

The Carondelet Neighborhood: A Piece of St. Louis History



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Carondelet: “Vide Poche” No More

As one of St. Louis’ oldest neighborhoods, Carondelet has a long and interesting history. Before Carondelet as we know it today was settled, it was temporarily founded by Catholic missionaries at the mouth of the River des Peres, which means “River of the Fathers.” In 1767, the village later became known as Carondelet and was founded by Clement DeLore de Treget, a man who chose to settle his family there, and whose home is still located on the foot of Elwood Street. The village was first named De Lore’s village and underwent many name changes as the years went on. It was officially named Carondelet in 1794, in honor of Baron Francois Louis Hector de Carondelet, the Spanish governor of Louisiana. He and his family were soon joined by other French settlers, thus turning Carondelet into a predominately French neighborhood.

Since this area was part of the Spanish territory included in the Louisiana Purchase which they acquired from the French, Clement had to receive permission from the Spanish to govern this village. Along with the responsibilities of governing a village came the duty of providing food for the people. To do this, he laid out strips of land called the Carondelet Common fields, which stretched from what is presently known as Virginia Avenue to Morganford Road. The village was often referred to as “Vide Poche,” which means “empty pockets.” This term either referred to the financial situation of the citizens or the visitors who left the village after gambling all of their money.

After the transfer of the Louisiana Purchase to the United States possession, Carondelet had a population of nearly 250 persons occupying a mere 50 houses. The members of the community could not govern it alone, and in 1826, when 1700 acres were sold to the government of the United States for only \$5.00, only 12 of the land owners

signed the contract. A formal government for Carondelet was not established until 1832, and it was then said to be governed by a five member board of trustees.

Around the time of the civil war, the general make-up of the town changed. The older inhabitants were still predominately liberal, but the new German immigrants that were arriving, tended to be more conservative. For many years to come, the conservatives dominated the political arena in Carondelet. In 1850, Carondelet's population was up to 1,265 people, 28 of whom were slaves. Typical of Missouri during this time, the town of Carondelet was split into two groups: northern supporters and southern supporters. The southern supporters of Carondelet rallied to join the Confederate Army and many of the town's inhabitants joined one of the two armies during the civil war.

The census of 1865 reported that the population of Carondelet had grown to 4,534 people. The majority of the neighborhood was comprised of three groups: Native Americans, Irish and Germans, and the French and Creoles. Because of the population growth in 1870, the town of Carondelet was annexed to the city of St. Louis. Many things about the town of Carondelet have changed since it was first settled; however, the people and the places that have made up the neighborhood have forever carved its legacy in one of the oldest neighborhoods in St. Louis.

Social Dimensions

Religion has always been part of the make-up of Carondelet, and the church history is immense. The oldest religious institution in the town is the Convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph, which was founded in 1836. Schools were established in Carondelet that same year. Catholic churches were more predominate than any other, but nevertheless, Baptist churches and many others were established as well. Some of the

established denominations within Carondelet, besides Catholic and Baptist, include: Methodist, the United Christian Church, Lutheran, and Presbyterian. What is now known as the intersection of Holly Hills and Pennsylvania Avenue is where land was set aside for church purposes by the founder of Carondelet, De Lore. The first church established there was a Catholic chapel, dedicated to St. Francis Xavier. Since its institution, Catholicism, although joined by many other denominations in the neighborhood, has been the most predominant over time.

Beginning around 1850, businesses began to emerge, mostly on Carondelet's main street, which is now South Broadway. This street still remains the neighborhood's most commercialized zone today. One of the first industries in Carondelet was lead shot manufacturing, which began in the late 1840's. Shortly after, a brewery and a couple flour mills opened. Many of the breweries that once existed were torn down as a result of the Prohibition laws. Once the railroads became a major transit in the late 1850's, the iron business flourished. Iron was first brought in from Southern Missouri and turned into Pig Iron in Carondelet. It stayed this way until iron was discovered near Lake Superior, which made the business transfer to a different location. Industry, in large part, still exists to the east of Broadway, but other industry can now be found on Alabama Avenue, just north of the River des Peres.

