
2025
POPLAR BLUFF
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
POPLAR BLUFF
Gateway to the Ozarks
DRAFT

RESOLUTION

(THIS PAGE TO BE REPLACED UPON APPROVAL BY CITY COUNCIL)
DOCUMENT IS NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL PASSED AND INCLUDES RESOLUTION

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Cover photo: Mural at downtown parking lot in 2026. (OFRPC)

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2025 • Butler County Health Department **

*** Report not produced as part of Comprehensive Plan project.*

Sources

Poplar Bluff Comprehensive Plan; 1962, 2008.
City of Poplar Bluff, various records, including: Audits (2015-2025), budgets, meeting minutes, and reports, *Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport Layout Plan, 2025; Poplar Bluff Historical Design Guidelines, 2014; DREAM Downtown Guidelines, 2009; Municipal Utilities Plan, 2018.*
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Missouri Economic Research (population trend)
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American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

PROJECT OUTLINE



The Planning and Zoning Commission meets in the Council Chambers to discuss the plan.

The City of Poplar Bluff created Comprehensive Plans in 1962, ’71, ’91, ’98 and 2008. The City began the process of updating the plan for the next 20 to 25 years starting in 2023 by seeking funding to pay for the project.

At that time, the City entered into an agreement with the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission (OFRPC) to update the plan by applying for grant funding as partners in the project. The Delta Regional Authority awarded a $72,500 grant on October 1, 2023, as part of its Strategic Planning Program, which was funded at the time by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law signed by then President Biden.

OFRPC staff created the plan with input from the community. The City’s staff, elected council members, planning and zoning commission and a group of selected citizens were all involved in the project. Open house style meetings, along with interviews with key stakeholders and crowd-sourcing techniques such as surveys provide opportunities for input to help shape the plan throughout the process.

WHAT IS A COMP PLAN?

An effective Comprehensive Plan describes the community by focusing on each of the elements that create the city. Those include transportation, public facilities, infrastructure, housing, economic development, intergovernmental coordination, capital improvements, public health, utilities, community character, land use, among others. Each of these areas will feature inventories, analysis, goals and objectives, along with implementation policies. It will also look at how the previous plan was implemented.

Missouri State law requires that municipalities have a Comprehensive Plan. Here’s what the law states:

*RSMO Chapter 89.340. The commission shall make and adopt a city plan for the physical development of the municipality. The city plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts and descriptive and explanatory matter, shall show the commission’s recommendations for the physical development and uses of land, and may include, among other things, the general location, character and extent of streets and other public ways, grounds, places and spaces; the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned, the acceptance, widening, removal, extension, relocation, narrowing, vacation, abandonment or change of use of any of the foregoing; the general character, extent and layout of the replanning of blighted districts and slum areas. The commission may also prepare a zoning plan for the regulation of the height, area, bulk, location and use of private, nonprofit and public structures and premises, and of population density, but the adoption, enforcement and administration of the zoning plan shall conform to the provisions of sections 89.010 to 89.250.

PLANNING TEAM

Made up of citizens with a vested interest in the community’s future, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was selected by the City staff and approved by the Council to guide the conversations that helped the project team create this document.

→

PROJECT OUTLINE

The City Manager and City Planner worked with the OFRPC to gather information on the needs of the community. This group attended all meetings with the public and stakeholders.

A consultant from the previous plan, Smith & Company, was used to provide updates to maps and technical support.

DATA COLLECTION

The planning team and the Advisory Committee met June 6, 2024, to start the process and later determined the schedule for meetings with the public. The meeting also determined questions to ask the community in surveys, establish goals and areas of focus for the planning team to meet in creating the plan and set up communication during the process.

Meetings open to the public occurred at different times of the day and week to accommodate as many people as possible. These meetings featured an agenda set by the planning group and Advisory Committee, focusing on various topics, such as transportation or land use, with open discussion to follow. These meetings included information provided by previous meetings and results from a community survey to help focus discussion on the selected topics.

PUBLIC MEETINGS • 2024

- **Monday, Oct. 21**, 12 p.m. Poplar Bluff Area Chamber office
- **Thursday, Oct. 24**, 6:30 p.m. O'Neal School
- **Tuesday, Oct. 29**, 7 p.m. Eugene Field School
- **Wednesday, Oct. 30**, 10 a.m. Community Room at Twin Towers
- **Wednesday, Nov. 6**, 12 p.m. Black River Coliseum
- **Thursday, Nov. 7**, 6 p.m. Historical Wheatley School

The City worked with other community stakeholders in creating the plan including Butler County, officials from state entities, business leaders, school officials, nonprofit and religious leaders. Through a series of meetings, the City worked with representatives from those stakeholders, which included the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), the Poplar Bluff R-I School District, Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce and Poplar Bluff Housing Authority among others.

OFRPC staff met with city staff for internal discussions, which focused on how to better serve the public.

Data was collected from the U.S. Census, including the Decennial Census and annual American Community Survey, along with other state and federal agencies.

PROJECT DELAYS

The project saw a number of setbacks, including the resignation of two city managers and a EF-3 tornado on March 14, 2025, that damaged a large section of the city. The project was put on hold during the rest of that year. However, it was determined there was a need for a study to examine the extent of the damage and overall state of residential housing in and around the city. A housing study was completed and included as an appendix.

Included in the project is a Master Plan for the Parks and Recreation Department, the first in nearly 30 years. This plan is included as an appendix and was approved by the Park Department's board of directors in September 2025.

PLAN APPROVAL

The Advisory Committee was presented with draft chapters starting in March 2026. Suggestions and revisions were made over the following weeks with the final report completed and approved by the committee.

A public meeting was held prior to the regular city council meeting to present the first draft to the City Council and general public for review. Comments and suggestions were taken over the next several weeks then discussed before changes were made and a final draft was approved by the City Council.

Approval of the final plan went as follows:

1) The City Manager and City Planner approved a draft of the plan to move forward;

2) The Planning and Zoning Commission was presented the draft for consideration during one of its regularly scheduled and advertised meetings. The first draft was later approved at another advertised meeting;

3) The plan was presented to the Citizens Advisory Committee. A majority of the CAC members approved the plan;

4) Approval of the draft sent it to the City Council as a final draft;

5) The final draft plan was presented to the public and City Council during a regular Council meeting as a workshop item. A public comment period followed;

6) The City Council approved the plan by vote during a second regular meeting. The adopting resolution is included on the first page of the plan.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project is the work of many individuals that provided their time and efforts during this process. We appreciate and gratefully acknowledge them.

CITY COUNCIL

Lisa Armes Parson ..... Ward 1
David Boyers ..... Ward 2
Barbara Horton ..... Ward 3
Shane Cornman ..... Ward 4
Robert L. Smith ..... Ward 5
Billy DePew ..... At Large
Michael Jones ..... At Large

PREVIOUSLY SERVING MEMBERS

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Gary Pride, Airport Director
J.R. Keirsey, Police Chief
Mike Moffitt, Fire Chief
Lisa Hafford, Human Resources
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ORGANIZATIONS

Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce
Poplar Bluff R-I School District
Three Rivers College
Poplar Bluff Housing Authority
Mo. Department of Transportation
Delta Regional Authority

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The project to update Poplar Bluff's Comprehensive Plan included an extensive program of citizen involvement. The issues raised by the general public and recommendations made form the overall vision for the future are summarized here and are included in full in the appendix.

A group of citizens were selected by the City, and approved by the City Council, to serve as community representatives. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) featured 23 individuals to help guide the project, making observations and recommendations to the City and OFRPC. The CAC helped create a survey in June 2024 that was presented to the public online while a longer survey that matched questions from 2007 was sent to 1,000 random registered voters within the city limits.

The online survey received 1,594 responses to the 15-question version while 504 of those respondents completed the longer survey that mirrored the mailed survey, which gave participants the ability to fill it out online. There were 31 mailed surveys completed for a total of 1,625 responses. Of those, 57.5% said they were city residents, approximately 5.8% of the city's population. Two-thirds of respondents, 68.6%, were female while the age of the respondents were closer to the city's demographics with 15% under 30, 22% in their 30s, 25% in their 40s, 18% in their 50s and 18% age 60 and above.

The strongest project support among respondents with nearly half, 48.6%, absolutely agreeing with the statement "Historic downtown should be restored." That was much higher than the 2007 rate of 36%.

Among the most agreed upon questions was that more recreation programs were needed (80.5% agreed or absolutely agreed), the city should encourage more recycling (79.7%), downtown should be restored (79.2%), the city should fix stormwater and flooding issues (78.2%), more sidewalks are needed (73.0%) and the city should encourage more retail stores (70.3%).

There were 2,220 total comments between all of the surveys with each given keywords to determine which topics were most popular.

Among the most popular answers to Poplar Bluff's greatest strengths were community, location, retail, schools, size and parks. The most popular answers for the city's greatest weaknesses were crime, lack of activities, blight, retail, roads and community. Having community and retail appear in both lists shows a matter of perspective. One retail weakness answer stated, "need more variety," while the retail strength answer stated, "plenty of retail stores." One community strength answer stated, "people that complain but do nothing to help," while the community strength answer was, "many nice people with a desire to improve the community."

The CAC group listed Poplar Bluff's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as follows:

STRENGTHS

- Location with highway access
- Low cost of living
- Regional hub for manufacturing, retail, health care, and education
- Access to education
- Access to outdoor recreation

WEAKNESSES

- Low income levels
- State of downtown area
- Loss of trained or educated people
- Drug use
- Unhoused population

OPPORTUNITIES

- Extending Interstate 57 to state line
- Potential for annexation, growth
- Available commercial land
- Outdoor recreation

THREATS

- National economy, local job loss
- 'Brain Drain' or loss of trained and educated citizens
- Community apathy

Among the topics raised at the six public meetings were growth and annexation, redevelopment, attracting businesses that offer more things to do, entertainment, cleaning up the blight, transportation including road and sidewalk improvements, child care, workforce development, housing, a plan for downtown redevelopment, animal control and public safety, stormwater and flooding issues, and the increase in unhoused people. Summaries of each meeting are included in the appendix.



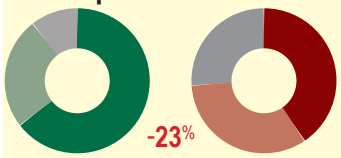
Appendix B

PB2025 SURVEY

Residents surveyed in 2024 were asked similar questions used in 2006 for the previous plan to determine what perceptions have changed in 18 years. The method of the two surveys, however, were different with the current survey featuring responses mostly sourced from social media using an online survey while both surveys featured surveys mailed to random residents. Both surveys featured similar demographics with female citizens accounting for a majority of the answered surveys. The current survey, however, had more people in the 40-49 age group while the previous survey had the most responses from the 50-59 age group.

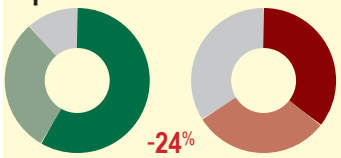
Here is a look at the differences between responses by year:

Poplar Bluff is a great place to live



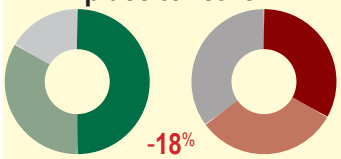
2006	2024
Agree ...64%	Agree ...41%
Neutral ...26%	Neutral ...33%
Disagree ...10%	Disagree ...26%

Poplar Bluff is a great place to raise children



Agree ...58%	Agree ...34%
Neutral ...29%	Neutral ...32%
Disagree ...13%	Disagree ...34%

Poplar Bluff is a great place to retire



Agree ...51%	Agree ...33%
Neutral ...32%	Neutral ...32%
Disagree ...17%	Disagree ...35%

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

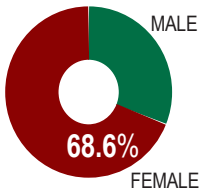
PB2025 SURVEY

2,129 TOTAL Responses to all surveys

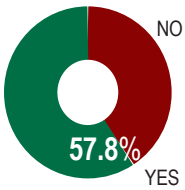
1,625 TOTAL Persons took survey

4% Percentage of county's population

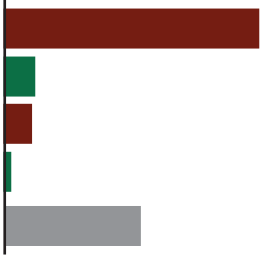
What is your gender?



Are you a city resident?

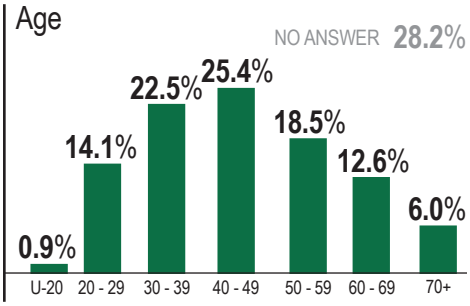


How long have you lived here?



- 56.6% 10+ yrs
- 7.0% 6-10 yrs
- 6.8% 1-5 yrs
- 1.4% Less 1
- 28.2% No answer

Age



Topics that generated the most agreement:

Percentage that absolutely agreed:

- Downtown should be restored..... 48.6%
- More recreation programs needed.... 44.3%
- Pay to demolish derelict houses..... 41.4%
- More sidewalks needed..... 40.7%
- Encourage more recycling..... 40.2%
- More parks and walking trails..... 37.4%

Percentage that agreed or absolutely agreed:

- More recreation programs needed.... 80.5%
- Encourage more recycling..... 79.7%
- Downtown should be restored..... 79.2%
- Fix stormwater, flooding issues..... 78.2%
- More sidewalks needed..... 73.0%
- Encourage more retail stores..... 70.3%

Comments:

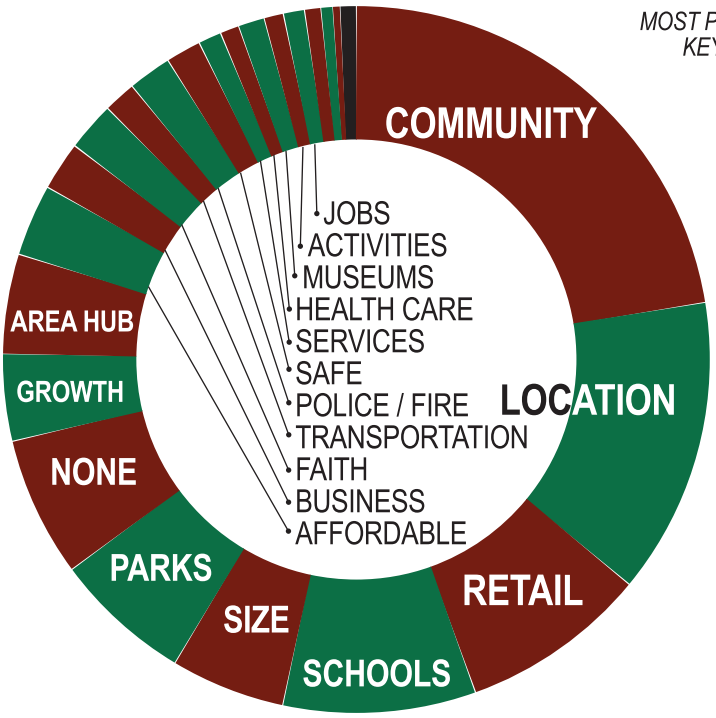
In all, there were **2,220** comments provided among the three surveys.

Each comment was reviewed and given keywords to determine which topics were most popular. The full text of comments is included in the report.

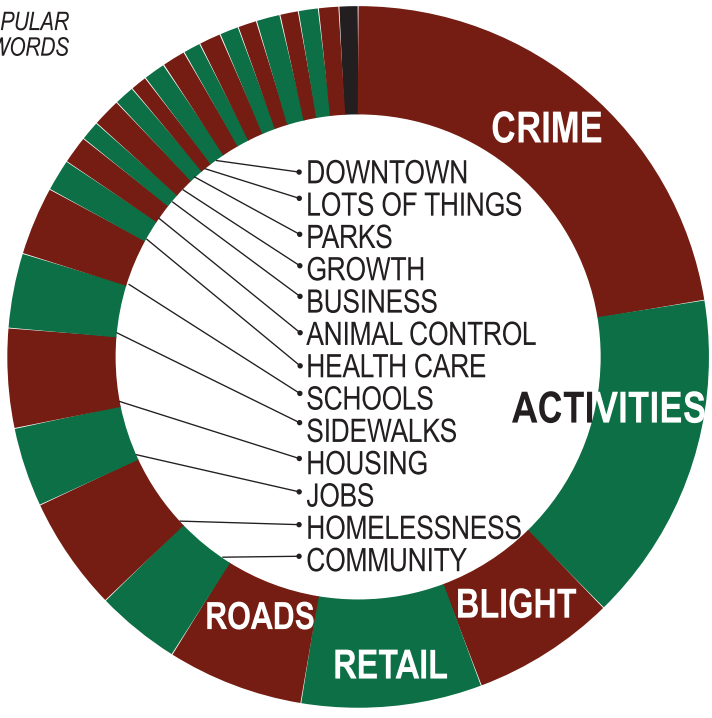
WHAT ARE POPLAR BLUFF'S GREATEST...

STRENGTHS?

MOST POPULAR KEYWORDS



WEAKNESSES?



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



A mural was created in 2024 at the municipal parking lot on Broadway in downtown Poplar Bluff.

The City of Poplar Bluff has charted its course for the next two decades through the comprehensive planning process encapsulated in this document. This Executive Summary provides an exhaustive overview of the extensive research, public engagement, historical analysis, and forward-looking strategies that formulate this Poplar Bluff 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

Initiated in 2023 through a $72,500 grant from the Delta Regional Authority, the plan was crafted in collaboration with the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission (OFRPC), City staff, elected officials, and a dedicated Citizens Advisory Committee. The overarching vision is to preserve the city's small-town atmosphere while promoting a livable, well-planned community through managed growth, economic development, and revitalization efforts.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY SENTIMENT

A cornerstone of this planning process was an extensive public outreach campaign designed to capture the community's desires and concerns, from citizens living both within and outside the city limits. The initiative garnered 1,625 total survey responses, representing approximately 4% of Butler County's 42, 130 population. The demographics of the respondents closely mirrored the city's makeup, with 68.6% female participants and the largest age cohort being individuals between 40 and 49 years old. Notably, 57.8% of the respondents were city residents.

The public feedback revealed a significant shift in community sentiment compared to data collected for the previous plan in 2006. The perception of Poplar Bluff as a "great place to live" plummeted by 23%, dropping from 64% in 2006 to just 41% in 2024. Similarly, its rating as a great place to raise children fell by 24%, and its suitability for retirement declined by 18%. Despite these declining sentiments, the community demonstrated strong consensus on several key priorities for the future. Expanding recreation programs received overwhelming support, with 80.5% of respondents in agreement. Increasing recycling efforts was supported by 79.7%, and restoring the historic downtown was favored by 79.2%. Regarding critical infrastrucutre, fixing stormwater and flooding issues, adding more sidewalks, and encouraging more retail stores were identified as critical needs by the community.

When assessing the city's strengths, residents frequently cited its geographical location, low cost of living, status as a regional hub, educational institutions, and access to outdoor recreation. Conversely, the most prominent weaknesses identified included crime, drug use, blight, a growing unhoused population, and a general lack of activities.

→

ABOUT THIS SUMMARY

This summary was produced using Artificial Intelligence to summarize the Comprehensive Plan and produce a plan to carry it out.

Multiple AI models were asked the same prompt:

"Attached is a draft of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Provide a summary, assessment and recommendations to improve the community. Provide a roadmap for the next 20 years that includes specific projects, policies and other techniques that the City can do. This report should be lengthy, starting with a 1,000-word summary, and include topics included in the attached plan."

The final product is a combination of several responses, edited for accuracy and included here. A one-page summary is also included at the end. The use of AI in the rest of the report was limited to chapter summaries and photo representations of future projects or graphic presentation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Understanding Poplar Bluff's future requires an appreciation of its rich history, which is thoroughly detailed in the plan. Founded in 1849 as the seat of Butler County, the city was named for the tulip poplar trees overlooking the Black River. The arrival of the railroad in 1872 catalyzed an economic boom heavily reliant on the timber industry, transforming the small village into a bustling center of commerce.

A defining, yet tragic, moment in the city's history occurred on May 9, 1927, when a devastating tornado struck the downtown area. The disaster claimed 98 lives and destroyed 35 city blocks, causing an estimated 4 million dollars in damages. This catastrophe, coupled with a decline in the timber boom, forced Poplar Bluff to pivot its economic focus toward agriculture and manufacturing. The establishment of an industrial park in 1945 and the opening of a Veterans Hospital in 1950 marked significant milestones in this transition, drawing manufacturing jobs and shifting the central business district westward toward Highway 67.



Fireworks explode over the Iron Mountain Railroad Depot in downtown Poplar Bluff during a Fourth of July celebration.

DEMOGRAPHIC & ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

The comprehensive plan meticulously analyzes Poplar Bluff's current socioeconomic status. As of the 2020 Census, the city's population stood at 16,225, representing a 4.7% decrease from 2010. Interestingly, while Butler County's overall population has grown over the past 50 years, the city itself has fewer residents today than it did in 1970, indicating a trend of residents moving outside the city limits. The greater Poplar Bluff area, however, supports a population closer to 33,000.

The community is facing the challenges of an aging demographic, with 18.1% of residents aged 65 or older. Economically, Poplar Bluff remains a vital hub for a 50-mile radius that encompasses southeast Missouri and northeast Arkansas. The largest employment sectors are health care and social assistance at 21.7%, followed by manufacturing at 15.5%. However, economic hurdles persist. The median household income is $37,448, which is significantly lower than the state average, contributing to a high poverty rate of 27%. This economic strain is only partially mitigated by a lower cost of living index of 86.5.

Housing presents another critical area of concern. Homeownership rates within the city lag significantly behind the state average, with only 48.7% of households owning their homes compared to Missouri's 67.6%. The housing vacancy rate has climbed to 12.2%, and over half of the renters currently allocate 30% or more of their monthly income toward rent, highlighting a pressing need for affordable housing solutions and neighborhood stabilization efforts.

EIGHT KEY PLANNING ELEMENTS

To address these challenges and capitalize on the city's strengths, the comprehensive plan establishes goals and implementation strategies across eight foundational sectors.

Downtown Revitalization focuses on transforming the central business district into a vibrant hub. Strategies include targeted infrastructure funding for public gathering spaces, implementing special financing districts, and promoting boutique retail, dining, and cultural events.

→

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Ice covers the trees along the Black River with the railroad bridge crossing into downtown Poplar Bluff.

Future Commercial Development aims to drive mixed-use projects along major corridors like Westwood Boulevard. This element emphasizes partnering with local educational entities such as Three Rivers College for workforce development and supporting the extension of Interstate 57.

Quality of Life initiatives are designed to enhance community aesthetics through gateway corridor designs, strict landscaping requirements, and the establishment of interconnected pedestrian and bicycle lanes.

Housing and Neighborhood Stabilization strategies focus on expanding diverse dwelling options, such as "Missing Middle" housing and accessory dwelling units. Strict code enforcement to combat blight and financing programs for low-income or elderly home repairs are also prioritized.

Transportation initiatives advocate for the adoption of "Complete Streets" principles to ensure safety for all users. Key projects include downtown traffic calming measures, executing the 2025 Airport Layout Plan, and evaluating options for a highway bypass.

Future Land Use policies enforce a growth hierarchy that prioritizes restorative development and adaptive reuse over new greenfield expansion, ensuring that infrastructure costs are shared equitably through developer agreements.

