

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The East Main Street Historic District is a linear district which encompasses New Iberia's grand residential rue of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. There are seventy-one buildings within the district, most of which date from between c. 1890 and c. 1930. All of the contributing buildings are residences except for a 1903 synagogue, a 1903 post office and a 1902 bank. The intrusion rate is 20% and none of the contributing buildings have been significantly altered.

The three-quarter mile long district more or less follows the course of Bayou Teche as it meanders downstream from the center of town. It begins next to the much altered New Iberia central business district, proceeds east through an area of large relatively well-treed lots, and terminates near a modern shopping center.

Like many comparable historic streets in Louisiana, East Main Street features a combination of large and relatively small houses placed side by side. There is no "rich" or "poor" neighborhood as such. Because the smaller houses are mainly contemporaneous with the larger houses, it cannot be said that the district's smaller houses represent later infill to any great extent.

The district's buildings are predominantly of frame construction, with only a handful of masonry structures. The scale is variable. About one-third of the district's buildings are two to two-and-a-half stories high, a third are one-and-a-half stories high and a final third are a single story high.

The district contains some noteworthy landmarks such as the Creole-Greek Revival Shadows-on-the- Teche (1834-National Historic Landmark - Building #3), the high style Georgian Revival post office (1903- building #2), and the vaguely Romanesque synagogue (1903- building #1). Apart from these, most of the district's buildings reflect the Eastlake, Queen Anne Revival, Colonial Revival, or bungalow styles. No single style predominates in either the large or the small houses, although the most pretentious houses tend to be either Queen Anne Revival or Eastlake. There is no local style in evidence. The buildings along East Main Street could at one time have been found in most any regional city in Louisiana.

None of the contributing buildings have been significantly altered. For the most part, losses of integrity have taken the form of demolished or replaced structures. As a result, the flow of historic structures is broken in a few places. However, the overall intrusion rate is 20%, which is well within the range of intrusion rates normally considered acceptable. Generally speaking, the intrusions are similar in size to the historic buildings and conform to the same land use pattern (i.e., large lots and considerable setback). In addition, they are masked by the large live oak trees which line East Main Street for much of its length.

The largest break in the flow of historic structures occurs near the intersection of Bank Avenue (see map). This area requires additional comment. In addition to the above mitigating factors, one must also note that three of the intrusions (18, 19, 24) are built in something resembling a historic style of architecture. As a result, the area does not exude a modern feeling, as it otherwise might.

The district's building period breakdown is as follows:

Pre-Civil War	2 buildings	3%
1865--1889	4 buildings	5.5%
1890-1910	30 buildings	42%
1911-1933	21 buildings	29.5%
Intrusions	14 buildings	20%

1. Pre-Civil War

The Shadows-on-the Teche (1834) is New Iberia's grandest building, but it is not stylistically typical of the district in any sense. The only other period structure is a modest Greek Revival cottage (building #45).

2. 1865-1889

The fact that half of the buildings of this period represent a carryover of the Greek Revival attests to the tendency towards architectural conservatism in the area (see buildings 28 and 30). Number 28 resembles a New Orleans townhouse of the pre-Civil War era with its double gallery and side hall plan. The only feature which distinguishes #54 as even moderately progressive is its curious Italianate tower which is appended to the rear of what is essentially a cottage. By contrast, the massive double turreted Cyr House (1882-building #36) was very fashionable in its day even by New Orleans standards. Unfortunately it has lost its Eastlake galleries.

3. 1890-1910

Apart from a few late, essentially Greek Revival cottages (see #64), the architecture of this period was far more progressive than that of the 1865-1889 period. Seven large two-story multiple gabled Queen Anne Revival - Eastlake residences were built (#8), as well as a handsome Georgian Revival post office (#2), a copy of the Shadows (#6), and three sizable high style Colonial Revival residences (#59). Any one of these would stand as a landmark in most of the smaller towns across the state. In addition, there were a number of Queen Anne Revival cottages built, varying from the very plain (#35) to the most elaborate turreted Eastlake (#63). Finally, a handful of well-detailed side hall shotgun houses were built, the most elaborate of which (#15) has a semi-octagonal front encompassed within an Eastlake gallery.