Parks in Carondelet have contributed to the community's social life for many years. The oldest park in the neighborhood, Carondelet Park was purchased in 1875 by the city of St. Louis. Another small park, only 1.66 acres, called South St. Louis Square, is surrounded by four streets: Broadway, Courtois Street, Schirmer Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue. The Carondelet Lions Park, purchased in 1929, sits at Davis Street

and Michigan Avenue. The newest park in Carondelet is St. Agne de Bellerive, named after the Frenchman who governed the village. It was acquired in 1908, and still remains a decent size park at 5.67 acres.

The most interesting aspect of Carondelet is that it is both old and new. Its landscape still includes one of the Indian Mounds, which gave it the name of the Mound City. It's so old that there are still remnants of the town's early history which began more than two hundred years ago in 1767. However, Carondelet is also new in the respect that new buildings and constructs are being built in many areas of the neighborhood. For example, the Mississippi Bluffs townhouses and the Bellerive Parkway neighborhood are two areas in the neighborhood that are being re-worked and constructed. In the old days Carondelet was nicknamed "Vide Poche," as mentioned earlier. This stemmed from the laziness of the people who lived there, and also as a result of the gambling that took place. However, that concept has greatly changed over the course of time.

Cardondelet, due to the various housing that exists, from rowhouses to extravagant brick mansions, it is ideal for those looking to rehab and resell houses. Because of this, there are bargains to be had in this new, yet old neighborhood. President of the Carondelet Historical Society, Ron Bolte, says "This is the best development site in the city." It seems that the old nickname of this historic neighborhood has died out. The inhabitants can no longer be accused of being lazy or of losing all of their money on account of gambling. Caraondelet, with its rich history, diversity, and quaint and peaceful surroundings, is "Vide Poche" no more. The neighborhood of Carondelet has transformed from an old, historic town, to a modern yet ideal place within the city of St. Louis to achieve whatever lifestyle is desired.

Physical Description

In visiting the Carondelet neighborhood, it is easy to see that it is a historic part of St. Louis. The main boundaries of this neighborhood are main roads and well known rivers. The exact boundaries are Eichelberger to the Northeast, River Des Peres to the Southwest, the Mississippi River to the Southeast, and Grand Blvd. /Highway 55 to the Northwest giving the neighborhood of Carondelet an peculiar shape. Highway 55 divides this neighborhood into two pieces, with only a small section east of the 55 divider. Some of the side roads are still brick laid streets that are very bumpy from years of use and extreme weather. The conditions of the roads tend to be below average. The main roads, such as Grand and Eichelberger, though fairly new, are narrow given they are in the City. The map below outlines the Carondelet neighborhood in blue:



In my trip to the neighborhood, I noticed that the main use of transportation for many people through the neighborhood is the Metro bus. Not only is the bus conveniently located at major intersections throughout the City, there are also multiple stops within the neighborhood's boundaries.

While there is one section of new construction within Carondelet (a strip mall containing Schnuck's and Lowe's, most of the houses and buildings within the neighborhood are very old. Many of the businesses and houses that are still standing are from the original Carondelet that was founded in the late 1800s. There is, however some relatively "newer" homes built in the 1940s or 50s when the neighborhood was expanding, and more residents were moving in and living in the city. This "newer part" is located to the northeast bordering Eichelberger. The historic part of the neighborhood is centrally located, close to the most well known landmark, Carondelet Park. Many of the houses in that area have been well kept and/or refurbished to the original architecture.

The houses are generally on small lots, built up taller than they are wider for more living space, but also because it is cheaper than purchasing more land. Although some apartment buildings and multiple family dwellings are available, for the most part the houses are inhabited by single families. There were few boarded up buildings and/or houses. There were few "run down" places or streets in the neighborhood. It seemed small, quite, and quaint.

The schools located within the neighborhood are surrounded by homes and are not found on or at main intersections like many of the schools in St. Louis County. The schools are public and private, as well as elementary and middle schools There are no high schools located within the neighborhood. The private schools in the neighborhood

are generally affiliated with Archdiocesan Churches; however, these parishes and schools are being shut down.

As the map below illustrates, Carondelet, labeled # 1, is one of the largest neighborhoods in the City of St. Louis. Located near on the southern tip of the City, it borders the Patch neighborhood and St. Louis County to the south, the Mississippi River and Illinois to the east, Holly Hills and Boulevard Heights to the west, and Dutchtown and Mount Pleasant to the north.



