



Join our community...
Get email updates on new community wealth-
building models, publications, events & more.

C-W Cities

Community Wealth City: St. Louis, Missouri

At the turn of the 20th century, St. Louis, Missouri was the fourth largest city in the nation. Although a combination of suburbanization, industrial restructuring, and job loss have created a smaller St. Louis today relative to other U.S. cities, in 2008, the "Gateway to the West" marked its first net population gain during a decade since 1950. Today, the city is home to more than 350,000 residents. Demographically, St. Louis is 49 percent African American, 46 percent white, 3 percent Latino and 2 percent Asian.



In 2008, St. Louis received an Urban Renewal Award from the World Leadership Forum — a not-for-profit organization that promotes leadership internationally, especially in the areas of science, technology, education and the arts — for its progress in urban revitalization, specifically in the areas of tax credits, Brownfield redevelopment, tax exempt financing and housing credits. In addition to these revitalization efforts, the city is also home to many community wealth-building efforts that contribute to the city's revival.

The historic Old North neighborhood is one area that has received a significant amount of attention. At the forefront of the effort, the Old North Saint Louis Restoration Group has been working in the community since 1981. This community development corporation has been pivotal to the rehabilitation of multiple historic buildings, development of affordable housing, and neighborhood clean-up work. Today, the Restoration Group is working with the Regional Housing and Community Development Alliance on a \$35 million redevelopment effort to convert 27 vacant historic buildings into 80 mixed-income apartments and more than 34,000 square-feet of commercial and retail space.

The Restoration Group has also actively collaborated with the University of Missouri at St. Louis, leveraging its resources as an anchor institution to spur revitalization. The University's Community Partnership Project focuses on neighborhood stabilization, historic preservation, home maintenance, financial literacy, environmental health and safety, community organizing, and leadership development.

The Project's Old North Healthy Community Initiative has been instrumental in improving access to healthy food in the community, aiding the establishment of a CSA [community supported agriculture] program, urban community gardens, and the Old North Grocery Co-op. The Co-op, which just opened in 2010, is another

STRATEGIES & MODELS...

- » [Access Panel](#)
- » [Search by Location](#)
- » [Directory](#)
- » [Policy Guide](#)
- » [CW Toolbox](#)
- » [CW in Action](#)
- » [CW Cities](#)
- » [CW Interviews](#)

- » [Site Map](#)
- » [Email This Page](#)

PREVIOUS CW CITIES...

- » [Atlanta, GA](#)
- » [Baltimore, MD](#)
- » [Boston, MA](#)
- » [Buffalo, NY](#)
- » [Chicago, IL](#)
- » [Cleveland, OH](#)
- » [Denver, CO](#)
- » [Detroit, MI](#)
- » [Durham, NC](#)
- » [Los Angeles, CA](#)
- » [Miami, FL](#)
- » [Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN](#)
- » [New Orleans, LA](#)
- » [New York, NY](#)
- » [Oakland, CA](#)
- » [Philadelphia, PA](#)
- » [Pittsburgh, PA](#)
- » [Portland, OR](#)
- » [San Jose, CA](#)

part of the effort to eliminate the area's food desert and help revitalize the community.

Another project in the area is the Urban Food Café, a non-profit café dedicated to fostering a stronger community by serving as a community-gathering place while providing quality food. Striving to be a catalyst for economic revitalization in the Old North St. Louis neighborhood, this social enterprise café will provide job-skills training with financial literacy and profits from the café will go towards funding The Urban Studio art programs.

An overview of community wealth building efforts follows:

Anchor Institutions

Greater Saint Louis Community Foundation

www.gstlcf.org

Founded in 1915, the Greater Saint Louis Community Foundation was one of the first community foundations in the nation. Today, it manages than 400 individual charitable funds that total more than \$170 million in assets – nearly triple what it had at the beginning of the decade. In 2009, the Foundation distributed more than \$33 million through nearly 1,800 grants.

Community Development Corporations

Beyond Housing

www.beyondhousing.org

Established in 1980 and merged with Neighborhood Housing Services of St. Louis in 2003, Beyond Housing is a nonprofit housing group dedicated to providing affordable renting housing for large, low-income families. Working with the 21 municipalities that comprise the Normandy School District, Beyond Housing is undertaking the 24:1 Initiative – a comprehensive community-driven strategy to revive this historically overlooked area through community engagement, education, community health and wellness, commercial and residential real estate development, research and resource development.

DeSales Community Housing Corporation

www.desaleshousing.com

Formed in 1976 to promote investment in Fox Park and Tower Grover East neighborhoods in St. Louis, DeSales Community Housing Corporation focuses its program activities in four main areas: housing development, property management, technical assistance, and neighborhood improvement. To date, DeSales has helped generate more than \$45 million in housing investment in the community.

