

*Grand* !! *Historic*

SHREVEPORT - BOSSIER, LA

# DOWNTOWN *Walking* TOUR



Featuring  
**ONLINE  
INTERIOR  
VIEWS**

**STEP INTO HISTORY** !!

INSTAGRAMMABLE SPOTS & HISTORICAL LOCATIONS

# HISTORY

## THE STORY SO FAR

**Shreveport and Bossier City's story starts in the early 1800s when settlers from the Carolinas moved into the region already occupied by Caddo Native Americans. These first settlers were mostly a blend of Scotch-Irish, German and Welsh.**

They were affected by a 165-mile logjam in the Red River that blocked commerce. The federal government hired Captain Henry Miller Shreve to clear the river in 1833. Two years later, the federal government would enter into a treaty with the Caddo Native Americans, who occupied the land that was roughly the whole modern Caddo Parish and a part of DeSoto Parish. In exchange, the tribe received \$80,000 in goods and horses, plus \$50,000.

An 1840 census showed Caddo Parish's population as 2,416 whites, 2,837 enslaved Africans and 29 free African Americans. By 1860, there were 4,733 whites, 7,338 enslaved Africans and 69 free African Americans. The main commodities were cotton, timber and petroleum.

Bossier City's early beginnings date back to the 1830s. Mary Bennett Cane and James H. Cane established Elysian Groves, a plantation on the east bank of the Red River. The plantation was a trading post which shipped cotton, corn and sweet potatoes to market. Its population was 600 and remained that way until 1907, when the area was incorporated as Bossier City, which got its name from General Pierre Bossier, a former Creole general, cotton farmer and one of the area's earliest settlers. In the 1930s, Barksdale Air Force Base was built and the community has grown ever since.

Today, Shreveport-Bossier is the cultural hub of the region known as the Ark-La-Tex. Healthcare, tourism, agriculture, and oil and gas thrive in the sister cities. There are six historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places, five in Shreveport (Downtown, Ledbetter Heights, Highland, South Highlands, and Fairfield) and one in Bossier City (Barksdale Air Force Base). This brochure concentrates on historic sites and landmarks in easily walkable areas in and around the Downtown Shreveport and Ledbetter Heights historic districts.

This pamphlet is designed to give our visitors a glimpse of Shreveport and Bossier City as they began (1939-1875), as they grew (1875-1940), and as they are today.

### SOURCES

Eric Brock's Shreveport, KSLA News 12, Shreveport Times Archives

Louisiana State University Noel Memorial Library Collection

Historic photos provided courtesy of the Northwest Louisiana Archives at LSUS.

# LOCATIONS

## POINTS OF INTEREST

- 1.** Downtown Shreveport Visitor Center
- 2.** Commerce Street
- 3.** Spring Street Museum
- 4.** Shreve Square
- 5.** Old C.N.B./United Mercantile Building
- 6.** Shreveport Chamber Plaza
- 7.** Holy Trinity Catholic Church
- 8.** Slattery Building
- 9.** Shreve Memorial Library
- 10.** Hutchinson Building
- 11.** YMCA
- 12.** Shreveport Water Works Museum
- 13.** First United Methodist Church
- 14.** Justin Gras Building
- 15.** Shepherd-Blanchard Building
- 16.** Strand Theatre
- 17.** Scottish Rite Cathedral
- 18.** B'nai Zion Temple
- 19.** Holy Cross Episcopal Church
- 20.** Central Artstation
- 21.** Shreveport Municipal Auditorium
- 22.** Oakland Cemetery
- 23.** Logan Mansion
- 24.** Austen Place B&B/Ogilvie-Wiener Mansion
- 25.** Antioch Baptist Church
- 26.** "The Avenue"
- 27.** Hebrew Rest Cemetery
- 28.** Star Cemetery
- 29.** St. Joseph Cemetery



Check each location in the brochure for the estimated walking distance from the Downtown Shreveport Visitor Center.

**Map located in center of brochure.**

# DOWNTOWN

## 01 DOWNTOWN SHREVEPORT VISITOR CENTER



### 629 SPRING STREET

Start  
Here

Built 1895 for the C. C. Hardman Company, the business office building has housed numerous businesses through the years including a carriage and wagon dealership, a saddlery company, a livery stable, and others. Since 1979, it has housed the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, the official destination marketing organization for Caddo and Bossier Parishes. On the side of the building is one of the most beautiful murals promoting all the fun things to see and do titled "A Call to Action" by Ali Bahler. It's lit up at night and a popular spot for photos.

## INSTAGRAMMABLE!

02



## 02 COMMERCE STREET



0.9  
mi

### ONE BLOCK FROM THE RED RIVER

Historically known as "The Levee," this street was once the bustling location of cotton factories, merchants, and livery stables. It was to this point that Texans herded their ox-drawn

# SHREVEPORT

01



wagons filled with cotton and hides, exchanging them for tobacco, salt, molasses, coffee, and whiskey brought up by steamboat from New Orleans. At one time there could be as many as 25 steamboats regularly docked here. Today, nightclubs and the Red River District fill some of those spaces.

