

Cultural Heritage: Historic Preservation, Arts, and Culture

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personal vision statements:

*“A city with culture and
character you can’t find
anywhere else.”*

Chapter Summary

This chapter focuses on two closely-related sectors: historic preservation and arts and culture in Shreveport-Caddo. Both of these sectors are critical to promoting Shreveport's unique history, character, and cultural vitality—to enhance residents' pride in the city, to reinforce its unique place in the region, and to attract visitors and new residents.

The Master Plan Area's historic resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places are identified, with a discussion of the current lack of any protections for historic resources, the absence of an historic preservation infrastructure in Shreveport, and options to promote historic preservation. The chapter identifies the myriad arts and cultural activities available in the Master Plan Area, the contribution of the arts to the economy, and provides recommendations on strengthening arts and culture in Shreveport, particularly in revitalizing downtown.

Strategies and actions include:

- Create the basic civic infrastructure for historic preservation: staff time at the MPC; a thorough inventory of historic sites for integration into land use decision making; a citizens' Historic Resources Advisory Committee; a demolition delay ordinance downtown; and regulatory changes that promote adaptive reuse and make it financially feasible.
- Create a "one stop shop" for information and guidance on historic preservation within the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC)
- Raise public awareness among residents and visitors about Shreveport's history and culture with interpretive signs, heritage trails with different themes for self-guided digital tours, and events.
- Increase the visibility of art and artists through activities such as a "public art in public projects" ordinance, an annual "open studios" program, more music venues, and additional neighborhood-based arts and cultural events.
- Intensify the arts and culture presence in the downtown West Edge through new offices for the Shreveport Regional Arts Council (SRAC) in the historic fire station, as well as other physical improvements, and market downtown to artists as a place to live and work.
- Establish a program by ordinance that dedicates a small percentage of the budget in public projects for public art.

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	
<p><i>The integrity and character of historic structures and overall historic character is maintained and enhanced.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate city programs and policies to support historic preservation goals. • Adopt regulations and incentives that encourage and streamline adaptive reuse of historic structures. • Support and promote community-based historic preservation initiatives. • Provide appropriate tools to review changes that may detract from historic neighborhoods’ integrity and character, such as design guidelines.
<p><i>Residents’ and visitors’ experience of Shreveport is enhanced by a sense of the city’s history.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance public awareness of the Shreveport area’s unique historical and cultural legacy. • Enhance public awareness of the economic benefits of historic preservation in Shreveport.
ARTS & CULTURE	
<p><i>Shreveport’s arts community is vibrant and thriving.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance access to resources for arts and cultural organizations, nurture cultural and artistic entrepreneurship, and support fair and equitable distribution of resources. • Support and promote arts education programs throughout the city and for residents of all ages. • Promote arts and cultural initiatives as part of the city’s economic development strategy. • Incorporate public art in large capital improvement projects.
<p><i>Downtown is the city’s arts and cultural center.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to focus a critical mass of arts and culture activities in downtown and the “West Edge” arts district.

Findings

- There are 7 National Register Historic Districts in Shreveport and 54 individual National Register Historic sites.
- Shreveport currently has no regulatory protections against demolition for significant historic structures, except in the Highland Urban Conservation Zoning District.
- Several community-based preservation associations are working to increase awareness of the city's historic assets.
- Downtown is the hub of arts and cultural initiatives and institutions.
- The arts community offers a diversity of arts and cultural programs, institutions and events.

Challenges

- Encouraging renovations and adaptive reuse of historic structures downtown and elsewhere, and providing incentives to make investment in historic buildings financially feasible.
- Protecting and enhancing the character of Shreveport's historic neighborhoods.
- Increasing awareness of Shreveport-Caddo's cultural heritage.
- Providing professional development and business skills training to local artists.
- Providing more art exhibition and music venues throughout the city, especially downtown.
- Continuing to develop the "West Edge" as the city's epicenter of arts activities.
- Providing physical and programmatic connections among the numerous cultural attractions in the downtown area.

A. Current Conditions

CELEBRATE SHREVEPORT'S HISTORIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Shreveport's rich historic and cultural heritage does not appear to be well-known, even to many native residents. As a river port, rail depot and regional metropolis, the city became a cultural crossroads. The prosperity brought by the oil industry in the early twentieth century underwrote many of the Shreveport's most important historic buildings at a time when it was also serving as the crucible for new artistic and cultural forms. A haven for blues and African-American as well as white country folk music and a radio powerhouse, Shreveport became the birthplace of rock and roll, where black and white musical traditions blended and legends such as Lead Belly and Elvis Presley got their starts. Today, Shreveport's rich cultural and historic legacy is evident in its remaining historic landmarks and districts, and in the city's prominence as the cultural capital of the ArkLaTex region.

Nevertheless, the area lacks a cohesive cultural narrative and identity. This chapter outlines the Shreveport area's existing historic and cultural assets and presents strategies to build on these assets, preserve the city's remaining historic character and structures, infuse local identity with a stronger sense of its historic roots, and create a critical mass of arts and cultural resources to increase their visibility and growth.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Places with a strong sense of historic and cultural identity tend to be powerful attractors of residents, visitors, and investment. Single historic buildings and structures alone can create unique place markers that attract public attention and private investment. Individual landmarks help to tell the story of historic places, and an ensemble of several historic buildings, together with other distinctive "place-making" features that underscore a consistent character, can infuse a place with a strong sense of historic and cultural identity that is greater than the sum of its parts. Unique places with strong historic character represent the "sense of place" that enhances economic competitiveness, attracting residents who want

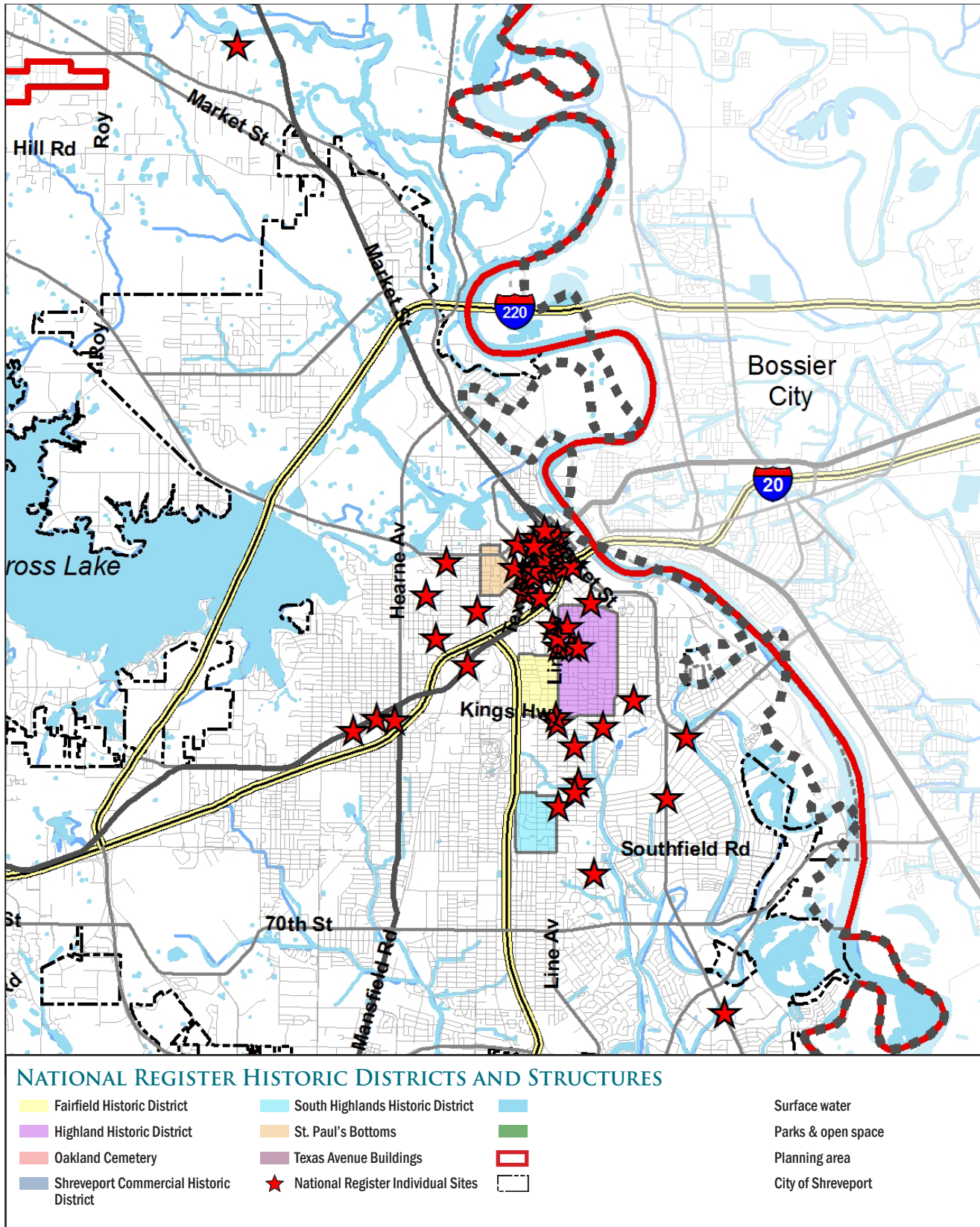
to live in distinctive neighborhoods; visitors who seek interesting, vibrant places to work, shop or spend leisure time; and investors who view stable and unique locations as attractive opportunities for investment.

Historic assets in the Shreveport-Caddo area include both historic districts and neighborhoods—in which the ensemble character is of primary value—as well as individual sites and structures of special historic value, some of which are surrounded by incompatible development or vacant land. Although many of the area's historic assets are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there is almost no regulatory protection of historic places against significant alteration or demolition in the Shreveport-Caddo area. Downtown Shreveport is probably the region's most recognized and most publicly-valued historic asset, yet many of its historic structures are threatened by deferred maintenance and neglect. Some years ago, growing public awareness of the historic value of Shreveport's older neighborhoods resulted in special zoning requirements—design review and demolition delay—for the Highland neighborhood.

Many historic structures in Shreveport are located in downtown or inner-core neighborhoods that have experienced waves of decline or even disinvestment in the last thirty years. While there is renewed interest in some of these areas today, significant barriers to reinvestment and preservation remain:

- Downtown zoning and building codes do not promote residential and adaptive reuse.
- "Demolition by neglect"—lack of long-term maintenance—has resulted in buildings that collapse or are so damaged that preservation efforts are prohibitively expensive.
- Market conditions downtown make demolition for parking lots more profitable to private owners than regular maintenance and use of the structures.
- Lack of historic, or any, context makes preservation less viable to property owners where historic structures are isolated in disinvested neighborhoods with vacant lots around them or surrounded by incompatible development.

