Using Sanborn Maps

Sanborn Maps is a subscription-based digital database available at Tulane University Libraries through a state consortium agreement. The contract allows access to Louisiana data sets only.

Users seeking Sanborn data for other states have access to microfilm copies available through Inter-Library Loan per Tulane’s relationship with the Center for Research Libraries. Holdings for the latter may be consulted at: http://www.crl.edu/?l1=5&l2=23&l3=41

For researchers who do not have time/facility with Sanborn database research, they may consult the Sanborn Company’s archivist for assistance at: http://www.sanborn.com/products/fims
Using Sanborn Maps

It is helpful to start with a good contemporary base map, unless you are very familiar with your neighborhood/site/property and its location within the given municipality.

Google Maps is one very good option, shown below.
Using Sanborn Maps

Access Sanborn Maps via Tulane Libraries’ Databases

http://library.tulane.edu/resources/databases
Using Sanborn Maps

Select the city and desired data year. Select the sheet (usually marked “0”) that includes the Index Map and Key.
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Using Sanborn Maps

Create a screen shot image of the Key, as it will help to clarify the way in which the neighborhood/property/site is represented. Keys vary slightly from year to year.

This is the Key for the 1908/1909 Sanborn for New Orleans.
Using Sanborn Maps

Zoom into and re-center the Index Map so that you can select the appropriate volume number for your area.
Using Sanborn Maps

The large numbers on the Index Map indicate the relevant volume number to consult.
Using Sanborn Maps

Select the relevant Volume Number from the drop-down menu.
Using Sanborn Maps

Method 1. Spatial Location. Locate the Sheet Index at the beginning of the relevant volume, usually Sheet “0.”
Using Sanborn Maps

Method 2. Textual Location. Locate the Street Name(s)/Number(s) best matching your neighborhood/property/site on the Street Index. This is typically Sheet “0.”
Using Sanborn Maps

Method 2. DETAIL.

Textual Location. Locate the Street Name(s)/ Number(s) best matching your neighborhood/property/site on the Street Index.

Street names are arranged alphabetically; corresponding numbers are arranged numerically.
Using Sanborn Maps

Select the relevant Sheet Number from the drop-down menu.
Using Sanborn Maps

Using the “Select Window Size,” “Zoom” and “Re-Center” tools at the top of the screen, you can obtain a larger image of your neighborhood/property/site.
Using Sanborn Maps

You can consult more maps from other years to compare. This is the same site as in the previous slide, but recorded 42 years later.
Using Sanborn Maps

For printing or saving, there are a number of options:

1. Save as PDF. Allows you to zoom in and out of the saved Sheet with greater ease.
2. After sizing and centering the Sheet image, right click to print relevant view.
3. Use Snag-It to capture images in jpeg format. You can then manipulate images in Snag-It or another program.
Beyond Sanborn Maps

There are other good cartographic sources for neighborhoods/properties/sites.

“Mapping Interface.” Orleans Parish.  

“Property Viewer.” City of New Orleans.  
http://property.nola.gov/

http://libguides.tulane.edu/architecture/maps

“Maps & Data.” U.S. Census Bureau.  
http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/