Community Services and Facilities recommendations include centralizing municipal functions by building a new City Hall downtown, constructing Fire Station No. 4, consolidating city trash contracts, and integrating the Black River Coliseum into the Parks department.

Parks & Recreation seeks to leverage the region's ecotourism potential. Plans include expanding existing assets like Leist and Pike Creek Parks and developing a greenway trail system along the Black River to promote active lifestyles and connectivity.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Poplar Bluff is currently navigating a transitional period characterized by both strong foundational assets and pressing socioeconomic vulnerabilities.

STRENGTHS

- Regional hub population is effectively much larger than city limits (approx. 33,000).
- Low cost of living (index of 86.5); strong medical and manufacturing sectors.
- Availability of diverse neighborhood footprints.
- Exceptional access to outdoor recreation and major transportation access like Highways 60 and 67.

VULNERABILITIES

- City population dropped 4.7% since 2010; "Brain drain" of educated youth leaving the area.
- Median household income is just $37,448; high poverty rate of 27%.
- Low homeownership (51.4%); high rent burdens and a 17.3% housing vacancy rate.
- Aging downtown infrastructure; public concerns over blight, crime, and an increasing unhoused population.

The sentiment shift captured in the community surveys indicates that residents feel the strain of these vulnerabilities. The drop in the city's rating as a "great place to live" signals an urgent need for visible, restorative action, particularly concerning neighborhood blight, safety, and recreational activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE COMMUNITY

Based on the core elements of the Comprehensive Plan, the following tactical recommendations are proposed to revitalize Poplar Bluff:

Implement Aggressive Code Enforcement: Combat blight by strictly enforcing building codes and property maintenance standards to stabilize property values and restore neighborhood pride.

Establish a Special Financing District Downtown: Create a targeted funding mechanism to share the costs of public improvements like street lighting, sidewalk installation, and public gathering spaces in the historic center.

→

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prioritize Infill and Restorative Development: Adopt policies that make it financially and administratively preferable for developers to build on underutilized existing lots (e.g., open lots) rather than expanding outward.

Create Housing Repair Grants: Launch targeted grant and low-interest loan programs aimed at helping low-income and elderly residents repair and maintain their homes.

Consolidate City Trash Services: Develop a unified trash hauling contract that reduces truck traffic in neighborhoods and incorporates robust recycling and yard waste programs.

Embrace "Complete Streets": Redesign critical corridors with pedestrian and bicycle safety in mind, integrating traffic calming measures at major crossings, especially downtown.



A statue of Gene Bess stands outside the Libla Family Sports Complex on the campus of Three Rivers College in Poplar Bluff. Bess coached the men's basketball team for 50 years, winning 1,300 games and two national titles. He was inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in 2023.

20-YEAR ROADMAP (2026–2046)

To achieve the vision laid out in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan, Poplar Bluff must adopt a phased approach to growth and revitalization.

PHASE 1 (YEARS 1–5)

Project: Design and construct a new City Hall downtown, preferably at the Second Street site, to serve as a catalyst for central business district investment.

Technique: Absorb the Black River Coliseum operations into the Parks and Recreation Department to maximize its utility as a community recreation asset.

Policy: Implement the growth hierarchy policy that strictly prioritizes restorative development over greenfield expansion.

Technique: Continue a "Shop Poplar Bluff First" campaign in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to retain local retail revenue.

Project: Complete the expansion of the Highway 67 to the Arkansas border.

PHASE 2 (YEARS 6–10)

Project: Construct and staff Fire Station #4 in the western portion of the city near PP Highway, hiring nine new firefighters.

Project: Evaluate and construct a highway bypass connecting the Industrial Park to Highways 53 and 60 to alleviate commercial traffic downtown.

Policy: Adopt zoning reforms that explicitly allow for "Missing Middle" housing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in residential areas to combat the housing shortage.

Project: Execute the 2025 Airport Layout Plan improvements to enhance regional connectivity.

Project: Complete the integration of the Interstate 57 extension from Sikeston to the Arkansas border.

PHASE 3 (YEARS 11–20)

Policy: Finalize an annexation policy that strategically incorporates residential growth areas based on the city's ability to efficiently provide infrastructure and services.

Project: Begin construction of the Black River greenway trail system, starting with a pilot trailhead located downtown and connecting with parks east of the river.

Technique: Continually evaluate and expand ecotourism initiatives, cementing city's status as a premier gateway for Ozarks outdoor recreation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Poplar Bluff 2025 Comprehensive Plan serves as a strategic blueprint for physical development, economic growth, public infrastructure, housing, and community quality of life.

CHAPTER 1

Public outreach featured six open-house style public meetings in October and November 2024 along with citywide surveys yielding 1,625 total responses.

COMMUNITY CONSENSUS

The public survey identified strong consensus on key policy interventions:

• Top Priorities: Expanding recreation programs (80.5% agreement), encouraging recycling (79.7%), restoring historic downtown (79.2% overall; 48.6% "absolutely agreed"), repairing stormwater/flooding infrastructure (78.2%), expanding sidewalks (73.0%), and recruiting retail variety (70.3%).

• Strengths: Strategic highway location, low cost of living, regional hub status for healthcare/retail/manufacturing, educational facilities, and outdoor Ozark recreation access.

• Weaknesses & Threats: Crime, drug usage, commercial/residential blight, lack of youth activities, unhoused population growth, job/population loss ("brain drain"), and community apathy.

CORE VISION STATEMENT

"To preserve the City's small-town atmosphere while promoting a livable, well-planned community through managed growth, economic development and revitalization efforts."

CORE PLANNING ELEMENTS:

- Downtown Revitalization
- Transportation
- Future Commercial Development
- Future Land Use
- Quality of Life
- Community Services
- Housing & Stabilization
- Parks & Recreation

CHAPTER 2

This section focuses on the City's history and current state. Key demographic analysis included:

• Population Trends: The 2020 U.S. Census recorded Poplar Bluff's population at 16,225, marking a 4.7% decrease from 2010 (17,023). Poplar Bluff Township contains 59.6% of Butler County's 42,130 residents.

• Commuter/Daily Dynamics: As a regional employment and health service center, Poplar Bluff experiences net inbound daily commuting (+3,039 daily commuters), elevating the daytime population to an estimated 28,000–37,500.

• Vital Statistics: The median age is 37.3 years. Seniors (65+) comprise 18.1% of the population, above national averages. Butler County exhibits a negative natural birth-to-death ratio, recording more annual deaths than births in 10 of 11 years leading up to 2023.

SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE

The top regional employment sectors for Butler County include Health care and social assistance (21.7%), Manufacturing (15.5%), Retail trade (11.4%).

• Income & Poverty: Poplar Bluff's median household income stands at $37,448, well below the Missouri state average of $65,920. The overall poverty rate is 27.0% (compared to 12.8% statewide).

• Cost of Living: The city's Cost of Living Index is 86.5 (U.S. base = 100), making it an affordable community. However, 53.8% of renters spend 30% or more of their monthly income on housing costs.

• Housing Tenure: Homeownership in Poplar Bluff is 51.4%, significantly below Missouri's state rate of 67.6%.

CHAPTER 3

SERVICES & FACILITIES

This section focuses on the City's services, facilities and community partners. Key recommendations:

• City Hall Relocation: Rebuild City Hall at the former Oak Street site or adaptively reuse a prominent downtown facility. Retaining municipal headquarters downtown acts as a public investment catalyst for private central business district development.

• Utilities Expansion: Execute strategic utility master planning to service growth and upgrade current system.

• Public Safety: Construct a fire station near the police station to optimize response coverage for expanding western commercial and residential zones. Maintain operations for the Police Department while intensifying proactive property maintenance enforcement.

• Cultural Facility Consolidation: Expand the Art Museum Director's position into a unified cultural administrator to manage city-owned historic sites, and coordinate with volunteers who run those museums.

• Administrative Changes: Create a full-time position for technology to serve all departments and update roles to include an Assistant City Manager.

• Black River Coliseum: Transition operation under the Parks & Recreation Department to enhance community recreation access while maintaining major event bookings.

CHAPTER 4

PARKS & RECREATION

This section incorporates the 2025 Parks & Recreation Master Plan — the city's first comprehensive parks plan update in nearly 30 years — approved by the Park Board in September 2025. Key recommendations:

• Black River Greenway Trail: Establish a primary trailhead in downtown Poplar Bluff along the Black River, developing a continuous multi-use linear trail along the water.

• Park Facilities Expansion: Acquire land and build out amenities at existing parks, prioritizing expansion at Leist Park, Pike Creek Park, and high-density neighborhood pockets.

• Ecotourism Strategy: Market Poplar Bluff as the regional gateway to Ozark outdoor amenities, leveraging proximity to the Mark Twain National Forest, Lake Wappapello, and the Ozark National Scenic Riverways.

CHAPTER 5

MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

This section focuses on the City's transportation system. Key recommendations:

• Interstate 57 Extension: Support MoDOT's upgrade of Highway 60/67 corridors to complete Interstate 57 from Sikeston through Poplar Bluff to the Arkansas state line, ensuring gateway aesthetics and multi-modal integration.

• Industrial Bypass: Evaluate alignment options for an industrial bypass road linking the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park directly to Highway 53 and Highway 60 to divert freight traffic from downtown.

• Access Management: Implement access management controls (consolidating closely spaced driveways and curb cuts) along Westwood Boulevard and major arterial routes.

• Complete Streets Policy: Adopt Complete Streets standards across municipal street developments, requiring sidewalks on both sides of streets, dedicated bicycle lanes, crosswalk lighting, and streetscape vegetation.

• Traffic Calming: Install traffic calming mechanisms — including choke points, neckdowns, decorative paving, reduced lane widths, and on-street parking — in downtown and high-pedestrian zones.

• Airport Master Plan: Execute capital improvements detailed in the 2025 Airport Layout Plan for the Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport to support regional commerce.

CHAPTER 6

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

This section focuses on the City's future land use. Key recommendations:

• Restorative Development: Highest policy preference given to downtown historic restoration, structural rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse.

• Infill & Urban Redevelopment: Secondary priority targeting underutilized urban parcels, vacant parking lots, and brownfields served by existing utilities.

• Greenfield Expansion: Outward expansion managed through phased extension of municipal services.

• Developer Cost-Sharing: Require developers to fund direct and indirect infrastructure extension costs through formal Development Agreements.

• Environmental Conservation: Prohibit grading, filling, or development on identified wetlands, floodplains, and steep drainage slopes. Establish conservation easements along natural watersheds, particularly the Black River basin.

• Resource Policy: Discourage land uses that consume extensive land or municipal utility capacity without delivering proportional employment or tax revenues (e.g., data centers).

CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTATION

This section focuses on the turning goals into plans and projects. Key recommendations:

• Special Financing District: Establish a downtown improvement/financing district to fund public infrastructure upgrades, decorative street lighting, sidewalk paving, alley improvements, and facade restoration grants.

• Business Recruitment: Promote boutique retail, specialty dining, lodging, and cultural venues in downtown, complemented by the Chamber's "Shop Poplar Bluff First" campaign.

• Missing Middle Housing: Update zoning regulations to permit multi-family types ("Missing Middle" duplexes, quadplexes, courtyard apartments), Accessory Dwelling Units, and tiny homes within established neighborhoods.

• Housing Preservation: Combine strict building code enforcement with public rehabilitation grants and low-interest loan programs targeted at low-income, disabled, and elderly homeowners.

• Pilot Infill Projects: Initiate city-backed infill housing developments on underutilized surface parking lots and blighted lots cleared following tornado damage.

• Targeted Recruitment: Recruit light manufacturing, medical technology, warehousing, assembly, and transportation/distribution firms into designated industrial parks.

• Annexation Policy: Draft a phased city annexation plan tied strictly to municipal service capacity, targeting contiguous built-up areas along primary growth corridors (Highway PP, Shelby Road, Highway 60/67 interchanges).

• Funding Mechanisms: Finance capital initiatives through local tax revenue, developer cost-sharing agreements, and state/federal grant programs (including CDBG, and other funds).

GOALS



VISION FOR POPLAR BLUFF'S FUTURE

Poplar Bluff's comprehensive planning process defined what residents want the community to be in 20 to 25 years. The Future Land Use Plan recommends balanced and carefully planned growth, neighborhood stability, restorative development and historic preservation. The recommendations also identify new planning initiatives, such as developing quality neighborhoods supported by an integrated park system and diversified retail and commercial choices with downtown revitalization. The vision developed for this Plan to help guide the city into the 21st Century is:

"To preserve the City's small-town atmosphere while promoting a livable, well-planned community through managed growth, economic development and revitalization efforts"

The goals adopted for this Plan represent ideals of what Poplar Bluff should strive to become in the next 20 to 25 years. The plan also includes several objectives and implementation strategies that provide the focus and direction needed to obtain the preferred future. The implementation strategies form a work program that lays out the development philosophy the City should strive to achieve. Some strategies are clear actions the City should take, others are recommendations for additional planning work, more study or further public input.

The formulation of a vision, goals and objectives is a critical process in the preparation of a comprehensive plan. Goals are general statements that address the City's long-range plans and desired outcomes. They provide the philosophical framework upon which the objectives of the comprehensive plan are based. Objectives more specifically define how a goal will be achieved. The next level, policies, provides physical actions or milestones that help further explain and define the goals and objectives. The stability and growth of Poplar Bluff depends directly on its ability to provide the desired public services, facilities, opportunities and community amenities. These and other factors that influence the growth of Poplar Bluff have been considered in the development of the following goals and objectives.

The goals and objectives developed for this plan respond to the critical issues raised during the meetings, interviews with stakeholders and the conditions observed and researched during the formation of this plan. The goals and objectives will assist public officials in guiding their decisions relating to services, land use development and neighborhood preservation. Obtaining these goals will require the coordination and leadership of all levels and forms of government, both internal and external to the City, plus strong support from community groups and private enterprise. The goals and objectives have been broken down, in no particular order, into the following eight (8) planning elements:

- Downtown Revitalization
- Future Commercial Development
- Future Land Use
- Quality of Life
- Housing & Neighborhood Stabilization
- Transportation
- Parks
- Community Services

In addition to the following goals, objectives and implementation strategies, the Community Facilities & Services Chapter, Park Plan, Transportation Plan and Future Land Use Plan chapters also provide recommended strategies and land use policies that, when implemented, create a more livable community that retains and attracts residents and businesses.

The Poplar Bluff Comprehensive Plan established several goals for each of the main planning elements selected.

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GOALS



Downtown Poplar Bluff in 2015 (Smith & Company photo)

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

"Promote investment in the City's central business district in order to attract and retain businesses, revitalize downtown and increase commercial and entertainment opportunities that attract people"

OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

• Support the Downtown Redevelopment / Grow Our Downtown Poplar Bluff group, Main Street program.

• Develop the Second Street site the as location for a new City Hall.

• Identify and procure funding for more infrastructure improvements such as gathering spaces, parks, trails, facade improvements, alley improvements, utility upgrades and stormwater flood control.

• Encourage the cooperation of all business and civic groups with an interest in downtown to work together in a unified effort to enhance the downtown experience.

• Revitalize the riverfront area and improve access to the river by implementing the recommended greenway system (see Black River Trail in Parks plan).

• Encourage and promote community events that capitalize on Downtown Poplar Bluff's social, professional, cultural, recreational and entertainment opportunities.

• Encourage the development of boutique style specialty shops, restaurants, hotels and entertainment establishments within the historic downtown district.

• Create a special financing district to share the costs of public improvements in the downtown area such as the installation/ improvement of sidewalks, street lighting, and other site amenities such as landscaping and the creation of public spaces.

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FUTURE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

"Encourage integrated, balanced growth that benefits all residents and businesses by strengthening our positive business climate, and proactively planning our future while responding to economic opportunities."

OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

• Encourage commercial and mixed-use redevelopment focused primarily along the Westwood Boulevard and Pine Street corridors, along both sides of PP Highway, Oak Grove and North Shelby Road and within the City's historic downtown.

• Develop programs to attract light industrial land-uses such as technology based enterprises, medical, warehousing, light assembly, manufacturing, and transportation distribution into the city's industrial areas shown on the Future Land Use Map.

• Develop an economic diversification plan that facilitates long-term economic stability and reduces the City's economic dependence on a few industries.

• Recruit businesses that provide a better variety of retail shops, restaurants, and entertainment establishments.

• Improve and maintain the supply and quality of Poplar Bluff's workforce and promote local employment opportunities for Poplar Bluff residents to maximize the number of residents. Providing jobs within the City increases revenue within the City.

• Work with Three Rivers College and other entities to provide worker training that meets the needs of existing and anticipated businesses.

• Work with local school districts, trade schools and community college to develop programs providing school-to-career readiness in support of a skilled workforce for Poplar Bluff.

• Promote efforts that make the City more attractive to working families by improving housing options, educational opportunities, and other services that are attractive to working families.

• In accordance with the Chamber's goals, conduct and promote a "Shop Poplar Bluff First" campaign.

• In accordance with the Chamber's goals, promote and develop plans and procedures to attract visitors to the area. Work with the local tourism related entities to plan and promote monthly events.

• In accordance with the Chamber's goals, promote improvement in local transportation measures by working cooperatively with the Chamber and the Missouri Department of Transportation to find ways to ensure future growth includes the following:

1. A continued partnership in upgrading Highway 67 and extending Interstate 57 from Sikeston to Arkansas.
2. Evaluate options for a bypass from the Industrial Park to Highways 53 and 60.
3. Improve access along combined sections of Highways 60 and 67 for safety.

• Re-energize community pride in the downtown area.

• Focus on the clean-up and revitalization of the downtown area.

• Promote and restore the economic health, community pride, and quality of life for Poplar Bluff residents and visitors.

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GOALS

QUALITY OF LIFE

"Develop programs that promote community beautification, character enhancement and quality of life by preserving Poplar Bluff's small-town character and building upon the City's premier services, facilities, and nearby nationally recognized outdoor recreation amenities."

OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

• Protect the resources that make Poplar Bluff a great place to live and raise a family. More specifically, continue providing excellent, cost-effective services and opportunities for all residents and business owners.

• Maintain the local character and high quality of life while minimizing negative after or side effects from future growth or development.

• Provide access to a wide range of social, cultural, recreational and other resources, events and facilities that enriched community life and promote active lifestyles.

• Collaborate with other governmental agencies to promote regional opportunities and solve regional problems.

• Develop plans for major entrances into the city — including the airport and rail station — to create an aesthetically pleasing gateway corridor leading into the community. Gateways serve as a focal point, and can consist of monument structures, distinctive building designs or unique landscaping and lighting schemes.

• Maintain and build upon Poplar Bluff's existing recreational and cultural successes.

• Preserve landforms and drainage patterns when designing sites for development. Excavation and fill of any identified wetland or floodplain is strongly discouraged. The appropriate state or federal agency should review projects involving these natural areas.

• Require the installation of quality landscaping along roadway rights-of-ways and parking areas and promote the use of landscaped berms, vegetation and decorative screening to provide buffering between different zoning districts and/or uses.

• Expand parks where practical to include the use of environmental corridors and bike lanes on specific streets to form an interconnected network that is fully and easily accessible from all districts within the City for pedestrians and cars.

• Require future development, including stormwater and utility improvements, to provide all necessary property right-of-way and consider easements for bicycle/pedestrian corridors.

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HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION

"Preserve the character and stability of the City's existing neighborhoods and promote the continued development of new, high quality residential development in the City's residential growth areas that offer a range of housing options.

OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

• Expand the supply of dwelling units to provide appropriate housing for all social and economic classes such as assisted living facilities, multi-family developments, such as the "Missing Middle" building types, and planned residential subdivisions.

• Preserve neighborhood character by maintaining the city's current quality of life and sustaining the current level of public services and facilities, including the parks and recreation system and schools.

• Support and encourage the development of neighborhood organizations that promote civic activities and empower residents to strengthen and protect their neighborhoods.

• Research available home improvement and low-income housing grants and provide applications for the applicable grants (Federal and State) at City Hall and sponsor programs to raise awareness and promote the utilization of the grants to help improve and maintain the city's housing stock, specifically those of elderly and low-income homeowners.

• Promote financing programs for home repairs and maintenance (target low income, disabled, and elderly) to help sustain the City's current supply of affordable housing.

• Neighborhoods should be encouraged to incorporate central gathering places such as community gardens, parks, trails and play fields into their design in order to provide a common space for personal interaction.

• Encourage quality infill development of different housing types and density/intensity to coexist with existing neighborhoods, including accessory dwelling units (ADU) and tiny homes.

• Develop planning and development regulations that protect residential neighborhoods from encroachment of incompatible activities or land uses that may have a negative impact on the residential living environment.

• When possible, neighborhoods and major parks should be linked together via sidewalks, or a greenway consisting of bicycle paths and trails. One solution is to create a preservation corridor along natural corridors and watersheds such as the Black River. The intent is to create a linear park system connecting to activity centers, parks and neighborhoods throughout the community. A conservation easement is one method of establishing a public use corridor that would support passive recreation, pedestrian traffic, and the preservation of natural features.

• Protect residential and commercial areas from flooding — river and stormwater — with improvements to protection systems.

• Develop a plan to extend basic utilities to all existing neighborhoods and new subdivisions.

• Use existing neighborhood organizations and/or leaders to assist in the education of housing maintenance programs.

• Continue strict, consistent code enforcement to prevent property deterioration and to protect property values.

• Budget for infrastructure needs such as sidewalks, streets, water lines and sewer lines.

• Develop small-scale incentives, including "rent-to-own" programs, to help meet the demand for affordable housing.

• Implement a pilot infill project: Target the redevelopment of underutilized parking lots.

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GOALS



Construction of the Shelby Road bridge over Pike Creek in March 2018.

(Smith & Company photo)

TRANSPORTATION

"The City shall ensure the transportation system provides safe and effective circulation and economic development potential."

OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

• Promote the completion of Highway 67 upgrades south of the City to the state line and encourage, promote and help the project to extend Interstate 57 from Sikeston to Arkansas along Highways 60 and 67.

• Make sure the Interstate 57 upgrades are done in a manner that promotes and supports the City's goals and objectives contained herein. Go beyond basic engineering requirements and try to make improvements in the areas of aesthetics and multi-modal access.

• Provide a thoroughfare system, which includes signage, road improvements, and the addition of new roads, that allows safe and efficient travel through the City – with special emphasis on improving crosstown accessibility. The arterial and collector street system should be laid out with an emphasis on connecting neighborhoods and encouraging access within and between neighborhoods.

• Address all modes of transportation when considering improvements with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle linkages to community activity centers.

• Use the "Complete Streets" concept that provides safety and accessibility for all users of the roadway system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, scooters, motorists, emergency vehicles, and people of all ages and abilities.

• Sidewalks should be required on both sides of every street unless alternative pedestrian routes are available.

• Consider modifying signal timing and installing turn lanes where traffic flow tends to back up or increase safety risks.

• Implement a community-wide greenway system – starting with a pilot project/trailhead in the downtown area and extending along the Black River. The greenway is intended to increase pedestrian travel, encourage active lifestyles and expand year-round park and recreation options for all ages.

• Trailheads, picnic areas, restroom facilities and parking areas should be provided at the major points of access to primary trail/pathway segments. Additionally, educational kiosks should be located at trailhead locations and along trail routes.

• Implement access management techniques along all major collector roads and arterials as recommended in this plan.

• Consider traffic calming measures at all pedestrian crossings to reduce vehicular speeds and improve the safety and circulation patterns for pedestrian users. Traffic calming measures may include but are not limited to, alternative paving materials, on-street parking, lighting, landscaping, reduced lane widths, choke points, traffic circles or any combination thereof that reduce apparent street width and protects pedestrians from moving traffic.