MAP 5.1 NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND STRUCTURES



Source: Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, & Tourism; NLCOG; Goody Clancy

- The Highland Urban Conservation Zoning District regulations are often not effective in achieving the stated goals of the special district.
- Lack of public awareness about historic structures and about the history of the area results in neglect of historic resources.

Historic resources

The National Register of Historic Places (“National Register”) is the nation’s official list of significant historic properties. Designation of an historic site or district by the National Register denotes the architectural, historical, cultural, ethnic, or other significance of a site that is at least 50 years old. Historic places are nominated for registration, typically by a local community or advocacy organization, through an application to the respective state office of historic preservation. Being listed on the National Register is an honor and also qualifies the owner for certain tax incentives to offset the cost of restoration. However, National Register designation provides no regulatory protection against demolition or exterior change—except in the case of federally-funded projects, which are required to undertake a special review process if a designated historic district or landmark may be affected by the proposed federal project. Otherwise, owners of National Register properties are free to do with their property whatever they wish. Indeed, a cursory review of the list of registered sites in and around the Shreveport area reveals that at least a few have been demolished since receiving Historic Register designation. Others remain standing but in severe disrepair.

The National Register recognizes both individual structures or places as well as whole areas, such as neighborhoods, that have collective historic significance—known as Historic Districts. National Historic Landmarks are a special category of individual places that have exceptional value for the heritage of the United States.

Individual National Register Historic Places and Landmarks

There are 57 individual historic places in Caddo Parish, 54 of which are located within the Master Plan Area. (A complete list is at the end of this section.) They include homes, commercial and office buildings, schools, places



(Above) The historic site marker reads, “Sprague Street Row—Group of six Victorian cottages built circa 1890... Listed in National Register of Historic Places, 1983.” By the time of this photograph in 2010, only one of the six cottages remains standing, and is in visibly poor condition. (Below) Designation of a site on the National Register of Historic Places does not guarantee adequate maintenance.



of worship, bridges, cemeteries, fire stations, industrial structures, and other types of properties that represent notable periods, events, and influences throughout Shreveport’s history. Two properties are National Historic Landmarks: Municipal Auditorium and the McNeill Street Pumping Station.

Several of Shreveport’s historic sites represent notable architectural influences and periods throughout the city’s history. Perhaps Shreveport’s most influential early architectural heritage dates from the oil boom of the early twentieth century—a period of eclectic revival architectural styles. Examples from this era listed on the Register include A.C. Steere Elementary School (Spanish Colonial Revival), C.E. Byrd High School (Tudor

Revival), Fair Park High School (Classic Revival), the Flournoy-Wise House (Greek Revival), and the Lewis House (Queen Anne Revival).

Other sites signify important engineering innovations, including the McNeill Street Pumping Station—representing the second municipal water system in the country (1887)—and the Kansas City Southern Railroad Bridge, one of two remaining Waddell A-Truss railroad bridges in the US (1926). The McNeill Pumping station has received special attention as a National Landmark and is now a museum. As multiuse paths are extended along the Red River and Cross Bayou, the truss bridge could be reused as a pedestrian bridge over Cross Bayou to link the areas on either side of the bridge.



C.E. Byrd High School: An example of the Tudor Revival style of architecture from the early twentieth century.



McNeill Street Pumping Station (Shreveport Waterworks Museum) is a National Historic Landmark



The Lewis Home: An example of Queen Anne Revival style



The distinctive silhouette of the Kansas City Southern Railroad Bridge over Cross Bayou, completed in 1926, marks it as a Waddell A-Truss railroad bridge. Only one other remains standing in the U.S.

Sites important to the city's ethnic, religious, and cultural heritage have also been recognized as historically important. African-American history is represented by the city's first African-American golf course (Lakeside Golf Course, 1952), burial ground (Star Cemetery, 1883), and high school (Central High School, 1917-1941). The Crystal Grocery (Fertitta's Delicatessen, 1927) was built as a grocery store and restaurant catering to Shreveport's Italian immigrant population.

Numerous places of worship are also listed on the National Historic Register, indicating the rich diversity of communities of faith that have shaped Shreveport's past and present. The B'nai Zion Temple (1915), considered one of the finest Beaux-Arts buildings still standing in



Antioch Baptist Church in downtown Shreveport

Louisiana, represents the contributions of Shreveport's Jewish community. Likewise, Antioch Baptist Church (1901-1903) is among the city's first African-American Baptist institutions, and is a significant example of Romanesque Revival architecture.

National Register Historic Districts

There are six National Register Historic Districts in the Master Plan Area:

- Fairfield Historic District
- Highland Historic District
- Shreveport Commercial Historic District (i.e. Downtown)
- South Highlands Historic District
- St. Paul's Bottoms (i.e. Ledbetter Heights)
- Texas Avenue Buildings (800 block of Texas Ave.)

Downtown Shreveport. According to National Register documentation, the Shreveport Commercial Historic District is the second highest-quality historic central



Downtown Shreveport historic buildings on Texas Street

business district in Louisiana, after New Orleans. Downtown boasts a number of significant historic structures in varying states of preservation dating from the early 19th century through the Modernist period of the mid-1900s. Several historic buildings continue to serve their original purposes as offices and commercial buildings. Others have been repurposed—for instance, a former hardware warehouse as residences, and a former bank as a museum. A number of historically-significant downtown buildings are vacant and threatened by long-term lack of maintenance, mostly due to the high cost of repairs relative to real estate market demand and values. As the only urban downtown for the entire ArkLaTex region, the historic character and fabric unique to downtown is central to its identity and sense of place. Preserving and enhancing this character is critical to ensuring Shreveport's continued ability to attract jobs and residents and to provide cultural amenities and resources to both visitors and locals.

The Texas Avenue Corridor. The west side of the 800 block of Texas Avenue is listed on the National Register. Its distinctive storefront facades are among the city’s best examples of cohesive historic commercial corridors. This block, directly adjacent to the grid of downtown, marks the beginning of the old Texas Trail—a path worn by covered wagons moving from the Red River westward toward Texas during the mid-19th century. The buildings that stand there today comprise a row of early-20th century commercial buildings, several with residences on the upper floors. Mostly vacant today, they represent what remains of a vibrant cultural district, including businesses owned and operated by residents of Chinese, Lebanese, Jewish, and other ethnic heritages. The upper end of the block marks the location of the early-20th century center of African-American commercial and cultural life, including a dentist, several doctors, a weekly paper, and a number of restaurants, all catering to African-American patrons.

Beyond the 800 block, the Texas Avenue corridor and immediately adjacent areas include other culturally and historically important landmarks. Directly to the west is the Shreveport Municipal Auditorium, where the Louisiana Hayride radio program was recorded live and showcased national talents including Hank Williams Jr., Johnny Cash and Elvis Presley. Today the Texas Avenue corridor is also significant in that it represents a “gateway” to the adjacent West Edge arts district and the rest of downtown.



Lee Hardware residences: Conversion from industrial warehouse to apartments in downtown.

Historic Residential Neighborhoods. Physical reminders of Shreveport’s history also remain in the fabric and character of the historic neighborhoods recognized by the National Register: Fairfield, Highland, South Highland, and St. Paul’s Bottoms (Ledbetter Heights). While these neighborhoods all contain individual structures of special importance, their historic significance lies predominantly in their unique physical fabric and character—the overall ensemble of buildings, streets, sidewalks, and open spaces.

The current condition of these districts varies significantly. The grand residential streets of Fairfield—which housed Shreveport’s early agricultural trade and oil barons—and the South Highland district remain prestigious addresses with mansions and substantial homes. In recent years, the Highland neighborhood has also attracted renewed interest and restoration as a historic area close to downtown.

St. Paul’s Bottoms (now known as Ledbetter Heights), by contrast, has suffered waves of disinvestment and has



Fairfield Historic District



One of the few remaining houses in Ledbetter Heights

seen significant demolition. Today it is the location of the Millennium Studios, under construction in 2010 and has potential to be redeveloped as a downtown neighborhood. One of the city's earliest neighborhoods outside of downtown, the area is historically significant as Shreveport's former legal red light district. It was called St. Paul's Bottoms because of its low elevation relative to downtown. Because of the negative image left by the red light district (repealed in 1917), the area's name was later changed to Ledbetter Heights in honor of legendary blues musician and former resident Huddie "Lead Belly" Ledbetter who was born in Caddo Parish and played in Ledbetter Heights.

Archaeological Sites. Archaeological resources from the native Caddo tribe are found throughout the Shreveport region, though they are often poorly marked (or not marked at all), and public information about the sites is sparse. The archaeology program at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches maintains a database of known archeological sites in the region. One of the most important in the area is located near the downtown airport adjacent to the Red River. Discovered accidentally during utility trenching in 1991, the site holds materials such as Caddo pottery shards and animal bones dating from the 17th or early 18th centuries. A nearby human burial site, discovered in the 1960s, is likely from the same settlement.

Local archaeological experts state that there is a need to increase access to information about Shreveport's potential archaeological resources before construction projects occur and about what to do if something is found. At the same time, access to sites must be protected before they

are publicized widely because of the danger of theft and destruction of resources.

Historic preservation resources and initiatives

Local Resources

- **Downtown Shreveport Cultural District.** The Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism operates a Cultural Districts Program that allows a local government to designate cultural districts for the purpose of revitalization based on cultural activity. The only designated cultural district in Caddo Parish is in downtown Shreveport, including Texas Avenue to Stoner Avenue—roughly bound by Fannin Street, the riverfront, Snow, Milam, and Douglas streets. Cultural districts offer tax credits for rehabilitation of historic structures and state sales tax exemption for sales of original works of art within the designated district.



Source: Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, & Tourism

- **Shreveport Historic Preservation Society.** Although in the 1970s and early 1980s Shreveport had a robust historic preservation society and community that counted a number of preservation successes, there was little activity after the oil bust and into the 1990s, and the historic preservation society no longer functioned. A new group, the Shreveport Historic Preservation Society, was established in 2007 as a volunteer-based nonprofit that seeks to identify, document and encourage preservation. The catalyst for action was a series of

demolitions downtown, and the group is currently focused on downtown preservation issues. As of 2010, the board of the society was beginning to reach out to the broader community for more membership and to develop a strategic plan.

- **Neighborhood-Based Historic Preservation Initiatives.** Community-based preservation initiatives have been established within several of Shreveport’s historic neighborhoods. These include the Highland Restoration Association and the Fairfield Historic District Association. These groups mainly work to document and raise awareness about the historic assets in their neighborhoods and to bring attention to neglected historic structures in danger of demolition. Some historic markers and interpretive signs can be found around the city. Markers identifying historic neighborhoods were installed by neighborhood groups.

