

## **"Back of Town"**

March 31, 2011 3:00 AM Stephen Hilger  
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I am photographing in the historic New Orleans neighborhood Lower Mid-City that has been marked for demolition to make way for new medical centers. I seek to collect and consolidate the fragmented touchstones of what is passing in the face of change. My photographs describe the specific details, history and landscape of a place that is disappearing. (See related [story](#).)



The stillness of the increasingly empty neighborhood is echoed by blank signs along a stretch of Canal Street in which Charity Hospital can be seen in the distance in this photograph from December 2008.



Flags and pennants cast shadows on an exterior surface of Deutsches Haus. Located on South Galvez since 1928, the cultural center celebrated its last Oktoberfest at its longtime Mid-City home in October 2010.



Sunlight floods the cluttered interior of a vacant home on Cleveland Avenue.



Cat's claw vines overtake a double shotgun home, located on the corner of Johnson Street and Cleveland Avenue and dating from the 1890s.



Gaynell Blatcher, a registered nurse, sits for a photograph in front of her childhood home on Palmyra Street. Blatcher settled with the state on fair compensation for her property after several months of appeals.



Left: The double-bay shotgun house with distinctive architectural details located at 227-229 S. Miro St. is photographed before it relocated to 2546 Conti St., nearby. Right: Wally Thurman, an 80-year old veteran, who was born in his 19th-century home on 217 S. Tonti St., places his personal belongings into his car.





The lengthy shadow of a roofless shotgun stretches down Palmyra Street during the building's relocation to another neighborhood in November 2010.



A shoring worker rides inside a shotgun style house as it and a caravan of other historic homes from Lower Mid-City travel across the I-10 to destinations in Central City in November 2010.

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