• Implement traffic calming downtown to help slow traffic, beautify and increase pedestrian safety and convenience. Use traffic calming at key corner locations to provide safer pedestrian crossings and better orientation for both pedestrians and drivers.

• Implement the airport improvements recommended in the 2025 Airport Layout Plan, including upgrades to the runway, hangars and terminal.

• Promote and facilitate the gateway features such as professional landscaping-including crepe myrtle plantings, monument signage and other aesthetic features at the City's primary, secondary and transitional gateways.

• Manage and maintain the current transportation system assets, capacities and levels of service.

• Ensure that congestion on the City's roadways does not reach levels which compromise economic competitiveness or the quality of life.

• Coordinate land use, transportation, economic development, environmental quality, and community aesthetics in all transportation improvements in a manner that meets today's needs without compromising the ability to address the needs of future generations.

• Review and update the City's sign ordinance and other design standards to help create a consistent, more desirable physical and visual streetscape.

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FUTURE LAND USE

"Promote development that preserves existing neighborhoods and the natural landscape, topography, vegetative cover, scenic view sheds and natural drainage patterns."

OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

• Follow a hierarchical growth model that prioritizes restorative development activity, such as downtown revitalization and adaptive reuse, as the preferred growth strategy, followed by infill, redevelopment and Greenfield development.

• Promote the provision of housing, commercial services, entertainment, cultural venues, higher educational institutions and other quality of life amenities that appeal to young adults age 18 to 34.

• Encourage development in areas where municipal services can most easily be extended. New development should not be permitted until such time municipal services are available.

• Parks and open space should be designed as an integral part of new development based on an overall plan. Linear parks and trails should be incorporated into the design of new development to ensure they tie into existing or proposed trail/greenway plans.

• More unique types of development such as conservation subdivisions and cluster developments should be encouraged in order to attract residential growth.

• The cost to extend the infrastructure required to serve new development should be shared by the new development areas.

• Require new development to install sidewalks, landscaping, preserve trees and share in the cost of the construction of other infrastructure improvements.

• Initiate development agreements that help pay for the direct and indirect costs of new infrastructure development.

• Encourage project developments to incorporate alternative transportation elements (pedestrian walkways, bike facilities, public transit etc.) into proposed site improvements.

• Discourage any development, such as a data center, that uses large amounts of land and, or resources without providing significant job creation or tax benefit to the community.

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COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES

"Ensure the availability of public facilities, infrastructure and emergency services that adequately serves Poplar Bluff's present and future needs. These facilities and services include roads, water, sewer, stormwater, internet, police, fire, library, schools, and other general services."

OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

• As the population ages, the percentage of income spent on housing related costs and medical expenses will increase. The housing, medical and related retail industries that provide the aforementioned services will benefit from the increased demand. The City should encourage the development of these markets and service delivery sectors. Recreation services, public safety, public transportation, housing assistance, and water and sewer service to residential developments are all areas that need careful evaluation to ensure they meet the needs of the aging population.

• Promote compact, low-impact development throughout the community. Compactness can be achieved by encouraging development adjacent to the existing built-up area rather than allowing "leap-frog" development, which skips over large tracts of undeveloped land. A second means of increasing service delivery efficiency is to cluster those land uses which have the greatest need for fire and police protection, such as high value commercial uses or hazardous industrial uses. Clustering will allow the concentration of services and infrastructure and minimize costly utility runs and infrastructure costs.

• Build a new City Hall at the former Oak Street site, or relocate into an existing building downtown that could be adaptively reused as a centralized facility that could accommodate a variety of city departments and functions. If City Hall is rebuilt, it should stay in the Central Business District to serve as a redevelopment catalyst to increase the confidence to invest in the downtown area.

• Construct a new fire station (Station No. 4) in the western portion of the city near police station and hire additional firefighters to improve the City's rating.

• Develop and award a unified trash hauling contract to minimize truck traffic on the City's roads and neighborhoods. Make sure the contract includes weekly yard waste removal in the summer and fall, recycling and annual bulk and white goods pick-up services.

• Formulate an annexation policy based upon future growth patterns, ability to provide public facilities and services, and suitability of land for development.

• Plan for long-term infrastructure improvements to serve future development in Downtown, Kanell (PP), Shelby Road, Interstate 57, and the current and future Industrial Park bypass.

• Concentrate public capital investments into areas that are contiguous with currently developed land and that are currently served by existing facilities.

• Expand the role of Art Museum director position to oversee all city-owned museum assets – Mark Twain School, Whiteley School, Frisco Depot, Dalton-Moore House – and work with nonprofit groups that run these sites, and others within Butler County, to combine efforts to promote and maintain these institutions.

• Expand the use of the Black River Coliseum as a recreation asset by bringing its operation within the Parks and Recreation Department while still maintaining its ability to host events.

• Reorganize administration to split duties for City Clerk and Treasurer, include an Assistant City Manager and information technology (IT) personnel.

• Improve communication between the City and public to highlight progress and target improvements. City Manager, or designated staff member should be point of contact to ensure that factual information and timely updates are provided.

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GOALS

PARKS

"Continue to maintain, enhance and expand the City's parks and recreation system."

OBJECTIVES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

• Support improvements as needed to keep pace with the latest trends in park and recreation services, facility market demands and the acquisition of additional park land and the establishment of open spaces, greenbelts and trails as needed to serve the City's population.

• Greenway and trail development provides recreation amenities that are accessible to users of all ages and abilities, and function to preserve open and environmentally sensitive areas. Promote and facilitate open space and environmental protection as recommended in the Parks Master Plan.

• Promote Outdoor Recreation Tourism. Poplar Bluff is in a unique geographic position to capitalize on ecotourism, conservation and recreational opportunities throughout the Ozarks.

• Connect the City's parks and open spaces with a system of trails, sidewalks and bicycle lanes. Connecting the city's recreation areas, neighborhoods and schools helps to improve functionality and increase the utilization of park and transportation systems.

• Partner with other organizations, such as the school district, Three Rivers College and Library, to provide more access to recreation opportunities to the community.

• Support the expansion of parks and smaller neighborhood parks, as outlined in the Parks Master Plan.



Poplar Bluff gateway sign above Highway 60.

Poplar Bluff has been, and is, a regional center drawing people from surrounding counties for retail trade, employment and health services.

As a regional center, the city must plan not only for its own population, but also for those who benefit from the services offered. The demographics and economics of the region become as important as the demographics and economics of the city itself. Economic growth increasingly comes to those places that attract and retain the largest supply of talented workers or "human capital." Surveys show that the most important locational factors used to site new businesses are based on regional development patterns, downtown vitality, the proximity of housing to work, natural amenities, and outdoor recreation. Economic gains are made when workers and businesses cluster in tight geographic proximity, thereby gaining quicker access to new ideas and technologies. The City should focus on providing these key locational factors to attract and retain a quality workforce and improve the quality of life for all residents, new and old.

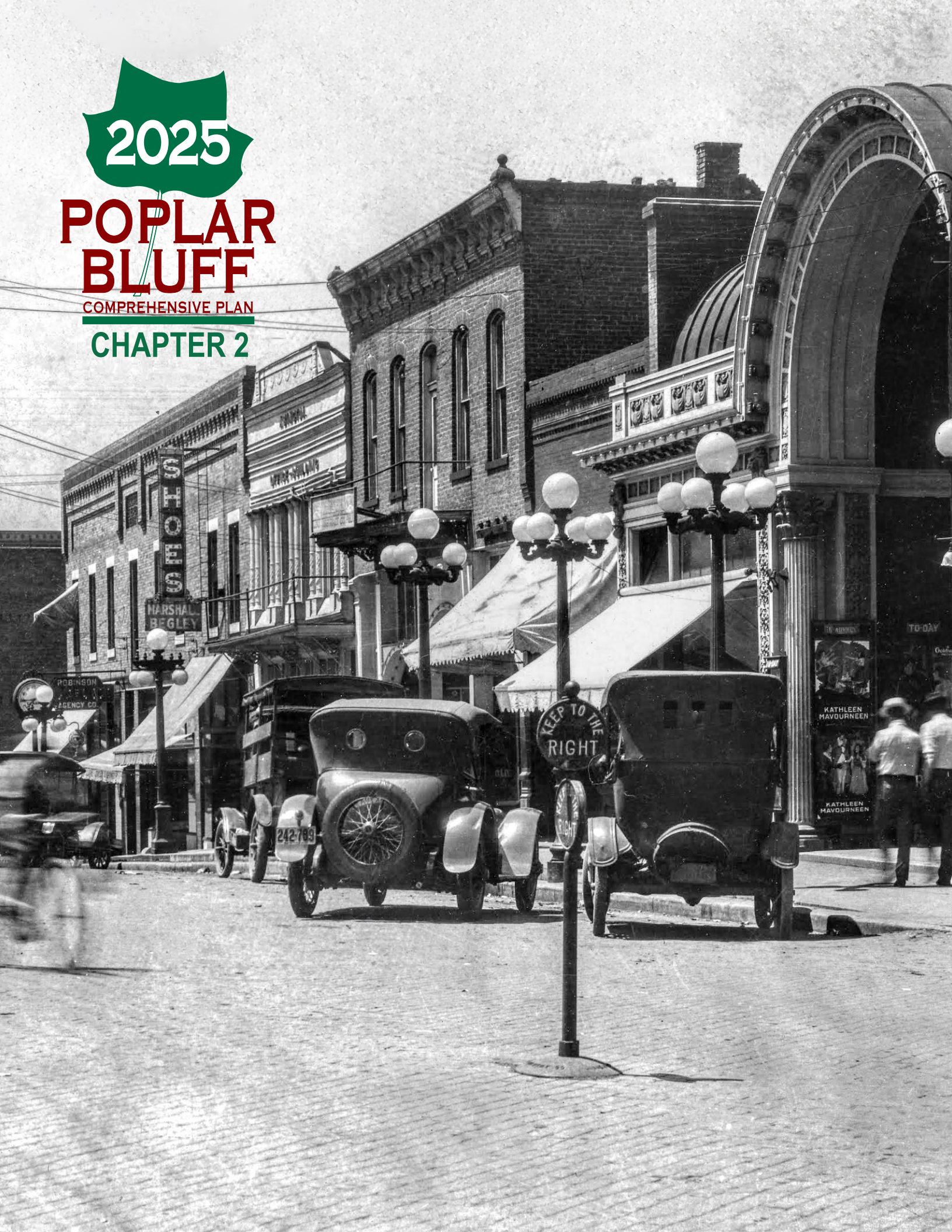
The City will need to be prepared to provide the level and type of services and amenities demanded of an aging population, while also providing the housing, services and quality of life factors that attracts and retains young adults and children. The availability of good salaried jobs, diversified housing options and entertainment/cultural attractions are key considerations that the City should consider to attract young adults while also serving the needs of the aging population.

Much of Poplar Bluff's character and desirability is attributable to its high quality of living. Poplar Bluff is well known for its established single-family residential neighborhoods that enhance and reinforce the City's family-friendly atmosphere. The City's school and park systems, low taxes and central location are a few of the factors that make Poplar Bluff a great place to live, work and raise a family. Poplar Bluff strongly desires to remain a family-oriented community, while recognizing the diverse and evolving needs and desires of its citizenry. One challenge the City faces is that many of the older structures (commercial and residential), which met the market demands at the time they were constructed, do not provide the features and amenities needed to compete in today's marketplace. To address this shift in market demand, City policies should promote restorative development as a primary option; replacement, infill or redevelopment as a secondary option; and Greenfield development as a third option.

In order to maintain and enhance Poplar Bluff's quality of living and promote its economic stability, the City must continue providing excellent municipal services and develop innovative approaches to encourage on-going investment within the community. The purpose of the goals and objectives is to show how these two key issues (neighborhood stability and economic diversification) can be addressed while simultaneously ensuring that Poplar Bluff maintains its family-oriented character and grows responsibly.

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CHAPTER 2





2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 2

HISTORICAL & CURRENT ANALYSIS

Here is a summary of this chapter covering the historical background and current socioeconomic status:

Historical Roots and Growth

• Founding & Early Economy: Poplar Bluff's history began with the creation of Butler County in 1849. Named for the tulip poplar trees along the Black River bluffs, the city was incorporated as a village in 1870. Early growth was heavily fueled by the timber industry and the arrival of the railroad in 1872.

• Defining Moments: A devastating tornado struck on May 9, 1927, killing 98 people and destroying much of the downtown business district. Following this disaster and a decline in the local timber boom, the city's economy transitioned toward agriculture and manufacturing, supported by the creation of an industrial park in 1945 and the opening of a Veterans Hospital in 1950.

Demographic Trends

• Population Decline: As of the 2020 Census, the city's population was 16,225, representing a 4.7% drop from 2010. While Butler County's population has grown over the last 50 years, the city itself actually has fewer residents today than it did in 1970 with residents moving outside city limits. The population of the greater Poplar Bluff area is likely closer to 33,000.

• Aging Demographic: The community is aging, with 18.1% of residents aged 65 or older. The area also faces challenges with the outward migration of young adults moving to urban areas.

Economic Landscape

• Regional Hub: Poplar Bluff serves as the economic, medical, and retail hub for a 50-mile radius covering southeast Missouri and northeast Arkansas.

• Employment: The largest employment sectors are health care and social assistance (21.7%) and manufacturing (15.5%).

• Income & Poverty: The median household income is $37,448, which sits significantly lower than the state average. Consequently, the poverty rate is notably high at 27%. However, this is partially offset by a low cost of living, with an index of 86.5 compared to the national average of 100.

Housing Challenges

• Homeownership: Less than half of the city's households (48.7%) own their homes, falling well below the state average of 67.6%.

• Housing Stock: The city has seen a decrease in housing units over the past decade, and the housing vacancy rate has climbed to 12.2%. Over half of renters currently spend 30% or more of their monthly income on rent.



This chapter includes information used in the Poplar Bluff Housing Study, which was completed in December 2025 and included in this plan as an appendix.

TOP PHOTO: Looking south on the 100 block of South Main Street from Pine Street shows the Criterion Theater at right and the downtown business district in 1919. (Butler County Historical Society).



ABOVE: St. Louis Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad Depot with Wright Hotel and RRYMCA in background. W.H. Kennedy photo. (Butler County Historical Society).

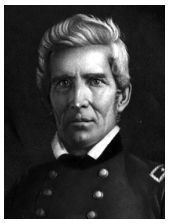
SEEDS FOR A NEW TOWN

The story of Poplar Bluff begins with the creation of Butler County in 1849.

In 1821, Missouri became the 24th state in the Union. The area that would become the City of Poplar Bluff was uninhabited and part of Wayne County, which was organized three years earlier and was larger than five states combined but only had a population of 1,443.

Butler County was officially organized on February 27, 1849, and named after William O. Butler, the previous year's vice-presidential nominee for the Democrats. Butler also served as Kentucky's congressman, was a soldier in the War of 1812 and later the commander of American forces in Mexico City following the Mexican-American War.

To select a seat of justice, the state legislature appointed John Stevens, William Henley and Martin Sandlin commissioners. All three men lived outside the county, per state law, as did John F. Martin, who replaced Sandlin who died prior to the trio taking any action. The first meeting of the county court was held June 18 at a home near Cane Creek.


William O. Butler

Nearly all the land in the county belonged to the government and a majority of the settlers had no land titles. In 1850, the county's population was 1,616. The largest area of inhabitants at the time was along the Natchitoches Trail on Ten Mile Creek and Cane Creek but the commissioners sought a central location for the county seat along the Black River. On August 13, they chose a site with 160 acres of government land and appointed Obadiah Epps to receive small loans from individuals to pay for it.

The new city's name was suggested by a dense growth of tulip poplar trees – Liriodendron Tulipifera – that covered the bluffs overlooking the Black River.

The townsite was surveyed in early 1850 and on May 18 the first lot was sold for $9.75 to C.B. Arnold while more lots were sold in August. The post office was established February 27, 1850, and the first court proceedings were held near the river on November 11 that year. The County's first courthouse opened in 1855.

On February 9, 1870, the site was incorporated by the county court as a village.

There were only 10 families living in Poplar Bluff at the end of 1850 and just half that by the end of the Civil War. The 1880 Census counted a population of 791. The city grew to 2,187 by 1890 and reached 4,321 at the turn of the century. →

1820 1830 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2020 2030

Aug. 10, 1821 Missouri becomes 24th state.


Area is part of Wayne County with few inhabitants.

Feb. 27, 1849 Butler County, named in honor of William O. Butler, is formed by state legislature.

June 10 County court holds first meeting near Cane Creek.

Sept. 15 Site for county seat is chosen.

Feb. 27, 1850 Post office opens.

March 18 Name of town first appears.

May 18 First lots are sold for Poplar Bluff.

Feb. 9, 1870 Poplar Bluff incorporates as a village.

Aug. 1872 A railroad connects Poplar Bluff and the first train arrives.

Aug. 1892 Poplar Bluff becomes a third class city by vote. Joseph T. Davison is first mayor.

1902 New city hall on Broadway opens - used until **1982**.

1912 City streets paved with bricks.

1914 City opens electric power plant

May 9, 1927 At 3:16 p.m. a tornado slams into city, killing 98 and injuring hundreds more while causing an estimated $4 million in damages.

Feb. 28, 1945 Ten men purchase a 43-acre site that becomes Industrial Park.

1934 Airport opens at current site.

Nov. 1950 Veterans hospital opens, named for John J. Pershing.

Nov. 1961 Opening of shopping center, Valley Plaza, draws retailers from old Main St. locations.

April 1966 Voters approve the creation of Three Rivers Junior College, starting in '67. A new campus opens in **1979**.

1981 5th St. bridge opens.

1987 Hwy. 60 bypass opens.

1990 City Hall, police move to Oak St. Building closes in **2016**.

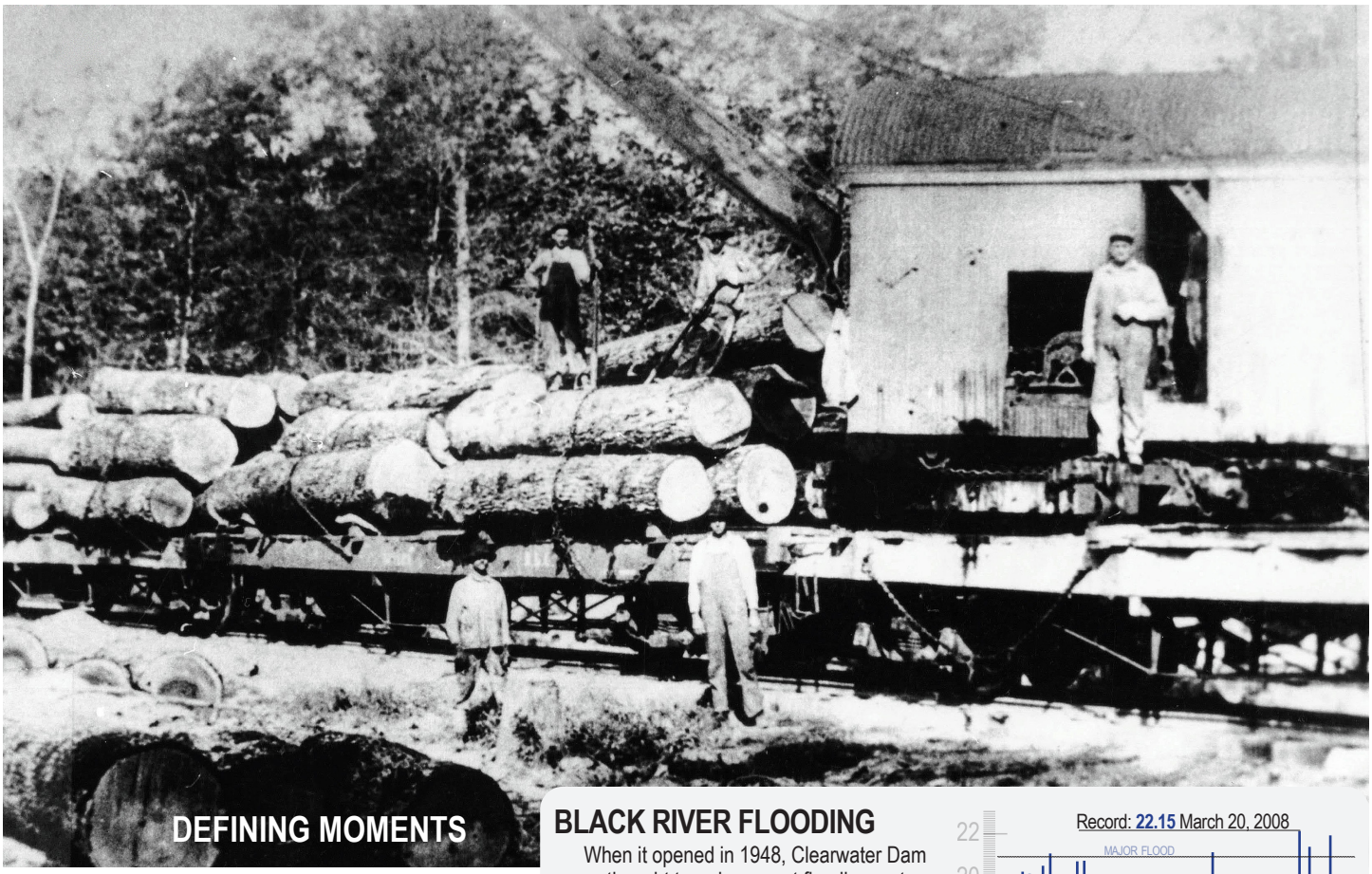
1999 Coliseum hosts first event.

2001 Hwy. 67 bypass opens.

2011 Hwy. 67 4 lanes finished.

2022 Police station opens.

HISTORY



DEFINING MOMENTS

ABOVE Butler County Railroad logging, date and location unknown.

(Butler County Historical Society).

Much of Poplar Bluff's early growth centered on the timber industry and the railroad, which reached the small town in 1872. The St. Louis Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad first came from the north in May and the Cairo & Fulton Railroad followed shortly from the east.

Sawmills and woodworking factories sprang up and workers were attracted to the area as the population jumped 176% between 1880 and 1890. Poplar Bluff later became a stopping point for livestock being transferred from the west to Chicago and a large stockyard took up part of the south end of town.

The Iron Mountain Railroad built a permanent depot in 1910 that included a set of steps leading to Main Street. The depot became the stopping point for the Missouri Pacific Railroad's Texas Eagle between Little Rock and St. Louis that is still in operation today by Amtrak. The Frisco line, which ran to Cape Girardeau, had a depot that was rebuilt in 1928 and used until the railroad folded in 1965. The Spanish-style depot, which served as Poplar Bluff's police station for a time, still stands and is currently home to the MoArk Railroad Museum.

Poplar Bluff became a fourth class city in August 1879 and a third class city by special election in August 1892.

A city hall was built in 1902, streets paved with bricks in 1912 and a new municipal electric power plant was built in 1914 as the city's population nearly doubled in the 20 years after the turn of the century.

The coming of the railroad and the boom of the timber business marked the first defining moment in the history of Poplar Bluff but no date had more of an impact on the city and its residents than May 9, 1927.