State and Regional Resources

- **The Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (CRT)** provides resources for the preservation and development of Louisiana’s historic, cultural and natural resources. CRT’s Office of Cultural Development has divisions of Arts, Historic Preservation, Cultural Economy, and Archaeology.
 - > **The Division of Archaeology** provides resources, promotes awareness of archaeological resources, and helps private landowners and local and municipal agencies identify and preserve important archaeological sites—including resources discovered during public works projects. When preservation of resources is not possible, the Archaeological Program can do data recovery prior to disturbance. The Division of Archaeology is in the process of updating the State Archaeological Plan to identify preservation priorities.
 - > **The Division of Historic Preservation** provides a database of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is responsible for nominating places to the National Register, and serves as a clearinghouse for information on available preservation resources.¹
- **The National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Streets Program** provides technical support and resources for revitalization of historic commercial streets—including physical rehabilitation as well as economic development programs. Designation as an official Main Street is by application to a state Main Street Coordinating Program. Designated Main Street organizations are typically incorporated nonprofit organizations, and usually administered by paid staff. There are currently no designated Main Streets in the Shreveport-Caddo area, though there are several elsewhere in Louisiana.
- **The Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation** is a statewide nonprofit education and advocacy network that provides training and technical assistance and outreach to preservation initiatives.
- **The Louisiana Archaeological Society** is a membership association of professional and avocational archaeologists interested in investigating, interpreting and preserving information on the early history and inhabitants of Louisiana.
- **Northwestern State University in Natchitoches** has a master’s degree program in heritage resources. Faculty may be open to creating class projects or providing internships to help Shreveport advance its historic preservation efforts.
- **National Center for Preservation Technology and Training**, a research division of the National Park Service located in Natchitoches, offers applied research and professional training in historic preservation technology, including seminars and workshops on a wide variety of preservation topics. The Center also awards research grants for the advancement of preservation technology.

Historic Preservation Regulation

Unlike many Louisiana cities, the City of Shreveport does not have a historic preservation district commission, a historic landmarks commission, local historic districts or landmarks, nor does it have ordinances or programs that promote preservation or protection of historic structures, such as a demolition-delay ordinance that would require that

¹ To access the database see: www.crt.state.la.us/hp/historicplacesdatabase.aspx

FIGURE 5.1 LOUISIANA TAX INCENTIVES PROGRAM QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

	FEDERAL HISTORIC REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT	LOUISIANA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT	LOUISIANA STATE RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT
Purpose	Encourages the preservation of historic buildings through incentives to support the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings	Encourages the preservation of historic buildings through incentives to support the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings.	Encourages taxpayers to preserve and improve their homes by offering a tax credit on rehabilitation costs
Eligibility	Income producing property individually listed on the National Register (NR) or a contributing element within a National Register Historic District	Income producing property that is a contributing element within a Downtown Development District or Cultural District as determined by the Division of Historic Preservation.	An owner occupied building that is a contributing element to a NR District, a locally designated historic district, a Main Street District, a Cultural District, or a DDD; a residential structure that is listed or is eligible for listing on the NR; or a vacant and blighted building at least 50 years old
% of Credit	20% of construction costs and fees	25%	25% credit = AGI less than or equal to \$50,000; 20% credit = AGI \$50,001 - \$75,000; 15% credit = AGI \$75,001 - \$100,000; 10% credit = AGI \$100,001 plus. (Available only for vacant and blighted residential buildings at least 50 yrs. old.)
Minimum Expenditure	The rehabilitation must exceed the adjusted basis of the building. If adjusted basis is less than \$5,000, the rehabilitation cost must be at least \$5,000.	\$10,000	\$20,000
Credit Cap	None	\$5 million per taxpayer within a particular DDD	\$25,000 per structure
Application	Submitted to DHP and forwarded to NPS with recommendation. Part 1 certifies the building as historic. Part 2 describes the proposed rehabilitation. Part 3 is final certification of completed work.	Submitted to DHP. Part 1 certifies the building as historic. Part 2 describes the proposed rehabilitation. Part 3 is final certification of completed work.	Preliminary Application-A establish initial eligibility. Proposed Rehabilitation Application-B determines if the proposed rehabilitation is consistent with the Standards. Certificate of Completion-C is the final certification.
Fees	Initial fee request by NPS of \$250 with Part 2; final fee is scaled to the size of the rehabilitation	\$250 with Part 2	\$250 with Proposed Rehabilitation Application-B
Program Standards	Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation	Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation	Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
Taking the Credit	Credit is claimed for the year the project is completed and has received an approved Part 3. Unused Credit can be carried back one year and forward for 20 years.	Credit is claimed for the year the project is completed and has received an approved Part 3. Any unused credit may be carried forward for up to 5 years. This credit may be sold to a third party.	The tax credit is divided into 5 equal portions, with the first portion being used in the taxable year of the completion date, and the remaining portions used once a year for the next four years. If the full credit for one year cannot be taken, the owner will receive that amount as a refund.
Recapture	If the owner sells the building within 5 years of the rehabilitation, he loses 20% of the earned credit for each year short of the full 5 years.	If the owner sells the building within 5 years of the rehabilitation, he loses 20% of the earned credit for each year short of the full 5 years.	If the building is sold during the five-year credit period, all unused credit will immediately become void.

Source: www.louisianahp.org

efforts be made to find potential uses for historic structures before a demolition permit is issued. The only exception is a special zoning district designation, SPI-1 Highland Urban Conservation District, for two sections of the Highland-Fairfield neighborhoods. The purpose statement of this zoning district emphasizes the need to conserve the area’s historic character. All uses except one- or two-family residences must be approved by the Metropolitan Planning Commission and are subject to staff design comment, and the zoning district provides for a possible 120-day delay when a demolition permit is requested. Although the zoning district provides for staff design review in the “context of design guidelines published by the Metropolitan Planning Commission,” no such published guidelines have been found.

Louisiana state law provides for creation of local historic preservation district commissions and, for parishes of over 500,000 in population and certain named parishes, historic landmarks commissions (Louisiana R.S. 75: 732-78). Historic preservation district commissions exist only if there is a local historic district—a geographic area where

external alterations to historic structures are regulated by the commission for compliance with a set of design standards through issuance of a permit called a Certificate of Appropriateness. Historic landmarks commissions have the same kind of regulatory power over individual sites and structures designated as landmarks. Under state law, the establishment of local historic districts or historic landmarks does not require the agreement of property owners.

Because Caddo Parish has fewer than 500,000 residents and is not one of the named parishes in the state legislation, Shreveport is currently eligible only for a historic preservation district commission and not a stand-alone landmarks commission. The steps to establish a historic preservation district commission are:

- Appointment of a historic preservation study committee to study any proposed historic preservation districts
- Issuance of a report by the committee to the planning commission that includes the historic significance of buildings, structures, sites, monuments, areas and landmarks to be governed by the proposed historic

FIGURE 5.2 NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC SITES, DISTRICTS, AND LANDMARKS

DATE	HISTORIC NAME	ADDRESS	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
1929, 1938	A.C. Steere Elementary School	4009 Youree Drive	Local
1901–03	Antioch Baptist Church	1057 Texas Avenue	State
1910–1921	Antoine, C.C. House	1941 Perrin Street	State
1915	B'nai Zion Temple	802 Cotton Street	State
1924	C.E. Byrd High School	3201 Line Avenue	Local
1856	Caspiana House	Northeast corner of campus of LSU–Shreveport, LA 1	Local
1922	Central Fire Station	801 Crockett Street	Local
c.1910–1941	Central Railroad Station	1025 Marshall Street	Local
N/A	Crystal Grocery (Fertitta’s Deli)	1124 Fairfield	Local
1900–c.1915	Davidson House	654 Wichita	Local
1928–29	Dodd College President’s Home	601 Ockley Drive	Local
1928, 1931	Fair Park High School	3222 Greenwood Road	Local
1900–1936	Fairfield Historic District		Local
1936	Flesch House	415 Sherwood Road	State
c. 1890–1930	Highland Historic District		Local
1896	Holy Trinity Catholic Church	315 Marshall Street	State
1926–1928	Huey P. Long House (Forest Avenue)	305 Forest Avenue	State
1918–1926	Huey P. Long House (Laurel Street)	2403 Laurel Street	State
1922–1939	Jefferson Hotel	907 Louisiana Avenue	Local

DATE	HISTORIC NAME	ADDRESS	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
1929–1950	KCS Railroad Bridge, Cross Bayou (Waddell “A” Truss Bridge)	Cross Bayou and Spring Street	National
1925	Kings Highway Christian Church	806 Kings Highway	Local
1952–1955	Lakeside Municipal Golf Course	2200 Milam	Local
1904–1905	Lee Hardware Building (Taylor Wholesale Grocers and Cotton Factors Warehouse; Lee Hardware Building)	719, 723, 729 Edwards Street	Local
1898	Lewis Home	675 Jordan Street	Local
1905	Line Avenue School	1800 Line Avenue	Local
1937	Louisiana State Exhibit Building (Louisiana State Museum)	3015 Greenwood Road	Local
1937	Mason House	103 Ardmore	Local
1937	Masonic Temple	1805 Creswell Street	Local
N/A	Oakland Cemetery	Block bounded by Milam, Christian, Sprague, and Baker streets	Local
1926–1950	Ogilvie Hardware Company Building	217 Jones Street	Local
1910	Old Commercial National Bank Building (United Mercantile Bank Building)	509 Market Street at Texas Street	State
1860s–1946; predominantly 1910s and 1920s era of oil boom	Shreveport Commercial Historic District (Downtown Shreveport Historic District)		State
1925	Shreveport Fire Station #8 (Velva St. Station)	3406 Velva Street	Local
1924	Shreveport Municipal Building	724 McNeil	State
1929	Shreveport Municipal Memorial Auditorium	705 Grand Avenue	National
1887	Shreveport Water Works, Pump Station (McNeil Street Pump Station)	On Cross Bayou off Common Street Extension	National
1924–25	Shreveport Woma’s Department Club Building	802 Margaret Place	Local
1929	South Highlands Fire Station (Fire Station #10)	763 Oneonta	Local
1912–1949	South Highlands Historic District		State
c.1905	Sprague Street Houses	1100–1118 Sprague Street	Local
1905	St. Mark’s Episcopal Church (Church of the Holy Cross)	875 Cotton Street	Local
c.1880–c.1934	St. Paul’s Bottoms Historic District (Ledbetter Heights)		State
1883	Star Cemetery	off 2100 block of Texas Avenue	Local
1923–1925	Strand Theatre	630 Crockett	Local
1872	Symphony House (Scofield House; Col. Robert H. Lindsay House)	2803 Woodlawn Avenue	Local
1866	Tally’s Bank (Spring Street Museum)	525 Spring Street	Local
c.1908–1917	Texas Avenue Buildings–800 Block	824–864 Texas Avenue	Local
1912	U.S. Post Office and Court House	Marshall and Texas Streets	Local
1937	Wiener, Samuel, House	615 Longleaf Road	State
1934	Wile House	626 Wilder Place	State
1917	Wray–Dickinson Building	308 Market Street	State
1925	YMCA, Downtown Branch	400 McNeil Street	Local

Source: www.crt.state.la.us/hp/nationalregister/nhl/SEARCHBY.ASP

district; what should be regulated in the district; and suggestions for a proposed ordinance on the district

- Filing of a copy of the report with various state and local agencies, as well as provision for public review and comment
- Preparation and submission of a report by the planning commission to the city council making a recommendation
- Action, for, against, amendment, and so on, by the city council.