**#DOWNTOWNSHREVEPORT**



03

## 03 SPRING STREET MUSEUM

### 525 SPRING STREET



0.08  
mi

One of the best preserved early structures in Shreveport, this building was finished in 1865. Listed on the Register of Historic Places, the museum houses exhibits and memorabilia of the early days of Northwest Louisiana. The lower floor was employed as a banking and brokerage facility by the builder, Martin Tally. Subsequently it was rented to three other banking operations, and it was here that the original First National Bank of Shreveport was located at 525 Spring Street.

## 04 SHREVE SQUARE

### UNDER THE TEXAS STREET BRIDGE

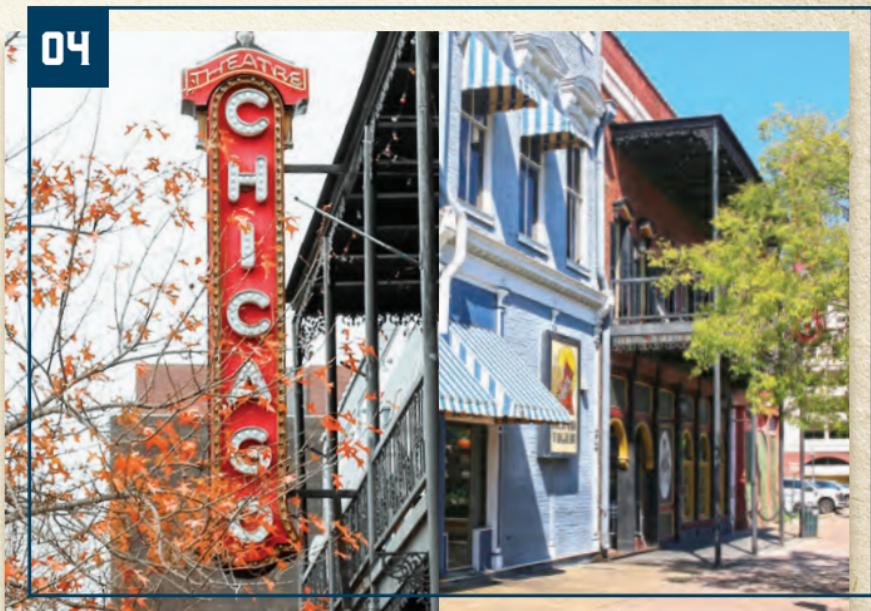


0.1  
mi

Nestled under the Texas Street Bridge, this area coincides with the earliest town site in the 1830s. Surviving structures date from 1865-1895. The city's first stores, hotels, and saloons were built here. The alley bisecting Shreve Square is called Green's Alley to the north and Martin's Lane to the south. In the early 1970s, the area was restored as an entertainment district though several of the historic structures that were its cornerstone were destroyed by a tornado in April 2000. Today, visitors can dine at the Blind Tiger and dance at Chicago, a nightclub.



**360°**  
**VIEW**



## 05 OLD C.N.B. / UNITED MERCANTILE BUILDING

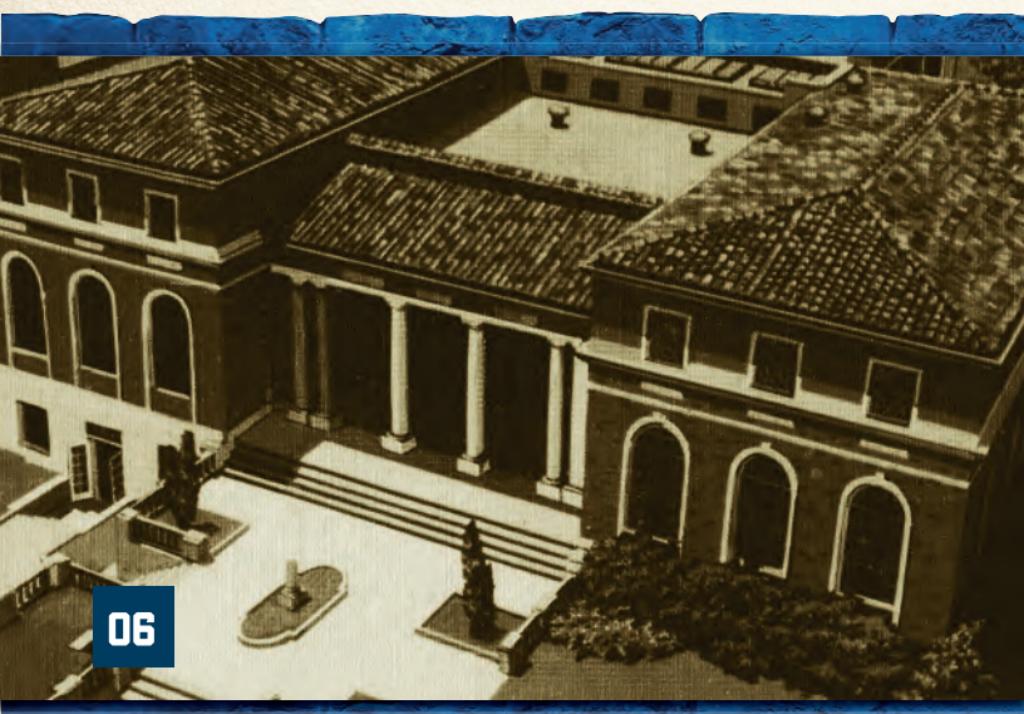


0.2  
mi

### 509 MARKET STREET

This building is architecturally significant with terra-cotta embellishments. It dominated the skyline when it was completed in 1910. Originally it was the Commercial National Bank of Shreveport and later the location of the United Mercantile Bank, both important local institutions now gone. Today, the building has been restored and turned into apartments and office space. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