Overview of Schools in Carondelet

Schools in Carondelet have been established since 1824. Since Catholicism was the most predominant faith in the village, the schools were formed based on that faith. Public schools were not instituted until 1851. Before the founding of public schools, the parochial schools were funded by the public. Some schools that were originally founded in the early days of Carondelet still exist today. For example, St. Trinity Lutheran Church's School still exists at present and is located on Koeln Street. It wasn't until St. Louis incorporated Carondelet as a city in 1832 that arrangements were made for public education. The first public schools were set up under the administration of Mayor William Taussig. Carondelet's first major school building was constructed in 1866. Carondelet also had a school for blacks, which opened in 1873, in response to a state law which required segregated schools. It changed to an all-white school called Maddox from 1940 to 1952. Schools in Carondelet have been enriching kids and contributing to the community for many years. There are still schools in Carondelet that have been established since the early 1900's. Below is a picture of the Carondelet Historical Society, formerly the Des Peres School, which was the nation's first kindergarten.



Des Peres School
6303 Michigan Avenue

According to Carondelet's neighborhood website, there are eight different schools in the area. These eight schools give a good picture of what is going on in education in Carondelet. Of the eight schools, four are public. This means that half are private/parochial and half are public, which is a good mix for the students. Of these eight, however, there is only one high school, and the high school is parochial. In fact, most schools are for grades K-5. It seems that the neighborhood needs more high schools for students to attend, especially public high schools.

In general, the schools of Carondelet do not perform very well. The data is not readily available for the parochial schools, but the public schools definitely underperform. The test scores are well below the state average in most cases, but the schools do have excellent student to teacher ratios. Carondelet is not an extremely wealthy neighborhood and a huge percentage of the students that attend the public schools qualify for the state free or reduced lunch program. These kids probably have a lot of problems outside of the classroom, which may account for why they do not perform well on state tests.

Public Schools of Carondelet

Woodward Elementary School

This school is for students in preschool-5th grade. It is the only public school in Carondelet to include a preschool program. The school contains about 500 students and has a student/teacher ratio of 11:1. 99% of students at Woodward receive free or reduced-price lunches. This is a huge percentage of students; it is far above the state average, which is 39%. Woodward performed poorly on the MAP tests for 2006. These were the scores for students in grades 3-5. Grade 3 students scored in the 33rd percentile

in Communication Arts and the 24th percentile in Math. The state averages for third grade in these areas was 43rd percentile for Communication Arts and 44th percentile for Math. Woodward clearly falls short of these averages. The percentages of Woodward compared to the state averages are even worse for 4th and 5th grades.

Lyon ABI Elementary School

This is a school that houses around 285 students and serves students grades K-5, so each grade has anywhere from 30-50 students. Lyon School is considered a magnet school among St. Louis Public Schools. The students/teacher ratio is 11:1 and 86% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

Blow Middle Community Education Center

This school serves around 230 students in grades 6-8. The student/teacher ratio is 10:1 and 92% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

Woerner School

Woerner School is a magnet school with around 500 students in grades K-5. Woerner School is extremely diverse with larger numbers of Afghani, Albanian, Bosnian, Hispanic, Kurdish, Somali, and Vietnamese students. Because of this great diversity, Woerner has developed an ESOL program that many of its students are involved in. The student/teacher ratio is 13:1 and 99% of students are eligible for free or reduced price lunches. Even though Woerner is considered to be a magnet school, their scores are not excellent. From the 2006 MAP testing the third grade class scored in the 29th percentile in Communication Arts and in the 31st percentile in Math. The state average in these area are scores in the 43rd percentile in Communication Arts and the 44th percentile in Math.

St. Louis District Schools

The public schools of Carondelet are included in the St. Louis School district. This district has 39, 554 students in total. That number has fallen by a few hundred people for the last few years and is projected to fall even more in the future. The St. Louis School District generally does not have extremely impressive performances, but Carondelet schools still tend to fall short. For the district, the student/teacher ratio is 13:1. The percentage of students in the district eligible for free or reduced-price lunches is 41.8%.

Three characteristics stick out when comparing Carondelet's statistics to the statistics of the entire district. The first thing that stands out is that huge percentages of students who attend Carondelet schools are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. In fact, all of the public schools in Carondelet have over 85% of students who qualify for the lunch program, some with close to 100% of students. Another factor is that the Carondelet schools do not perform as well as the rest of the district. This may be tied to the fact that the students in the Carondelet schools are eligible for free lunches which indicates that the students may not have much money. A lack of money could be an indicator that the students have more on their minds than school and so don't perform as well. The third thing noticeable about the Carondelet schools is that they all have excellent student/teacher ratios. In general, their ratios are even better than the school district's.