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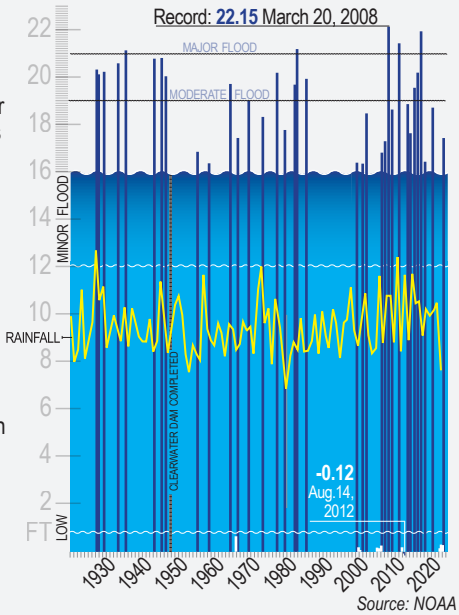
BLACK RIVER FLOODING

When it opened in 1948, Clearwater Dam was thought to reduce most flooding up to two feet in Poplar Bluff, lowering the number of times the Black River would spill out of its banks and into the east side of town.

The frequency of flood events above 16 feet (blue bars in chart) did drop in the following 50 years but there has been a significant increase since 2000, including three major flooding events above 21 feet. There has also been a dozen low-water events in that time (white bars at bottom of cart).

Yearly rainfall (the yellow line) has increased slightly as a trend, but recent flood events have been caused by more rain falling over shorter periods of time, such as the May 2017 flood during which the river jumped from 8.0 to 21.0 feet in 24 hours.

While the dam and levee system protects the city, it is still vulnerable to river flooding and stormwater flooding.



Source: NOAA

HISTORY





At 3:16 p.m. a tornado hit south Fifth Street, moved across the business district and over the river at the Vine Street bridge through the east side of town. In all, 98 people were killed – which still ranks the 17th deadliest tornado in the United States[1] – and caused an estimated $4 million in damage. The tornado damaged or destroyed 35 city blocks including every business on Main and Broadway streets, the courthouse and jail, the Frisco Depot, the East Side school building and many homes.

Residents vowed to rebuild and did so quickly as the current Butler County Courthouse was completed enough to host the November 1928 election and later dedicated in May 1929.

But the city saw its first drop in population in 1930 when the Census reported a 6.1% decrease in residents from a decade earlier.



ABOVE Damage following a tornado on May 9, 1927, can be seen at the Butler County Courthouse, above left. The building, pictured above right in 1919, was replaced.

The 100 block of South Broadway, looking south, at the damage caused by a tornado. At left is the Post Office.

(Butler County Historical Society).

LUMBER, ADDING MACHINES & SHOES

The tornado coincided with the area's decline in the once booming timber business. The removal of large amounts of timber, once the leading industry, eventually led to a "lumber bust" and to the shredding of jobs during the 1920s.

Missouri saw a 23% drop in the total number of jobs associated with the lumber industry between 1920 and 1930, according to the U.S. Census data, and Poplar Bluff was especially hit hard. While many of the city's early factories produced wood products, such as barrels and all the wooden spokes for Henry Ford's automobiles, there were also brick and tile plants, a distillery, soda water bottling factories and a concrete block plant. In 1907, the city had 57 manufacturing plants that provided an estimated 1,400 jobs.

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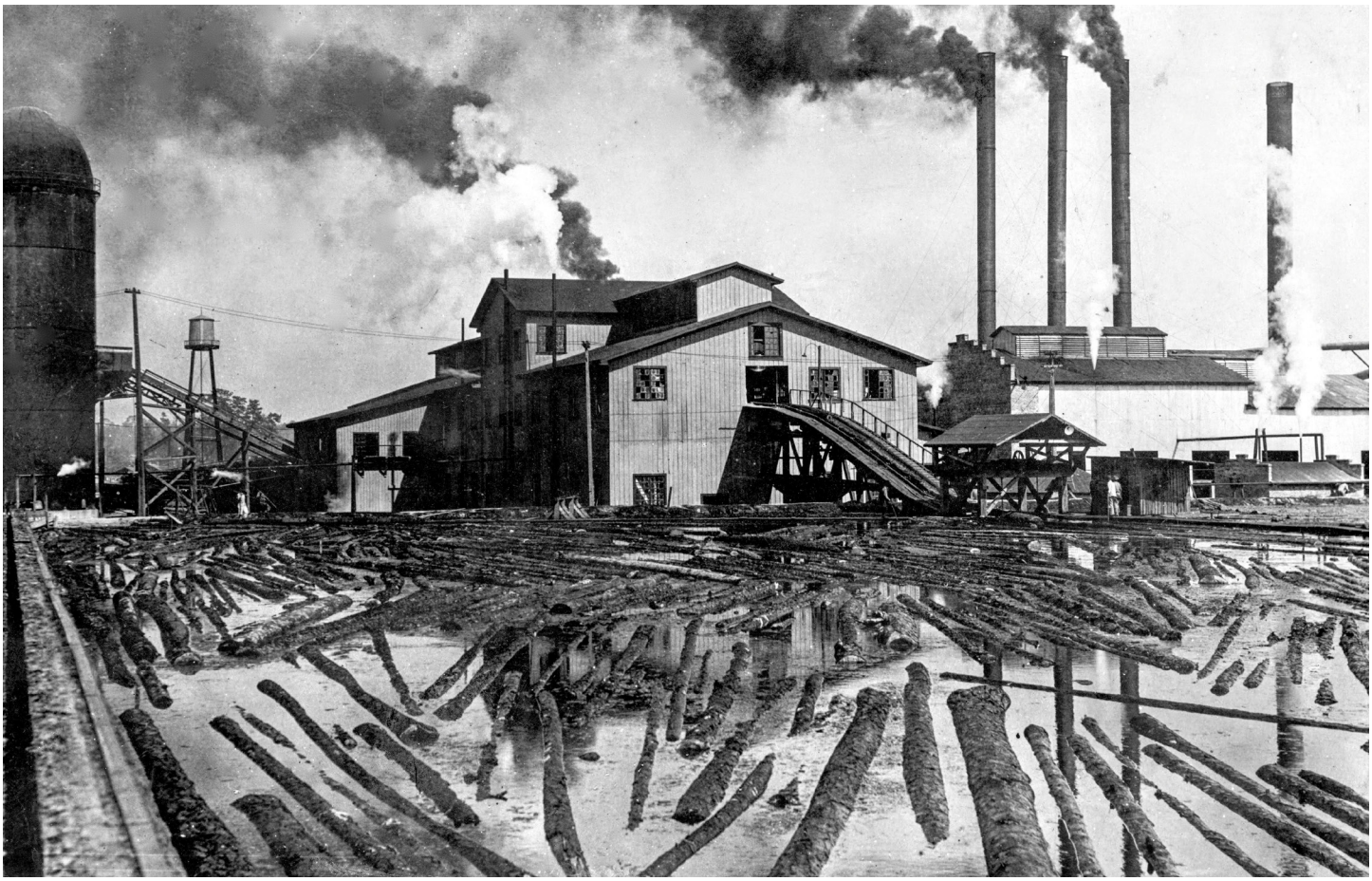
HISTORY



The city also featured one of the nation's largest department stores outside of a metropolitan area in the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Store that employed 125 people and produced $750,000 in yearly sales. One of the partners, James L. Dalton, had a friend in St. Louis who invented an adding machine and asked him to invest. The Dalton Adding Machine Company, incorporated four years earlier, was located on the corner of Main and Pine streets with 100 employees in 1907. Dalton built a $100,000 factory on the riverfront in 1911 but just three years later it became necessary for the company to move the factory to Cincinnati to keep up with demand.

The Hamilton-Brown Shoe Company later occupied the factory along with the International Shoe Company, which sought to build a second plant in 1945.

On February 28 that year, a group of 10 businessmen pooled together enough money to purchase a 43-acre site in south Poplar Bluff. Two years later a separate economic development organization was formed to create and run the industrial park — Poplar Bluff Industries.



ABOVE Mill, unknown location or date, with timber waiting to be processed.

LEFT Dalton Adding Machine factory in Poplar Bluff pictured in 1903 by W.H. Kennedy.

(Butler County Historical Society).

The shoe factory in the industrial park closed in 1986 but by then there were other manufacturers located there, including Rowe Furniture Corporation, which had opened a facility in the early 1970s – it closed in 2006. Briggs & Stratton, currently the largest employer at 515, opened in 1989. Gates Corporation employs 400 at two locations and is one of the longest tenured manufacturers in the industrial park. Mid-Continent Steel & Wire employs 300, producing fasteners designed for wood framing, finish and industrial applications. Rheem Manufacturing, formerly Nortek Global HVAC, operates a central distribution facility that employs 100.

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HISTORY

In 2015, Poplar Bluff Industries added a 10-acre site on South 11th Street that is currently occupied by Empire Comfort Systems which makes Primo Ceramic Grills.

Another 54-acre site located between Fair Street and Highway 142 was created in 2022 and is expected to be the new home of a 3.7-million square foot facility for True Manufacturing Company.

Revere Plastics Systems announced in 2023 it was closing a facility that opened in 1969 under different owners, Moark, losing 80 jobs.

The Industrial Park, which was also previously home to Reinell Boats and Russell Stover among other manufacturers, along with the construction of the Veterans Hospital were key to the post-war growth of Poplar Bluff.





ABOVE: A parade is held on Main Street, date unknown.

LEFT From left, Dr. Z. Lee Stokely, Congressman Paul C. Jones and John MacDonald move the flag from the old post office at the corner of Broadway and Cedar streets to the new location on July 2, 1967.

(Butler County Historical Society).

CHANGING LANDSCAPES

While manufacturing companies moved to the southern end of town, the central business district migrated following World War II.

Poplar Bluff started with a few houses, a log cabin post office and a shop at Second and Vine streets that traded goods for furs. The town was laid out parallel to the river instead of the traditional north/south style, which would later be adopted when the city grew to the west, south and north.

That growth started after the Civil War when the railroads arrived in 1872 along the same paths still in use today. As timber in the area was cut, the land was not reforested and in some cases it was sold and used for raising livestock or farmed. The "timber bust" of the 1920s and closing mills caused the population in the city and county to fall for the first time in 1930, but the efforts since 1900 to drain the swamp land in the southeastern part of the county created some of the most fertile soil in the nation for planting crops, creating an agriculturally based economy with Poplar Bluff providing the supplies.

It was during this time the city expanded, first in 1910 – by vote with 76% of residents approving the extension of city limits that included approximately 2,600 residents. The city's limits extended west to a north/south line along what is now 14th street, north to what is now the southern boundary of the city cemetery and parts of the east side of Black River. The southern boundary ended at present-day Butler Street west of the railyard along the southern line of Section Two to the eastern boundary, which is now present-day South F and North G streets.

Poplar Bluff's next expansion of its city limits came in 1938, following a vote of city residents and a lengthy court battle. An estimated 570 homes were added to the city, extending the city limits south to include Kellytown, east to Palmer Slough, north to what is now Barron Road and west to Pike Creek. Only 54% of residents approved of the expansion in a vote and one council member sued the city to prevent it.

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HISTORY

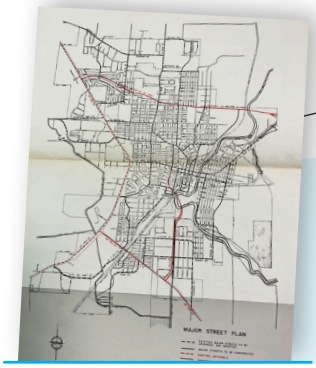
By this time, Highway 67 had moved to the western edge of the city to become what is now Westwood Boulevard. A decade later, ground was broken for the Veterans Hospital on a site along this road. The opening of the hospital in November 1950 signaled the start of a slow migration of businesses from the downtown area to Highway 67.

Valley Plaza opened in November 1961 featuring a 46,000-square foot Newberry's store, which had previously been located at Main and Poplar streets, while J.C. Penney also moved out of downtown. The Mansion Mall Shopping Center opened in August 1970 and included Walmart's 39th location, which at 50,000-square feet was one of its largest at the time.

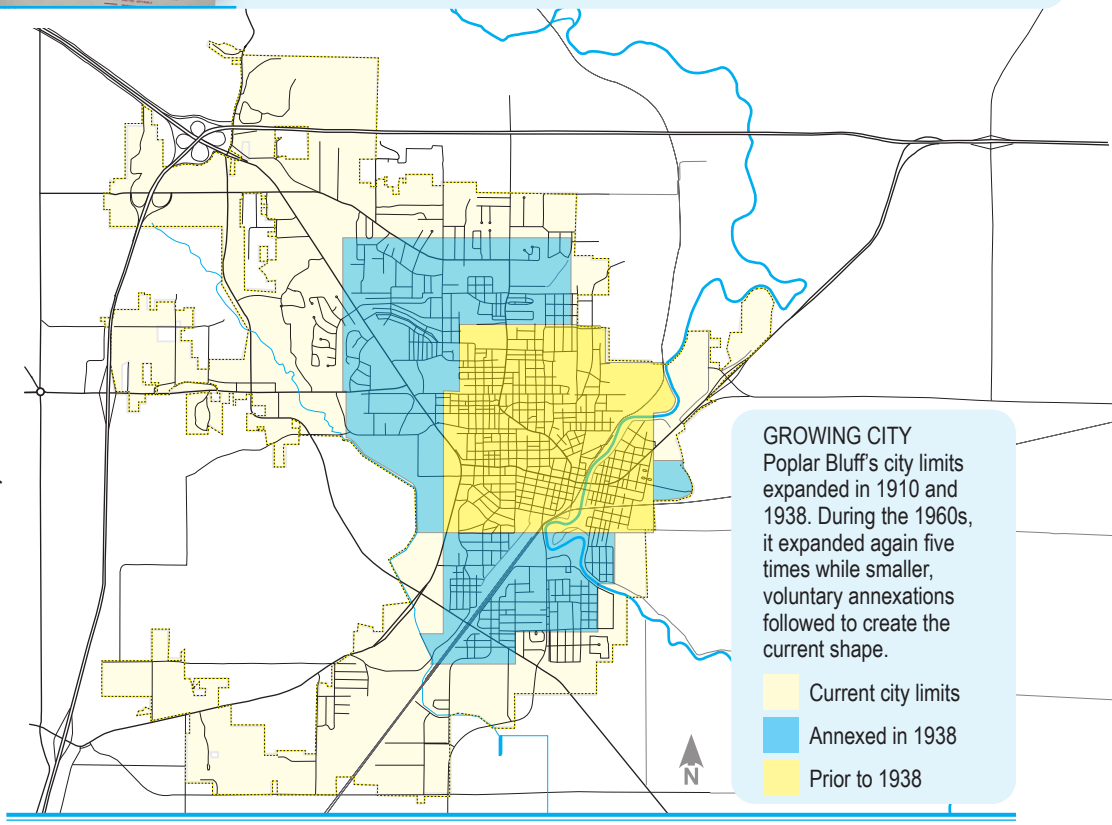
City limits were expanded five times in the 1960s. The first came following an April 1961 election that saw 79% in favor of adding Whiteley Park and the surrounding area along with parts along Highway 67 to the north. The last vote, in June 1967, added approximately 350 homes along Barron Road and the Loma Linda area. The city also expanded through voluntary annexation by property owners over the next three decades.

A plan to bypass Highway 67 west of Poplar Bluff started to take shape in the late 1980s but was not finally completed until May 2001. The economic landscape of Poplar Bluff has once again slowly changed over the past two decades.

Poplar Bluff: "Where were you in '62?"



In 1962 the city, as it looked above, hired a firm to produce a Comprehensive Plan. Among the recommendations was replacing an aging city hall (the chosen site was at 5th and Vine streets, at the old high school building), to create a Highway 60 bypass and build a bridge over the railroad tracks south of downtown (pictured at left). The bridge opened nearly 20 years later and the bypass ended up further north nearly 30 years later. "The plan is a pattern for community development and as such should be reviewed at least every five years to update where necessary," the report stated.



FORWARD THINKING

The City of Poplar Bluff's previous 2008 Comprehensive Plan looked at future "large-scale commercial growth" along PP Highway and Oak Grove Road, proposed a road connecting the Industrial Park to the Highway 67 bypass and revitalization of downtown – much of which occurred.

The City's first Comprehensive Plan, produced in 1962, proposed a Highway 60 bypass from Highway 67 (now Westwood) north of the VA east through the residential part of the city, across the Black River to meet Highway 60 at B Highway (a Highway 60 bypass north of town opened in 1987). It also called for a bridge over the railroad yard to connect downtown and south Poplar Bluff (it opened in July 1981), although the proposed route took it over the Black River twice.

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HISTORY



ABOVE
A passenger train waits in front of the Iron Mountain depot in Poplar Bluff, year unknown.

(Butler County Historical Society).

Community leaders have been thinking ahead even before the town started.

When the County Commissioners were selecting a site for the county seat in 1849, they were directed by state law, which stated the process should consider "quality of the land, extent of population and convenience and interest of the inhabitants." At the time, the majority of the population in the county was located west and northwest of what would become Poplar Bluff, the majority of which needed to travel 5 to 15 miles to reach the new county seat.

Instead, the commissioners chose a remote site on the Black River to present to Judge Harrison Hough, who agreed and ordered the site to be the permanent seat of government on September 15, 1849.

It ended up being a good choice. The river provided a link to the Mississippi River delta so that goods, such as timber, could be taken downstream. Upstream as the river cut through the Ozark foothills, it was not navigable for larger boats. Connecting the town by river helped Poplar Bluff get its start until the railroad's arrival 22 years later.

In 1913, the city paved a little over three miles of streets with bricks following the specifications established in New York City at a cost of $86,645 (equivalent to approximately $2.6 million today). Those streets are still in use today, 110 years later, as is the utility company the city created in 1917 that provides electric, water and sewer.

The site of Poplar Bluff's future high school in the 1930s started with a football stadium and the building of an auditorium/gymnasium near the western edge of town at the junction of Highways 67 and 60. That location still serves the district today as does the airport. The first airplane flew — briefly — near Poplar Bluff in 1911 as an exhibition on the west side of town while planes landed in open fields until the city and county teamed up to create the airport at its current site in 1934.

The Industrial Park site selected in the 1940s offered access to the railroad and was selected so that the prevailing winds didn't push smoke over the city. Starting with one factory, the site has grown to provide thousands of jobs to residents over the years. Later that decade, the federal government selected the site for a new Veterans Hospital outside the city limits but near the junction of highways 67 and 60.

The intersection of highways 60 and 67 have changed many times through the years as 67 moved west from what is now North Main Street to Westwood Boulevard to the current four-lane bypass while 60 moved north from Vine to Pine and then the current interchange. Plans for upgrading Highway 60 and parts of 67 to expand Interstate 57 through Poplar Bluff will again change the transportation landscape of the area.

"Good planning is continuing planning." That was the advice of the planning team from Butler and Associates, Inc. to the City of Poplar Bluff at the end of their 1962 Comprehensive Plan. This effort marks the fifth plan since then to embark on the planning process. Looking at the city's history is beneficial in understanding the city's current state while learning from successes and failures of past leaders. However, neither they, nor we, can see into the future. The 1961 Plan estimated the city's population would rise between 4.5% and 11.6% over the next two decades and that by 1980 there could be as many as 20,000 residents. It ended up being 17,139 and the city's population has never been higher.

Economic factors have changed drastically even since the last Plan was developed in 2008. Internet sales have taken away a large portion of the city's sales tax revenue and just like the late 1930s before the city limits were expanded, the city's citizens are paying for services that serve the region outside those city borders.

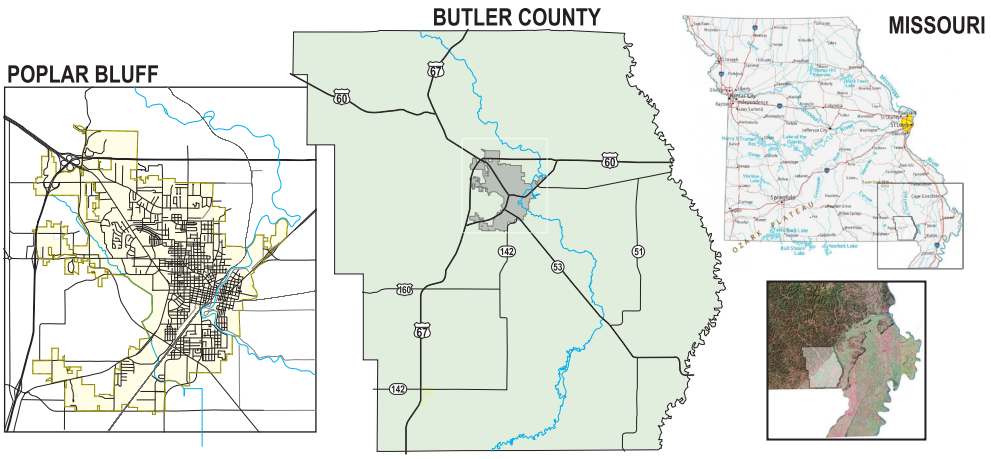
Poplar Bluff's future, as with its past, is dependent on forward-thinking citizens making informed decisions.

⌂

CURRENT STATE

The City of Poplar Bluff is located at the crossroads of U.S. Highways 60 and 67 along the Black River in Butler County, Missouri. It is the county seat with a population of 16,225, according to the 2020 census, making it the largest incorporated area and economic hub for a region within a 50-mile radius among the southeast part of the state and northwest Arkansas.

The city is situated on the Ozark Escarpment, the point where the foothills of the Ozark Mountains meet the flat Mississippi Alluvial Plain with much of the 13.21-square mile area featuring hills to the west of Black River. The terrain is flat on the east side of the river as well as the southeast part of the city, southeast of the railroad line where it crosses the river. Both areas feature a variety of rich soils, ranging from rich clayey loam with underlying sand or gravelly clay in the higher elevations to heavier clays composed of a sandy loam and alluvial soils rich in organic materials in the drained swamplands. The low-lying areas produced large cypress, water tupelo trees while the higher elevations featured large oaks, ash and other hardwoods.



AT A GLANCE

POPULATION: **16,225**

ESTABLISHED: **1870**

CLIMATE

RECORD HIGH: **112°**
July 23, 1901

RECORD LOW: **-25°**
Feb. 13, 1899

RAIN AVG/YR: **52.24"**

RAIN DAYS/YR: **106.1**

RECORD RAIN: **6.6"**
March 28, 1977

SNOW AVG/YR: **5.4"**

SNOW DAYS/YR: **1.8**

RECORD SNOW: **20.0"**
Jan. 11, 1978

WEBSITE
www.poplarbluff-mo.gov

Along with the Black River, the Current and St. Francis rivers are all within 40 miles with Poplar Bluff in the middle making the "Three Rivers" region that features numerous outdoor recreation areas, including Mark Twain National Forest and Lake Wappapello to the north and the Ozark National Scenic Riverways National Park to the west, which averages 1.5 million visits each year.

The city also serves as a railroad hub with a Union Pacific railroad yard and an Amtrak service line that connects to St. Louis, Missouri, to the north and Little Rock, Arkansas, to the south. The Poplar Bluff Municipal Airport features a 5,000-foot runway three miles east of the city limits, handling approximately 15,000 operations annually.

Agriculture is the predominant industry of the county with Poplar Bluff featuring the majority of the residential, commercial and industrial areas. The city is home to the region's medical services, including the Veterans Administration's John J. Pershing Medical Center (50 beds) and Poplar Bluff Regional Medical Center (240 beds), accounting for 21.6% of jobs. Manufacturing jobs account for 15.5% of the city's workforce according to Census estimates followed by the retail trade (11.5%).