# #DOWNTOWNSHREVEPORT



06

## SHREVEPORT CHAMBER PLAZA

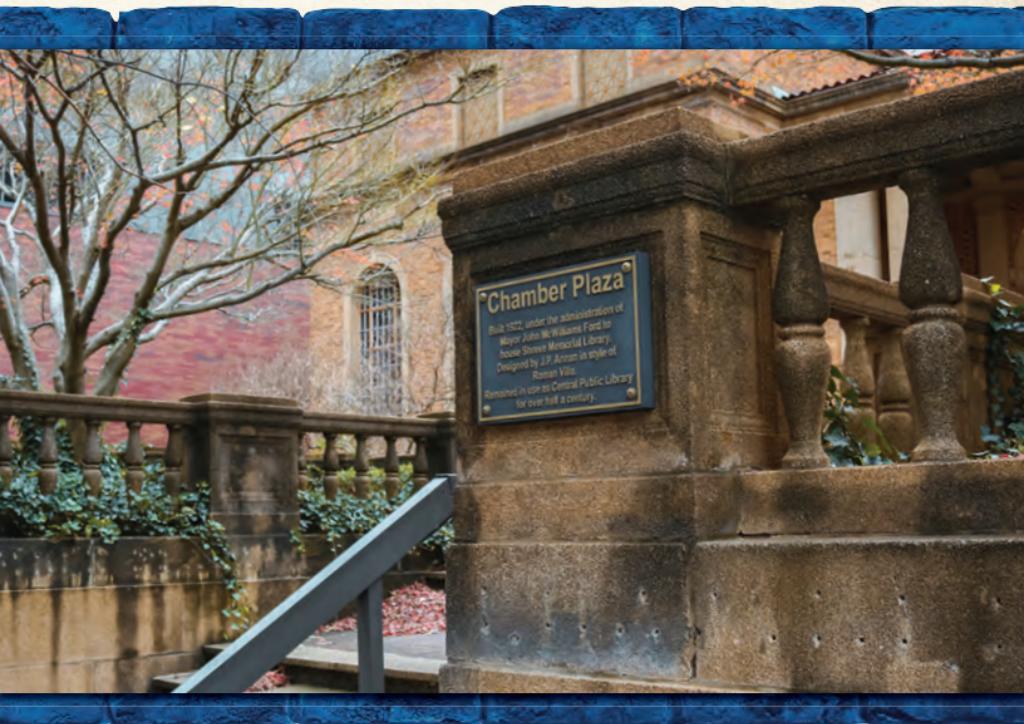


0.3  
mi

### 400 EDWARDS STREET

Until 1922 the home of Thomas T. Williamson, a member of the Shreve Town Company, stood on this site. Built in 1923 to house Shreve Memorial Library, Shreveport Chamber Plaza is an excellent example of early Italian Renaissance architecture. Renovated in 1984, the building is now home of the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Several movies have been filmed here including *The Pardon*, *Disaster Movie* and *W.*

05



**VIEW**



## 07 HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH



0.5  
mi

### 315 MARSHALL STREET

Designed by noted U.S. architect Nicholas Clayton and built in 1896, this is the third building of the first Roman Catholic parish in Shreveport. The church is of Romanesque Revival design with the main altar of white Carrara marble. Particularly significant are the windows, including five memorializing the Catholic priests who died ministering to the population during the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1873, and the stained glass windows of the eight beatitudes. In 1944, the Garden of Our Lady was dedicated as a tribute to Americans serving in the Armed Forces. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Group tours are available.



**VIEW**



## 08 THE SLATTERY BUILDING



0.2  
mi

### 509 MARSHALL STREET

Shreveport's tallest building when constructed was built by 80-year-old John B. Slattery in 1924, a testament to his faith in the future of the city. At the time of its opening, it was the largest office building between St. Louis, Missouri and New Orleans. During excavation a flatboat in perfect condition, as well as a wooden pier, both dating from the 1830s, were discovered 12 feet down. These testify to the fact that the now-vanished Silver Lake once extended to this point.

