

PRINCETON HEIGHTS (6)

LOCATION

The neighborhood boundaries are defined as Hampton Boulevard on the East, Eichelberger on the North, Christy Boulevard on the East, and Gravois on the South.

HISTORY

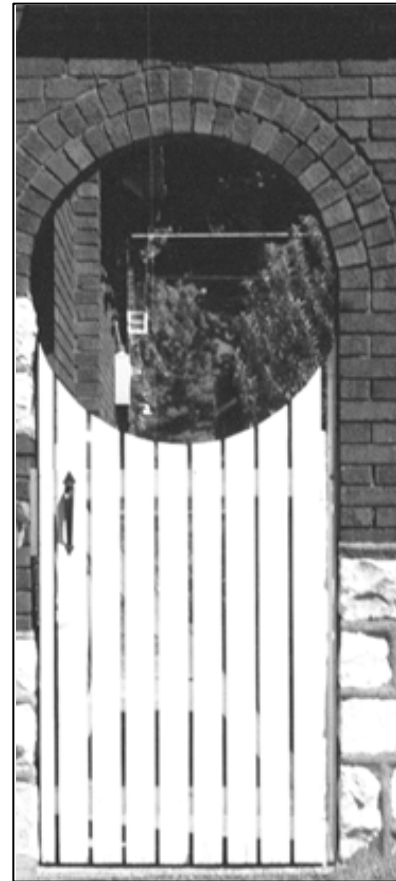
Princeton Heights received its name from the old Princeton Creamery on Kingshighway Boulevard near Gravois, which in the past sold milk in glass jars. Previous to its incorporation to St. Louis City, the Princeton Heights neighborhood was known as Gardenville. At the turn of the century, this area was primarily an agricultural community. Farmers in this area grew a plethora of fruit and vegetables. The products grown were then brought to the Soulard Market located nearby. Outward expansion shortly after the turn of the century resulted in the inevitable development of this land. By 1920, nearly all these farms and gardens had been developed and land use was converted from agricultural to residential and commercial land use. It was at this time that the present-day community began to take shape.

The smaller tracts of land from the 1839 land survey west of present Hampton Avenue and south of Bancroft Avenue were held by Ferdinand Overstolz, Benjamin C. Clements, and M. D. Cotheld. The oldest subdivision (1856) was the Hazelwood Addition running the south side of Eichelberger Street and west of Kingshighway. The area south of Eichelberger and east of Hampton was completely subdivided by the mid 1920s. These developments include Kingshighway Park, Gardenville Terrace, Princeton Place, Gravois Homesites, Gravois-Loughborough Place, and Woodland Park. The early commercial activity coincided with the streetcar lines around the South Hampton Loop at Macklind Avenue and along Kingshighway, south of Chippewa. After World War II, the remaining housing stock was built, which involved heavy strip development along Hampton Avenue.

CHARACTERISTICS

To this day, the residents of Princeton Heights take pride in their homes and community. Generally, the neighborhood is well kept, as families take pride in the upkeep of their lawn and appearance of their property. As compared to the adjacent Boulevard Heights neighborhood, Princeton Heights contains a larger proportion of single-family homes and fewer apartments. The apartments are generally two- to four- family units. The homes are fairly new, most having been built after World War II. Recent trends show that there are many young couples moving into the area to buy homes and establish residences.

There is currently a River Des Peres Beautification Project working to restore the previous luster and charm to the area. There has also been activity within the business community to upkeep store façades and signs. The housing stock Princeton Heights has to offer includes oxblood-colored brick structures built during the Calvin Coolidge, Herbert



Hoover, and Franklin D. Roosevelt presidential terms. The housing can be described as primarily single-family bungalows and flat-roof shotgun cottages. The neighborhood also contains two- to four-family flats, as well as larger apartment buildings, excluding the large apartment complexes. Princeton Heights has been described as a pedestrian-friendly community, developed at a time when single-family and multifamily structures were integrated together with local businesses.

Within the neighborhood are shopping centers, service stations, banks, and other modern conveniences. Hampton Village is one of the most popular shopping areas in the neighborhood. At Loughborough and Morganford, there has been construction of a Save-A-Lot supermarket, with other specialty stores adjacent to the complex. At the intersection of Gravois and Morganford, there are also several small stores and specialty shops.



Princeton Heights is conveniently located and easily accessible to I-55 and I-44. Being near the outer boundary of the city limits, Princeton Heights offers a relaxing, less crowded atmosphere that further adds to its character. At the intersection of Hampton and Gravois is the Bus Loop, which offers easy access to all sections of the city via public transportation.

INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Princeton Heights Neighborhood Association is an active community asset that strives to enhance the quality of life and provide neighborhood services, recreation and a variety of other services for the residents and businesses of the neighborhood within its boundaries (Princeton Heights Neighborhood Association Mission Statement). There are several local businesses that are enthusiastic supporters of Princeton Heights: St. Louis Community Credit Union, Cordes Pharmacy, John L. Ziegenhein and Sons Funeral Home, Gravois Glass, Alhambra Grotto Social Club and Frie's Tax Service. The two local schools include Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School (K–8) and the nearby Bevo Long Public School and Mary Magdalen. Area churches include Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, Fifth Spiritualist Church and Redeemer Evangelical Church. Located within Princeton Heights is also the Hampton-Chippewa Business Association. The active neighborhood organizations include Gardenville Community Center, the Princeton Heights Neighborhood Association, and a C-4 group.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The population and demographics of the area have changes little throughout the existence of the neighborhood. Currently, there has been the creation of the River Des Peres Beautification Project, which plans to improve the appearance of the greens located along River Des Peres. There are also plans to enhance the appearance of the Bus Loop at Hampton and Gravois. The plans include the addition of modern wall benches,

landscaping, and other beautification projects. Furthermore, a recent addition to the neighborhood business community is a Bosnian real estate company.