The city's population in 2020 dropped 4.7% from the previous Census and has remained relatively unchanged since 1970 – there are 428 fewer residents than there were 50 years ago. Butler County, meanwhile, has seen an increase in population of 25.6% (8,601 total) since 1970, despite a 1.6% drop between 2010 and 2020. Of the 42,130 residents in Butler County, 38.5% currently live within the city's limits while it was 49.6% in 1970.

Poplar Bluff is considered a third class city under state law and operates under the council-manager form of government. The City Council consists of seven elected members, one each from five wards and two at-large members, each serving staggered three-year terms. Each year the members of the Council elect a mayor and mayor pro tem. Council meetings are held on the first and third Monday of each month. The administrative head of the city is the city manager who is appointed by the elected members of the Council.

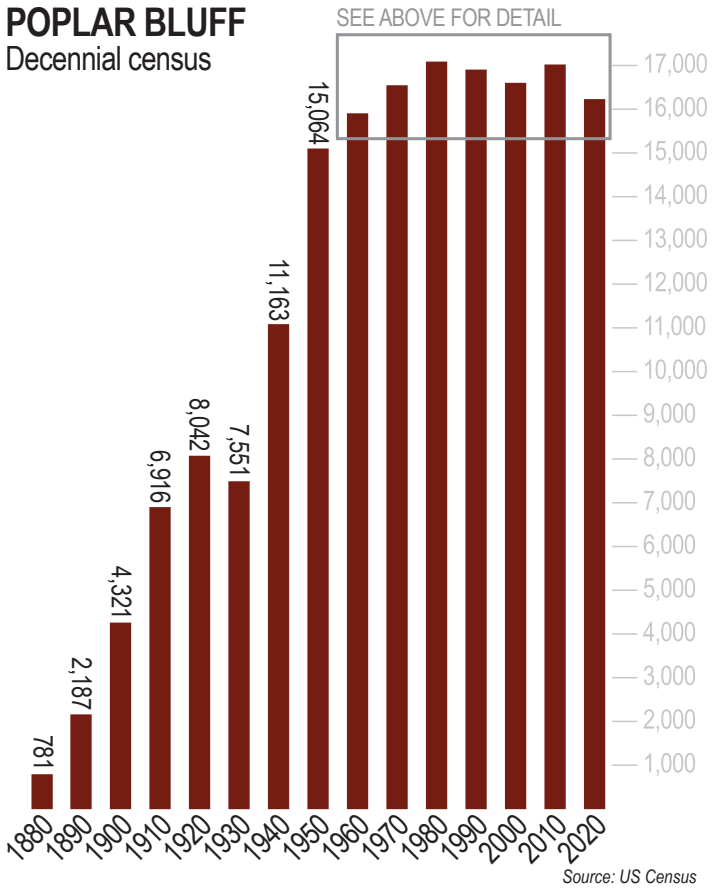
The City's police department features 43 sworn officers, eight telecommunicators and two civilian employees. There are code enforcement and animal control divisions while the fire department has a staff of 33 operating out of three stations. The city's Municipal Utilities provides water, sewer and electric services while the city maintains over 100 miles of streets and a cemetery. The Parks and Recreation Department oversees 14 parks, an 18-hole golf course, numerous trails throughout the city and recreation programs for all ages. The Black River Coliseum, a 115,000-square foot multi-purpose facility, hosts various events with seating up to 4,700 along with the city's municipal court and council meetings.

The city is home to the Poplar Bluff R-I School District featuring one high school, a junior high school, a middle school, four elementary schools, a kindergarten center, early childhood center and technical career center. Two private schools, Westwood Baptist and Sacred Heart Catholic, also operate in the city along with the MERS Goodwill Excel Center for adult education. Three Rivers College is a public, two-year community college that provides associate degrees at eight campus locations, including the 80-acre campus in Poplar Bluff.

Poplar Bluff was recognized as one of the most affordable and safest places to live in the United States, featuring a low annual cost of living around $32,941 and violent crime rates roughly a tenth of the national average in 2025.

POPULATION





Source: US Census

Poplar Bluff's total population as of the US Census Bureau's 2020 decennial census was 16,225. That ranks the city 47th among the largest in the state of Missouri and fifth among the Eighth Congressional District behind Cape Girardeau (39,531), Rolla (19,934), Farmington (18,221) and Sikeston (16,289).

Poplar Bluff saw a 4.7% drop in population over the 2010 census, the largest percentage decrease since 1930, which saw a 6.1% fall following the 1927 tornado and closing of mills the previous decade. The city's population has never gotten above the 1980 count of 17,139 and has seen a drop in population in three of the last four censuses.

Butler County's population, meanwhile, saw an increase of 5,101 residents since 1980 to reach 42,794 in 2010 before a smaller percentage drop (1.6%) than the city saw for a population of 42,130 in 2020.

The majority of residents in Butler County live within or near the Poplar Bluff city limits. The population in 2020 of Poplar Bluff Township, which includes the city limits and surrounding area, was 25,127. That accounts for nearly 60% of the county's population while the city's population is only 38.5% of the county's total. Poplar Bluff Township also saw a smaller percentage drop (2.9%) in population from 2010 than the city.

The estimated population for Butler County in 2024 (US Census 5-year estimates) was 42,020 with 16,254 residents in Poplar Bluff.

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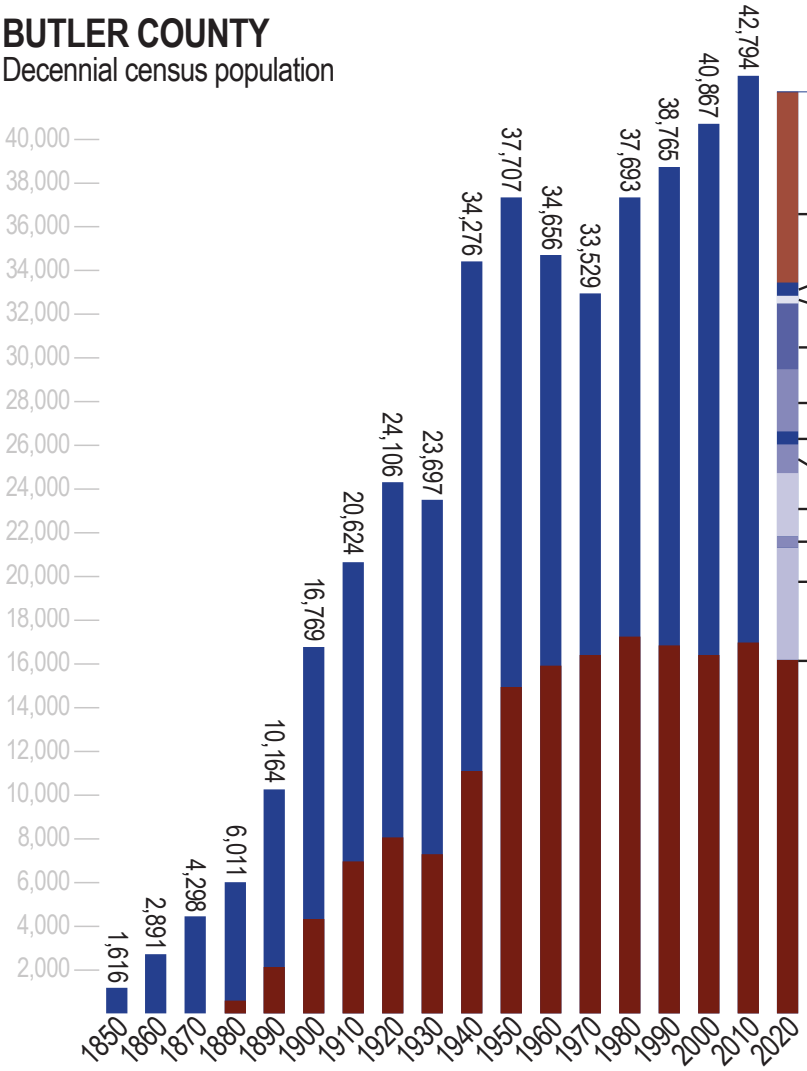
POPULATION

BUTLER COUNTY

Decennial census population



42,130

Butler County population 2020 US Census

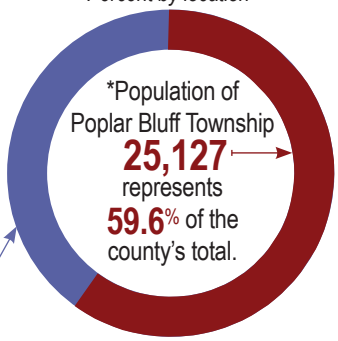
- 8,902 Poplar Bluff Township*
- 590 Gillis Bluff
- 150 Coon Island
- 1,732 St. Francis
- 3,442 Epps
- 500 Cane Creek
- 1,665 Black River
- 3,056 Ash Hill
- 878 Neely
- 4,990 Beaver Dam

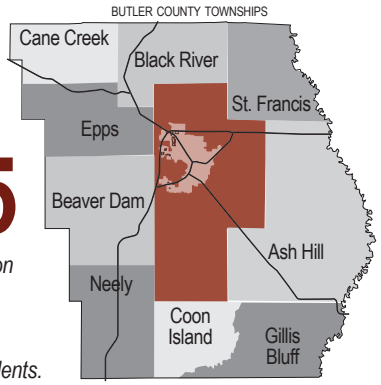
16,225

City of Poplar Bluff population 2020 US Census

**Poplar Bluff Township represents non-city residents.*

Butler County population Percent by location





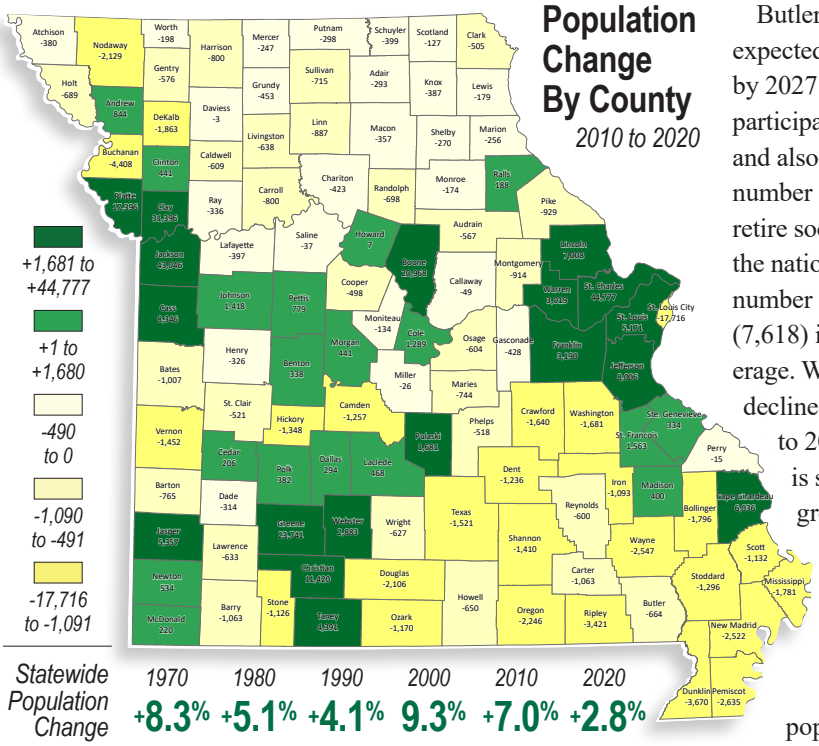
TOWNSHIP	2020	2010
Ash Hill	3,056	3,349
Beaver Dam	4,990	4,473
Black River	1,665	1,665
Cane Creek	500	468
Coon Island	150	187
Epps	3,442	3,171

TOWNSHIP	2020	2010
Gillis Bluff	590	683
Neely	878	1,126
St. Francis	1,732	1,794
Poplar Bluff	25,127	25,878
CITY	16,225	17,023
NON-CITY	8,902	8,855

Source: US Census

Population Change By County

2010 to 2020



Statewide Population Change	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
	+8.3%	+5.1%	+4.1%	9.3%	+7.0%	+2.8%

Butler County's population is expected to decrease by 0.4% by 2027 while the labor force participation rate was 54.37% and also expected to fall. The number of residents expected to retire soon (13,605) is close to the national average while the number of residents age 25 to 39 (7,618) is below the national average. While the number of jobs declined by 2.0% from 2017 to 2022 to 20,442, which is short of the national growth rate of 3.8%, it is expected to increase to 21,600 by 2027.

In 2008, the Missouri Office of Administration's population projections estimated Butler County's 2020 population to be 41,613 (it was 517 more) and 41,491 by 2030.

The City's Comprehensive Plan in 1962 estimated a population growth rate between 4.5% and 11.6%, with the population in 1980 reaching at minimum 17,420 and 20,000 as a high estimate.

Based on current conditions, it is estimated that Poplar Bluff's population will remain between 16,000 and 17,000. The low end of that estimate is a 1.38% drop in population while a high estimate of growth is 4.77%.

There are many factors that determine a community's future population.

→

POPULATION

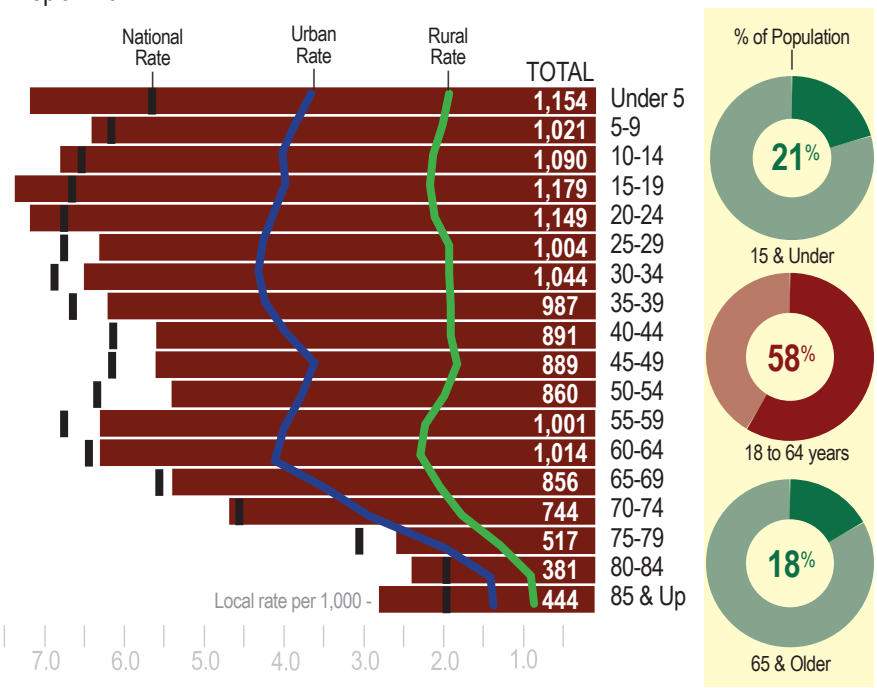
POPLAR BLUFF	2020		2010	
Population	16,225		17,023	
BY RACE				
One race	15,025	92.6%	16,539	97.1%
White	12,410	76.5%	14,263	73.8%
Black/African American	1,865	11.5%	1,683	9.8%
Hispanic or Latino	461	2.8%	376	2.2%
Asian	144	0.9%	152	0.8%
American Indian	81	0.5%	88	0.5%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	7	<0.1%	11	<0.1%
Other	57	0.3%	17	<0.1%
Two/more races	1,200	7.3%	417	2.4%
White; American Indian	502	3.1%	127	0.7%
White; Black/African Am.	400	2.5%	218	1.2%
White; Other	138	0.8%	6	<0.1%
White; Asian	56	0.3%	41	0.2%
Black; American Indian	20	0.1%	19	0.1%
Black; Other	10	<0.1%	13	<0.1%
Asian; Hawaiian/Pacific	7	<0.1%	3	<0.1%
White; Hawaiian/Pacific	4	<0.1%	1	<0.1%
Hawaiian/Pacific; Other	2	<0.1%	0	0.0%
American Indian; Hawaiian	0	0.0%	1	<0.1%
Asian; Other	0	0.0%	1	<0.1%
Three races	57	0.3%	13	<0.1%
White; Black; Am.Indian	33	0.2%	6	<0.1%
White; American Indian; Oth.	13	<0.1%	0	0.0%
White; Black; Asian	10	<0.1%	1	<0.1%
White; Black; Other	9	<0.1%	1	<0.1%
White; Hawaiian; Other	2	<0.1%	1	<0.1%
Black; Am.Indian; Asian	2	<0.1%	0	0.0%
Black; Am.Indian; Other	2	<0.1%	0	0.0%
White; Am.Indian; Asian	1	<0.1%	0	0.0%
Black; Asian; Other	1	<0.1%	0	0.0%
White; Am.Indian; Hawaiian	0	0.0%	3	<0.1%
Am.Indian; Hawaiian; Other	0	0.0%	1	<0.1%
Four races	3	<0.1%	2	<0.1%
White; Black; Indian; Other	3	<0.1%	0	0.0%
White; Indian; Asian; Island	0	0.0%	2	<0.1%
Five races	1	<0.1%	1	<0.1%

	AVG. SIZE HOUSEHOLD	MARRIED	2-PARENT FAMILY	1-PARENT FAMILY	LIVING ALONE
CITY	2.41	35.9%	10.8%	12.0%	39.5%
COUNTY	2.48	42	14.3	8.9	34.3
STATE	2.40	46	17.3	8.2	31.1

*Household estimates from 2024

POPULATION BY AGE

Poplar Bluff

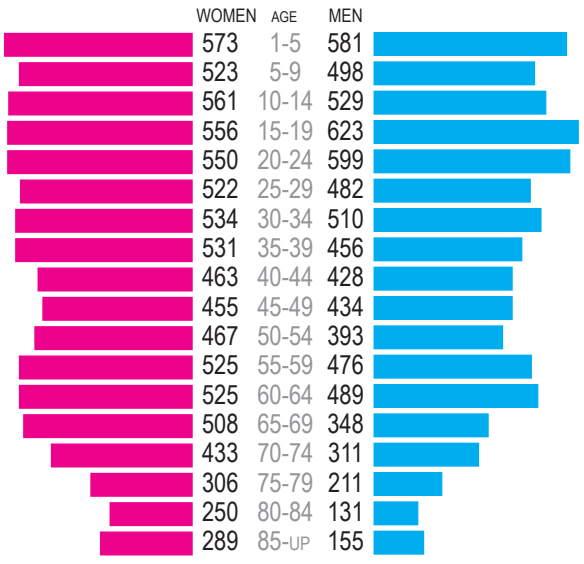


The natural increase in population, the number of births minus the number of deaths, declined over the past 15 years in Missouri before COVID-19 pushed it to nearly zero. For 2019-21, there were virtually equal numbers of births and deaths statewide while in rural areas, such as Butler County, there were 11,400 more deaths than births. Deaths increased by 13.7% over the previous three-year time period while births only declined by 3.8%. As a result, natural increase declined statewide by approximately half in 10 years, from 77,394 to 36,165. The rate of deaths from 2017-21 for Butler County is among the highest in the state and the County saw a negative birth-to-death ratio in 2023 for the 10th time in 11 years.

One factor in the higher death rates among rural communities is that a higher percentage of the population is older than in urban areas. The senior population (65 years and older) made up 19.4% of the rural population compared to 16.6% of the urban population. Young adults (those age 20-34) made up 20.5% of urban counties compared to 18.1% in rural counties. Poplar Bluff's 2020 Census population by age showed that the City's residents age 65 or older was higher than the national average while those age 25 to 59 were below the national average.

→

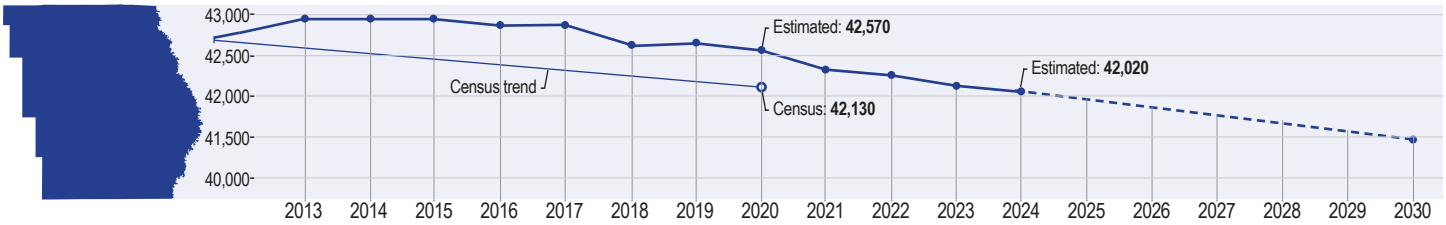
The female population of **8,571** represents **52.8%** of the city's population.



Source: US Census

POPULATION

Yearly Projected Population, Butler County



Of the total population in Poplar Bluff, 18.1% are aged 65 or older while in 1960 that percentage was 13.6% and just 6.8% in 1940. Poplar Bluff also had a higher than average number of persons under the age of 21. Statewide numbers show a trend that rural populations age 21 to 50 will fall while the urban numbers among those ages will rise as younger adults migrate.

Missouri saw a 0.9% increase in population over the past three years. Statewide population trends, however, depended on location as the 99 rural counties had a population decline of 1.0% - including Butler County, which fell 0.9% - while urban areas saw an increase of 1.9% over the last three years. In 2021, the U.S. Census estimated that Missouri's rural population was 2.05 million, or 33.2% of the state's total.

The percentage of women among Poplar Bluff's population is 53.0%, lower than the national average. The median age of all residents is 37.3, a year younger than the national average. About 33.6% of households are married, well below the state and national averages, while 40.5% of households feature single women, well above the state and national average of 27%, including 8% featuring single-mother homes, also above the national average of 5%.

YEARLY TRENDS

Missouri's Office of Administration projected that the state's overall population growth would slow between 2000 and 2030 so that the total population could reach 6.8 million.

"Unlike Sunbelt states where net in-migration is the primary cause of population increase, Missouri's increases are mainly due to natural increase (births minus deaths). ... Favoring more recent migration trends, the population projection model predicts a natural increase of approximately 732 thousand people between 2000 and 2030, and net in-migration of nearly 420 thousand people."

In the years following that projection, however, the natural increase turned into a decrease in many parts of the state.

BIRTHS & DEATHS

Missouri had never seen a negative birth-to-death ratio prior to 2020. But that ratio had fallen below zero in Butler County even before COVID-19.

Butler County saw just 10 more births than deaths between the 2010 and 2020 census (top chart at right). The County saw a decrease of 664 in population. That loss was mainly due to migration as the birth-to-date rate could not keep up.

MIGRATION

Just as George Bailey wanted to leave his small town in the 1946 movie "It's a Wonderful Life," young adults tend to move to urban areas.

This change can be seen in population rates by age (bottom chart at right) between urban (blue line) and rural (green line). The urban rate rises while the rural rate falls for people in their 20s, but the drop in both rates is slower for rural population as people migrate back after retirement.

Another factor for Poplar Bluff's population change is migration out of the city limits as new homes are built. The city had 195 fewer housing units between 2010 and 2020 while Butler County featured an increase of 200.