07



08



## 9 SHREVE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

### 424 TEXAS STREET

0.3  
mi

The first Shreveport library was run by a group of women who organized a subscription library service in 1890 for a fee of \$2 per year. The current site of the main library first served as the location of the "Old" Custom House, which included a post office, customs house and federal court. The building was designed by Architect N.S. Allen and was completed in 1887, standing for 23 years before being razed in 1910. In 1978, Walker & Walker architects began a renovation that lasted until 1980, culminating in relocation of the Shreve Memorial Library main branch from the original building at 400 Edwards Street to the current site at Texas and Marshall Street. The Italian Renaissance building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## 10 HUTCHINSON BUILDING

### 504 TEXAS STREET

0.4  
mi

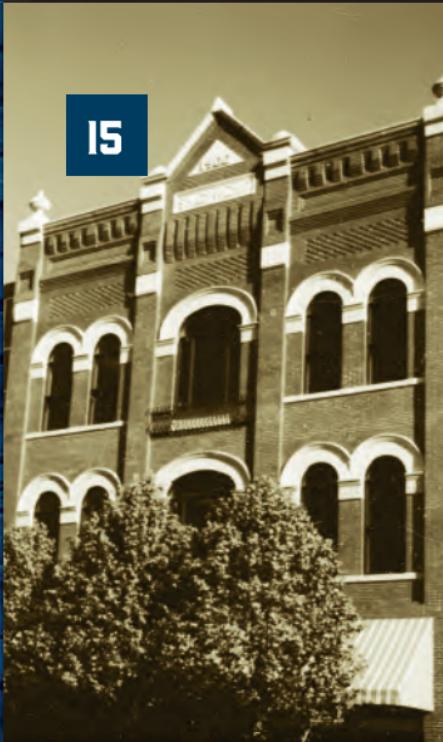
This six-story structure with its unique terra-cotta façade was built in 1911 to house the Hutchinson Brothers Music Company and Jewelers. The builders required that the building be constructed within a strict deadline and when the contractor failed to do so he was obligated to add two floors at his own expense. It later became home to Grayson's Department Store and was restored in 1977-1978. It is now a commercial office building and home to The Missing Link, a craft hotdog restaurant.



14



15



16



# TOUR MAP

- 1. Downtown Shreveport Visitor Center  
629 Spring Street
- 2. Commerce Street  
Commerce Street
- 3. Spring Street Museum  
525 Spring Street
- 4. Shreve Square  
Under Texas Street Bridge
- 5. Old C.N.B./United Mercantile Building  
509 Market Street
- 6. Shreveport Chamber Plaza  
400 Edwards Street
- 7. Holy Trinity Catholic Church  
315 Marshall Street
- 8. Slattery Building  
509 Marshall Street
- 9. Shreve Memorial Library  
424 Texas Street
- 10. Hutchinson Building  
504 Texas Street
- 11. YMCA  
400 McNeill Street
- 12. Shreveport Water Works Museum  
142 North Common Street
- 13. First United Methodist Church  
500 Common Street
- 14. Justin Gras Building  
527 Louisiana Street
- 15. Shepherd-Blanchard Building  
631 Milam Street
- 16. Strand Theatre  
619 Louisiana Street
- 17. Scottish Rite Cathedral  
725 Cotton Street
- 18. B'hai Zion Temple  
802 Cotton Street
- 19. Holy Cross Episcopal Church  
875 Cotton Street
- 20. Central Artstation  
801 Crockett Street
- 21. Shreveport Municipal Auditorium  
705 Elvis Presley Avenue
- 22. Oakland Cemetery  
Located near Milam Street & Elvis Presley Avenue
- 23. Logan Mansion  
725 Austin Place
- 24. Austen Place B&B/Ogilvie-Wiener Mansion  
728 Austin Place
- 25. Antioch Baptist Church  
1057 Texas Avenue
- 26. "The Avenue"  
800-1100 Blocks of Texas Street
- 27. Hebrew Rest Cemetery  
1437 Texas Avenue
- 28. Star Cemetery  
2100 Texas Avenue
- 29. St. Joseph Cemetery  
2300 Texas Avenue

#SBFUNSIDE



## II YMCA

400 MCNEILL STREET

0.5 mi

The first YMCA in Shreveport was established in 1888. In 1922, the heirs of prominent banker Edward Jacobs, co-founder of the First National Bank of Shreveport, gave the family's home to the YMCA for the purpose of erecting a new state-of-the-art facility. The old Victorian mansion was demolished and the present Italianate building, designed in the style of a Renaissance palazzo, was built. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991.



## INSTAGRAMMABLE! 📸



## 12 SHREVEPORT WATER WORKS MUSEUM

142 N. COMMON STREET

1.3 mi

Formerly the McNeill Street Pumping Station, this attraction has the rare distinction of being both a National Historic Landmark and a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. Opened in 1887 as the city's first water plant, it added filtration in 1890, an unusual technology at the time. In 1911, it was among the earliest facilities in the country to use chlorine in the treatment process. When the old steam pumps were finally retired in 1980, the plant was believed by the Smithsonian to be the last operating steam-powered municipal water works in America. The station continued to provide water to Downtown Shreveport, Agurs and Barksdale Air Force Base until 1992. Today, the entire physical plant (pumps, filters and other machinery) remains in place after more than 100 years of service and is a rare example of an intact steam water works.