Population of Carondelet

According to the city of St. Louis 2000 census data, the total population for the South St. Louis neighborhood of Carondelet is approximately 9,960. It has changed quite drastically within the ten years since the census was taken, as seen below.

1990 Population	10,474
2000 Population	9,960
Number of Change	-514
Percent of Change	-4.91

Keeping the population in mind, the racial makeup is not the most diverse compared to the city as a whole. In this particular neighborhood, Caucasian is the most concentrated race, accounting for almost 74% of the total population, which roughly translates to 7,369 individuals. This is quite a large percentage given a little less than half of the entire population of the city is white. There are a little more than 1,800 African Americans in Carondelet, comprising 18.5% of the total population. American Indian and Alaska Native almost, Asian alone, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone or some other race alone together account for 4.5% of all races represented. In people figures, this translates into approximately 457 inhabitants. The Hispanic and Latino community represents around 5% of the total population. Just over 500 Hispanic or Latino people are living in this area.

Having categorized the residents of the Carondelet neighborhood according to race, the population will now be broken down according to sex and age. Of the 9,960 residents in the area, 48.64 % are male and 51.36% are female, with approximately 4,845 males and 5,115 females. Given the average life expectancy of Americans is around 77 years, the residents of the Carondelet neighborhood tend to be younger. As the chart below indicates, almost 50% of the population is under 35 years old and the proportion of the population shrinks as age increases.

Age Category	% of Population
Under 5 Years	6.77
5 to 9	7.57
10 to 14	6.54
15 to 19	6.20
20 to 24	7.36
25 to 29	7.71
30 to 34	7.64
35 to 39	8.20
40 to 44	8.09
45 to 49	6.48
50 to 54	4.77
55 to 59	4.07
60 to 64	3.27
65 to 69	3.29
70 to 74	2.99
75 to 79	2.79
80-84	2.06
Over 85 Years	4.22

In addition to breaking the neighborhood population down by age, the 2000 Census also categorizes the population according to age and sex. The following table indicates exactly how many individuals of each sex are in 18 different age subsections:

Age Category	# of Males	# of Females
Under 5 Years	332	342
5 to 9	388	366
10 to 14	328	323
15 to 19	321	297
20 to 24	342	391
25 to 29	394	374
30 to 34	410	351
35 to 39	468	349
40 to 44	432	374
45 to 49	337	308
50 to 54	223	252

55 to 59	191	214
60 to 64	135	190
65 to 69	157	170
70 to 74	123	175
75 to 79	115	163
80-84	64	141
Over 85 Years	85	335

Analyzing the data reveals some interesting trends about the nature of the population in the neighborhood. Among residents less than 24 years old, the number of males is roughly equal to the number of females. This trend, however, begins to change in residents around the age of 25—the number of males significantly outnumbers the number of females in residents between the ages of 25 and 49. On the other hand, past the age of fifty, females greatly outnumber males. Given the fact that females outlive males, it seems logical that a larger number of females would reside in the area. Alternatively, it seems strange that there is such a significant difference in sexes in middle-aged residents. Perhaps the affordability of housing and the nearby industrial plants make the neighborhood an attractive place to live among this demographic.