Butler County

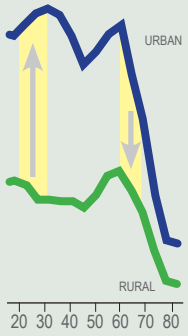
BIRTH-TO-DEATH RATIO



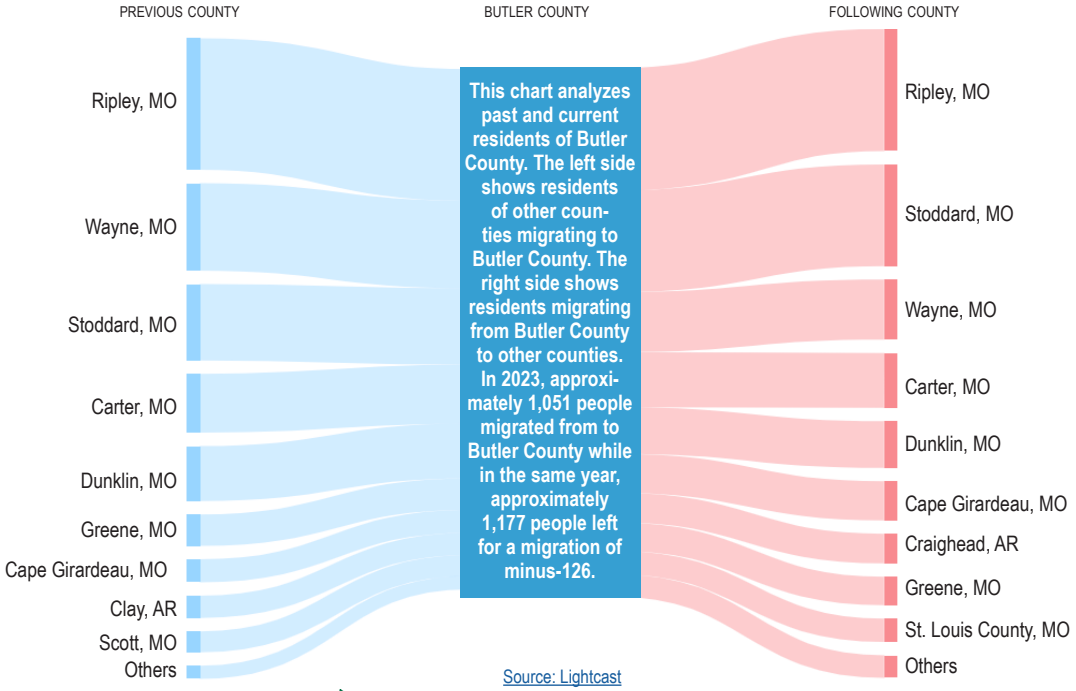
Source: Mo.HSS

Urban / Rural

US POPULATION RATE



MIGRATION TO AND FROM BUTLER COUNTY



Source: Lightcast

ESTIMATED DAILY POPULATION

32,750

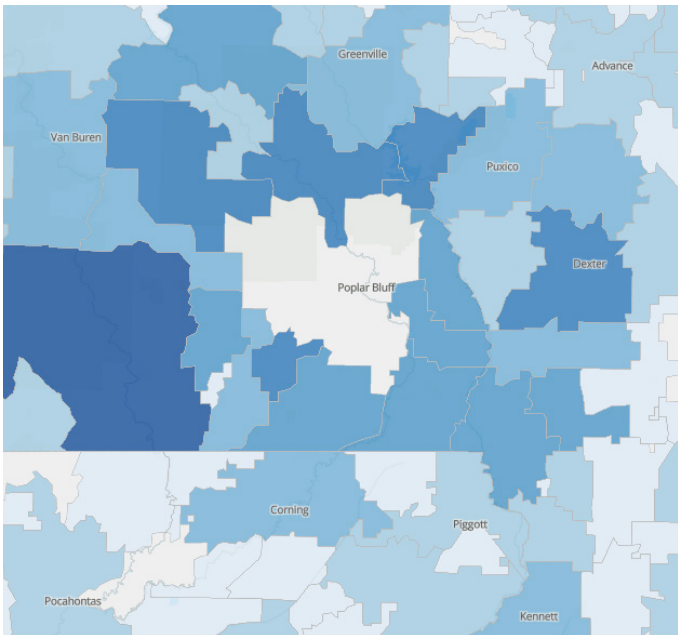
Population counts the number of residents living within a certain area. The actual population during any given day is likely much higher as people travel to an area for work, school, or for services such as medical, retail or entertainment.

In 2020, US Census data for the City was 16,225 while the 63901 Zip Code showed 34,354 residents and the population of the Poplar Bluff Township was 25,127, both of which include the City. Meanwhile, daily commuters coming to Poplar Bluff in 2025 is estimated to be 3,039.

The estimated daily population in the City could be between 28,000 and 37,500 based on the different population definitions (see page 40) plus commuters.

COMMUTING MAP

The number of inbound, outbound, and net commuters in 2025.



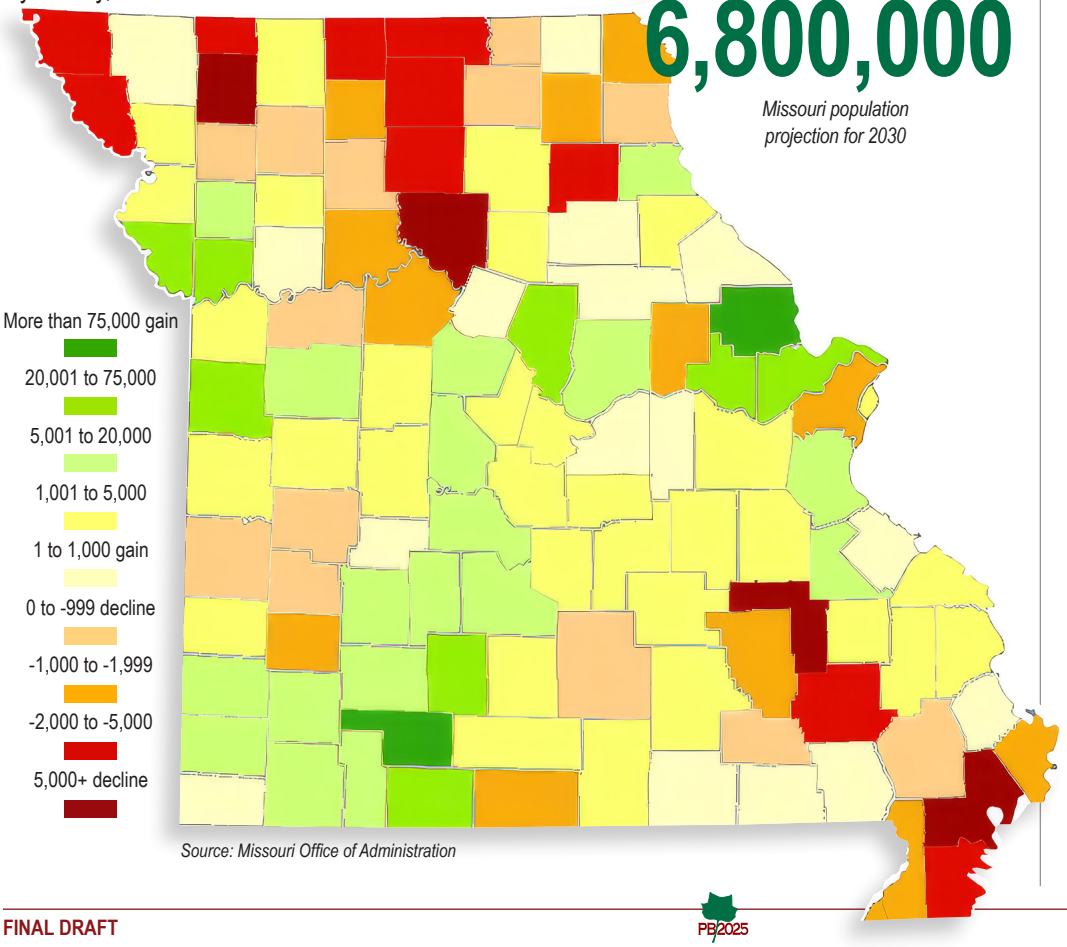
INBOUND COMMUTERS

0 - 19 | 20 - 73 | 74 - 134 | 135 - 245 | 246 - 688 | 689

Source: Lightcast

PROJECTED CHANGE IN POPULATION

By county, 2000 to 2030



Source: Missouri Office of Administration

6,800,000

Missouri population projection for 2030

US

VIOLENT CRIME

Butler County has 2.39 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national average is 3.38 per 1,000 people.

US

PROPERTY CRIME

Butler County has 10.76 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national average is 16.44 per 1,000 people.

US

3,246

VETERANS

Butler County has more than the national average (2,062) of veterans for an area the same size.

US

7,666

MILLENNIALS

Butler County has fewer people age 25-39 than the national average, which is 8,560 for an area this size.

US

13,538

RETIRING SOON

The retirement risk is a little above average in Butler County. The national average for an area the same size is 12,644 people 55 or older.

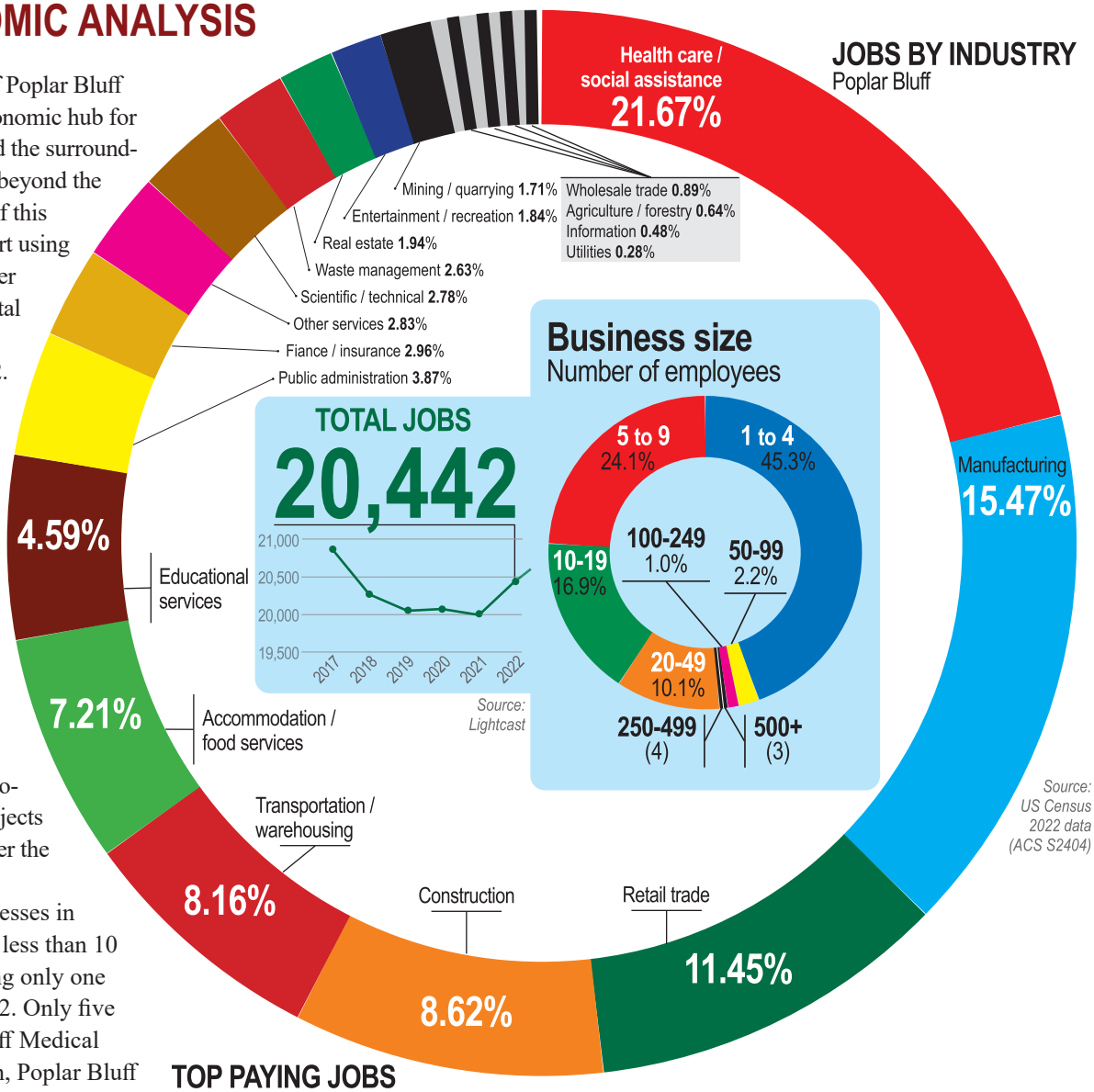
Source: Lightcast

SOCIOECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Because the City of Poplar Bluff is the regional economic hub for Butler County and the surrounding area, its impact is felt beyond the city limits. An overview of this economy, based on a report using data from the fourth quarter of 2023, shows that the total regional employment for Butler County was 20,442. That number decreased by 418 (or 2.0%) over the last five years, below the national growth rate of 3.8%, but as the number of jobs declined, the labor force participation rate decreased from 56.1% to 54.9% between 2017 and 2022. The area exported $3.73 billion in goods, or 0.9% of the state's $405.43 billion in total exports. The report projects a growth of 1,150 jobs over the next five years.

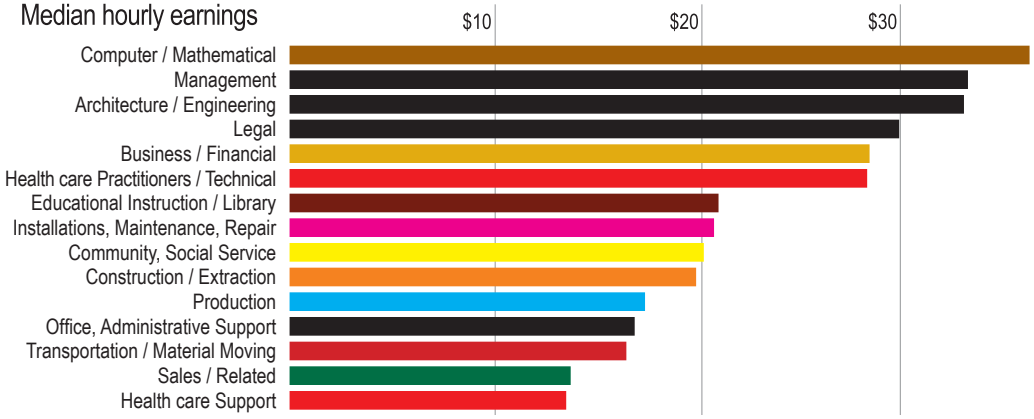
Two-thirds of all businesses in Butler County employed less than 10 people with 45% featuring only one to four employees in 2022. Only five employers — Poplar Bluff Medical Center, Briggs & Stratton, Poplar Bluff R-1, John J. Pershing VA Medical Center and Gates — feature more than 500 employees.

Among the full-time, year-round civilian employed population age 16 and over in 2022, Poplar Bluff's biggest industry was health care and social assistance at 21.7%, followed by manufacturing at 15.5%, both above the state averages of 14.7% and 13.7%, respectively. Retail trade (11.5%), construction (8.6%), transportation and warehousing (8.2%), and food services (7.2%) were the next largest employers, each above the state average. Sedalia (26.1%) had a higher percentage of manufacturing jobs while Sikeston had similar percentages as Poplar Bluff but nearly 1,350 more people employed.



TOP PAYING JOBS

Median hourly earnings



EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

Percentage of residents over 25

POPLAR BLUFF	2020	2010	2000	1990
High school grad+	84.2	75.1	67.9	58.0
Some high school	12.8	164	19.4	20.0
College, no degree	26.2	20.8	9.8	17.3
Associate's degree	6.1	5.3	5.0	N/A
Bachelor's degree+	11.5	14.3	12.2	11.8
Graduate degree	4.0	6.9	6.2	4.1

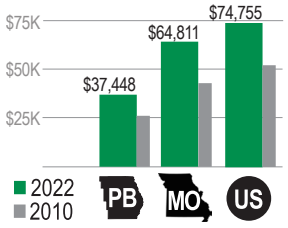
2022	PB	MO	US
High school graduate or higher	81.9%	91.3%	89.1%
Some college, no degree	19.5	21.4	19.7
Bachelor's degree or higher	8.7	19.2	20.9

Source: US Census (ACS: DP02)

SOCIOECONOMIC ANALYSIS

INCOME & POVERTY

Median household income



Source: US Census (ACS)

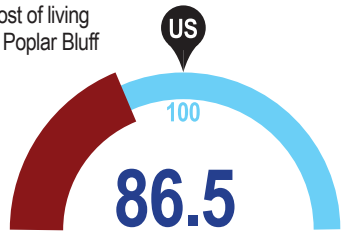
Percentage of residents living below poverty level

	2022	2017	2012
PB	27.0%	25.5%	30.4%
MO	12.8%	14.6%	15.0%
US	12.5%	14.6%	14.9%

Percentage of households on Food Stamps / SNAP

	2022	2017	2012
PB	34.9%	28.0%	30.4%
MO	10.0%	12.2%	13.1%
US	11.5%	12.6%	11.4%

Cost of living in Poplar Bluff



The Council for Community and Economic Research reports that Poplar Bluff's cost-of-living index is well below the national average (100).

Poplar Bluff's unemployment rate has historically been higher than the state's rate since 1990. Poplar Bluff's unemployment rate in November 2023 was 4.0%, much higher than the state's 2.9% and that of both Sikeston (2.8%) and Moberly (3.3%).

There were only eight more cities in Missouri with a higher poverty rate than Poplar Bluff in 2022, according to US Census data estimates. More than a quarter of residents, 27.0%, live in poverty, well above the state's 12.8% rate. Broken down by race, Hispanic or Latino residents that live in poverty (57.1%) are three times higher than the state average, White residents living in poverty (23.4%) are twice the state average while Black or African Americans (38.4%) are 1 ½ times above the state average.

Education is a factor in poverty status as 41.4% of Poplar Bluff residents without a high school diploma fall under the poverty line. High school graduates, which includes equivalency, living in poverty make up 22.3% of the city's population age 25 and over while those with some college, including an associate's degree, is 18.2%, nearly twice the state average.

Poplar Bluff has seen an improvement in the number of residents age 25 or older with a high school diploma, equivalency, or higher. In 1990, the percentage was just 56.7% of residents but 30 years later it has grown to 82.4%, including an 8.2-point percentage increase in the last decade. The percentage of residents that did not graduate high school dropped from 42.0% in 1990 to just 17.6% in 2020. However, the percentage of residents with higher degrees - Bachelors, Graduate or higher - has mostly stayed the same with only 11.6% with a higher degree in 2020.

STANDARD OF LIVING

Poplar Bluff's cost-of-living index as determined by the Council for Community and Economic Research, is 86.5 with 100 being the national average.

The five least expensive urban areas in 2023 all rated under 83.0 and Missouri ranked sixth among the least expensive states in the nation. Farmington (86.3) had an index below Poplar Bluff, which ranked better than Sedalia (88.4), Sikeston (89.4), Rolla (90.0).

However, Poplar Bluff's median household income of $37,448 in 2022 was $200 less than Rolla while Farmington ($49,317), Sikeston ($47,464), Sedalia ($48,518) and Moberly ($39,332) all had MHI lower than the state MHI of $65,920.

A higher portion of that income goes toward housing costs for Poplar Bluff households, according to estimates.

One-third of Poplar Bluff residents are estimated to pay 30% or more of their monthly income toward housing costs.

More than half of renters (53.8%) pay 30% or more of their monthly income toward rent, higher than the state average of 45.2%, but Poplar Bluff has a higher rate of units in which the monthly rent is less than $500 than the state average, 33.5% to 9.2%.

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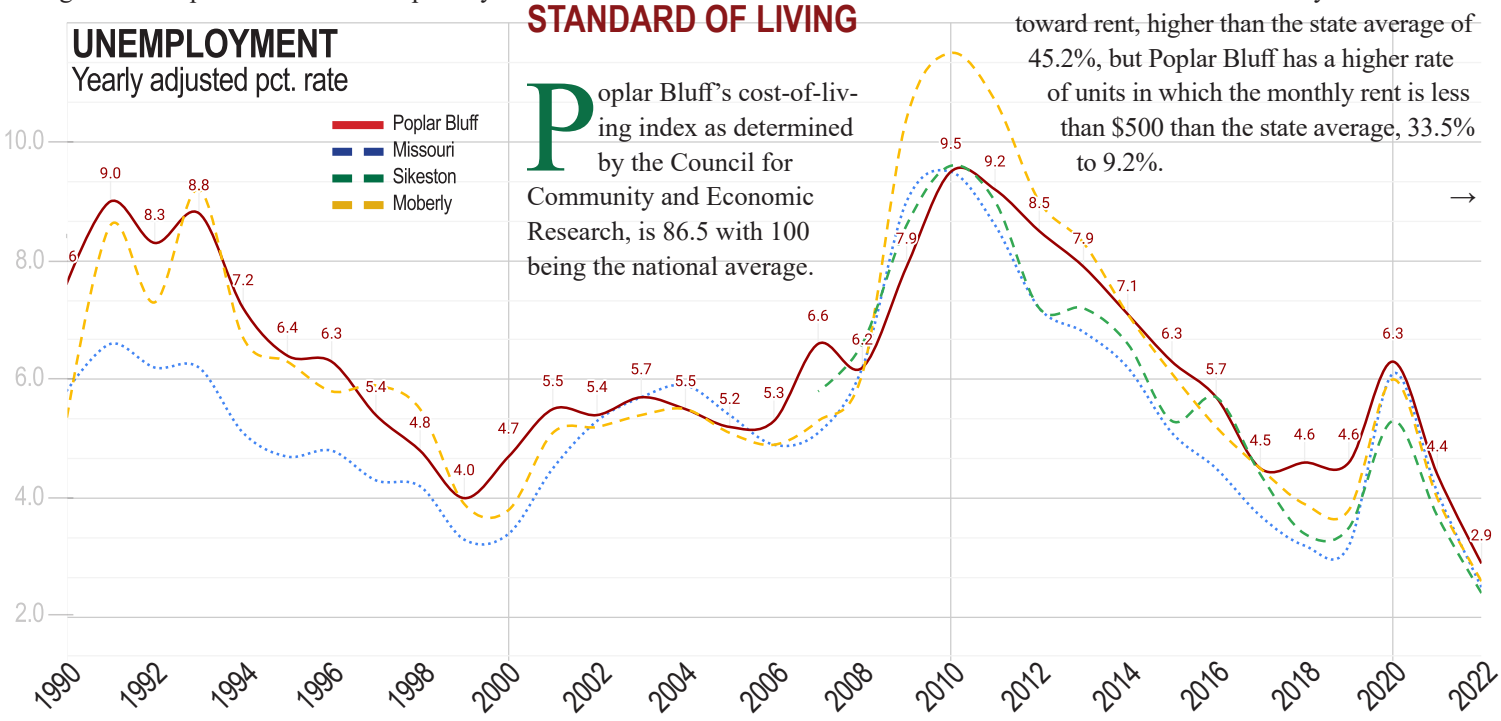
UNEMPLOYMENT

Yearly adjusted pct. rate



SOCIOECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The median monthly rent in Poplar Bluff is $707 (the state average is $957), but that is higher than the median monthly cost for an owner ($651). That is not the case statewide (owner's median monthly costs are $1,029 to renter's $957) and in Sikeston, Farmington and Moberly, but renters in Sedalia do pay more than owners ($825 to $700).

In 2022, less than half of the households own their home in Poplar Bluff (48.7%), well below the state average of 67.6%. Estimates in 2024 have that ownership rate up to 51.4%.