16

## 13 FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

500 COMMON STREET

0.6 mi  
The present-day church represents the third home of the congregation and the second structure erected on this site. The cornerstone was set in 1912 and the building dedicated in 1913. The flanking wings were added in 1964 and the steeple was added in 1972. The church was founded in 1845 and has occupied this address since 1882.

# ICONIC LOCATION

[WWW.SHREVEPORT-BOSNIER.ORG](http://WWW.SHREVEPORT-BOSNIER.ORG)

II

## 14 JUSTIN GRAS BUILDING

527 LOUISIANA AVENUE

0.5 mi  
Although reportedly built as a hotel in 1900, the Justin Gras Building was actually a brothel and gambling saloon. Painted on the rear of the building is an original sign for the "Big Casino Hotel." It was renovated in the early 1980s to house offices. It also was the home to the Gilmore News Company, a notable local institution from 1919 to 2000.

09

## 15 SHEPHERD-BLANCHARD BUILDING

631 MILAM STREET

0.4 mi  
Originally it was created as two separate buildings built in 1900 and 1901. The original tenants were offices, a men's clothing and accessory store, and a hotel. This corner was once an important commercial area for Shreveport and was across from the old City Hall and city market.

## 16 STRAND THEATRE

619 LOUISIANA STREET

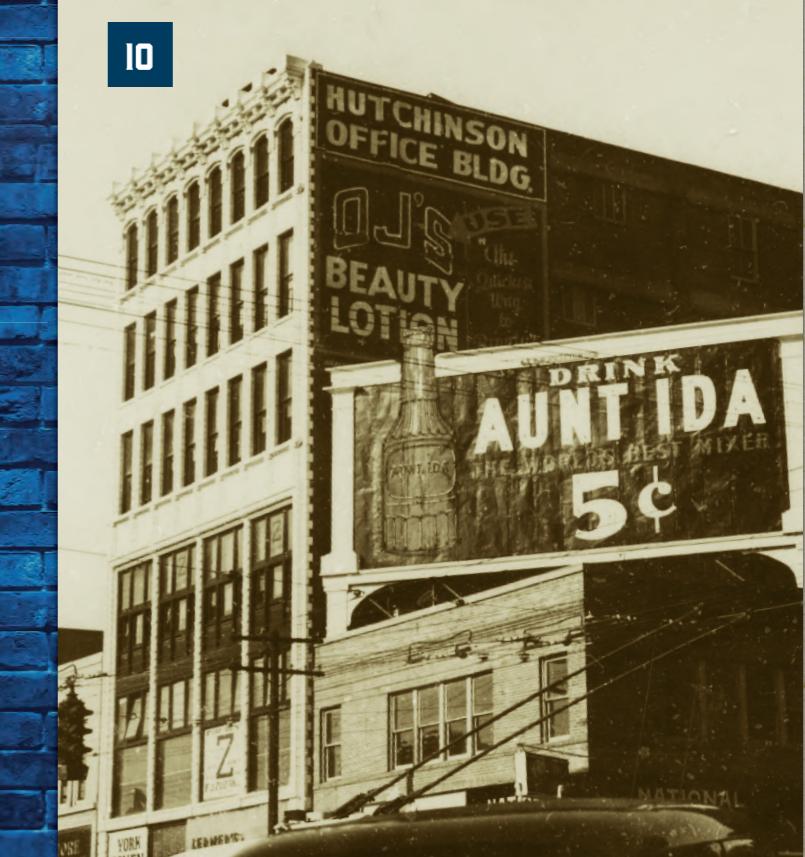
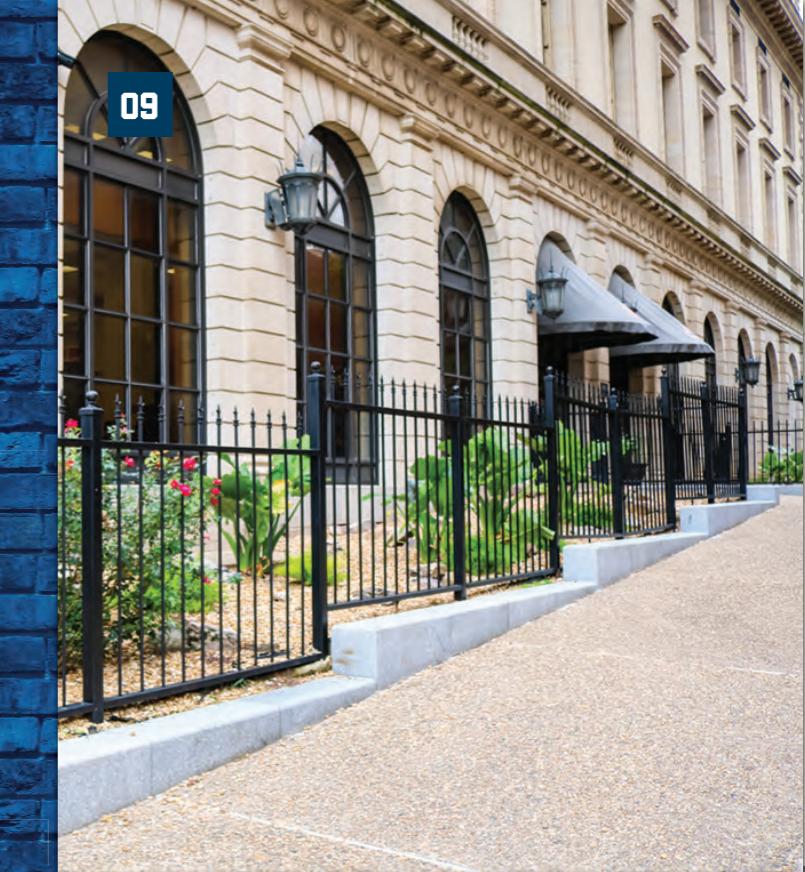
0.5 mi  
This performing arts center was built in 1925 and was the headquarters of the Saenger Theatre Corporation which operated more than 300 theatres, vaudeville houses and cinemas throughout the southern U.S., Central America and Caribbean. Closed in 1977, the Strand reopened in 1984 after extensive restoration and renovation. It is the Official State Theatre of Louisiana. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Today's patrons can see off-Broadway productions, comedy shows and concerts.