Households and Families

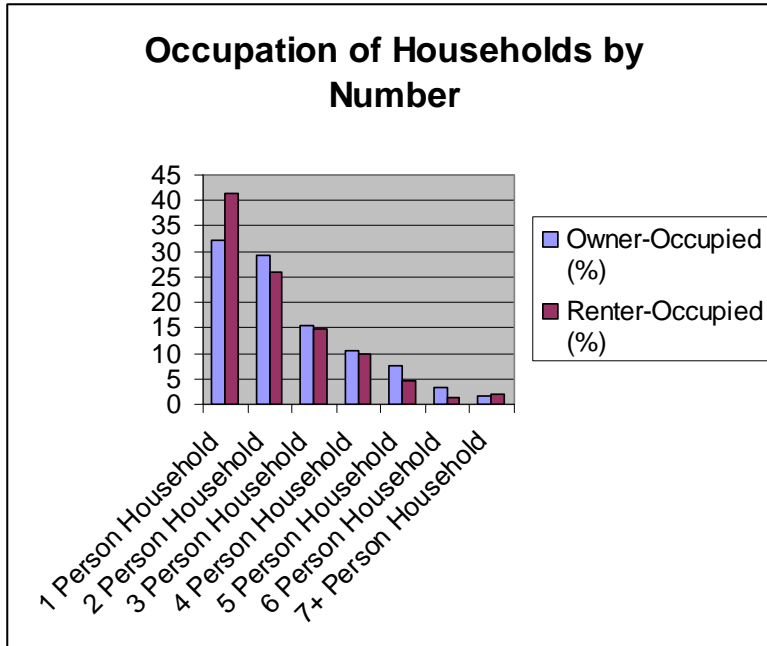
According to the 2000 Census Neighborhood Summary on the St. Louis City CIN web site, Carondelet has 4,004 occupied households. Of these 4,004 households, 1,399 households (34.94%) are one-person residences while 2,605 households (65.06%) contain two or more persons. In households of only one person, 741 (52.97%) are owned by males and 658 (47.03%) are owned by females.

The Census categorizes multiple person households into family households and non-family households. In the Carondelet neighborhood, 342 (13.13%) multiple person

households are non-family households, and 2,263 (86.87%) are family households. When multiple persons live in a non-family household, 213 (62.28%) of these households are headed by males while 129 (37.72%) are headed by females.

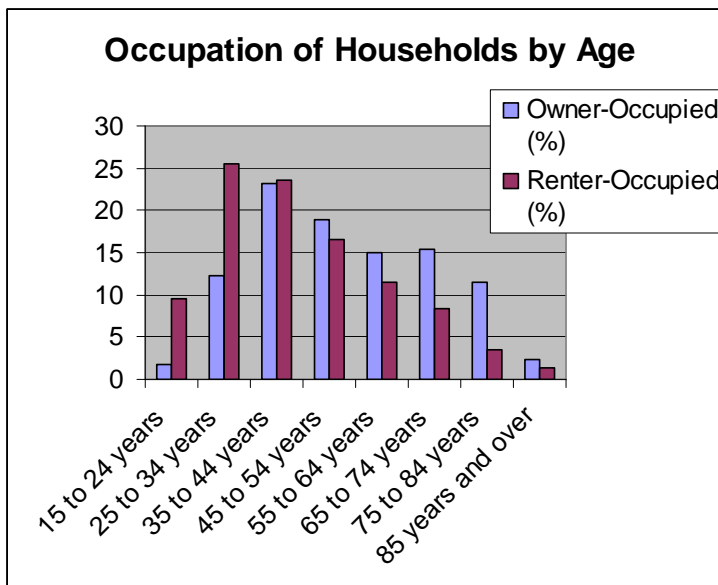
Family households are broken down into *married-couple family* households and *other family* households. The 1,288 married-couple families make up 56.92% of family households and the 975 other family households make up 43.08% of the family households in the neighborhood. Lastly, the Census describes the neighborhood presence of children in both married-couple family and other family households. In Carondelet, 46.67% of married-couple families have children under the age of eighteen, compared to the 53.03% of married-couple families without children under the age of eighteen. The families of Carondelet are not too young—of the 4,004 households in the neighborhood, only 1,170 (29.22%) have children under the age of eighteen.

Although the Carondelet neighborhood is part of six separate census tracts, for purposes of simplicity, Census Tract 1018, which covers roughly half the neighborhood, will be used to make generalizations about the occupation of households throughout the entire neighborhood. According to the United States Census Bureau, in 2000 48.6% of housing units are owner-occupied while 51.4% are renter-occupied. In Census Tract 1018, the number of occupants tends to be small in both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing, although the number tends to be slightly smaller in renter-occupied households. The following is a table which breaks down owner and renter-occupied housing into number of occupants by percentage:



Data taken from <http://www.census.gov>

The 2000 U.S. Census also breaks down Census Tract 1018 by age of occupants. As expected, younger residents tend to occupy rental properties while older residents tend to own their own homes. The following table illustrates this trend by displaying the percentage of occupants in several age groups:



Data taken from <http://www.census.gov>

Perhaps the largest problem Carondelet families face lies in the low skill set of adults in the labor force. Many of the adults in the area have very little formal education or training, which makes finding a decent paying job very difficult. A low income can be an enormous strain on a family, especially a family with small children. An alarming number of families live below the poverty level in the neighborhood, a fact that will be expanded upon more fully in the next section.