4. 1911-1933

Two-thirds of the buildings from this period are bungalows, although some are fairly large (#46). But it is the non-bungalows which are the most interesting. The district contains one ersatz medieval manor house (#52) as well as some late Colonial Revival residences with exceptional detailing (#22). One even partakes of the Creole style with its French doors and arches between the turned columns (#29).

Contributing Elements:

For purposes of this application, contributing elements are defined as pre-1934 buildings which have not been altered beyond easy recognition. This is because the district developed as the grand rue of the parish over a period of 100 years. Its overall character is established by the combined effect of all the historic styles and periods, not just one.

East Main Street Historic District Inventory (New Iberia, LA)

1. Synagogue. 1903. Contributing element. One-story brick vaguely Romanesque building with half-timbered front gable.
2. Old Post Office. 1903. Contributing element. One-story brick Georgian Revival building with arched fenestration and a columnar cupola.
3. Shadows-on-the-Teche. National Historic Landmark. 1834. Contributing element. Two-and-a-half story, brick, 7 bay, colossal columnar Greek Revival plantation house.
4. 314 E. Main. c. 1900. Contributing element. One-and-a-half story Colonial Revival cottage with Doric columns.
5. First Federal Savings & Loan. 320 E. Main. 1902. Contributing element. Two story brick commercial building columns added c. 1925.
6. 333 E. Main. c. 1900. Contributing element. Two story frame neo-Greek Revival residence built as a copy of Shadows-on-the-Teche.
7. Cajun Travel. Intrusion. Small one story brick building.
8. 405 E. Main. 1890's. Contributing element. Two story frame Queen Anne Revival house with well-developed Eastlake details.

9. 412 E. Main. c. 1880 house-modified in 1910. Contributing element. Two story frame mansard roof house with massive c. 1910 Colonial Revival gallery. (In 1910 category on map because of alterations.)
10. 417 E. Main. 1890's. Contributing element. Two story frame Queen Anne Revival house with well-developed Eastlake details and mansard roof tower.
11. 420 E. Main. Intrusion. One-and-a-half story small brick modern residence.
12. 424 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. One story frame Colonial Revival residence with widely proportioned Doric portico.
13. 425 E. Main. 1890's. Contributing element. Two story frame Queen Anne Revival residence with modest Eastlake details.
14. 438 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. One story frame bungalow with partially enclosed porch.
15. 442 E. Main. 1890's. Contributing element. One story frame semioctagonal fronted shotgun house partially encircled by an Eastlake gallery.
16. 446 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. Large two story elaborate frame house, built along bungalow lines.
17. CLECO. Intrusion. Small brick office building built to resemble a suburban ranch house.
18. CLECO. Intrusion. Small brick office building designed to fit in with the residential character of the area.
19. Parish library. Intrusion. One-and-a-half story brick building built along Acadian lines with suggestions of a front gallery.
20. U.S. Post Office. Intrusion. One story brick structure with false mansard roof.
21. 504 E. Main. c. 1910. Contributing element. Large frame two-and-a-half story Colonial Revival house with Palladian window and pedimented gable; bungalow porch added c. 1920.
22. 511 E. Main. c. 1930. Contributing element. One-and-a-half story White Pine style Colonial Revival house with handsome colonnade.
23. 512 E. Main. c. 1920 Contributing element. Large frame bungalow with sets of casement windows and unusual arched columnar porch.
24. 513 E. Main. Intrusion. Two-and-a-half story modern brick neo-Greek Revival townhouse with more or less correct details.
25. 520 E. Main. c. 1930. Contributing element. One story brick vaguely medieval cottage.
26. 524 E. Main. Intrusion. Small frame 1940's ranch house.
27. 525 E. Main. Intrusion. Two-and-a-half story frame modern Mt. Vernon style house.
28. 534 E. Main. c. 1880. Contributing element. Two story, galleried, frame, late Greek Revival townhouse.
29. 541 E. Main. c. 1930. Contributing element. One-and-a-half story large rambling frame neo-Creole house with exceptional early 19th-century style details.
30. 544 East Main. c. 1880. Contributing element. One-and-a-half story, frame, four bay late Greek Revival cottage. Dormers added later.
31. 601 E. Main. Intrusion. Rambling frame and brick ranch house.

