

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: THE HISTORIC PRIVATE PLACES OF ST. LOUIS,
MISSOURI: ENDURING URBAN FORMS

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This thesis examines the development of the historic private places of St. Louis, Missouri from 1851 to 1905 as a means of providing essential services, infrastructure, restricted land use and to assure the security of persons and property in a period of urban expansion preceding the adoption of citywide planning and zoning. During this period, local private developers adopted the private place as a response to the common problems associated with industrial city growth. After 1905, St. Louis's private places were eclipsed by subsequent periods of municipal activity in city planning and the adoption of a zoning plan by 1918.

St. Louis's private places are significant for many reasons: for their architecture, for their architects, for their residents, and for their association with important historical events; but perhaps more importantly, private places made

a major contribution to urban design in St. Louis during a period before direct municipal involvement with regulated land-use. This thesis will not focus on individual developers, nor will it elaborate on significant architects and builders. It will not analyze extraordinary architectural details or ingenious construction methods. Rather, this thesis demonstrates the great impact that St. Louis's early private places had on local urban development as private responses to a series of public problems. It proves that the historic private places of St. Louis have endured the test of time and should be given more attention and recognition in the study of urban history and will hopefully encourage continued preservation of these places.