Poplar Bluff has also seen a decrease in the number of housing units over the past decade and the vacancy rate has also increased from 10.7% to 12.2%. Farmington saw the most addition of housing between 2010 and 2020 with 859 more units while Sedalia's stock grew 330 followed by Moberly (96) and Sikeston (39). Sikeston, for example, has issued 157 more single-family home construction permits than Poplar Bluff over the same 10-year period ending in 2020.

The previous Comprehensive Plan in 2008 stated that "Poplar Bluff's has an affordable housing stock that has significantly more rental housing than the statewide average" and that appears to still be true. However, the decline in the number of available housing attributed some to the decline in population.

Poplar Bluff's socioeconomic ecosystem is a delicate balance with a low cost of living supporting a population that features among the lowest median household incomes in the state. A workforce that can be supported by lower-paying wages can attract more industry to the region, however, young adults are more likely to leave the area to find higher-paying jobs. The city's drop in population over the past decade will continue unless migration into the city occurs, the city limits expand, and improvements are realized.

HOUSING





TOTAL HOUSING UNITS

	COUNTY	CITY	STATE	SIKESTON	FARMINGTON	MOBERLY	SEDALIA	ROLLA
2023	**19,296**	**7,654**	**2,809,501**	7,600 ↓	7,054 ↓	5,799 ↓	9,951 ↑	9,231 ↑
YEAR	TOTAL CHANGE*	TOTAL CHANGE*	TOTAL CHANGE*					
2022	19,336 -0.2%	7,633 +0.3%	2,795,030 +0.5%					
2020	**19,868 -2.9%**	**8,076 -5.5%**	**2,804,664 +0.2%**	8,245	7,493	5,603	10,109	9,509
2015	19,662 -1.9%	8,344 -9.0%	2,729,862 +2.8%	-8.5%	-6.2%	+3.5%	-1.6%	-2.9%
2010	19,668 -1.9%	8,271 -8.1%	2,687,610 +4.3%					

**percentage change between year and 2023.*

VACANCY RATE

COUNTY	CITY	STATE	SIKESTON	FARMINGTON	MOBERLY	SEDALIA	ROLLA
14.5%	17.3%	11.6%	9.2% ↓	8.9% ↓	13.3% ↓	8.8% ↓	12.6% ↓

HOME OWNERSHIP RATE

COUNTY	CITY	STATE	SIKESTON	FARMINGTON	MOBERLY	SEDALIA	ROLLA
65.0%	51.4%	67.9%	59.0% ↑	52.6% ↑	57.5% ↑	58.2% ↑	40.8% ↓
MEDIAN VALUE **$138,800**	**$109,700**	**$215,600**	$158,100 ↑	$187,500 ↑	$140,000 ↑	$136,500 ↑	$177,400 ↑

SINGLE-FAMILY UNITS

COUNTY	CITY	STATE	SIKESTON	FARMINGTON	MOBERLY	SEDALIA	ROLLA
74.3%	75.7%	70.5%	74.5% ↓	56.0% ↓	75.7%	73.9% ↓	48.1% ↓

UNITS IN STRUCTURE

	COUNTY	CITY	STATE	SIKESTON	FARMINGTON	MOBERLY	SEDALIA	ROLLA
2	4.1%	8.1%	3.2%	10.7%	5.9%	7.9%	2.4%	5.9%
3-4	4.2%	6.5%	4.5%	3.7%	7.4%	4.3%	5.5%	18.9%
5-9	2.8%	3.6%	3.7%	2.8%	11.7%	2.8%	4.9%	7.3%
10+	1.8%	3.9%	8.9%	4.6%	7.8%	3.0%	9.6%	14.5%
MOBLE	11.5%	1.0%	5.3%	2.1%	5.0%	3.6%	1.2%	1.6%

AGE OF STRUCTURE

	COUNTY	CITY	STATE	SIKESTON	FARMINGTON	MOBERLY	SEDALIA	ROLLA
2020+ (1-5 YR)	0.8%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	1.2%	0.9%	0.5%	0.1%
2010s (6-15)	7.2%	3.1%	7.6%	5.3%	11.5%	5.7%	7.6%	15.3%
2000s (16-25)	13.4%	10.0%	13.0%	7.9%	14.6%	7.8%	7.4%	14.2%
1990s (26-35)	13.2%	6.2%	13.3%	10.9%	18.5%	7.5%	8.6%	14.0%
1980s (36-45)	15.7%	10.8%	12.0%	14.1%	13.1%	9.1%	5.5%	13.3%
1970s (46-55)	19.9%	22.4%	14.6%	22.7%	14.6%	16.5%	12.3%	17.2%
1960s (56-65)	11.9%	18.0%	11.1%	15.5%	5.9%	13.2%	13.7%	10.9%
1950s (66-75)	7.9%	11.7%	9.8%	10.4%	8.8%	6.1%	15.7%	5.8%
1940s (76-85)	3.3%	4.9%	4.4%	6.3%	3.4%	3.3%	8.2%	5.7%
«1939 (86+)	6.8%	12.9%	13.4%	6.9%	8.2%	30.0%	20.2%	3.5%

MEDIAN RENT

COUNTY	CITY	STATE	SIKESTON	FARMINGTON	MOBERLY	SEDALIA	ROLLA
$768	**$760**	**$996**	$827	$856	$749	$854	$790

Source: US Census - DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles 2023

COMPARING COMMUNITIES

A look at each city's demographics:

POPLAR BLUFF
Population (2020): **16,225** Est. 1870
Cost of Living Index (100 avg.): **86.5**
Living in Poverty: **27.0%**
Race (% of population)
White: 76.4 Black: 11.4 Latino: 2.8

SEDALIA
Population (2020): **21,725** Est. 1860
Cost of Living Index: **88.4**
Living in Poverty: **17.6%**
Race (% of population)
White: 77.1 Black: 5.3 Latino: 12.6

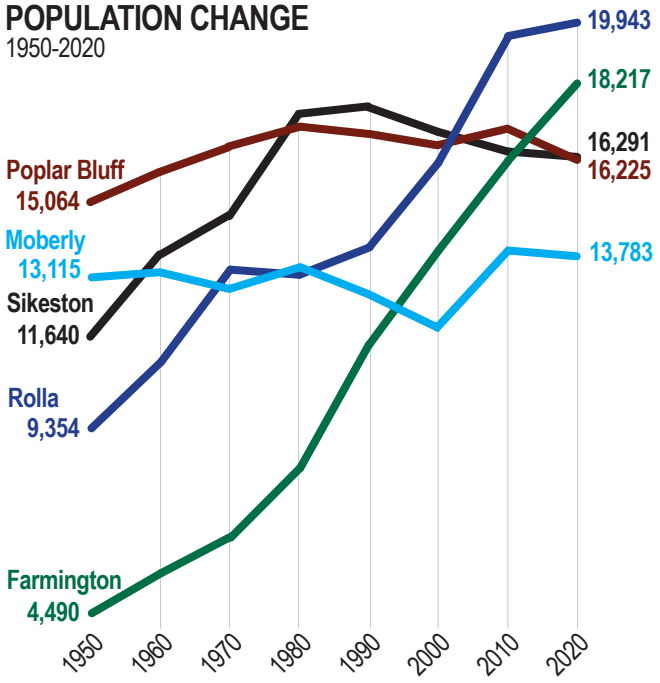
SIKESTON
Population: **16,291** Est. 1860
Cost of Living Index: **89.4**
Living in Poverty: **20.0%**
Race (% of population)
White: 63.5 Black: 27.6 Latino: 3.0

ROLLA
Population: **19,943** Est. 1858
Cost of Living Index: **90.0**
Living in Poverty: **24.5%**
Race (% of population)
White: 79.4 Black: 4.1 Latino: 3.4

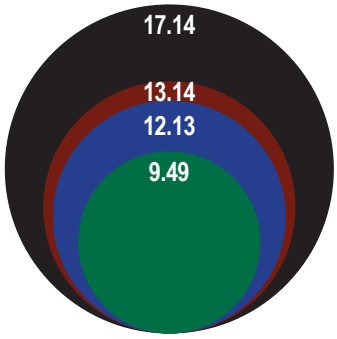
FARMINGTON
Population: **18,217** Est. 1825
Cost of Living Index: **86.3**
Living in Poverty: **17.1%**
Race (% of population)
White: 86.1 Black: 5.7 Latino: 2.2

MOBERLY
Population: **13,783** Est. 1866
Cost of Living Index: **90.5**
Living in Poverty: **23.3%**
Race (% of population)
White: 81.1 Black: 9.1 Latino: 2.7

POPULATION CHANGE
1950-2020



TOTAL LAND AREA
Square miles



CITY	SIZE	POP
Rolla	**12.13**	**19,934**
Warrensburg	9.41	19,325
Republic	15.99	18,763
Farmington	**9.49**	**18,221**
Kirksville	14.39	17,547
Clayton	2.51	17,362
Sikeston	**17.14**	**16,289**
Poplar Bluff	**13.14**	**16,228**
Grain Valley	6.16	15,613
Carthage	11.91	15,573
Jackson	10.75	15,478
Lebanon	14.64	15,017
Washington	9.66	14,653
Moberly	**13.18**	**13,783**

INCOME
% of Population

	Poplar Bluff	Sikeston	Farmington	Sedalia	Moberly	Rolla	STATE
Total Households	6,261	6,836	6,205	8,915	4,935	8,222	2.45M
Less than $15,000	**24.0**	15.9	11.6	11.5	13.8	18.6	9.3
$15,000 to $24,999	**15.7**	9.9	12.7	11.2	11.7	14.3	8.0
$25,000 to $34,999	9.9	12.5	11.5	12.2	**16.8**	15.3	8.6
$35,000 to $49,999	10.7	12.7	14.7	16.5	**18.1**	8.2	12.3
$50,000 to $74,999	18.2	**20.8**	16.3	19.1	15.3	17.1	17.7
$75,000 to $99,999	8.2	9.8	14	11.5	10.9	12.8	**13.4**
$100,000 to $149,999	9.5	8.6	8.6	11.4	9.6	8.5	**16.1**
$150,000 or more	3.7	9.9	10.6	6.7	3.7	5.2	**14.5**
Median income ($)	37,448	47,464	49,317	48,518	39,332	37,685	65,920

EDUCATION
% of Attainment*

	Poplar Bluff	Sikeston	Farmington	Sedalia	Moberly	Rolla	STATE
	4.1 ▲1.2	**2.8** ▲0.4	**3.3** ▲0.4	**3.0** ▲0.4	**3.3** ▲0.7	**2.9** ▲0.4	**2.9** ▲0.4
High School graduate	81.9	87.9	88.0	85.1	88.1	**93.7**	91.3
No HS diploma	**18.1**	12.1	12.0	14.9	11.9	6.6	8.7
College, no degree	19.5	20.1	14.1	21.6	20.9	**25.6**	21.4
Associate's degree	7.3	6.1	9.0	**10.8**	7.8	6.1	8.2
Bachelor's degree	8.7	14.3	7.8	10.8	12.3	18.8	**19.2**
Graduate degree	4.5	9.5	7.3	6.2	3.5	**17.9**	12.0

**25 years and older*

Sources: US Census - 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates (S151); meric.mo.gov



HOUSING

	% OWNED	% VACANT	+/- SINCE 2010
Poplar Bluff	48.6%	12.2%	-5.9%
Sikeston	59.5	8.5	+0.5
Farmington	53.4	8.4	+13.9
Sedalia	57.5	12.8	+3.3
Moberly	53.0	12.7	+1.7
Rolla	40.4	12.3	+11.0
STATE	67.6	11.0	+2.7

Unemployment rate
2023 average percentage / change from 2022

JOBS

	FACTORY	HEALTH CARE	RETAIL	FOOD SERVICE
Poplar Bluff	15.5%	21.7	11.5	7.2
Sikeston	14.1	14.6	10.8	7.6
Farmington	15.2	19.2	9.8	8.2
Sedalia	26.1	16.8	11.8	6.8
Moberly	13.0	19.1	19.7	1.8
Rolla	9.7	13.6	12.5	6.5
STATE	13.7	14.7	9.7	3.9

Among the four largest rural cities within the Eighth Congressional District of Southeast Missouri - Rolla, Farmington, Sikeston and Poplar Bluff - two have seen continued gains in population while Poplar Bluff and Sikeston have seen declines. Rolla's population has increased 21.8% since 2000 as Farmington saw a 30.8% increase in residents over that same period. Sikeston, which surpassed Poplar Bluff in population during the 1980 census, has seen a 4.1% drop since 2000 as Poplar Bluff's population has dropped 2.5%.

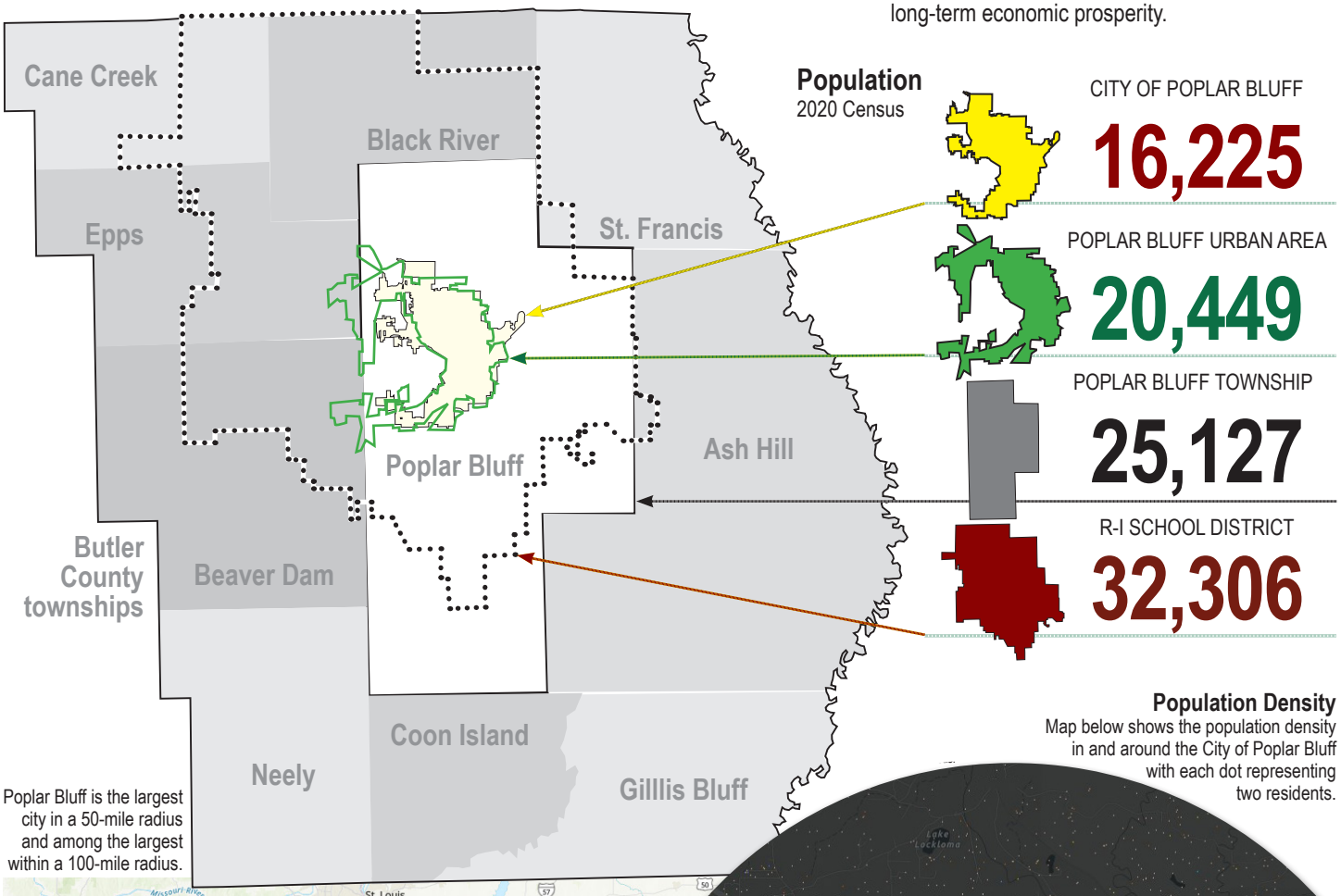
As expected, location is the biggest difference between the four cities. On Interstate 44, Rolla features Missouri S&T University and is 25 miles from Fort Leonard Wood military base. Farmington, a little over an hour drive south of St. Louis, is the largest community in the Lead Belt area but also features 19.2% of its population within an institution, such as the Southeast Missouri Mental Health Center and the Farmington Correctional Center (Farmington's population outside an institution is 14,713 while Poplar Bluff is 15,953).

Meanwhile, Sikeston has a nearly identical population as Poplar Bluff with only 66 more residents and both communities are at the crossroads of major highways. Sedalia (2020 population 21,725) and Moberly (13,783) also feature similar traits as Poplar Bluff and will be included for comparison.

The key factors that affect a city's population are the availability of good paying jobs, housing options, educational opportunities and cultural attractions geared toward younger adults.

DEFINING POPLAR BLUFF

While this plan is for the City of Poplar Bluff, there is also a Poplar Bluff Township and the greater Poplar Bluff community extends beyond even those borders. Within a six-mile radius of the City's center there are five different townships. Additionally, people may only work, shop or go to school in the City of Poplar Bluff, commuting from areas within Butler County and beyond as this is the largest community within a 50-mile region that includes southeast Missouri and northeast Arkansas. This plan extends beyond the city limits to proactively manage orderly growth, protect natural resources, and ensure efficient infrastructure expansion. Planning beyond borders mitigates regional traffic congestion, aligns land use, and secures future development areas for long-term economic prosperity.



Population
2020 Census

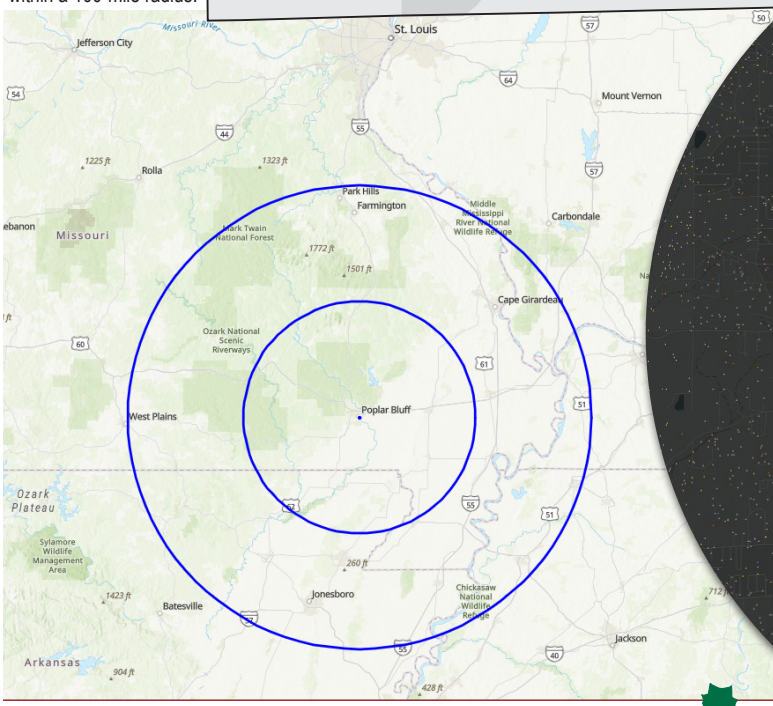
CITY OF POPLAR BLUFF
16,225

POPLAR BLUFF URBAN AREA
20,449

POPLAR BLUFF TOWNSHIP
25,127

R-I SCHOOL DISTRICT
32,306

Poplar Bluff is the largest city in a 50-mile radius and among the largest within a 100-mile radius.



Population Density
Map below shows the population density in and around the City of Poplar Bluff with each dot representing two residents.



2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CHAPTER 3





2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 3

Facilities & Services

Here is a summary of this chapter covering the City of Poplar Bluff's Facilities & Services:

This chapter evaluates the city's community infrastructure, municipal services, public safety networks, and external partner agencies. Poplar Bluff is a third-class city operating under a council-manager government system.

City Council: Features seven elected members serving staggered three-year terms.

City Manager: The administrative head of the city is appointed by the City Council.

City Clerk: Functions as the custodian of records, treasurer, and assistant city manager.

Operational Departments include the Finance Department, Human Resources and Planning.

Street Department: Maintains roughly 150 miles of roadways, manages snow removal, operates the municipal cemetery, and coordinates seasonal mosquito abatement.

Municipal Utilities: MU has operated as an independent entity since 1917, delivering power, water, and sewer services. Purchases wholesale power and operates a 33-megawatt generating station to serve over 9,400 customers. Pumps an average of 3.075 million gallons per day from the Black River. Recent mandates require MU to prioritize lead service line replacements and resolve sewer issues.

Solid Waste: While residents individually contract trash hauling, the city offers localized cleanup initiatives, such as "Buff Up The Bluff" events and monthly bulky trash pickups.

Public Safety: Public safety remains a critical focus area, with community feedback indicating varying perceptions of safety and enforcement efficacy.

Police: Operates out of a 27,000-square-foot facility opened in 2022 on Shelby Road. It features 43 sworn officers and handles nearly 50,000 annual incidents.

Fire: Deploys 28 trained personnel across three stations. It holds an ISO rating of four, which directly impacts local insurance costs.

Support Divisions: Animal Control and Code Enforcement currently manage heavy service volumes under the Planning Department.

Health Care Hub: Supported by the 250-bed Poplar Bluff Regional Medical Center and the John J. Pershing VA Medical Center.

Education, Culture, & Community Partners: The Poplar Bluff R-I School District serves 4,619 students, complemented by higher education opportunities at Three Rivers College.

• Regional growth is bolstered by partners like the Butler County government, the Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission.

• Local cultural assets include the 115,000-square-foot Black River Coliseum, the historic Rodgers Theater, the Margaret Harwell Art Museum, and the Poplar Bluff Library.

Recommendations

The chapter concludes with actionable recommendations to maximize municipal efficiency and support downtown revitalization:

New City Hall: Building a permanent downtown City Hall on Second Street is designated as the top priority to eliminate $33,000 in annual rental fees.

Staff Realignment: Proposes splitting the City Clerk and Treasurer duties with one being the Assistant City Manager. Improving the City's needs in communications with the public and information technology (IT) for all departments.

Fire Station Optimization: Establishing a new station on Shelby Road to improve ISO rating.

Unified Trash Contracting: Recommends securing a single, unified waste contract to reduce heavy truck traffic, minimizing wear and tear on city streets.

TOP PHOTO: The Poplar Bluff Police Department moved into a new 27,000-square foot headquarters, located at 911 Shelby Road, in 2022.



A Poplar Bluff Fire Department truck turns onto C Street responding to a fire in 2024.

Community facilities and infrastructure are essential in creating a high quality of life and ensuring the City is a safe and attractive place to live. These facilities include public entities and private organizations that offer services to improve the livability of the City including fire and police protection, arts and culture, education and health care services. Infrastructure includes stormwater, power, internet, sewer and water systems, which provide residents with critical services. Investing in community services can elevate the City's quality of life, community identity, and economic position.

While the City of Poplar Bluff provides some of these services – including police and fire protection, streets maintenance, municipal utilities, among others – many others are provided by entities other than the City. This is why it is critical that the City continues to maintain open communication and promote collaboration between agencies for efficient and quality services. This includes both within city limits and in nearby unincorporated Butler County.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The City of Poplar Bluff is a third class city under state law and has operated under an optional council-manager form of government since 1969.

