New Orleans neighborhoods radiate outward from the French Quarter in a tier of distinct residential building styles marking each period of the city's expansion through the 19th century. Dr. Robert Sauder, assistant professor of geography at the University of New Orleans, has identified, mapped, and dated the varying architectural styles of older New Orleans neighborhoods during a two-year study.

Using Sauder's information, an exhibition can be seen today at the UNO Department of Anthropology and Geography as a visual history of social and economic change.

Sauder explains that New Orleans' oldest existing houses are of the Creole cottage and Creole townhouse design, built in the French Quarter following Marigny-Trémé area between 1720 and 1740. "Creole cottages are square and three stories high, having four square rooms on three sides and a staircase leading to a large room on the third floor. A few had chimneys, one for the front and one for the rear of the house. Some two-story frames with a projection over the interior to protect the rear room from the hot sun and rain."

These small cottages continued to be built in the Vieux Carre throughout the early 19th century, but a more dignified class of structures appeared in the early 1830s. "They were large, two or three stories tall, and usually had balconies in the front and rear of the house on and rear."

The most common building style during the 1830s, 40s, and 50s was the Italianate tradition. Sauder notes that, in most older neighborhoods, architectural styles of different 19th century periods are standardized, the variety of store-bought gingerbread components allowed builders to provide comfort and spaciousness in a small house without increasing the number of rooms by subdividing larger lots with great imagination and variety. These cottages were much more common. The proliferation of double shotguns is a result of these roofs being bought cheaply. Uptown neighborhoods could be ordered from catalogs. The standard, the variety of store-bought gingerbread components allowed builders to provide comfort and spaciousness in a small house without increasing the number of rooms. This occurred because a general increase in wealth in the 1850s led to the manufacture of these decorations which could be ordered from catalogs. "The decoration of buildings increased"...

Although the trend of these double and single shotguns was rather standardized, the history of interior design shows individuality in their arrangement. Buildings were built in any number of houses at the increase of the city by 1860. The interior's beauty increased during this period. There were a number of mills in New Orleans that manufactured these decorations which could be ordered from catalogs. Although the outer appearance of these double and single shotguns was rather standardized, the interior decoration showed individuality in their arrangement. Buildings were built in any number of houses at the increase of the city by 1860. The interior's beauty increased during this period. There were a number of mills in New Orleans that manufactured these decorations which could be ordered from catalogs.