32. 604 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. Frame shotgun house with open side gallery and Eastlake details.
33. 608 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. Frame shotgun house with open side gallery and late Greek Revival details. (Side gallery now screened in,)
34. 615 E. Main. Intrusion. c. 1945 one story aluminum sided cottage.
35. 616 E. Main. c. 1900. Contributing element. One story frame galleried cottage.
36. Cyr House (NR). 1882. Contributing element. Two story, brick, galleried urban mansion. Present columns added c. 1940. Home of Paul Cyr, Lt. Governor under Huey Long.
37. 624 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. Frame shotgun house with elaborate Eastlake porch.
38. 625 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. Large frame bungalow.
39. 626 E. Main. c. 1960. Intrusion. Small brick cottage.
40. 630 E. Main. c. 1925. Contributing element. Two story stucco Mission ersatz villa with shallow arch porch.
41. 640 E. Main. c. 1900. Contributing element. Two-and-a-half story frame Queen Anne Revival house with semioctagonal bay and broad encompassing gallery.
42. 647 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. Old rambling brick house stuccoed and made into a bungalow in the 1920's.
43. 651 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. Large frame one story Queen Anne Revival cottage with imbricated shingle gable. Columns replaced.
44. 656 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. Two-and-a-half story frame Queen Anne Revival house with two semioctagonal bays and an Eastlake gallery.
45. 664 E. Main. c. 1850. Contributing element. Greek Revival cottage similar to small plantation house of the period
46. 667 E. Main. c. 1920's. Contributing element. One-and-a-half story frame bungalow with exceptionally massive columns.
47. 700 E. Main. c. 1950. Intrusion. Georgian style house.
48. 701 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. One-and-a-half story rambling frame bungalow.
49. 705 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. One story small frame bungalow.
50. 707 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. One story small frame bungalow.
51. 712 E. Main. c. 1900. Contributing element. One story frame Queen Anne Revival cottage. Porch modified in the bungalow style.
52. 715 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. One-and-a-half story brick ersatz medieval manor house.
53. 718 E. Main. c. 1900. Contributing element. One story frame rambling Queen Anne Revival cottage.
54. 724 E. Main. c. 1880. Contributing element. One story frame cottage with Doric gallery and Italianate tower in the rear.
55. 727 E. Main. c. 1930. Contributing element. One story frame White Pine style Colonial Revival cottage.

56. 729 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. One-and-a-half story frame plantation house size cottage with hesitant Eastlake touches.
57. 775 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. Two story frame well-detailed Colonial Revival house.
58. Exxon Service Station. Intrusion.
59. 812 E. Main. c. 1910. Contributing element. Impressive two story frame Colonial Revival house with pedimented portico.
60. 815 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. Two story stucco-and frame bungalow with Cape Cod style roof.
61. 826 E. Main. 1920's. Contributing element. One story frame Creole cottage with bungalow details.
62. 829 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. Frame Eastlake cottage.
63. 830 E. Main. c. 1890. Contributing element. Elaborate frame Eastlake cottage.
64. 200 Philip St. c. 1900. Contributing element. Frame late Greek Revival cottage. Small frame c.1930 garage also part of property.
65. Philip St. 1902. Contributing element. Frame Queen Anne Revival cottage.
66. Philip St. 1920's. Contributing element. Frame bungalow.
67. Lee St. c. 1890. Contributing element. Frame late Creole cottage.
68. Lee St. c.1920. Contributing element. Simple frame bungalow.
69. Lee St. c. 1920. Contributing element. Large frame bungalow.
70. Ann St. c. 1890. Contributing element. Frame Italianate cottage with pedimented porch.
71. Ann St. c. 1890. Contributing element. Frame Italianate cottage with pedimented porch.