If the city council approves the historic district study report, then it will pass an ordinance establishing the district and the Mayor will appoint members of a historic preservation district commission, with council consent. The preservation commission has to establish guidelines before it can exercise its power to regulate exterior alterations of resources within the local historic district. Very general guidelines are available in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (1995) for preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction.² A historic preservation district commission can also be empowered by city government to name resources that are worthy of preservation, whether or not they are located inside the established local historic district, and then exercise the powers of a landmarks commission—regulation of external alterations of designated landmarks—over proposed alterations to these historic resources.

In 2009, the Shreveport City Council established a historic preservation study committee composed of local experts and community members active in historic preservation. As of late 2010, the group has not issued a final report and recommendations.

The Louisiana state law means that a historic preservation commission exists primarily in terms of its regulatory role and there does not appear to be provision for a historic commission with a purely educational or advocacy role. However, the Shreveport City Charter provides for the establishment of boards and commissions for any city purpose, so there could be an opportunity to have a city-

² www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_8_2.htm

supported historic preservation entity without having a highly-regulated local historic district.

Both the federal government and state governments offer tax incentives for rehabilitation of historic structures. In addition, local governments can establish incentives, such as tax abatements, to encourage preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Arts and cultural activities make communities more desirable places to live, work, and visit. As cities compete to retain and attract businesses and residents, studies show that the most competitive communities are those that offer an abundance of arts and cultural resources. Arts-related industries are also well known as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization—a pattern illustrated in diverse communities, from the SoHo neighborhood of New York City to Paducah, Kentucky.

In 2007, the nonprofit organization Americans for the Arts issued an economic study that documents the economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture industry in 156 communities throughout the nation, including a Northwest Louisiana region composed of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Lincoln, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine and Webster parishes. Arts and cultural organizations are economic drivers that create jobs, generate private and public revenue, attract visitors, and fuel a culture of innovation. Nationally, as of 2007, nonprofit arts and cultural organizations generated \$166.2 billion in economic activity, supported 5.7 million full-time jobs, and generated nearly \$30 billion in government revenue to local, state, and federal governments per year—a 7:1 return on investment in public funding for the arts. Arts and cultural attractions can also fuel increased tourism. Travelers who include arts and culture events in their trips spend more than 30 percent more money per trip and stay more than 50 percent longer than other tourists.³

³ Americans for the Arts: *Arts & Economic Prosperity III: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences*. Available at www.artsusa.org/information_services/research/services/economic_impact/default.asp

The study found that spending by nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in the Northwest Louisiana Region was significantly less per person compared with the average of all regions around the country, but that audiences for arts events in the region actually spent slightly more than the national average (expenditures including food, parking, child care and other expenses associated with the event).

Organizations in Northwest Louisiana spent over \$34 million per year—or \$60.33 per person—as compared with the nearly \$103 million or \$109.63 per population average for all regions studied.⁴ However, audiences spent \$97.16 per person per year in the Northwest Louisiana region, more than the average of \$94.33 per person per year throughout all study regions.⁵ This suggests that while nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in the Northwest Louisiana region collectively have a much smaller budget per person, regional audiences are willing to spend as much or more on arts and cultural entertainment as those living in other regions of the nation, and therefore may be able to support significantly more arts and cultural offerings

The study also found that arts and cultural organizations’ spending in Northwest Louisiana resulted in 2,367 full-time equivalent jobs in 2005, the year organizations were surveyed.

Arts and cultural resources

Shreveport’s numerous arts and cultural institutions provide a wide variety of offerings, but while long-time residents are often “in the know” about these resources, outsiders and

⁴ The study examined spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations only, and thus does not account for spending by for-profit arts and entertainment industries such as the gaming or film industries.
⁵ Figures do not account for interregional differences in cost of living.
⁶ Average of all 35 regional study areas. Does not include study city, town, or statewide study areas.
⁷ Includes: payroll and payroll taxes, facility expenses, overhead and administrative expenses, programmatic expenses, and event production costs including payments to artists.
⁸ Includes purchases of art, equipment, and real estate. Capital expenditures also include construction and renovation costs.
⁹ Sum of organizational operating and capital expenditures.
¹⁰ The total expenditures made by arts audiences as a direct result of their attendance at nonprofit arts and culture events in each study region during fiscal 2005. For example, when patrons attend an arts and culture event they may purchase dinner at a restaurant, pay a valet to park their car, eat dessert after the event, and/or pay a babysitter upon returning home.

FIGURE 5.3 ARTS/CULTURE ORGANIZATION SPENDING

SPENDING PER PERSON	NORTHWEST LOUISIANA REGIONAL STUDY AREA	AVERAGE ACROSS ALL REGIONAL STUDY AREAS ⁶
Operating expenditures ⁷	\$41.13	\$98.51
Capital expenditures ⁸	\$19.20	\$11.12
Total organizational expenditures ⁹	\$60.33	\$109.63
Audience spending (arts-event-related) ¹⁰	\$97.16	\$94.33

new residents frequently comment about how difficult it is to find out about local arts, culture, and entertainment. Although the majority of arts and cultural institutions are located in and around downtown, there is a general lack of physical connectivity and programmatic synergy among them. However, there is significant potential for Shreveport-Caddo to strengthen and capitalize on its local and national identity as the cultural capital of the ArkLaTex region, and, in so doing, attract new residents, businesses, and innovation, improving overall quality of life

Cultural history

Shreveport has long served as the cultural capital of its region. In the early 20th century, downtown Shreveport had numerous theaters, including vaudeville stages and, later, movie theaters and an opera house. The nearby Blue Goose neighborhood—roughly bound by Fairfield Avenue, Princess Park, Texas Avenue, and Sam R. Fertitta Drive and named after a speakeasy that operated there during Prohibition—is nationally significant in the history of early blues music and hosted a number of the nation’s great blues musicians. The Texas Avenue corridor was the location of Shreveport’s first African-American business district and for many years was also a center of music and culture.

By the mid-20th century, the city’s rich cultural mix was embodied in the local fusion of blues and country music, and helped forge one of the nation’s best-known global exports: rock and roll. The famed “Louisiana Hayride” radio program—dubbed “The Cradle of the Stars”—was broadcast nationally from Shreveport’s Municipal Auditorium and fixed the city’s place on

the national music scene. It is perhaps best known for hosting the debut radio performance of a then-unknown Elvis Presley in 1954, and also hosted performers such as Hank Williams, Jr., and Johnny Cash. That era also saw the establishment of the Shreveport Symphony and the creation of the Louisiana State Exhibit Museum in Shreveport—a sign of the city’s regional and statewide cultural importance.

In the last half of the 20th century, Shreveport solidified its place as the cultural capital of its region with its growing array of arts and cultural institutions. The 1970s–80s saw establishment of the Shreveport Regional Arts Commission (SRAC), as the arts arm of the City of Shreveport, the return of public Mardi-Gras celebrations to the area, and the founding of numerous smaller nonprofit arts initiatives and institutions.



‘Elvis has left the building.’

From October 1954 to December 1956, the “Louisiana Hayride” radio program—broadcast live from the Shreveport Municipal Auditorium—held a contract with the young Elvis Presley, who lived for most of that time in Shreveport. Although virtually unknown at the time of his first performance for the Hayride, by the end of his contract in 1956 Elvis had risen to national stardom. Following his final performance at the Municipal Auditorium, Elvis quickly exited the stage, despite audience calls for an encore. When the audience persisted, announcer Horace Logan made the now-legendary announcement, “Ladies and gentlemen, Elvis has left the building.”

Arts and Culture in Shreveport-Caddo Today

Recent years have seen increased focus on creating a critical mass of cultural and arts destinations, activities and organization downtown—reinforced by state designation of downtown as a cultural district. Two nodes of arts and cultural activities have emerged: the “West Edge” arts district and the riverfront. The southwestern blocks of downtown Shreveport—referred to as the “West Edge” arts district (roughly bound by Common, McNeill, Cotton and Fannin streets), has become the epicenter of Shreveport’s arts and cultural initiatives. Several of the city’s cultural institutions are located within the West Edge area, and others plan to move there in the future. The downtown riverfront also functions as an important cultural center with Sci-Port, Riverview Hall, the Barnwell Art and Garden Center, Festival Plaza, and several casinos.

The spirit of the arts and cultural community in Shreveport today is generally collaborative, though arts leaders often mention a lack of coordination among arts and cultural initiatives as a major challenge to future advancement. Priority needs within the arts and culture community also include more exhibition and performance space, and physical and programmatic connectivity among the numerous existing institutions—especially in and around downtown. Additionally, there are few opportunities for adult arts education. General funding for the arts declined with the 2009-2010 recession.

Members of the arts community further indicate a need to “professionalize” the arts economy through business-skills training for local artists. To increase the competitiveness of local and regional artists at the national level, the SRAC maintains the Northwest Louisiana Juried Artist Roster—a jury-based roster of local artists of all media who are “assumed to demonstrate work that is of the highest artistic quality and is produced in a professional manner.”¹¹ However, there are accomplished Shreveport artists who work outside the arts jury system.

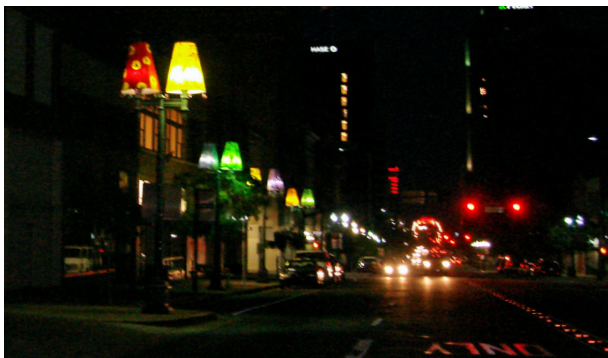
¹¹ www.shrevearts.org

Arts and culture organizations

- **Arts Congress:** In 2006 the Shreveport-Bossier Community Foundation convened an Arts Congress composed of local artists, arts administrators, and other stakeholders to increase collaboration around a common vision and a coherent set of policies and strategies. In 2008 the Congress published a set of policies and strategies for implementation in the areas of equity, education, access, collaboration and visibility upon which the recommendations in this chapter build. (See Appendix.)
- **Shreveport Regional Arts Council (SRAC),** founded in 1976 as the “arts arm” for the City of Shreveport, is an arts promotion and education nonprofit that now serves all of northwest Louisiana. SRAC maintains the regional juried artist roster and provides information on funding and other opportunities for local artists. It runs Artspace, a gallery and exhibition space in the West Edge; provides arts education programming for K-12 students; offers grants and technical assistance to artists and arts organizations; hosts an annual student arts festival; and sponsors public art installations throughout the region. SRAC’s Thursday Night Trolley offers free transportation throughout downtown Shreveport to numerous arts and cultural venues on the third Thursday of every month. SRAC receives both city and state funds, private donations. In 2009 it received \$250,000 in federal stimulus funding from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). SRAC’s offices were lost to fire in late 2009. A competitive grant of \$100,000 was awarded to SRAC by the NEA in 2010 to advance the arts district in the West Edge through conversion of a

historic fire station for SRAC offices and event space, as well as planning for a seven-block gateway cultural district, an outdoor arts festival, podcast tours, and a competition to design public art and signage.