Emerson Park Development Corporation

www.emersonpark.org

Located in East St. Louis, the Emerson Park Development Corporation was initially formed by a group of concerned residents in 1985 and officially incorporated in 1989. Since 2000, EPDC has helped generate more than \$65 million worth of investment in the Emerson Park Neighborhood through Metrolink development, new rental housing, and new for-sale housing.

Old North Saint Louis Restoration Group

www.onsl.org

Working to revitalize the community in a way that respects its historical, cultural and urban character, the Old North Saint Louis Restoration Group was formed in 1981 by a group of residents, small business owners, and community leaders. The Group has been involved in the rehabilitation of multiple historic buildings, development of affordable housing, and neighborhood cleanup. Currently, the group is working with RHCDA on a \$35 million redevelopment effort of 27 vacant historic buildings into 80 mixed-income apartments and more than 34,000

» [Seattle, WA](#)

» [Washington, D.C.](#)

square-feet of commercial and retail space.

Regional Housing and Community Development Alliance (RHCD)

www.rhcda.com

Focused on revitalizing St. Louis-area urban core neighborhoods, the Regional Housing and Community Development Alliance is a nonprofit group that provides capacity building technical assistance and resources to nonprofit community-based development organizations through a predevelopment loan fund. Since 1997, RHCD has provided more than \$65 million worth of investment through the development of more than 570 homes and eight commercial units. Additionally, the organization is currently developing another 84 homes and 10 commercial units with total development costs of \$36 million.

Community Land Trusts

Red Brick Community Land Trust

www.redbrickclt.org

Formed in 1999 by residents from several neighborhoods in South St. Louis, the Red Brick Community Land Trust strives to create sustainable and diverse neighborhoods in St. Louis through permanently affordable housing. Red Brick is currently renovating eight homes to sell to families at 60 and 80-percent of area median income; this effort is linked to its co-sponsorship of the Financial Education Program, which provides financial counseling to community members.

Cooperatives

City Food Co-op

<http://cityfoodcoop.com>

Founded in 1980 and located in St. Louis's Marine Villa neighborhood, City Food Co-op is a member-owned and -operated food cooperative that supplies organic food, personal care items, and "earth-friendly" household products. At least one adult of each member household is required to work at least one four-hour shift each month at the co-op.

Old North Grocery Co-op

www.oldnorthgrocery.com

Located at the intersection of St. Louis Avenue and North 13th Street, Old North Grocery Co-op opened in 2010 in a community that is considered one of the city's food deserts. In addition to offering food products that are locally grown from no more than 100 miles away, the Co-op will have cooking, food preservation, and nutrition classes as well as space for community events.

Cross Sectoral

Justine Petersen Housing and Reinvestment Corporation

www.justinepetersen.org

The Justine Petersen Housing and Reinvestment Corporation was founded in 1997 with the mission to connect institutional resources with the needs of low- to moderate-income families and individuals in order to build assets and create sustainable change. To date, the organization has helped more than 4,000 individual purchases homes, provided micro-business loans or technical support to more than 1,000 entrepreneurs, and manage Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) for more than 1,500 families.

Pagedale Development Project (Washington U.)

www.csd.wustl.edu/communities/pagedale/Pages/Pagedale.aspx

Founded through the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, the School of Architecture, and the Institute of Public Health at Washington University in St. Louis, Beyond Housing, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Pagedale Development Project strives to create a long-term, sustainable revitalization of

Pagedale, a lower-income, majority African American suburb of St. Louis County. The project will integrate a comprehensive asset-building strategy that includes the establishment of a grocery store, the development of affordable housing, and management of individual development accounts (IDAs).

Employee Ownership

Graybar

www.graybar.com

Specializing in supply chain management services and distribution of high-quality components, equipment and materials for a number of industries, Graybar is an employee-owned Fortune 500 company. With more than \$5.4 billion in revenue in 2008, Graybar, headquartered in St. Louis, has thousands of employees at more than 240 distribution centers throughout the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico.

McCarthy Building Companies, Inc.

www.mccarthy.com

Founded in 1864 and headquartered in St. Louis, McCarthy Building Companies, Inc. is one of the nation's oldest privately owned construction firms and has nine community-based offices nationwide. Today, it is 100 percent employee owned with more than \$3.5 billion in annual revenues and 1,700 full-time salaried and 3,100 weekly payroll employees.

Municipal Enterprise

Affordable Housing Commission of the City of St. Louis

www.stlouis.missouri.org/501c/affordablehousingcommission

Providing grants and loans to non-profit groups and developers that construct or rehabilitate low-income housing, the Affordable Housing Commission strives to achieve neighborhood stabilization through preservation and production of affordable housing and other support services. Since 2006, the Commission has provided more than \$17.5 million in grants and more than \$3 million in development loans.