Housing Overview

Most of the residential area is located on the high ground area on the west side of Broadway Street. These structures are primarily single-family structures, but there are some two-story flats. The majority of these are modest homes with larger brick homes in the “old elite” section. (The older elite refers to the area that housed the town’s very wealthy citizens in the late 1800s). As mentioned earlier, most residential buildings are on the west side of Broadway Street. There are, however, some residents sprinkled across the area east of Broadway. These homes are not well-maintained; they are mainly older buildings that have not been taken care of over the years.

There are some homes that still exist in the French and German style of the original settlers of Carondelet. The French houses are mostly two stories and used to be referred to as “double houses”. These houses can be found on Michigan Avenue. The German-style houses were originally built in the Steinstown area. They are usually constructed of stone or brick and are row houses one and a half stories high.

According to the 2000 census, the total number of housing units in Carondelet is 4,730. Of these, 4,004 (or 85%) are occupied and considered to be “households”. This leaves about 15% of the housing units to be unoccupied. 15% is not a huge percentage of

vacant lots, but it is not a good percentage either. Carondelet is actually behind a lot of the other neighborhoods as far as redevelopment goes; there have not been many big projects set to be located there.

As far as households go, the number has dropped by about 100 since the 1990 census. This is not a big drop, but it's always better to grow than drop. The median housing value in 1990 was \$48,883 and median rent was \$399. These numbers are modest and reflect how Carondelet is today; the 2000 median housing value was around \$48,000 as well and the 2000 median rent was \$408. There really aren't any homes that are worth more than \$150,000. Basically, Carondelet has not changed from 1990 to 2000.

Carondelet has about 420 housing units below the official poverty level, and of those 420 units 25% are owned by householders who are sixty-five years and older. 70% of these units were built in 1939 or earlier. In fact, Carondelet's median year for homes to be built in is 1940. The great majority of homes are quite old; as of the 2000 census less than fifty houses have been built from 1990 to 2000.

Overall, Carondelet is an older neighborhood that has some larger houses, but most are of a more average size and are clustered together in the area of high ground near Broadway. There is not a dominant group of renters, owners, or really any other type of homeowner. The demographics are spread out fairly evenly and typically across all of the categories.

Businesses

Although there are some older, middle class residents in the Carondelet neighborhood, the area is generally considered home to lower-income, blue collar

workers, and the 311 businesses in the area tend to cater to the needs of this demographic population. There are four commercial strips within the neighborhood—three retail and service zones and one industrial zone. The two commercial strips along South Broadway and Virginia Avenue generally consist of small, independent shops, restaurants and offices. There are several small pawn shops, antique shops, and other small retail stores as well as corner markets throughout these areas. Also scattered down South Broadway are many taverns, saloons and restaurants which all advertise plate lunch specials for very low prices. Lastly, there are many offices and services that can be found in the commercial strips on South Broadway and Virginia Avenue. Some of these include, barber shops, tax services, employment agencies, social services offices, real estate offices, and offices to the industrial plants nearby. Below are pictures of some very typical shops on South Broadway:



John's Furniture and Antiques
7101 South Broadway



South Public Super Market
7701 South Broadway

In addition to the retail and service shops located on South Broadway and Virginia Avenue, there is a new development being completed at the intersection of

Loughborough Avenue and Interstate 55 known as Loughborough Commons. This retail center differs from those along South Broadway and Virginia Avenue in that it is not comprised of small, independent shops; rather, it consists of regional and national chains such as Schnuck's Supermarket and Lowe's Hardware.

The last commercial zone in the Carondelet neighborhood is a strip of industrial parks located east of South Broadway along the Mississippi River. Notable industrial sites include: Cash's Scrap Metal and Iron, a wholesale scrap metal recycler, Southern Metal Products, a retail scrap metal recycler, ICL Performance Products, a food preservative manufacturer, Ashland Chemical plant, Lone Star Industries cement plant, New World Pasta grain processors, and Broadway Terminal Company Asphalt Products. Pictured below is the ICL Food Preservatives Manufacturing Carondelet Plant:



