

# Rental Comparisons at 1205 St. Charles Avenue

## 1. Introduction: The Art of Objective Housing Choice

Choosing a rental is more than a lifestyle upgrade; it is a financial commitment that requires the rigor of a professional audit. Too often, renters are swayed by "curb appeal" or a specific view, leading to "renter's remorse" once the true costs of utilities and space inefficiency become clear. The purpose of this tutorial is to provide a framework for transforming disparate rental listings into a clear, data-driven decision.

We will analyze **The Athenaeum** (1205 St. Charles Avenue) as our primary case study. This landmark building is situated directly on the historic St. Charles Avenue streetcar line, offering a diverse inventory of units.

**The "So What?":** Beyond the aesthetic, objective comparison identifies hidden value and protects your bottom line. For instance, the building's location on the streetcar line effectively permits a car-free lifestyle, potentially saving a resident hundreds of dollars in monthly Uber costs or CBD parking fees.

The first step in professional housing consultancy is the normalization of raw data to facilitate a true "apples-to-apples" comparison.

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## 2. The Data Landscape: Inventory of Available Units

To evaluate options effectively, we must organize the current inventory by price, size, and furnished status. By viewing these units together, we can begin to see patterns in the **Price-to-Space Ratio**.

Unit #	List Price	Square Footage (SqFt)	Price per SqFt (\$/SqFt)	Furnished Status
#1313	\$2,000	565	\$3.54	No
#1014	\$1,600	648	\$2.47	Yes
#701	\$1,500	850	\$1.76	Yes
#509	\$1,500	648	\$2.31	Yes
#313	\$1,500	565	\$2.65	Yes
#616	\$1,400	565	\$2.48	Yes

#917	\$1,400	600	\$2.33	Yes
#1202	\$1,395	540	\$2.58	Yes
#405	\$1,350	850	<b>\$1.59</b>	No
#513	\$1,350	565	\$2.39	Yes
#714	\$1,275	648	\$1.97	No
<b>#1002</b>	<b>\$1,200</b>	450	\$2.67	No
<b>#208</b>	<b>\$1,200</b>	400	\$3.00	Yes

While the monthly list price is the most visible metric, true "value" is found by evaluating the Price-to-Space Ratio, which reveals what you are actually paying for every square foot of living area.

### 3. Deep Dive: Analyzing Value through Space and Cost

A professional consultant looks for **Value Efficiency**—identifying which units provide the most square footage for the least capital.

#### Units with the Best Value Efficiency (Lowest \$/SqFt):

- **Unit #405:** \$1.59/sqft
- **Unit #701:** \$1.76/sqft
- **Unit #714:** \$1.97/sqft

#### Units with the Highest Cost per Square Foot:

- **Unit #1313:** \$3.54/sqft
- **Unit #208:** \$3.00/sqft
- **Unit #1002:** \$2.67/sqft

**The "So What?":** A higher list price often pays for more than just square footage. Unit #1313 commands a 3.54/sqft premium due to its 13th-floor position and high-end renovations. Similarly, Unit #1202 (2.58/sqft) sits on the 12th floor and is located on the "quiet" side of the building, offering city scape views that lower-floor units lack. Conversely, the "entry-level" units (#208 and #1002) have high Price-to-Space ratios because they provide the lowest absolute price point for access to the building's full amenity suite.

**Data Reliability Alert:** Always verify the "SqFt Source." Data for **Unit #1313** and **Unit #701** come from "Condo Documents," a high-reliability source. **Unit #405** and **Unit #1002** are "Measured" by the agent, while **Unit #1202** and **Unit #208** rely on "Tax Records," which can sometimes be less precise.

Space is only half of the story; included amenities and utilities represent the "hidden" financial impact of any lease.

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## 4. Comparing the "Hidden" Factors: Amenities and Utilities

All residents at 1205 St. Charles benefit from building-wide services that effectively replace external costs like gym memberships or security services.

### Building-Wide Amenities Checklist

- 24/7 Security Guard, Key Fob Entrance, and Controlled Access
- Swimming Pool and Hot Tub
- Fitness Center / Exercise Studio including Sauna
- On-site Laundry Facilities (Laundromat/Co-op)
- Community Spaces (Club House, Activity Room, Meeting Room)
- Outdoor Grilling Areas and BBQ Grills
- Immediate access to the Historic St. Charles Streetcar line

### Utility Responsibility Comparison

Responsibility for electricity (Entergy), water, and gas can drastically change your monthly budget.

Utilities Paid by Owner (Reduced Risk)	Utilities Paid by Tenant (Variable Cost)
<b>Unit #405:</b> Electric, Water, Sewerage, and Trash.	<b>Unit #1202:</b> Tenant pays Electric (Entergy) and Gas.
<b>Unit #1014:</b> Water and Electric (Entergy).	<b>Unit #616:</b> Tenant pays Water and Electric. (Gas is Owner-paid).
<b>Unit #208:</b> Water included.	<b>Unit #509:</b> Tenant pays Electric (Entergy).
<b>Unit #714:</b> Water included.	<b>Unit #917:</b> Tenant pays Electric and Gas.

For a first-time renter, **all-inclusive rent**—specifically found in **Unit #405**, which is the only "zero-variable" unit in this list—provides the primary benefit of predictable monthly budgeting without seasonal electricity spikes.

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## 5. Strategic Decision-Making: Which Unit Wins?

Different learners have different priorities. Based on the synthesized data, we can categorize the "winners" by persona:

1. **The Budget-Conscious Learner:**

- **Unit #1002 (\$1,200):** This is the sought-after "**Dauphine Floor Plan.**" While it has a higher price-per-square-foot than larger units, it offers the lowest absolute entry price into the building's luxury amenity environment.
2. **The Space Seeker:**
    - **Unit #405 (850 sqft):** This is the "**Value Champion.**" It combines the largest living area in the building with the lowest price-per-square-foot (\$1.59) and the most comprehensive owner-paid utility package (Electric, Water, Sewer, Trash).
  3. **The Convenience Seeker:**
    - **Unit #313 or #1313:** Parking on St. Charles is a premium. **Unit #1313** includes a **Deeded parking spot (#95)**, which is a significant property right. **Unit #313** offers **spot #149 in a covered garage**, a massive convenience. Note that for seekers of flexibility, **Unit #513** comes lightly furnished, but the owner will remove furnishings upon request.

### **3-Step Action Plan for Future Rental Searches**

1. **Calculate the Price-to-Space Ratio:** Never compare by monthly rent alone. Determine the \$/SqFt to see if you are paying for actual room or just a "floor-level" premium.
2. **Audit the Utility "Fine Print":** Identify units like #616 that may cover one utility (Gas) but not others (Electric/Water). Total cost of occupancy is Rent + Utilities.
3. **Evaluate Parking Rights:** Differentiate between "Gated," "Assigned," and "Covered Garage" parking. Covered parking (like #313 or #1202) adds more value to your vehicle and daily routine than an uncovered gated lot.