Social Enterprise

Angel Baked Cookies

www.angelbaked.org

Currently employing 12 teenagers in the economically depressed North City-area of the city, Angel Baked Cookies is a non-profit venture that sells cookies, while teaching youth valuable job and life skills. Started in the spring of 2007 as a program of North Grand Neighborhood Services, the teens learn everything from preparation and packaging procedures to practicing one-on-one sales and visiting local businesses.

McMurphy's Grill

www.stpatrickcenter.org/programs/employment-training/mcmurphys-grill

Opened in 1990, McMurphy's Grill was the first-in-the nation full-service restaurant for training homeless/mentally ill clients. As a project of the non-profit St. Patrick Center, the program enables 30 to 40 people per year to develop the necessary employment skills to work in the restaurant industry.

Urban Studio Café

www.urbanstudiocafe.org

The Urban Studio Café is a non-profit café dedicated to fostering a stronger community by serving as a community-gathering place while providing quality food. The café will provide job-skills training with financial literacy and profits from the café will go towards funding The Urban Studio art programs. The social enterprise is striving to be a catalyst for economic revitalization in the Old North St. Louis neighborhood.

Transit Oriented Development

The Loop Trolley

<http://looptrolley.org/index.html>

Receiving more than \$25 million in federal funding, the St. Louis Loop Trolley Project is a \$44 million project that will help foster economic development between Forest Park and The Loop. Currently looking for sources of local matching funds, the Project will run 2.2 miles, including nine stops and connections to two MetroLink stations.

University Partnerships

Community Partnership Project (Univ. of Missouri)

<http://umsce.org/index.php/centers-a-programs/community-partnership-project>

Active in the Old North St. Louis community for the past decade, the Community Partnership Project received a HUD [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development] Community Outreach Partnership Centers grant that enabled it to utilize the physical, economic, intellectual, and creative resources of the university in the local community. The Project, which has continued since the grant expired, is focused on neighborhood stabilization, historic preservation, home maintenance, financial literacy, environmental health and safety, community organizing, and leadership development.

Neighborhood Leadership Academy (Univ. of Missouri)

www.umsce.org/index.php/neighborhood-leadership-academy/384-about

Bringing together a diverse group of up to 20 current or potential neighborhood leaders each year, the University of Missouri-St. Louis's Neighborhood Leadership Academy offers 10 sessions over a four-month period on leadership training that focuses on community building principles, organizational leadership and management practices, and personal leadership skills. Each participant completes a personal leadership development plan and designs a community-building project for their neighborhood.

Old North Healthy Community Initiative (Univ. of Missouri)

www.umsce.org/index.php/community-partnership-project/231-old-north-healthy-community-initiative

A component of the Community Partnership Project, the Old North Healthy Community Initiative is focused on improving access to healthy food in the Old North neighborhood. Through a partnership between the University and the community, the Initiative is helping to establish a CSA [community supported agriculture] program, grocery co-op, urban community gardens, and an expansion of North City Farmer's market.

Old North Partnership Project (Univ. of Missouri)

www.umsl.edu/continuing/cpp/onnp/preservation.html

Focused on integrating the Old North neighborhood's recent history with its more remote past, the Old North Partnership Project strives to revitalize the neighborhood and strengthen the sense of identity among residents by leveraging the area's historic capital. In addition to encouraging the historic preservation of the buildings, the Project is also committed to recording the oral history of local residents, developing a bicycle tour of the neighborhood, creating a community museum, and using archaeology to uncover more about Old North's history.

Urban Agriculture

City Seeds Urban Farm

www.gatewaygreening.org/our-programs/city-seeds-urban-farm

A project of Gateway Greening, the City Seeds Urban Farm occupies 2.5 acres and provides job training, therapeutic horticulture, and education on nutrition and food preparation to those at risk of chronic homelessness, substance abuse, mental illness, and recidivism. Supplying two area farmers' markets, the farm features 48 raised veggie beds, a native plant nursery, dwarf fruit tree orchard, ornamental shrub borders, drip irrigation, rain water catch cistern, outdoor classroom, harvest station, tool sheds, composting bins, a greenhouse and 3 bee hives.

New Roots Urban Farm

www.newrootsurbanfarm.org

Located on less than an acre of land, New Roots Urban Farm operates a CSA program that supports between 25-30 families every year. New Roots is also responsible for farming 1/3 of the City Seeds Urban Farm and offers supervision and training to those participating in the program. Additionally, the farm offers a youth apprenticeship program, admitting 15 students each year.

-

- [Home](#) \ [About C-W](#) \ [Strategies & Models](#) \ [News & Events](#) \ [Articles & Publications](#) \ [C-W Blog](#) \ [Contact Us](#) \ [Site Map](#) -

ShareThis

- **301.405.9834** · [click here to contact us via email](#) -

© Copyright 2007-2009 **The Democracy Collaborative**. All rights reserved. Web design by ComBridges.



■

■