility of arriving at the St. Mary's Market in 15 minutes. Those who wish to purchase are particularly requested to view the property before the day of sale.

The Directors of the St. Mary's Market Steam Ferry Company hold out further inducements. They will issue a free ticket to all purchasers for one year, and pledge themselves to renew the same for four years more to all who build a tenement at Gretna in one year from the day of sale.

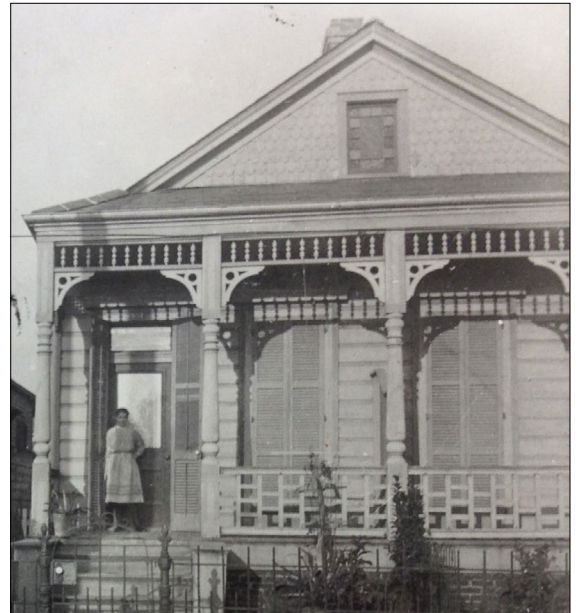
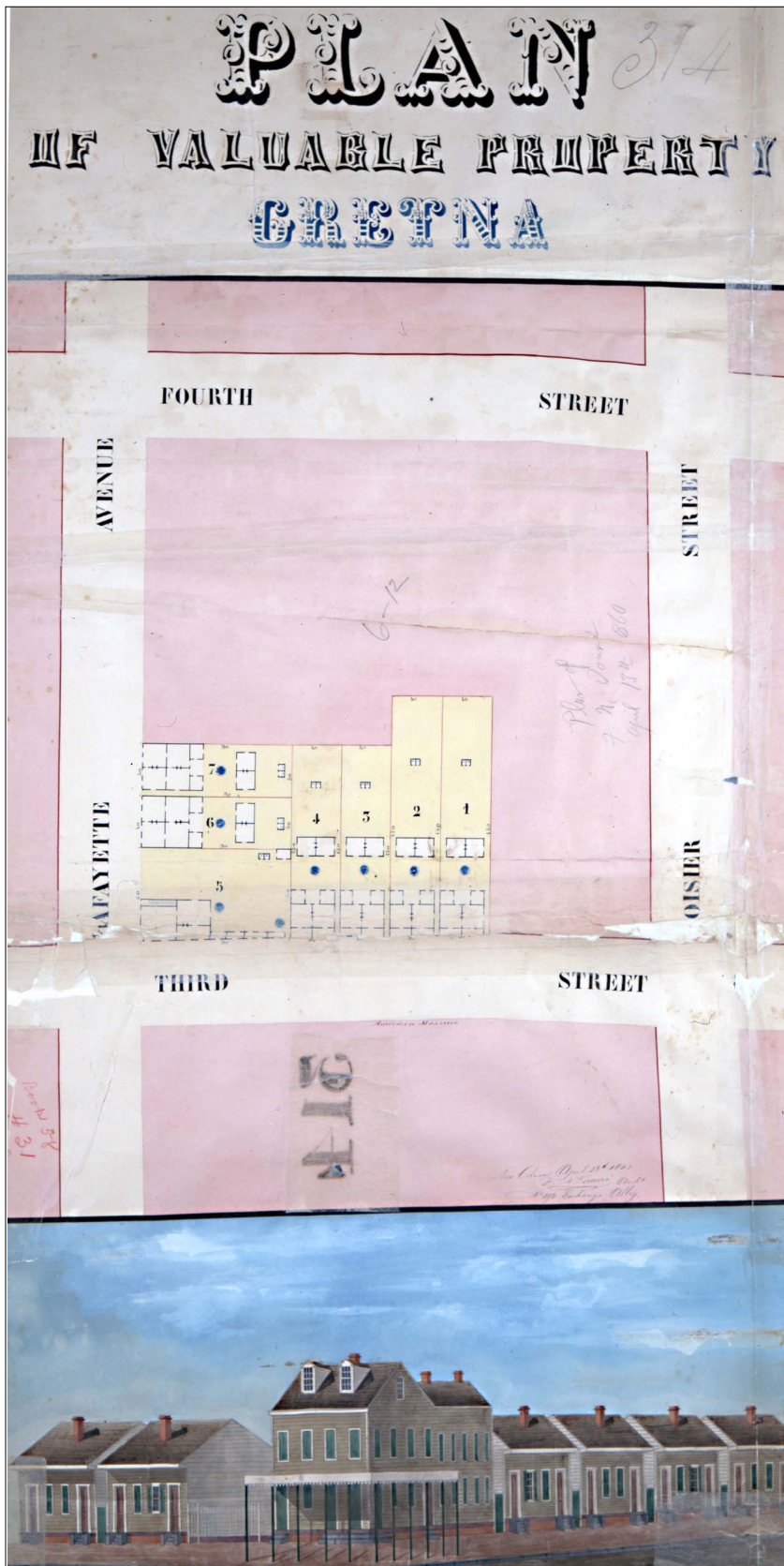
The terms of sale are extremely liberal and no endorser required, viz: One fourth cash, and the balance in 1, 2 and 3 years, for notes with mortgage until final payment.