ICL Performance Products
8201 Idaho Avenue



ICL Performance Products
8201 Idaho Avenue

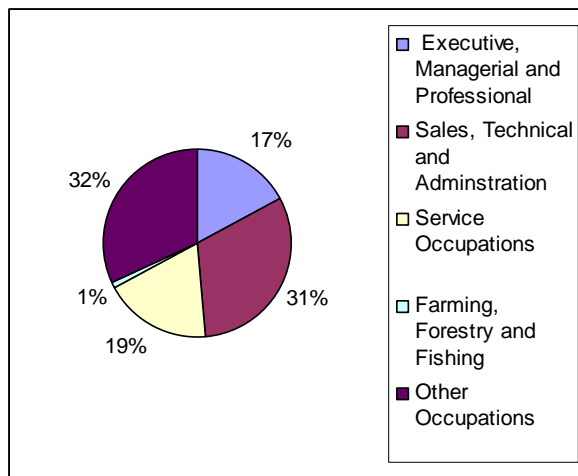
Employment

The 2000 Census reveals that the unemployment rate for the Carondelet neighborhood is 8.1%, which is considered to be above the average, but not extreme. While this number is not too extreme, it may be a little deceiving given the median

household income and the percentage of families living below the poverty level. At a time when the median income for a household was right around \$40,000, the median in the Carondelet neighborhood was \$22,040. An alarming 23.5% of families in the neighborhood live in poverty. Even worse, 38.8% of families headed by females where no husband is present are impoverished. While 92% of household heads might be officially “employed,” this number does account for discouraged workers who are not seeking employment or workers who are underemployed and unable to work full-time.

As mentioned before, the majority of residents of the Carondelet neighborhood are blue-collar workers and the businesses in the surrounding area tend to cater to their needs. The following table illustrates this trend by illustrating the percentage breakdown of occupations according to industry in Census Tract 1018:

Occupation Percentages by Industry



Data taken from <http://stlouis.missouri.org/neighborhoods/01/stat.html>

There are some white-collar pockets of the Carondelet neighborhood and the residents of these areas have Executive, Managerial, and Professional occupations. On the other

hand, 31% of the neighborhood's residents are involved in Sales and Technical skills-related industries while 19% have careers in the Service industry. The "Other" category, which accounts for 32% of the Carondelet population, represents industries such as Transportation, Information, Arts, Entertainment, and Food Services, Public Administration, and Wholesale and Retail trade.

Economic Development

In addition to the 311 businesses currently operating in the Carondelet neighborhood, there are two very large developments in the works. The first project, spearheaded by Pinnacle Entertainment Inc., is a casino scheduled to open in 2008. Although it will technically be part of Lemay in St. Louis County, the majority of this riverfront casino will be on the banks of the Mississippi in Carondelet. While St. Louis City will not receive any tax dollars from this development, it will bring nearly 7,000 jobs to the area. In addition, this casino development will spur other economic development and help to improve infrastructure such as roads and bridges. South Broadway Merchants Association President Jaymes Dearing argues that, at very least, this casino will bring much-needed attention to and awareness of the area.

Another development that is in the works is a theatre district consisting of a theatre, bars, and nightclubs. This Rothschild Realty development will be centered on the former St. Boniface Church and Rectory recently sold by Archbishop Raymond Burke. If successful, these bars and clubs would generate substantial tax dollars for the City and

the Carondelet neighborhood. Likewise, residents hope that this project will bring attention and crowds to the neighborhood.

Economic Problems

Perhaps the most significant economic problem the Carondelet neighborhood faces is the fact that it is somewhat isolated. With Interstate 55 to the west and the Mississippi to the east, the neighborhood has become an island. As a result, the area has trouble attracting national retailers and utility structure. When chain restaurants and retailers look at prospective sites for locating a new store, they use a technique that estimates the radius the store could serve. With the Mississippi River to the East, the service radius is nearly cut in half. Consequently, the neighborhood loses out on bids for these large chains, which means a loss of jobs and tax dollars for improvements. In the same way, Carondelet is unable to attract companies to provide basic utilities such as DSL internet connection.

Another significant problem Carondelet faces deals with outside perception of the neighborhood. Although statistics do not support this claim, many businesses and individuals view the area as a crime-ridden, unprofitable place to invest. Coupled with isolation, this perception severely hinders the neighborhood's ability to attract national chains and jobs. On a smaller scale, because the area is widely considered unsafe, middle-class individuals looking to live in St. Louis City look elsewhere to buy homes. As a result, the neighborhood loses out on families with disposable income which could be used to spur economic development.

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