Specific dates c. 1835-c. 1930
 Builder/Architect N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)
 Criteria A and C

The East Main Street Historic District is locally significant in the area of architecture as Iberia Parish's finest grouping of historic structures. It is locally significant in the area of exploration/settlement because it continues to reflect the town's earliest settlement patterns along Bayou Teche.

ARCHITECTURE

There are four incorporated towns and fourteen hamlets in Iberia Parish, most of which lack even a small contiguous area of historic structures. From among this group, East Main Street in New Iberia represents the parish's finest architectural grouping from the antebellum period to c. 1930. To begin with, East Main Street's Shadows-on-the-Teche (NHL) is undoubtedly the finest Greek Revival house in the region. The district also contains seven high style fully detailed two-story Queen Anne Revival houses and two two-story turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival houses, both of which are richly articulated. The district's only competitor in terms of large Queen Anne-Colonial Revival buildings is Main Street in Jeanerette, where there are three, only one of which is two stories and very plain at that. East Main also contains a New Orleans type townhouse as well as three elaborately detailed Eastlake shotgun houses, none of which are to be found in other towns in the

parish. Indeed, house #15, with its encircling front gallery, is one of the finest shotgun houses in southern Louisiana. Moreover, the district contains landmarks such as the copy of the Shadows-on-the-Teche, the Georgian post office, and the Romanesque, half-timbered synagogue which go far beyond the standard builder architecture commonly found in other towns in the parish.

Variety and sophistication also distinguish East Main Street's collection of early-twentieth century buildings. As in other towns in the parish, there are bungalows. But unlike in other towns, there are also several high style 1920's Colonial Revival houses, a Creole Revival house, a large Mission style house, and an unusual ersatz medieval manor house. Again, this can be contrasted with Jeanerette, where most of the early twentieth century houses are bungalows of little distinction.

The district is also important because of its scale and cohesiveness. It is the only historic residential streetscape in the parish which is more than essentially a row of galleried cottages. Fully a third of the buildings in the district are a full two stories high, and two-thirds are more than one story.** As previously mentioned, East Main Street's only competitor as the parish's grand rue is Main Street in Jeanerette. But along Jeanerette's Main Street the intrusions number close to 50% and are far more noticeable (i.e., two car dealerships). In addition, Main Street Jeanerette does not have the promenade of live oaks which distinguishes and to some extent unifies New Iberia's East Main Street district.

**Jeanerette's Main Street has only one two-story residence (the above mentioned Queen Anne-Colonial Revival house).

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

The properties along and near East Main Street are linked by the fact that all are part of the linear development of the district. Bayou towns such as New Iberia reflect a type of settlement pattern which was typical of the pre-railroad age. Instead of the block grid centering around a railroad depot, East Main Street developed along the Bayou Teche road. It therefore preserves a distinctive pattern of development which is seldom seen in old towns in southern Louisiana, most having been remade, either by railroads or by the automobile.

HISTORICAL SKETCH:

New Iberia was founded in 1779 by a band of Spanish settlers under the direction of Don Francisco Bouligny and was originally named "Nueva Iberia." It was incorporated in 1839 as the "Town of Iberia," and in 1847 the charter was amended and the name changed to New Iberia. When Iberia Parish was created in 1868, New Iberia was selected to be the parish seat. During the antebellum period the town achieved importance as a port due to the flourishing steamboat trade on Bayou Teche. The Iron Horse arrived in the town in 1879, and steamboating entered a period of decline. During the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, New Iberia's economic prosperity was based upon such industries as sawmills, a sash and blind factory, a shingle mill, brick factories, a foundry, and rice mills.

Major Bibliographical References

Louisiana Historic Standing Structures Survey, Iberia Parish

New Iberia: Essays on the Town and Its People. Compiled by Glenn R. Conrad, Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1979.

Bergerie, Maurine. They Tasted Bayou Water: A Brief History of Iberia Parish. Ann Arbor: Michigan: Edwards Brothers, 1962.