Acts of sale before J. B. Marks, Esq. Notary Public, at the expense of the purchaser. dec 18 1839

St. Mary's Market Steam Ferry Company advertised its new Westbank development in the *Daily Picayune*, February 21, 1839.



Top left: An 1839 map of New Orleans depicts the three communities of Mechanikham ("Mechanik's Village"), Gretna, and McDonoghville. Springbett, Enoch and Pilié, L. I. *Topographical Map of the City and Environs of New Orleans*. New Orleans, 1839. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University. **Top right:** An 1896 map depicts Gretna and Gouldsboro, a late-19th-century name for McDonoghville. Mississippi River Commission. *Mississippi River. Sheet Number 28 [New Orleans and Vicinity]*. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University. **Bottom:** An 1834 map of New Orleans includes McDonoghville and the future land of Gretna, then owned by N. N. Destrehan. Zimpel, Charles F. *Topographical Map of New Orleans and its Vicinity*. New Orleans, 1834. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.



Top right: Front Street, c. 1900. Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans. **Above:** A daughter of the Ruiz family poses on the porch of the family home at 526 Front Street, c. 1910. Their Queen Anne/Eastlake shotgun would have been about two decades old. Photograph courtesy of Chris Züfle. **Left:** Large-scale, hand-drawn watercolor plans were used to advertise properties prior to their sale at public auction. This 1860 plan illustrates a group of Creole cottages and a store at the corner of Third and Lafayette streets. Only the corner building remains. Tourné, F. Nicolas. Plan Book 58, Folio 31 (058.031), April 13, 1860. Clerk of Civil District Court, Notarial Archives Division, New Orleans, LA.

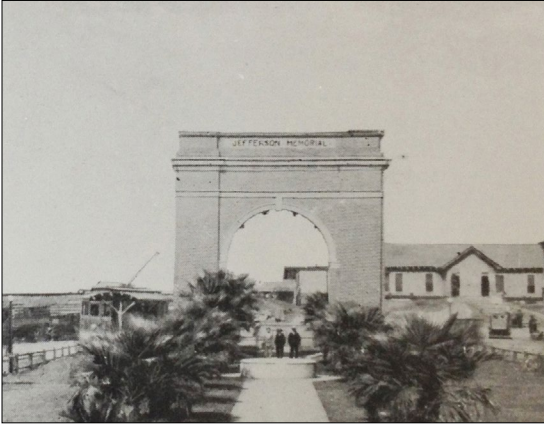


Left to right: The Gruhlers on their porch at 409 Newton Street, August 1916. Photograph courtesy of JoAnn Kerner Olsen. The Züfle corner grocery at Sixth and Lavoisier streets, 1900. Photograph courtesy of Ruth Züfle. A flooded Creole cottage at 635 Lafayette Street, c. 1891, illustrates the impact of an upriver crevasse. Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans.