- **The Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Division of the Arts** provides direct grant funding for arts programs statewide, provides funding to SRAC and other regional arts councils throughout the state, and designates cultural districts.
- **Eye-20 Creative Corridor.** The Eye-20 Creative Corridor is a regional collaboration of three northern Louisiana arts councils—SRAC, Northeast Louisiana Arts Council, and Bossier Arts Council—created to highlight north Louisiana’s cultural offerings and collaborate on programs. The corridor extends from Shreveport to Tallulah along I-20.
- **The Shreveport Symphony Orchestra** is Louisiana’s oldest continually operating professional orchestra, founded in 1948. It performs at the Strand Theater and other venues.
- **The Shreveport Opera** has performed more than 60 seasons of opera and offers traveling performances throughout Caddo Parish, including in Caddo Parish schools.
- **The River City Repertory Theater,** a professional theater company, draws local, regional and national talent and has featured numerous nationally-renowned actors.
- **Minicine** is a volunteer-run venue for experimental and independent film and video. Screenings occur in galleries, coffee shops, and vacant buildings throughout the city several times a year.



A temporary art installation by SRAC on Texas Street.

Downtown Arts and Cultural Resources

• West Edge

- > **SRAC’s downtown headquarters** was destroyed by fire in 2009. It will relocate to a historic former fire station on Common Street in the West Edge. Plans for the new building include a gallery, lounge, black box theater, studio space, and renovation of an old fire practice tower as quarters for an artist in residence.

- > **Artspace**, operated by SRAC, houses exhibition and performance space and a café on Texas Street.
 - > **Strand Theater**, built in 1925, is the official State Theater of Louisiana and is listed on the National Register. It was originally built as an opera house and movie theater, and was the “flagship” theater of the Saenger Brothers—Shreveport natives known for constructing many theaters of high architectural design throughout the south. It is a major venue for Broadway productions, concerts, and other performances.
 - > **Robinson Film Center** is a nonprofit venue for independent, international and classic cinema and resource for film production and media education. It houses a theater and a bar/restaurant on its second floor, and showcases regular screenings. Centenary Film Society also hosts screenings at the Robinson Film Center (free to Centenary students).
 - > **Shreveport Municipal Auditorium** offers guided tours and houses the Stage of Stars museum, which honors performers who began their careers on the Auditorium stage.
 - > **Tipitina’s Foundation** is a statewide nonprofit dedicated to preservation of Louisiana’s musical cultures. The foundation offers music studios, Sunday workshops with local musicians, an internship program for high-school age musicians, and an annual fundraiser that raises funds to support donation of band instruments to local schools.
 - > **Texas Avenue Community Association (TACA)**, formed in 2010, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation and revitalization of the Texas Avenue corridor, the Ledbetter Heights neighborhood, and the Blue Goose District, with a focus on neighborhood revitalization and on increasing the presence of arts and cultural initiatives in these historically important neighborhoods. TACA sponsored a successful crafts fair in fall 2010 as the first of a series of events.
 - > **West Edge Artists’ Co-op** is a metropolitan area-wide artists’ association that facilitates art displays in public places and galleries, provides support and promotion for participating artists, and provides marketing and networking resources for member artists.
 - > **The Blue Goose Blues Foundation** is a charitable community development organization working to rejuvenate the Blue Goose area through music and educational initiatives.¹²
- **Riverfront**
 - > **R.S. Barnwell Memorial Art and Garden Center** offers visual art exhibitions, art classes, a craft gallery and store, and a domed botanical garden. The dome and other parts of the Center have serious maintenance needs.
 - > **Sci-Port** science center is a highly successful public-private endeavor that draws visitors locally and regionally. In addition to educational exhibits and activities, Sci-Port hosts special events for children and families, including music and cultural performances, as well as adult-oriented events like the Mad Scientists’ Ball and a regular Thursday night happy hour in connection with the SRAC Thursday Night Trolley. The City of Shreveport owns the land and building where Sci-Port is located and maintains the grounds and exterior of the building. Sci-Port pays \$1 in rent per year plus utilities and maintenance for the inside of the building. Sci-Port has launched a \$30 million capital campaign for an

¹² www.bluegooseblues.org/



The Red River Revel Festival at Festival Plaza (<http://activerain.com/blog/view/730832/it-s-red-river-revel-time-in-shreveport>)

Alternative Energy Park on the riverfront, a green roof and rooftop garden, an educational miniature golf course, and a new parking garage built of recycled materials.

- > **J. Bennett Johnston Waterway Regional Visitor Center** features programs, exhibits, displays and other educational tools to inform the public about the Red River Basin, the J. Bennett Johnston Waterway, and the role of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in development, preservation, and enhancement of water resources.
- > **Festival Plaza**, a three-block area between Riverfront Park and Market Street located adjacent to the KCS railroad tracks, holds numerous outdoor festivals and events throughout the year.
- > **Riverview Hall** is a city-owned facility which houses flexible meeting and event space and a theater where the Shreveport Opera and Symphony often perform. Although still in use, it has many maintenance needs.
- > **Casinos**, located within a designated area along the riverfront, house several large performance venues catering to headline-level concerts and other events. Casinos also provide a number of fine dining options downtown. Due to their intentionally insular physical design, there is little “spillover” activity or commerce outside of the venues themselves.
- **Other Downtown Arts and Cultural Resources**
 - > **Southern University Museum of Art in Shreveport** houses exhibitions of African and African-American art and artifacts. Admission is free.
 - > **The Multicultural Center of the South** offers exhibits, tours and programs showcasing the diverse history and cultures of Northwest Louisiana.
 - > **The Capri Theater**, newly renovated, is utilized for music events and is available for private functions.
 - > **The Spring Street Historical Museum** depicts the development of northwest Louisiana since the 1800s, including Indian artifacts, firearms, period clothing and military uniforms. The museum is housed on the only surviving example of New Orleans-style architecture in Shreveport and is part of the State’s

Museum Program. Admission is free. The Friends of the Spring Street Museum supports and promotes the museum’s activities.¹³

- > **The Shreveport Water Works Museum** occupies the McNeill Street Pumping Station, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a National Historic Landmark, a Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, and an American Water Landmark. Built in 1887, the pumping station was the nation’s last operating steam-powered water works when steam engines were retired in 1980. The museum, opened in 2007, is part of the State’s Museum Program.



The Spring Street Historical Museum in downtown is the only surviving example of New Orleans-style architecture in Shreveport.

Outside of Downtown—Arts and Cultural Resources

- **The Louisiana State Exhibit Museum** is housed in a distinctive, circular building constructed in 1939 on the Shreveport Fairgrounds. It highlights world-

¹³ www.springstreetmuseum.com



Louisiana State Exhibit Building (www.friendsofsem.org)

renowned wax dioramas, a large notable fresco, and rotating exhibits that highlight the history and culture of Louisiana and beyond. The museum property also includes an auditorium and surrounding gardens. It is the only public museum in Louisiana honored as a Smithsonian Institution Affiliate, which allows it access to the traveling exhibits and educational research services of the Smithsonian Institution. Admission is free.

- **The Gardens of the American Rose Center**, the nation's largest park dedicated to roses, cover 118 acres in western Shreveport. The gardens were dedicated in 1974 when the American Rose Society headquarters moved to Shreveport from Columbus, Ohio. Today, the center features more than 65 individual rose gardens and 20,000 rosebushes, with a variety of companion plants, sculptures and fountains.
- **The Shreveport Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum** is one of a series of manuscript libraries throughout the U.S. that house the Karpeles manuscript collections, the world's largest private holding of important original manuscripts and documents.
- **The R.W. Norton Art Gallery** is a nonprofit museum built in 1966 featuring works of American and European art. Free and open to the public, the gallery is situated on 40 acres of gardens. In addition to art collections, the building houses a 10,000-volume research library and oversees educational programming and an oral history project.¹⁴

¹⁴ <http://www.rwnaf.org/>



Shreveport Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum Building
(www.rain.org/~karpeles/shrfm.html)

- **Shreveport Little Theater** celebrated its 88th consecutive season in 2009-2010 and is a primarily voluntary community organization in the Highland/Stoner Hill area that produces a variety of live theater.¹⁵

Festivals and Events

- **Red River Revel** is an annual week-long arts festival that has been held at Festival Plaza since 1976 and showcases more than 100 visual artists, as well as music and other performances on four stages. Sunshine Magazine includes the event on its list of 100 leading fine arts festivals; the AAA has named it a Southern Traveler's Travel Treasure; and the Southeastern Tourism Society includes it on its Top 20 events listing.
- **Mudbug Madness** is a multiday festival held at Festival Plaza in May that features food and craft venues and several stages with music.
- **The James Burton International Guitar Festival** features several music stages and raises money to purchase guitars for school-age children.
- **Mardi Gras** has been celebrated in Shreveport since the early 20th century, though for many years there was little public festivity surrounding the holiday, given Shreveport's relatively small Catholic population. Public celebration was revived in the early 1980s, several krewes have formed, and public parades and festivities now occur on Mardi Gras day and the preceding week.
- **Holiday in Dixie** is an annual festival held since 1949 to celebrate spring and the Louisiana Purchase. The festival includes a 10-day carnival at Festival Plaza, a parade, and neighborhood block parties and other local festivities.
- **The Louisiana State Fair**, founded in 1906, is held annually in the fall at the Shreveport Fairgrounds and runs for several weeks. It includes a carnival, live entertainment, livestock and agricultural exhibits, and special exhibits in conjunction with the adjacent state museum. It is run by a private, nonprofit membership organization and has no official ties to either the City or State.
- **Highland Jazz & Blues Festival** is held annually in November in Columbia Park and features local and national musicians, arts and crafts and food.