10



17

[WWW.SHREVEPORT-BOSNIER.ORG](http://WWW.SHREVEPORT-BOSNIER.ORG)



## **I7 SCOTTISH RITE CATHEDRAL**



**0.5  
mi**

### **725 COTTON STREET**

Designed by Edward F. Neild and Clarence Olschner, and constructed in 1915, this building houses the Shreveport Consistory of the Scottish Rite, the highest order of the Freemasonry. The sumptuous interior with its ornate theater and social hall was designed by Paul Heerwagen. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is occasionally used as a venue for the Louisiana Film Prize.

## **I8 B'NAI ZION TEMPLE**



**0.5  
mi**

### **802 COMMON STREET**

Designed by Edward F. Neild and built in 1914-1915, this was the home for the B'nai Zion congregation, Shreveport's Reform Jewish Temple, until 1956. The Knights of Columbus later acquired this building, using it as their hall until 1992. The immense stained glass windows by LaFargue were installed in 1920.

## **I9 HOLY CROSS EPISCOPAL CHURCH/ OLD ST. MARK'S CHURCH**



**0.7  
mi**

### **875 COTTON STREET**

Built in 1905 as St. Mark's Episcopal Church, it was founded in 1839 when Bishop Leonidas Polk held the first religious services in a warehouse on the riverfront. The present church was the congregation's second, though many elements of the first including its altar, pews, French glass windows, chancel rail, and credence table were all incorporated into this building and remained fixtures of its chapel. The cornerstone of its previous church on Fannin Street is also embedded in the chapel wall. Since the 1950s, when St. Marks moved to Fairfield Avenue, the building has been home to the Holy Cross Episcopal Church.