New Orleans, wrote that “[Gretna] has a rural appearance....The forest approaches quite near and, the idea that one may lose himself in the neighboring woods, gives the place a touch of romance which only the denizens of a crowded city know how to appreciate.” The author also remarked on the many cattle grazing along the river.

Gretna’s first railroad, the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western (later known as the Southern-Pacific) was built in 1853. In subsequent years, Gretna also gained the Texas-Pacific line, the Union Stone Company, the Louisiana Cypress Lumber Company, the Southern Cotton Oil Company, and John Stumpf’s Son, which began selling its famous “Magic Hoodoo” insecticides and Rust-Away in 1876 at the corner of Front and Lavoisier streets. In 1887, Jefferson Parish passed a resolution to actively encourage and promote industrial activity, and many companies were drawn to Gretna’s riverfront and railroad access. As a result, the community soon cemented itself as a manufacturing hub, and, in the 1890s, its factories and mills were able to support numerous small businesses, including twelve groceries and nine saloons. By the turn of the century, Gretna and nearby McDonoghville made up nearly half of Jefferson Parish’s total population. This period of expansion was responsible for Gretna’s numerous shotguns in the Italianate and Queen Anne/Eastlake styles, as well as many of its corner stores. In 1901, Front Street opened to connect the riverfront communities, and, a few years later, an electric streetcar service between Gretna and Algiers replaced the mule-drawn streetcar that had been running since 1884. Soon to follow were Gretna’s two railroad depots on Third and Fourth streets (1902 and 1906, respectively) and the Renaissance Revival Jefferson Parish Courthouse (1907), which has operated as Gretna City Hall since 1961.

Gretna was not without its challenges. Crevasses, or breaks in the Mississippi River levee, were frequent and sometimes devastating floods that plagued residents from the communities’ earliest days until the final crevasse of 1912. Also, the parish government was slow to provide much-needed public improvements such as streetlights. Pedestrians out after dark navigated the streets with hand-held kerosene lamps. Sidewalks remained unpaved into the 20th century, and the streets were muddy and full of ruts and debris, a hazard made worse by an



Top: A scene from the 1920 St. Rosalie procession shows paved sidewalks, gutters, electric poles, and a backyard cistern still in operation. Photograph courtesy of Ruth Züfle. **Middle:** The newly constructed Jefferson Memorial Arch on Huey P. Long Avenue, 1923. Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans. **Bottom:** Miller's Grocery at 415 Wiedman Street, shown here in 1925, was built in the very popular Craftsman style. Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans.

inadequate drainage system. Finally, in 1911, frustrated citizens formed the Good Government League, an organization that provided the impetus to separate from the parish government and establish the City of Gretna, which was incorporated in 1913. Comprising Mechanikham, New Mechanikham, Gretna, New Gretna, and McDonoghville, the new city embarked on an improvements campaign that resulted in streetlamps, cleaner streets, a new waterworks system, and a system of gas mains. By 1936, all sidewalks were paved and a modern sewerage system was installed. Gretna's population reached ten thousand. It was during this period of progress and prosperity that Gretna's many Craftsman and Eclectic Revival residences and several of its landmarks were built.

The Mechanikham-Gretna Historic District was locally designated in 1997. The Gretna National Register Historic District, which is a smaller, federally designated district contained within the local district's boundaries, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

McDONOGHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

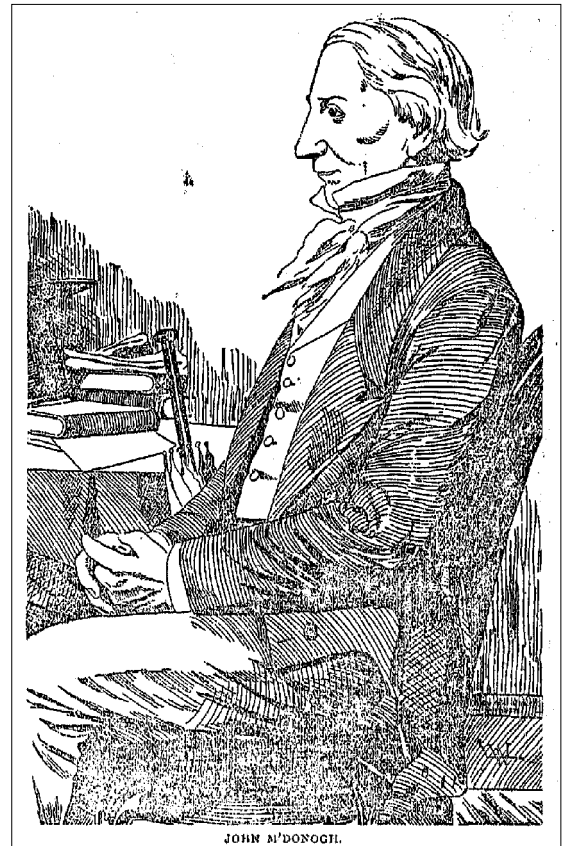
Named for its philanthropic and reclusive founder, John McDonogh, McDonoghville was established in 1815, which makes it Gretna's earliest subdivided development. The McDonoghville Historic District is characterized by modest residences set back on sizeable lots and a lack of commercial corridors, which gives it a sleepy, pastoral atmosphere that is rooted in its origins as a residential farming community. The 1845 guidebook *Norman's New Orleans* remarked in its brief mention of the place ("MacDonough") that "the country, the beautiful country is all around—and the noise and confusion of the city no longer annoy you." Although McDonoghville has been part of the city of Gretna since 1913, this sense of being removed from city life continues to distinguish it from its more urbanized neighbors.

Before McDonogh purchased the former plantation of Francois Bernoudy in 1813 and founded his namesake settlement, the western bank of the Mississippi River was a long row of working plantations backed by woodlands. McDonogh's property was the site of Monplaisir, a 1750 plantation house built for Jean de Pradel that sat near the present-day McDonoghville-Algiers border. The house and its auxiliary buildings were taken by the river in the late 19th century. McDonogh, who had been residing in New Orleans, moved into the house and divided the remaining land into regular lots and narrow, thirty-arpent strips for farming, which he sold or leased to laborers and some free people of color. While living there, he owned several slaves, whom he educated and encouraged to work for their freedom. Many of those freed men and women settled in a portion of McDonoghville called Freetown.

Because of McDonoghville's rural nature and the absence of local business, early residents had to travel to do their shopping, either at the New Orleans markets, which were accessible by ferry or skiff, or in Algiers and Gretna once those two communities had developed commercial districts. Many of the settlement's early dwellings were Creole cottages, a handful of which remain today, as well as some early shotguns and a few grander plantation-like residences with outbuildings, gardens, orchards, and livestock.

McDonogh died in 1850 and was buried in McDonoghville Cemetery on Hancock Street. Ten years later, his remains were moved to his hometown of Baltimore, but his tomb still stands with an inscription of the guiding principles he wrote as a young man. Rules such as "Never spend but to produce" and "Labor then to the last moment of your existence" communicate McDonogh's hard-working and frugal nature, which made it possible for him to amass a vast personal fortune. Although many accused the man of miserliness, in his will he famously established the John McDonogh School Fund, which provided enough money to create thirty-six public schools throughout New Orleans, including McDonogh No. 26 and No. 27 and McDonogh-Jefferson High School (No. 33) in McDonoghville.

By the 1880s, McDonoghville had become an important railroading center with a roundhouse, railyards, and numerous spurs. At this time, the community also became known as Gouldsboro, named for railroad magnate Jay Gould. The rise in economic opportunities led to a population increase and a building



Top: A portrait of John McDonogh, founder of McDonoghville, was published in the *Daily Picayune* on December 13, 1891. **Bottom:** A detail of an 1855 watercolor plan advertising a shotgun for sale on Anson Street. Tourné, F. Nicolas. Plan Book 76, Folio 21 (076.021), November 16, 1855. Clerk of Civil District Court, Notarial Archives Division, New Orleans, LA.