¹⁵ www.shreveportlittletheater.org

- **Let the Good Times Roll Festival** celebrates African-American music, art, food and culture and is held annually in June.
- **Brew** is an annual day-long beer-tasting festival founded in 2008 and held at Festival Plaza.
- **The Louisiana Film Festival** showcases the work of K-12 students in local film venues.
- **Movies and Moonbeams** a program of outdoor movie screenings throughout Shreveport and Bossier, is sponsored by the Robinson Film Center, SPAR, and others.
- More festivals and events are listed on the **Shreveport-Bossier Fun Guide**: <http://www.shreveportbossierfunguide.com/feature.php?id=3>
- **Sculpted Entertainment** and its sister program, **Inspiration Imagination**, offer community workshops in theater.
- **SPAR** offers pottery classes to the public at Wildwood Park and hosts weekly art classes with local artists in community centers throughout the city. SPAR also offers a musical theater program for children at David Raines Community Center.
- **Artspace** provides open drawing sessions with live models.

B. Community Issues and Concerns

Arts and Cultural Education

- **Louisiana State University in Shreveport** offers programs in communications, fine arts, music, and graphic design.
- **Centenary College** offers majors in studio art, visual culture, museum management, theater, and music, and also offers afterschool music programs for youth.
- **Bossier Parish Community College** in Bossier City offers programs in liberal arts, including fine art, music and theater (performance and production), graphic design, and TV and radio broadcasting. The college also offers music and theater performances open to the public.
- **Caddo Magnet High School** is a performing arts-oriented high school that draws talent from throughout the parish.
- **Green Oaks School** also has a performing arts program.
- **Renzi Education and Art Center**, located in the Highland neighborhood, is a charitable program of Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrows and the local Catholic diocese. The Center provides free afterschool arts and education programs and a summer film camp in partnership with the Robinson Film Center.
- **Playaz and Playettes** is a community-based nonprofit in Ledbetter Heights. It offers music appreciation programs for all ages and music business skills training for young people.

Public opinion survey

More than 82 percent of residents surveyed stated that “preserving historic buildings and traditional neighborhoods” was either “very important” or “somewhat important” to the future of the Shreveport area; nearly 80 percent stated that “availability of arts and cultural opportunities” was “very important” or “somewhat important;” and more than 37 percent called the availability of arts and cultural amenities “extremely important” or “very important” to their decision to live or stay in the Shreveport area.

Visioning forum for the 2030 master plan

Visioning forum participants also had the opportunity to participate in small-group discussions around key master plan topics, including several groups that focused on cultural and historic heritage and the arts. Recommendations from these groups included:

- Capitalize on Shreveport’s musical heritage.
- Expand awareness of the area’s history.
- Support a vibrant performing arts, visual art, and cultural arts community.
- Restore historic buildings.
- Promote fine arts education.

“Speak Out” neighborhood vision meetings

The Community Advisory Group organized a series of short visioning sessions in each of Greater Shreveport’s nine neighborhood high schools to give residents additional opportunities to contribute to the master plan vision. Participants expressed a desire to restore and revitalize downtown and for more family-oriented cultural activities, and they identified Shreveport’s cultural and musical heritage as a significant opportunity.

Downtown and neighborhood meetings

Two neighborhood workshops were conducted throughout the master plan area in each of five planning districts—North, Central, West, East, and Downtown—to allow residents to gather with others who lived near them. Relevant recommendations included:

- Capitalize on the historical significance of neighborhoods.
- Provide more family-oriented activities and events.
- Provide more festivals and events in neighborhoods throughout the city.
- Provide more commercial and cultural amenities.
- Revitalize historic neighborhoods.
- Preserve and celebrate historic architecture.
- Restore historic buildings.
- Restore Texas Street and the Texas Avenue corridor.

Historic Preservation, Culture and Arts in the Vision and Principles

The Vision Statement begins, “In 2030, greater Shreveport is the dynamic, creative and flourishing powerhouse of the ArkLaTex region. Our region combines the economic opportunity, diversity and cultural excitement of a growing city with the friendliness of a small town. Downtown and nearby neighborhoods in the city core are vibrantly alive with residents and businesses in historic and new buildings.”

Several master plan principles directly support historic preservation, culture and the arts:

- Support, maintain and expand on the economic and community assets that sustain our area today.

- Create a community with easy access to all aspects of community life—work, travel, cultural events, festivals, shopping, and faith based and non-profit opportunities.
- Build greater understanding of our historic roots through organized preservation and historic heritage activities and incentive programs.
- Support arts and culture as a source of community pride and a distinctive economic competitive advantage.

C. Strategies and Actions to Achieve the Goals**Goal 1**

The integrity and character of historic structures and overall historic character is maintained and enhanced.

Policies:

- **Coordinate city programs and policies to support historic preservation goals.**
- **Adopt regulations and incentives that encourage and streamline adaptive reuse of historic structures.**
- **Support and promote community-based historic preservation initiatives.**
- **Provide appropriate tools to review changes that may detract from historic neighborhoods’ integrity and character, such as design guidelines.**

Greater attention to preserving and reusing elements of historic character is essential to cultivation of Shreveport’s sense of place and celebration of its cultural identity, attraction of private investment to help create a unique and exciting downtown district, enhancement of quality of life, and distinguishing Shreveport from other places in the region and the country. Historic preservation should be a partnership between government and nonprofit entities, but in recent years, local government has not provided the minimum support for historic preservation efforts.

STRATEGIES

A. Create the basic infrastructure within government for historic preservation.

Actions

1. Provide for staff time at the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) to be devoted to historic preservation.

An existing or new staff member at the MPC should be assigned to develop the needed historic preservation infrastructure within government, working with local and state historic preservation organizations and entities.

2. Establish and maintain a thorough inventory of historic properties and structures for the entire MPC planning area and integrate this inventory into permitting and other land use databases.

The National Register listings on the state Division of Historic Preservation website will provide the foundation for this task. A GIS database and map file should be connected to zoning and other databases, so that the historic status of buildings can be taken into account during land use decision making. A baseline inventory of the condition of the historic resources should be made, with photographs, and added to the database. Assistance with this task could be sought from the M.A. program in Heritage Resources at Northwestern State University, in collaboration with local preservation advocates such as the historic preservation society.

3. Establish and support a Historic Resources Advisory Committee to lead preservation efforts and identify important historic resources for protection, as long as there are no local historic districts.

The City Council and Mayor should establish this committee—which is distinct from a Historic Preservation District Commission under state law—to provide advice to government officials

and agencies on preservation initiatives and on land use actions that affect National Register listed resources, and to undertake pre-emptive historic preservation promotion and public education activities. If a local historic district is created, then this advisory committee should be dissolved and its activities moved to the local historic preservation district commission that would be created with the local historic district. The Historic Preservation Study Committee working in 2010 to develop a historic preservation ordinance could be designated as this Historic Resources Advisory Committee in the absence of a commission.

4. Identify priority properties for preservation by means of a rating system.

Once an inventory is created, preservation priorities should be established by means of a rating system to help identify the best use of preservation resources and to identify target properties or areas for preservation initiatives. For instance, a point system could be adopted whereby historic resources are given points for: age, integrity of original structure/architectural style, contribution to a historic fabric or ensemble, uniqueness, and so on.

5. Raise awareness in public works agencies about potential archaeological resources.

The state's Regional Archaeology Program can assist the city in raising awareness among public works agencies and others about areas where resources are likely to be found and whom to contact if archaeological resources are discovered.

B. Establish regulations and ordinances that enhance the feasibility of rehabilitation and restoration of historic structures for adaptive reuse.

Actions

1. Establish a demolition-delay ordinance.

When an owner of a historic property applies for a demolition permit, a demolition-delay ordinance requires a waiting period during which an effort is made to find a use for the property that will not require demolition of its historic elements. Historic significance can be defined according to various criteria—for example, all structures over 50 years old or on the National Register could be eligible for a demolition delay, or the focus could be all such structures in downtown. This tool is used by many communities, where the delay period typically ranges from 60 days to one year. Demolition delay does not guarantee that a property will be spared from demolition if no other viable use can be found for it, but it has been shown to reduce demolition of historic properties.

In Shreveport, demolition delay should be established for all structures over 50 years old in the Downtown Development District. This will allow for review of structures that may not themselves have exceptional historic value but that contribute to the “tout ensemble,” the overall historic character of their block. Clear criteria for decision-making should be included in any ordinance on whether demolition delay should be applied in any specific case, with a written decision that responds to the criteria. Typically, the decision on demolition delay is made by a commission with historic preservation duties, but Shreveport has no such body yet. While that situation prevails, a demolition-delay ordinance should provide for the decision makers to seek expertise from the proposed Historic Resources Advisory Committee or another group of historic preservation professionals and other interested parties (such as a representative of the DDA).

2. Amend downtown zoning to encourage residential reuse of historic buildings.

See Chapter 10 for more details on zoning issues

in downtown and the zoning changes needed to promote more residential use.

3. Adopt building code elements that encourage reuse of historic buildings.

Particularly in downtown Shreveport, building code regulations are often mentioned by developers as an obstacle to preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings. The New Jersey historic rehabilitation code, the Los Angeles downtown rehabilitation code, and the International Existing Building Code all provide successful models. The first step can be creation of a working group under the auspices of the DDA that includes investors, developers, and others who have faced preservation challenges to determine how the codes could be altered to better accommodate preservation and adaptive reuse. The working group should also include city staff members from the permitting departments, the MPC, as well as legal counsel.

4. Offer incentives for restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures.

Incentives may include expedited permitting or tax abatements for a defined number of years.

C. Explore creation of special districts to enhance preservation of historic and neighborhood character.

Communities as different as New Orleans and Dallas have found it valuable to create special design review districts to ensure that unique and important aspects of their communities’ physical character are preserved. These kinds of districts can vary tremendously in the purpose, extent, and detail of regulation. Districts and neighborhoods that have some kind of design review intended to ensure compatibility with overall character—whether the building is new or reuse of an existing building—often see their real estate values rise. This is because the review requirements give confidence to buyers

and investors about the continuity of the district's character.

Preserving the unique character of historic neighborhoods does not always require that each individual building or structure be preserved as a perfect historic replica. Rather, where the ensemble of buildings is the source of historic character, attention to the forms, rhythms, and basic design features that create distinctive physical character can help to retain a place's uniqueness while providing opportunities for new development and contemporary ways of life. While some historic buildings are important to preserve as if in a museum, others can capitalize on their irreplaceable historic character while nurturing new identities, uses, and life.

Actions

1. Consider creating a pilot local historic district in downtown after demolition delay, new zoning, building code changes, and incentives are in place.

Local historic districts provide the highest degree of regulation of exterior features of buildings against incompatible development in historic districts. After regulatory and incentive changes are made to promote residential uses and adaptive reuse in the Downtown Development District, a pilot local historic district in a more restricted area would be appropriate to ensure that downtown continues to express its historic character. Locally-designated historic districts are often coterminous with National Register districts, but a smaller area may be more suitable for downtown Shreveport. In order for this to happen, a historic preservation district committee and study must be completed, including design guidelines, and the recommendations must be approved by the MPC and the City Council. The historic preservation district commission would review development and renovation proposals for the historic compatibility of exterior changes and issue permits called Certificates

of Appropriateness that allow work to proceed. Projects within the historic district would not be able to get a building permit without having obtained a Certificate of Appropriateness.