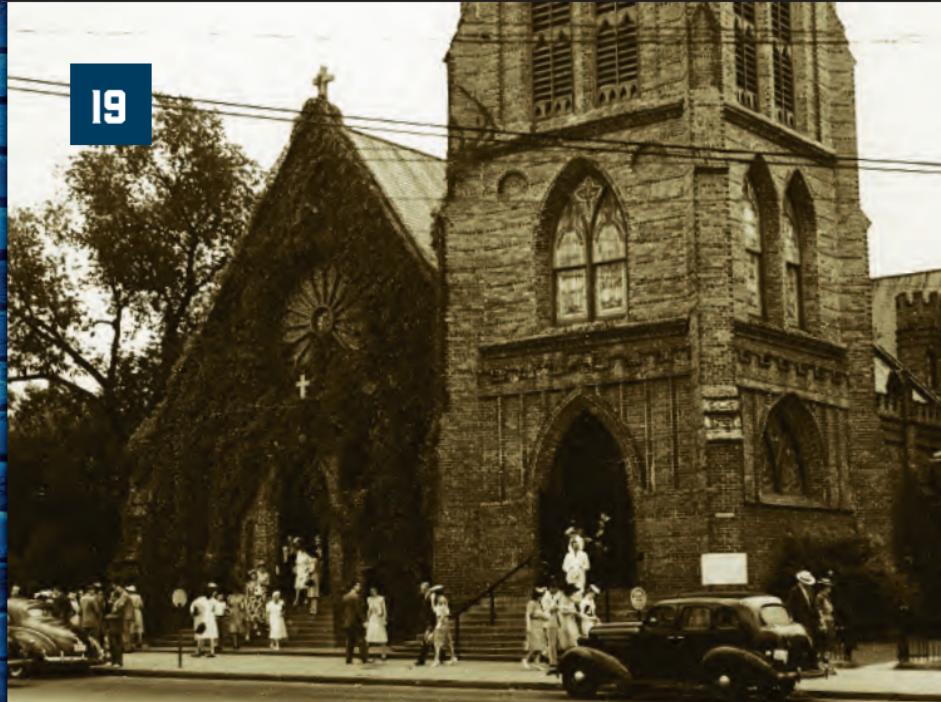
17



18



19



**20****VIEW  
360**

## 20 CENTRAL ARTSTATION

 **801 CROCKETT STREET****0.5  
mi**

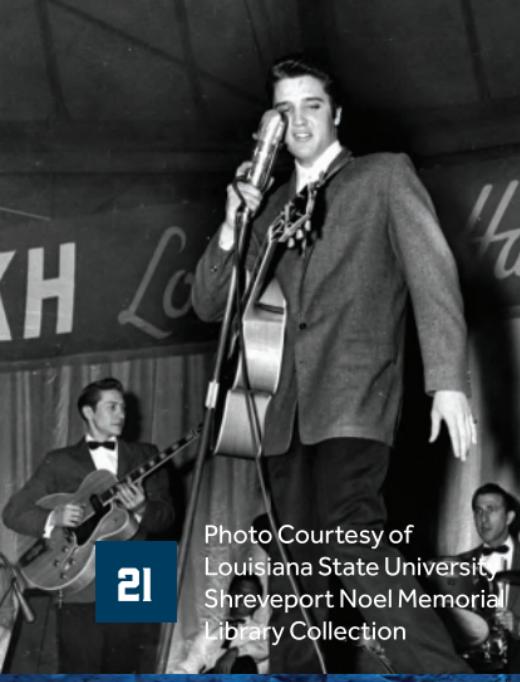
Built in 1922, this building housed the Central Fire Station. Today the Shreveport Regional Arts Council operates from here. Visitors to the new Central Artstation are greeted by "Art," a 19-foot-tall statue. He is said to be the guardian of the arts in northwest Louisiana. During the day, he is a white statue of a Dalmatian, but at night his spots light up. This location is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

# INSTAGRAMMABLE!

## 22 OAKLAND CEMETERY

 **MILAM STREET & ELVIS PRESLEY AVENUE****0.8  
mi**

Oakland Cemetery, founded in 1847, was the second cemetery established in Shreveport. It boasts marked graves dating back as far as 1842 and is the oldest intact burial ground in Shreveport. Buried here are 16 mayors, 2300 Confederate veterans, approximately 800 victims of the Yellow Fever Epidemic, as well as thousands of ordinary citizens, enslaved Africans and free citizens, Christians and Jews, foreign-born and native. A quarter-acre section in the northeast corner of the cemetery contains the first Jewish burial ground in Shreveport. Dating from 1859, it was the fifth established in Louisiana. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.



21

Photo Courtesy of  
Louisiana State University  
Shreveport Noel Memorial  
Library Collection



VIEW  
360°



## 21 SHREVEPORT MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM

### 705 ELVIS PRESLEY AVENUE

0.8  
mi

Designed by Samuel G. Wiener and Seymour Van Os and completed in 1929, the auditorium is a monument to the veterans of World War I. The Louisiana Hayride, a popular live radio show, was held here weekly from 1948 to 1960, and it helped launch the careers of stars like Kitty Wells, Johnny Cash, and Elvis Presley to national attention. Today, statues of Elvis Presley and his guitarist, hometown musician James Burton, are located outside of the auditorium. One of Louisiana's most significant Art Deco buildings, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991. It is also a National Historic Landmark. Today, after extensive renovations, it is a premier concert and entertainment venue. Group tours are available.

22



# LEDBETTER HEIGHTS

23



## 23 LOGAN MANSION

725 AUSTIN PLACE



0.8  
mi

This 2,000-square-foot Victorian mansion was built in 1897 by beer and ice distributor Lafayette Robert Logan. The 17-room mansion has been restored to its former glory and features original handcrafted woodwork, stained and beveled glass and a beautifully-restored grandeur mahogany staircase. The house is reportedly haunted by the spirit of a little girl who once lived across the street in a now demolished home next to the Austen Place Bed and Breakfast. Local legend claims she fell to her death from the attic window while playing. However, historians cite her dying on the way to Texarkana while seeking medical treatment for yellow fever.

# HISTORIC LOCATIONS!

# HISTORICAL DISTRICT

24

## AUSTEN PLACE BED AND BREAKFAST/ OGILVIE-WIENER MANSION



0.8  
mi

728 AUSTIN PLACE

Built in 1896, the Austen Place Bed and Breakfast is the largest Queen Anne-style historic mansion in north Louisiana. The 9,000-square-foot mansion was originally a private home. In 1951, the family leased the house and it was remodeled and opened as a private supper club called The Florentine Club. The upper-class establishment featured entertainment by nationally known performers, such as Perry Como, pianists Ferrante and Teicher, Big Band orchestras, and many others. Among the famous that patronized The Florentine were John Wayne, Bette Davis, Doris Day, William Holden, and Ethel Merman, just to name a few. The mansion is also famous for being in the opening credits of the television show "True Blood." This property is currently being restored and is open for tours.

