

Hammond (Images of America)

Eric W. Johnson, Catherine H. Tijerino

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Ideally situated about an hour from New Orleans at the conjunction of two major interstates, the city of Hammond grew from a stop on the Illinois Central Railroad to a thriving business and cultural center northwest of Lake Pontchartrain. The area known for its cypress swamps and lush pine forests was first settled around 1818 by Swedish sailor Peter Hammond. The land was purchased for industrial pursuits, primarily for growing timber to make sail masts, other nautical goods, and charcoal. After entrepreneur Charles E. Cate and the railroad arrived, a flourishing timber industry and its fame as the "Strawberry Capital of the World" spurred Hammond's economic growth and influence in Tangipahoa Parish. Now home to Southeastern Louisiana University and an expanding health-care industry, Hammond's many historic homes and buildings remain as a testament to its importance in the history of the state.



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