2. Consider creating neighborhood conservation districts.

Neighborhood conservation districts provide a mechanism for differing levels of review—from advisory to fully regulatory—for demolition and exterior changes to buildings within a defined area that has a recognized character. Typically, conservation districts are defined by a study of the area that highlights an identifiable neighborhood character and recommends which kinds of changes should be subject to review. Review standards are tailored to the special character of each district. Conservation districts can be administered by a local historic preservation commission, planning commission, municipal staff members, or a special neighborhood conservation district commission. They are sometimes included in zoning ordinances and sometimes enacted as separate ordinances for each conservation district.

Conservation districts based on neighborhood action and that encourage voluntary compliance—rather than mandatory review—are better suited to Shreveport's preservation goals at this time, rather than a more formal approach with mandatory design reviews, which require more staff, funding, time, and capacity. (A voluntary approach could still issue certificates or other indications that a given project has met the established standards.) In the future, neighborhoods or districts where there is an increased threat of deterioration of neighborhood character that is not adequately addressed through voluntary design guidelines may consider the more stringent approach of mandatory standards. A number of cities have conservation districts under various names, including San Antonio, Dallas, and Austin in Texas; Memphis

and Nashville; Roanoke (VA); and Atlanta.

Elements of a neighborhood conservation district system that would be suitable for Shreveport include:

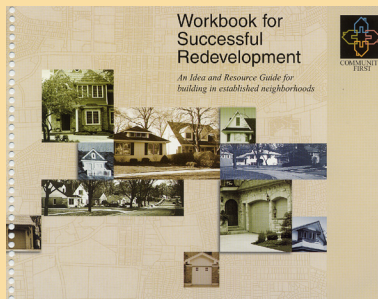
- nomination by a neighborhood group, with a process to get majority property-owner approval for the nomination and to start the process
- neighborhood study to identify key aspects of neighborhood character
- neighborhood meetings and discussion to identify what building or site elements, if any, should be subject to review, advisory or mandatory standards

- clear and simple guidelines to facilitate rapid review
- administrative review by MPC or zoning staff with appeal to the MPC board or Board of Zoning Adjustment
- supermajority approval by property-owners required for establishment of the district (60% or more)
- MPC and City Council approval required for establishment of the district

In order to conserve staff time, the City of Austin has developed a system for the neighborhood study needed as a foundation for conservation district review that uses neighborhood volunteers. The planning department provides conservation district advocates with maps and helps them develop a form to use in surveying every property in the proposed conservation district. This information then serves as the source material for neighborhood meetings on what elements to include in design review.

Voluntary Design Guidelines: Naperville, Illinois

An example of voluntary efforts is a workbook created by *Community First*, a citizens' group in the Chicago suburb of Naperville, which experienced inappropriate additions and teardowns. The organization was founded as an educational nonprofit by builders, architects and citizens and is supported by both the City of Naperville and the local Chamber of Commerce. The group prepared a booklet with simple illustrations to guide builders, property owners, designers and citizens through the process of understanding the character of a particular neighborhood and street—with special attention to what constitutes harmonious relationships among buildings—and provides advice on ways to design additions and new buildings to contribute to overall neighborhood character. Even



though compliance is entirely voluntary, the booklet influenced some 250 projects in its first four years. (www.communityfirstinc.org/)

3. Identify and designate local landmarks, and offer a 10-year tax holiday on additional assessed value for rehabilitation.

Caddo Parish is not one of the named parishes with less than 500,000 in population that state law allows to establish a historic landmarks commission. It should not be difficult to add Caddo Parish to the current list. Then it would be possible to designate individual properties as historic landmarks, which is the equivalent of a local historic district with a single property. Tax abatement or other incentive programs could be offered as incentives to rehabilitation of landmarks. If the City establishes a local historic district and associated historic preservation district commission, that commission would be able to propose the designation of local historic landmarks and review exterior changes.

4. Establish a pilot Main Street program on Texas Avenue.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation created the Main Street Program 28 years ago as a combined economic development and historic preservation program for commercial districts. More than 1,600 communities have put it into practice, including 28 in Louisiana. The National Trust Main Street Center estimates that between 1980 and 2009, Main Street programs have produced aggregate investment of nearly \$50 billion in physical improvements, 94,000 net additional businesses, 418,000 net new jobs, and 214,000 building rehabilitations. For each dollar used to operate the Main Street program, up to \$27 dollars are generated in the community.¹⁶

The Main Street Approach is a volunteer-driven initiative based on four points:¹⁷

- **Organization:** a governing board, standing committees, and division of labor, with coordination and support from a paid program director.
- **Promotion:** marketing a positive image through advertising, events, and campaigns carried out by volunteers to build confidence in the district.
- **Design:** restoration and rehabilitation of historic assets, compatible new development, enhanced walkability, good maintenance practices and good design practices in displays, signs and other aspects of visual appearance.
- **Economic restructuring:** strengthening and expansion of the economic base through market studies, diversification, and new uses.

The Texas Avenue corridor is an ideal candidate for the Main Streets program because of its historic importance, proximity to downtown, potential to support West Edge development, and the fact that several planning and community development initiatives are already underway to reinvigorate the corridor. The initial coordination of a Texas Avenue

Main Street program would need to come from City staff, whose help would be valuable in attracting corporate support. During the initial years, some public funding would be necessary for the salaried program director, but the program should be able to raise most or all of its own funding after five years. The state Main Streets program may be able to provide technical assistance.

D. Provide information and guidance to property owners on historic preservation issues.

Actions

1. Create a “one-stop shop” for information on historic preservation.

There is currently no one place where property owners who are interested in historic restoration, rehabilitation, or compatible renovation can go to find out about local historic building types, sources of materials, tax credit opportunities, preservation easements and other information. A resource center of this type would provide an excellent opportunity for public-private cooperation between the MPC and the historic preservation society. It could take the form of a website with designation of an individual to give in-person assistance, when needed.

Some functions of this resource could include:

- **Tax credit assistance:** information for property owners on obtaining federal, state and other tax credits for renovation.
- **Information on historical appropriateness for typical Shreveport architectural types for use by property owners in renovation projects:** A number of cities have created pamphlets explaining common historic architectural types in the community and how to preserve character while doing renovations. It may be possible to recruit students from Northwestern State University’s master’s program in heritage resources to develop such a resource—perhaps

¹⁶ www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/reinvestment-statistics.html

¹⁷ www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-approach/

as a city website or in collaboration with the Shreveport Historical Society.

- **Technical assistance on historic preservation easements:** Historic preservation easements are voluntary agreements between owners of National Register-listed property and a historic preservation organization recognized by the IRS. The easement restricts specified changes to the property and the donor conveys certain rights over the property to the easement-holding organization, which then has the legal authority to enforce the terms of the easement. Terms of the easement can include interior or exterior changes in a building, and they are tailored to each situation. In exchange for the tax break, the property owner agrees to provide public access to the property.

Goal 2

Residents' and visitors' experience of Shreveport is enhanced by a sense of the city's history.

Policies:

- **Enhance public awareness of the Shreveport area's unique historical and cultural legacy.**
- **Enhance public awareness of the economic benefits of historic preservation in Shreveport.**

STRATEGIES

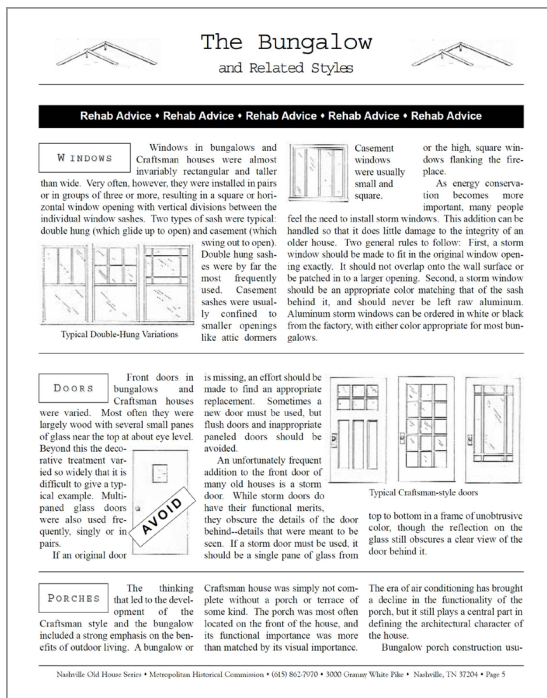
A. Provide user-friendly information on historic and cultural assets.

Isolated sites of historic importance can be given new vitality through increased public awareness, such as by linking these sites with other places of interest and with one another, or by providing resources such as self-guided tours and information to make isolated sites more accessible and attractive. Synergies and physical connections can also be encouraged through guides and easy-to-use information.

Actions

1. Inventory, improve and expand existing interpretative signage for historic resources.

Existing interpretive signs were installed some years ago, and some are in poor condition. An inventory of the existing signage, along with identification of additional sites that merit signs, should be prepared as a foundation for creation of thematic heritage trails. At a minimum, all National Register-listed sites and districts should be appropriately signed. The inventory could be an appropriate task for volunteers such as the Shreveport Historical Society or college or high school groups. Identification of additional sites for historic signage should occur in the context of a broader survey of historic people, activities and sites that should be recognized.



The Nashville Metropolitan Historical Commission "Old House Series" provides information on sensitive renovation and additions.

2. Create heritage trails with different themes.

The Freedom Trail tracing American Revolution sites in Boston was the first heritage trail and is still going strong. Thematic heritage trails serve both local residents and visitors with particular interests and have proven valuable attractions for school groups and families, as well as adults. Shreveport-Caddo has a wealth of potential themes, such as music history, the oil and gas industry, African-American culture, and 20th-century architecture.

3. Create self-guided digital tours.

Downloadable podcasts, maps and narratives that connect sites according to geographic and thematic content are cost-effective. These guides should correspond to interpretive historic signage.

B. Develop cultural heritage tourism destinations.

Cultural tourists generally stay longer and spend more money than other tourists. Development of a program of cultural tourism could also be one way to encourage festival visitors to stay longer and casino visitors to venture out of the casinos to spend some time in Shreveport. Today, the official Louisiana travel website, www.louisianatravel.com, puts northwest Louisiana in a region called "Sportsman's Paradise" but does not market the area for cultural or historic heritage.

Actions

1. Identify and develop cultural heritage destinations in Shreveport-Caddo.

Working with the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, identify appropriate locations and then fund and create easy-to-access information on cultural heritage tourism destinations throughout the region. Simple ways to begin might be with a "the South meets the West" theme that works with Shreveport's history and culture as a gateway to the West, or a museum circuit that combines the city's numerous

museums. Successful heritage tourism initiatives in Philadelphia (www.gophila.com) and Chicago (www.architecture.org) offer good examples of user-friendly resource and planning materials that the task force should emulate.

