



The Cottage Shops Recognized as Cultural Products District

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The following is a news release from the Arts and Humanities Council of SWLA:

Lake Charles, LA—The Cottage Shops was recently recognized by Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu as a Cultural District. The Cottage Shops is among the 51 Cultural Districts statewide, joining the ranks as the second certified Cultural District in Lake Charles. Charlestown District was certified in January of last year and is comprised of the Charpentier Historic District and the Downtown Development District.

The Cultural Districts program was formed in 2007 as a way to encourage community revitalization as well as local economic growth. "Louisiana's culture is a valuable economic engine that drives our businesses, attracts tourists, and provides a variety of rich experiences," said Lt. Governor Landrieu. "We started the Cultural Economy Initiative to create jobs through our music, film, food, and arts. Our cultural industries employ 144,000 citizens and account for 7.6% of our state's employment base."

"We are very pleased about this designation," said Mayor Randy Roach. "The certification of The Cottage Shops Cultural District will contribute to the economic development of the District and our entire area and will be a major factor in the promotion of business, arts and culture, and tourism within our community."

The program aims to build partnerships between artists, business owners, and local and state government while at the same time creating an incentive for communities by providing state historic preservation tax credits for renovations done to historic structures within the district. Also, the Cottage Shops expect an influx of visitors and consumers with the program's second community incentive which is to allow the purchase of original art without the inclusion of sales tax. This act seeks to fuel spending in the local cultural industries while further developing the Cottage Shop's own role as an epicenter for Lake Charles talent, art, and business.

"I am thrilled that the City and State have designated this area of midtown as The Cottage Shops Cultural District," said Sarah Ehlers, owner of Jon Margeaux. "We have pursued this designation almost two years with a vision to revitalize midtown, promote our local economy, and support the arts and tourism. This designation will allow The Cottage Shops to continue gathering support to further add charm to our area, beautify the city, and strengthen local art and culture."

Along with the Cottage Shops of Lake Charles, Lt. Governor Landrieu also designated five other Cultural Districts across Louisiana, including Mid City Baton Rouge, Downtown Lafayette, Main Street Crowley in Acadia Parish, Minden Art and Cultural District in Webster Parish, and Welsh Cultural and Historic District in Jefferson Davis Parish.



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