SCAN  
-AND-  
SEE



[WWW.SHREVEPORT-BOSNIER.ORG](http://WWW.SHREVEPORT-BOSNIER.ORG)

25

## **25** ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH



0.9  
mi

### 1057 TEXAS AVENUE

Founded in 1866, this is the oldest black Baptist church in Shreveport and is the city's second-oldest church building. The present Romanesque Revival church was designed by nationally known Shreveport Architect N.S. Allen and built in 1902. In 1983 it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## INSTAGRAMMABLE!

## **26** "THE AVENUE"



1.1  
mi

### 800-1100 BLOCK OF TEXAS AVENUE

Black businesses and social life concentrated along the 800-1100 blocks of Texas Avenue during the 1910s and 1920s. Black professionals, merchants, and restaurants such as Freeman and Harris Café thrived here. Entertainers such as Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, Count Basie, and Duke Ellington played on the rooftop of the Calanthean Temple and at the Plamoor Dance Hall. Other Avenue institutions included the Star Theatre. Few of these businesses and none of the homes remain, though a few of the buildings still stand. Today, "The Avenue" is home to many beautiful murals and is also the new site of the Caddo Common Park.

## **27** HEBREW REST CEMETERY



1.6  
mi

### 1437 TEXAS AVENUE

The second of Shreveport's four Jewish cemeteries, Hebrew Rest was founded in 1886 by the Reform congregation of B'nai Zion. One mayor, Ben Holzman, who served from 1899 to 1902, is buried here. Simon Goldstein, father of the Caddo Parish public school system, is among the notable figures buried here.

25



26



27





## 28 STAR CEMETERY

2100 TEXAS AVENUE



2.4  
mi

Located behind and adjoining St. Joseph Cemetery, Star Cemetery was the first cemetery established exclusively by and for black citizens. Founded in 1833 when ten acres of land were purchased by the Star Cemetery Association, the cemetery ultimately became the burial ground for many of Shreveport's first black citizens, though many were still buried in church graveyards in rural areas. Former slaves, soldiers, professionals, and clergymen can be found buried here. Among notable burials is Samuel Armstead, Louisiana's only black secretary of state, who lived to the age of 108.

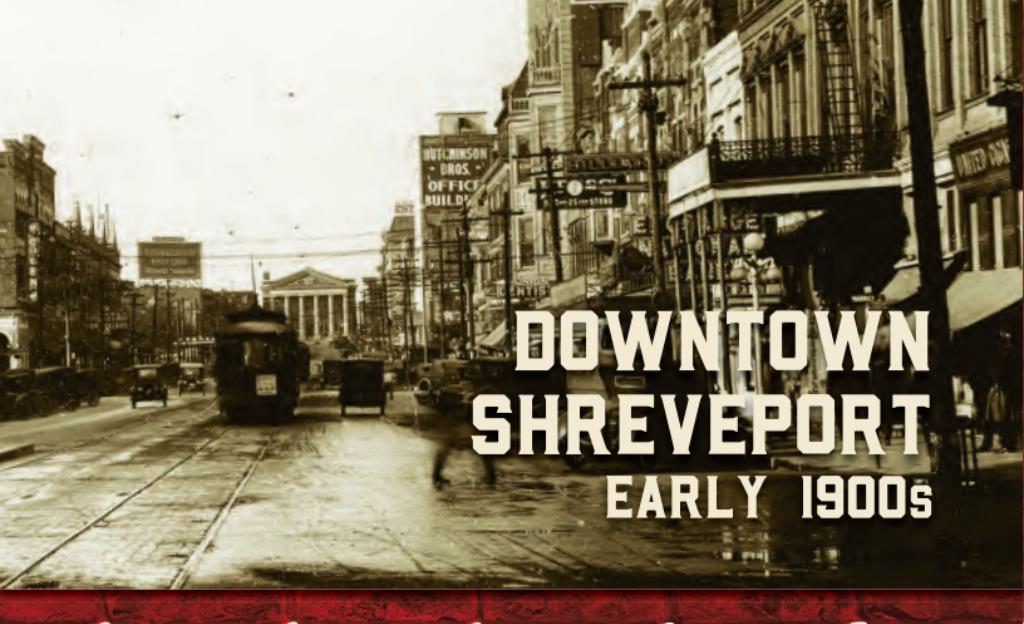
## 29 ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY

2300 TEXAS AVENUE



2.3  
mi

Founded in 1881, St. Joseph is the city's oldest Roman Catholic Cemetery. Many earlier graves from Oakland Cemetery were relocated here after its consecration, including those of the martyr priests who died in the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1873. The main aisle contains numerous impressive monuments of pioneer Catholic families of northwest Louisiana. Inscriptions in many languages, especially French and Italian but also some Greek, German and even Arabic, are found on gravestones at St. Joseph Cemetery.



# DOWNTOWN SHREVEPORT EARLY 1900s

28



29



# Thank You!

FOR MORE TO DO IN  
SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER  
**COME SEE US!**

SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER



**DOWNTOWN SHREVEPORT  
VISITOR CENTER**

**629 SPRING STREET. SHREVEPORT, LA**

**318.222.9391    1.800.551.8682**



Historic photos provided courtesy of the  
Northwest Louisiana Archives at LSUS.

**WWW.SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER.ORG**

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