C. Raise awareness among residents of the metropolitan area about the area's unique history and the contribution of all groups to that history.

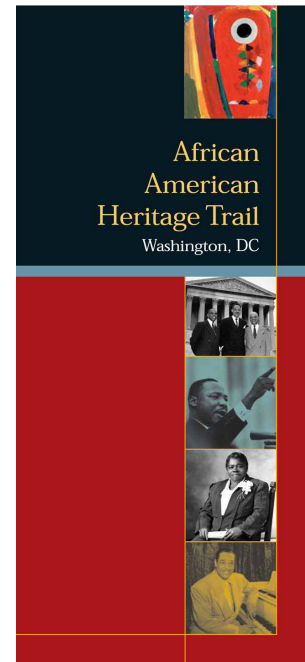
Actions

1. Organize historic house tours, dinners, or similar events to raise awareness about historic resources and raise money for advocacy organizations.

Organizations like the Shreveport Historic Preservation Society or other civic groups could promote the cause of historic preservation in Shreveport and raise money for inventories, neighborhood studies and creation of informational materials (on the web and in print) on historic subjects or on how to undertake historically-appropriate renovations.

2. Organize a program to sell historic house research and plaques.

Providence, RI, has many homes with a white plaque listing a date and a name, the year the house was built and the original owner. The widespread appearance of these plaques is a simple way to express the value of historic houses and their connection to individuals in the city's past. A similar program could be developed by



Washington's African-American Heritage Trail is one of many in cities throughout the country.

the Shreveport Historic Preservation Society, which can do the research and create the plaque for owners of historic houses for a fee.

3. Increase awareness of archaeological resources and Caddo Tribe history.

Work with local archaeological associations to create public access and interpretive information on archaeological resources, including the Caddo Tribe burial site downtown. Specific identification of archaeological sites should not be made public until a site can be secured and protected, in order to avoid damage and theft of archaeological remains.

Goal 3

Shreveport’s arts community is vibrant and thriving.

Policies:

- *Enhance access to resources for arts and cultural organizations, nurture cultural and artistic entrepreneurship, and support fair and equitable distribution of resources.*
- *Support and promote arts education programs throughout the city and for residents of all ages.*
- *Promote arts and cultural initiatives as part of the city’s economic development strategy.*
- *Incorporate public art in large capital improvement projects.*

STRATEGIES

A. Increase the visibility of art and artists in the community.

Actions

1. Establish a “public art in public projects” ordinance.

Many cities have programs that set aside a small amount from the project budget for major public projects. While this may seem to be an unaffordable “extra” to some, over the

years a growing inventory of public art can have a transforming effect that enhances a community’s sense of place. While most public art in Shreveport today is located in downtown, a percent-for-art program will bring public art to many parts of the city.

Typically, in percent-for-art programs, the amount is one percent, but the details of the program vary widely, with some ordinances requiring lower percentages, including a fund for conservation and maintenance of the artwork, capping the amount to be spent on art, and so on. The artists are usually chosen in response to a request for proposals by arts councils or commissions, based on professional criteria and often in collaboration with community groups. It is common for the artists to work closely with both the public works department and the business or residential communities in which the art will be placed.

2. Develop an annual “Open Studios” program and other arts events in neighborhoods throughout Shreveport and Caddo Parish.

“Open Studios” events invite the public into artist work spaces where visual artists sell their works and performers can give short performances.

These events raise awareness about the arts community. Specific routes can be mapped out, and local businesses such as cafes or restaurants can be included to provide refreshments along the way.



Many communities have established Open Studios weekends to raise awareness of local artists.

3. Continue the Arts Congress as a unifying force in the regional arts community.

With continuing facilitation by the community foundation, the Arts Congress should continue as an arena for artists and cultural organization professionals to strengthen communication and advocacy for common goals. Because not all cultural organizations are affiliated with SRAC, the Arts Congress offers the opportunity to include and coordinate around a wide array of artists and arts activities.

B. Enhance arts education.

1. Create a summer professional-development program for arts educators.

As the arts and cultural capital of the region, Shreveport is an ideal place to bring together arts educators from around the region and throughout the country to learn best practices in arts education from one another and from national arts education experts. Such a program would provide visibility for the Shreveport area's own strength in the arts, boost tourism by bringing several hundred visitors to Shreveport each summer, and help to foster a stronger culture of arts education. This can be sponsored by an existing "umbrella" arts organization such as SRAC or the Arts Congress, or through a newly-created committee composed of representatives from various arts institutions and interests throughout the region. Initial funding could come from national and local philanthropic sources, as well as fees from participants.

2. Provide a central source of information on all arts-related programming for youth.

SRAC's website, www.shrevearts.org, would be an ideal location for this resource.

3. Provide more opportunities for adult arts education.

Form partnerships among SPAR, SRAC, and local institutions to provide arts education for adults

in facilities such as Caddo Magnet High School and local colleges and universities that have arts and performance facilities that may be available for use during evenings and weekends. Publicize these programs through SPAR, through the Shreveport Fun Guide, and other outlets. Unlike SPAR's programs for children, adult programs should charge a reasonable fee. SPAR or SRAC could simply provide a framework for adult art classes—consolidating logistics, marketing and recruitment of teachers for a fee—and allow the teachers to establish their own fees. The Barnwell Center, which has a small adult arts program, may be able to provide facilities for independent artists to give courses.

4. Create a SPAR-School District collaboration to create afterschool arts programs in school buildings.

If given access to school buildings for afterschool programs, SPAR can organize arts programs for neighborhood youth.

5. Develop a centralized afterschool, weekend and summer arts program in downtown Shreveport for all Caddo School District and other students in the region.

Similar to NOCCA, the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, a program of this type would provide opportunities for high school students from all schools, not just the magnet schools. Entry to NOCCA is by audition only, and it offers training in an array of arts from creative writing and theater to music and visual arts. In addition to a summer program, it has a distinctive school year program in which students are at their regular schools for half the day and at NOCCA the rest of the day. Almost all NOCCA graduates go on to college and many nationally successful New Orleans performers and artists were trained there. Development of a program of this type in the Shreveport area would probably be most successful if it were a multi-parish effort. Locating the school in downtown Shreveport, ideally in or

close to the West Edge, would provide another addition to the critical mass of downtown arts organizations, as well as bringing the vitality of creative youth to downtown.

Goal 4

Downtown is the city's arts and cultural center.

Policy:

- **Support and promote a critical mass of arts and culture activities in downtown.**

STRATEGIES

A. Intensify the arts and culture presence and identity of downtown.

Strengthening arts and cultural institutions downtown will not only help to create a critical mass of cultural institutions and strengthen synergies between them, but will also support broader goals for downtown within the master plan, including expanding housing options in the downtown area, and strengthening the West Edge arts district.

Actions

1. Amend downtown zoning to specifically allow artists' studios and live-work situations.

Revisions of downtown zoning—recommended in this master plan as a foundation to attract investment to downtown and to promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings—should explicitly permit artists' studios and live-work uses in appropriate downtown subdistricts.

2. Attract artists' studios, galleries and residences by providing incentives for low-cost renovations for raw space.

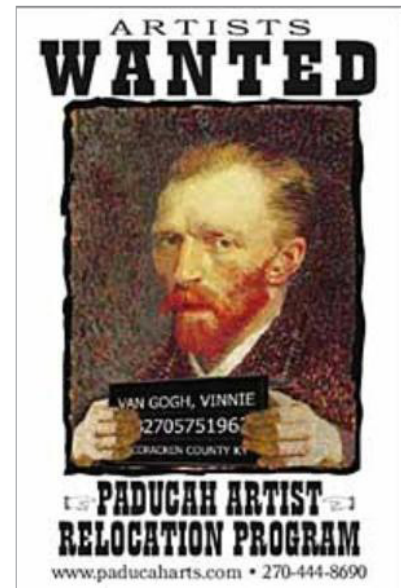
Artists often look for raw space with basic amenities that they can modify for their own purposes. After the necessary regulatory changes have been put in place for downtown, the DDA

could create a revolving fund for low-interest loans or matching grants to property owners to make simple renovations that create low-cost raw space.

3. Create marketing materials and initiatives to market downtown residences specifically to artists—both locally and nationally.

Paducah, Kentucky has become famous for the way it created an extremely successful arts district—and revitalized a historic neighborhood at the same time. It offered live-work housing in need of renovation to artists for \$1 and attracted artists from all over the country.

After zoning and similar reforms are enacted, the DDA and SRAC could develop a program suitable for downtown that matched artists with appropriate space in need of renovation.



4. Invest in a cultural arts identity branding campaign for downtown, including promotional materials for different market segments: families, locals, tourists, potential future residents, businesses, and so on.

Marketing downtown and other arts activities to specific audiences will help expand public awareness and build new constituencies for the arts in Shreveport.

5. Repair and maintain downtown riverfront arts venues and resolve lighting issues on the bridge.

The idea of the Neon Bridge was a good one, but the neon art on the bridge needs to be maintained. A fundraising campaign focused on the businesses on both sides of the river that benefit from the visibility that the Neon Bridge brought to Shreveport could provide a maintenance endowment. Also on the riverfront, both the Barnwell Center and Riverview Hall are in need of serious repair and maintenance. The Barnwell Center in particular needs a fresh look at how to retain and make the most of its assets, while pursuing options to resolve issues such as the extremely high cost of repairing the

dome. A more vigorous “Friends” group and additional classes and events to attract more people to the Barnwell Center would help make the Barnwell more successful. Both buildings can play an enhanced role as cultural anchors in the Riverfront District of downtown.

6. Build on the state Cultural District and increase awareness of its benefits.

Promote the tax advantages of the Cultural District to local and regional artists through targeted mailings and couple this promotion with joint Downtown Development Authority—SRAC incentive programs to attract artists to the West Edge.

D. Getting Started

Early actions that are not costly will provide a foundation for more ambitious activities.

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	
Provide staff time at MPC to be devoted to historic preservation	MPC
Establish a demolition-delay ordinance for downtown	Collaboration of MPC, DDA, preservation advocates; City Council
Establish and maintain an inventory of historic properties and integrate it with permitting and land use databases	Collaboration of MPC and advocates; MPC, DOS, NLCOG
Organize an annual historic house tour as a fund-raiser for preservation activities	Shreveport Historic Preservation Society
ARTS AND CULTURE	
Establish a “public art in public projects” ordinance	SRAC, DOS; City Council
Continue the Arts Congress	Shreveport-Bossier Community Foundation; SRAC
Provide a central source of information on all arts programming for youth.	SRAC with community partners (SPAR, School District, private schools, etc.)
Develop an annual Open Studios event	SRAC with community partners