The City Council consists of seven elected members, one from each of the five wards and two at-large members, each serving staggered three-year terms. Each year, members of the Council elect a mayor and a mayor pro tem. Council meetings are held on the first and third Mondays of the month.

The administrative head of the City is the City Manager who is appointed by the Council. The City Clerk maintains the records of the City, is the treasurer and the assistant city manager. Department heads oversee and lead their specific areas of City services. They include the airport, art museum, Black River Coliseum, finance, Fire Department, human resources, Municipal Utilities, Municipal Court, Parks and Recreation, Planning (including animal control, code enforcement and building inspection), Police Department and Street Department (including city streets, cemetery, motor pool and mosquito abatement).

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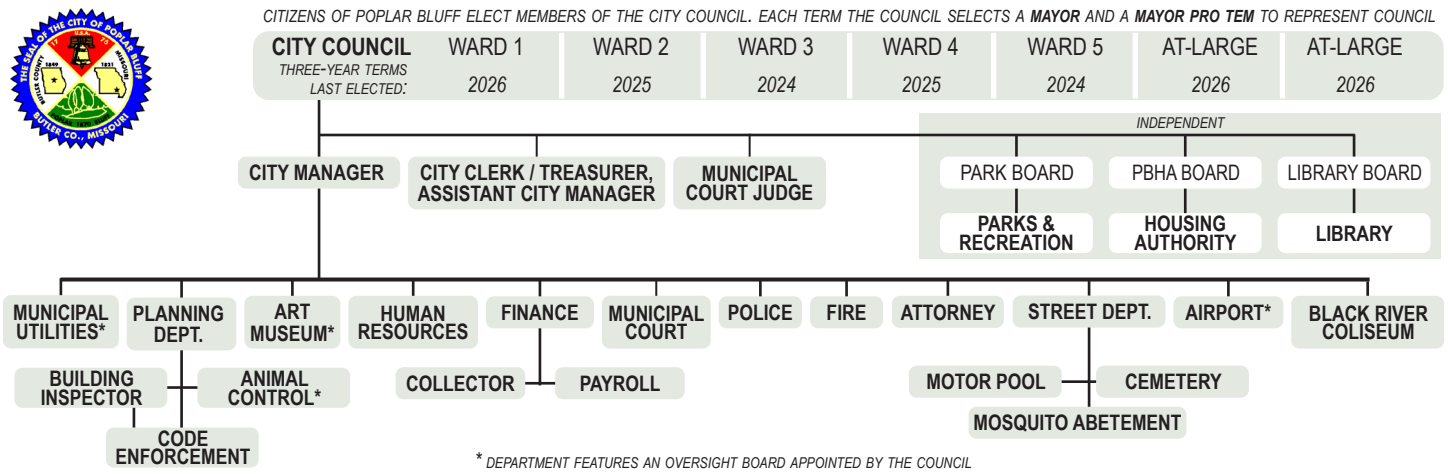
CITY SERVICES



Along with the department heads, there are boards and commissions that oversee city services. Each features members serving three-year terms and are appointed by the Council.

These include:

AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD - (Nine members, meets on final Wednesday) Oversees and advises on the operation of the Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport.

ANIMAL CONTROL BOARD - (Five members, meets on third Tuesday monthly) Oversees and advises on the operation of the Animal Control Department.

ARTS & MUSEUM ADVISORY BOARD - (Nine members, meets on second Thursday monthly) Oversees and advises on the operation of the Margaret Harwell Art Museum.

BLACK RIVER COLISEUM ADVISORY BOARD - (Seven members, meets on fourth Tuesday monthly) Oversees and advises on the operation of the Black River Coliseum.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT - (five members, meets on third Thursday monthly) Hears appeals by citizens from decisions made by the city planner, the building inspector or other city officials.

BUILDING STANDARDS BOARD - (seven members, meets on second Thursday monthly) Holds hearings relative to the mandatory demolition or repair and maintenance of buildings and structures required by the city's housing code.

DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD - (seven members, meets on second Tuesday every three months) Assists the City in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and to consider disability related requests.

poplarbluff-mo.gov

City Hall, located at 501 Vine Street, features administration offices, including finance, human resources, code enforcement, planning and inspections. The municipal court and city council chambers are located at the Black River Coliseum. Additional city offices located off-site include:

Animal Control	1500 Butler Street
Art Museum	421 N. Main Street
Black River Coliseum	301 S. 5th Street
Fire Department	300 S. Broadway St.
Municipal Airport	2903 State Highway B
Municipal Utilities	1902 Sunset Drive
Parks and Recreation	430 N. 2nd Street
Police Department	911 Shelby Road
Street Department	102 Johnson Drive

ELECTRICAL WIRING BOARD - (five members, meets on first Thursday monthly) Oversees the installation of electrical wiring and appliances through the licensing of electricians.

HEATING, VENTILATION, AIR CONDITIONING, REFRIGERATION (HVACR) ADVISORY BOARD - (seven members, meets on fourth Thursday monthly) Oversees the installation of heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration equipment through the licensing of installers and permitting of jobs.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION - (nine members, meets on second Wednesday monthly) Works to maintain the city's Certified Local Government status and works with the state Historic Preservation Office.

HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD - (five members) Oversees the operation of the Poplar Bluff Housing Authority.

LAND CLEARANCE FOR REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD - (five members, meets on second Thursday of year) Duties are to redevelop blighted or unsanitary areas for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial or for public uses in the City.

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES - (nine members, meets on first Monday monthly) Oversees and advises the operation of the Municipal Library.

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD – (nine members, meets on third Monday monthly) Has sole responsibility for the expenditure of money credited to the park fund and control of the city parks.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION - (12 members, meets on second and fourth Monday monthly) City ordinances give the Commission the responsibility for recommending the zoning of all real property within the corporate limits of the city.

PLUMBING BOARD – (five members, meets on third Thursday monthly) Oversees the installation of plumbing lines and appliances through the licensing of plumbers.

TREE ADVISORY BOARD – (five members, meets on third Tuesday monthly) Reviews and recommends rules and regulations on tree trimming, spraying, removal, planting and the protection of trees.

UTILITIES ADVISORY BOARD - (five members, meets on first Monday monthly) Oversees and advises the operation of Municipal Utilities.

⌂

Note: Two boards, the Fair Housing and Residential Housing Advisory, were dissolved in July 2026 by the City Council.

CITY SERVICES

CITY MANAGER

The City of Poplar Bluff has featured a City Manager to lead the administration since 1969. This position is responsible for managing the overall operations and administration of the city government and works with city council members, department heads, and other stakeholders to ensure efficient delivery of municipal services and to implement policies and programs that meet the needs of the community.

Since the previous Comprehensive Plan in 2008, there have been five different City Managers, including two during the project to update the Plan. Having a turnover rate of every four to five years heavily impacted the implementation of the previous plan's goals being met.



City Hall is currently located at 501 Vine Street. The City has rented space in this building since 2016.

CITY CLERK

The clerk serves as custodian of official records, administrative assistant the Mayor and City Council, oversees the codification of ordinances into the Municipal Code, sign all checks and performs internal control procedures as Treasurer, is responsible for compliance with the state's Sunshine Law, administers the oath of office, acts as the municipal election authority and conducts all municipal elections, updates the City's website and social media, processes City board applications, and process permits and licenses.

This position has also served as an assistant city manager.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The City's Finance Department features an accounting manager and payroll-accounting assistant who are responsible for the coordination of budgeting, accounts payable, accounting and payroll. The City Collector is responsible for the collection of all revenues for the City.

In 2025, the Collector processed 875 business licenses and issued 478 retail licenses, 31 tattoo licenses, 13 massage licenses and 200 fixed licenses. There were also 67 UTV permits issued and 128 bulky trash pickup requests.

HUMAN RESOURCES

This department is responsible for the advertising and collection of job applications, assists with candidate interviews, employee orientation, administers employee benefit programs and enrollments, coordinate LAGERS and Police & Fire Pension enrollment and reporting, administer 457 deferred compensation plan, processes and reconciles monthly benefit billing, coordinate annual Workers' Compensation audit and administer claims and reporting, organizes and assists with employee events, ensures compliance with federal and state labor laws and regulations, participate in union contract negotiations and grievance processes, works with supervisors on personnel issues, assists with payroll and personnel development schedule.

In 2025, the City processed 417 applications for 45 job postings along with 230 applications for Municipal Utilities, and reported a 31% turnover rate, up 18% from the previous year.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

The department administers 12 City boards, is designated as the Tree Board administrator, along with supervision of code enforcement and animal control, and to plan for and monitor the orderly growth of the City. This includes handling all aspects of zoning and subdivision development and working with many other departments. This department, which features three employees, is led by the City Planner who oversees the following:

Building Permits and Inspections The City issues permits which are required for any construction, alteration, repair or demolition. Before any activity can begin within the City, an application must be filled out so it can be reviewed before a permit is issued. The cost of the permit varies depending upon the nature of the project.

In 2025, the City issued 313 total permits with an estimated cost of the combined projects over $30 million. There were 1,309 fees collected for $124,928 for the year.

Code Enforcement This division is featured in the Public Safety section later in this chapter.

Skilled Contractor Licensing The City issues licenses for plumbing, electrical and HVACR.

→

CITY SERVICES

Stormwater Management Program The Planning Director is the the SEMA Floodplain Manager for the City. The purpose is to lessen or avoid hazards to people and property caused by uncontrolled stormwater runoff or by obstructions to drainage. Any entity within the City should apply to the Planning Department for approval of a stormwater management plan and obtain a permit before commencing any development activity. A Stormwater Management Plan was adopted in 2023.

Historic Preservation A commission established by city ordinance in 1988 helps identify historic, archaeological and architectural characteristics of Poplar Bluff, which represent elements of the city's cultural, social, economic and architectural history; to designate landmarks, historic places and districts and to educate the public on matters of preservation. A Poplar Bluff Historic Design Review Guidelines were created in 2014.

Animal Control This division is featured in the Public Safety section later in this chapter.

MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

The Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport, features a 5,000-foot runway, 47 hangers, five courtesy cars and maintains a 3,100-square foot terminal and 227 acres of grass with three employees.

Additional information and recommendations can be found in the Mobility chapter.

STREET DEPARTMENT

The Street Department provides several services for the City, including:

- Maintaining the City's transportation network
- Operating the City's cemetery
- Repairing and maintaining City's vehicles
- Providing mosquito abatement services

The department features 28 employees, including a superintendent and assistant, construction supervisor, motor pool supervisor, 16 full-time employees, five full-time mechanics, two full-time cemetery employees and one part-time mosquito abatement driver. In 2004 the department featured 39 employees, down from 43 in 1983.

The department maintains approximately 150 miles of road, including repairs and striping, along with maintenance on some City buildings. During winter weather events, it uses 13 pieces of equipment to remove snow and when there are flooding events the crew must set up flood gates and a floodwall, keeping 900 sandbags at the ready for major flooding. During the summer the crew mows 228 acres of city-owned lots, including flood buyouts, river levees and right-of-ways, while in the fall it handles the leaf pickup from open ditches, and maintains the city yard waste and leaf disposal site located on County Road 604. The motor pool repair and maintain every piece of equipment for the City, from weed eaters to fire trucks while the cemetery staff maintains 90 acres, coordinating burials with funeral homes, selling plots and assisting with the location of markers. The mosquito abatement programs runs from Memorial Day through September and uses 540 gallons of spray annually.

Additional information and recommendations can be found in the Mobility chapter.



Municipal Utilities features an office building, located at 1877 Sunset along with the operations building located at 2901 Barron Road (pictured).

MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

pbutilities.com

This department has provided water, sewer and electric services to citizens of Poplar Bluff since 1917 as a separate entity from the City and currently features 87 employees.

Electric Department MU purchases wholesale power from Southwest Power Administration, Grand River Dam Authority and Plum Point Generating Station to provide the power needs of the community. MU also owns a 33 megawatt generating station that provides peak power needs and can produce access power to be sold to the open market when advantageous. In 2025, there were 9,412 customers, 82% were residential but those accounted for 29% of total revenues while 37% of revenues came from commercial customers and a quarter of revenues were from selling power.

Water Department MU obtains water from the Black River, which is fed by numerous springs throughout the drainage area and continuous release from the Clearwater Reservoir that was completed in 1948 and controlled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District to control flooding. Storage is provided at the City's three elevated storage tanks – Bacon Park (1.5 million gallons), Barron Road (500,000), Vandover Road (500,000) and Industrial Park (250,000) – and one ground storage tank – Alice Street (1.5 million) – along with clearwells at the water treatment plant (500,000) with a total capacity of 4,750,000 gallons and an average pumping capacity of 6.2 million gallons per day (MGD). The City uses approximately 3.075 million gallons per day. In 2025, there were 7,568 customers, 85% were residential that accounted for 66% of all revenues.

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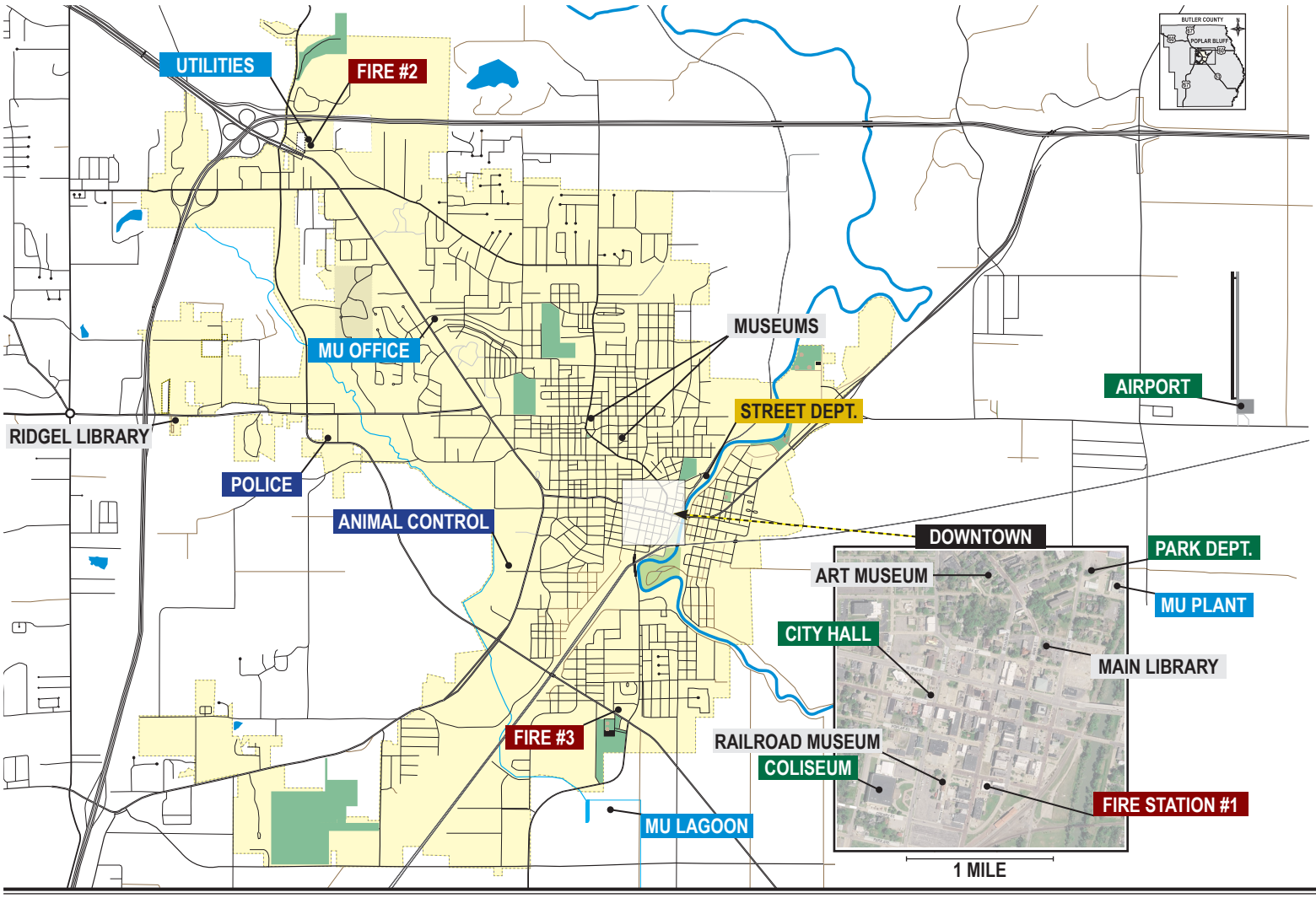
CITY SERVICES



Sanitary Sewer Department The City's sewer system features a four cell aerated lagoon treatment plant with a 2,900,000 gallon per day capacity. Treated water is released into Cravens Ditch, a tributary of the Black River. Improvements to the wastewater treatment were completed in 2016. There were 9,412 customers in 2025, 65% of which were residential that accounted for 57% of total revenues.

Municipal Utilities has completed significant upgrades to the treatment system, parts of the distribution system and water storage structures throughout the City. The focus now is on upgrading the water distribution system to eliminate any possible contamination sources from piping that is over a century old. In 2025, MU budgeted $300,000 for lead service line replacement, which has been mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency and is an issue for every water system in the United States. It also budgeted $1.1 million for sewer improvements that include inflow and infiltration issues, which can increase expenses. The City should continue to make improvements to the water and sewer systems, replacing aging lines to comply with state and federal regulations but also to prevent future issues.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The City requires each individual residence and business to have trash removal service. However, each is responsible for contracting their own trash removal services. Currently, waste hauling is provided by a variety of contractors that all adhere to various pick-up schedules. A recycling center in the Industrial Park, operated by the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission, provides residents a place to drop off recyclable items.

The City provides the following services:

Buff Up The Bluff The City has held these events since 1990, mostly during a spring Saturday and also during a fall Saturday, to promote cleaning the city of trash by providing dumpsters for residents to drop off trash or yard waste.

Yard Waste Disposal The City allows residents to discard garden and yard waste at a site on County Road 604 for four hours on Mondays and Thursdays and the second and fourth Saturdays.

Bulky Trash Pick-Up The City has provided this program since 2021, picking up large items such as large appliances and furniture, on the second Tuesday of the month. Residents purchase a $10 tag per item, up to four items, plus $5 charge per tire, but may not include construction materials or small household trash.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is a key component of providing an attractive, livable community with a high quality of life. When asked "How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?" during the PB25 online survey, 16.4% of respondents said unsafe f\ or very unsafe while another 19.2% were neutral. A third of those surveyed said that public safety was a weakness with 36.9% not sure. Comprehensive Plans, however, are not intended to provide direction on public safety. A more focused approach with regional public safety providers and partnering agencies, should be completed to form a regional public safety plan.



Station 1 at 300 S. Broadway in downtown Poplar Bluff has served as home to the Poplar Bluff Fire Department since 1979 when the department moved across the street.

POLICE

pbpolice.org

The Poplar Bluff Police Department, founded in 1883, is a full-service department featuring 43 sworn officers, eight telecommunication officers and two civilian employees. The department provides services to the entire City of Poplar Bluff and is led by the Chief of Police and a Deputy Chief. The Department's mission is preserving the public safety of all citizens of Poplar Bluff.

The Department is broken into two divisions – patrol and administrative. The patrol division is the largest and most visible component of the Department, which is charged with protecting the health, safety and welfare of the community. The division responds to all calls from the public and is responsible for handling a variety of duties including emergency response, traffic accident investigation, traffic enforcement and crime investigation. Patrol officers work closely with members of the community to ensure a safe, livable environment by providing a high level of visibility in order to minimize conditions or situations that may foster criminal activity. Patrol officers are the first responders to all major crimes and other emergencies and are the front line of defense for the City. Officers provide a high level of visibility in order to minimize situations that may jeopardize the safety of community members and criminal activity with at least five on duty at all times. School Resource Officers (SRO), Narcotics, Cyber Crimes, and Evidence also fall under the patrol division.

The administrative division provides resources that maximizes the training and safety of department personnel while providing access to the latest police protection technology and telecommunications.

Animal Control and Code Enforcement operate as separate departments within the City but work with the Police Department.

Poplar Bluff operates the police department on a quality of life basis, which means that additional services and resources are applied as needed beyond baseline services to address evolving problems and issues. This approach includes a four minute response time for all calls and a two minute response time for "hot calls."

A new 27,000-square foot police station at 911 Shelby Road featuring a 911 dispatch center, evidence storage facility, processing and holding facility, vehicle maintenance center, multi-purpose training room and administrative offices opened in 2022.

There were nearly 50,000 incidents that the department responded to in 2025. Of those, 18% were security checks while an additional 2% were responding to alarms, and 3%, a total of 1,559, were wellness checks. Officers made 3,749 traffic stops, an average of 10.2 per day, responded to 1,089 vehicle accidents – nearly three a day – while 103 vehicles were reported stolen. There were 8,197 reports of stealing and 240 domestic dispute calls while the other half of the incident calls were more rare.

The 911 Dispatch Center received 66,542 calls in 2025, including 12,467 emergencies, while dispatchers performed other duties including 953 warrants entered, 904 criminal histories and 1,285 probation and parole searches.

FIRE

The Poplar Bluff Fire Department provides fire protection, hazardous material response, search and rescue, including vehicle extrication, within the city limits. The Department features 28 trained personnel, including a fire chief, three captains and 24 firefighters. There are three stations at the following locations:

- Station No. 1 / Headquarters at 300 S. Broadway (downtown);
- Station No. 2 at 2777 Barron Road (north);
- Station No. 3 at 507 Highway 53 (south).

The department currently has an Insurance Service Officer (ISO) rating of four on a scale of 1-10 with one being superior. ISO assesses fire departments and the communities' fire protection capabilities, or Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS). This is determined by a community's emergency communication, staffing, training, operational capabilities, water supply and risk reduction, including prevention programs and code enforcement. Communities with low ratings have lower insurance costs than communities with higher ratings. The department would have to expand in order to improve the rating.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

In 2025, the department answered 885 calls, including 403 fires, of those 70 were structure fires, 86 agency assists, 67 vehicle accidents, 104 hazardous calls while 21% of calls fell into an "other" category that included controlled burns, recuses, law enforcement support or non emergency calls. The department also provides fire prevention and safety programs, free smoke detectors through donations, supervises fire drills and provides safety checks for schools and businesses, and assists other departments with manpower and specialized equipment.

The department purchased three new trucks in the last two years, including a ladder truck and two pumper trucks.

MUNICIPAL COURT

The Municipal Court is a division of the Circuit Court of Butler County, Missouri. Cases in Municipal Court involve alleged violations of city laws. This division features a Municipal Court Judge, two clerks and a City Attorney.

In 2025, there were 2,741 cases, including 1,666 traffic, 1,065 non-traffic ordinance, 35 bench trials, seven of which were traffic-related citations and 28 for non-traffic ordinance violations.

ANIMAL CONTROL

The City's animal control department is under the Planning Department supervision and features two full-time employees and one part-time shelter employee. It is located at 1500 Butler Street, featuring a 3,600-square foot facility that can hold approximately 26 dogs and 10 cats at one time.

Animal Control impounded 489 animals in 2025 with 44 summonses issued. There were 1,733 visitors to the shelter with 202 adoptions and 105 animals redeemed by the owners while 182 animals were transferred to rescue shelters.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

This department is under the Planning Department supervision and features two full-time employees.

In 2025 the department issued 2,734 notices of violation with 2,110 follow-up inspections in 2025. There were 665 summons issued, six vehicles impounded and 143 illegal signs collected. In all, there were 5,762 calls to Code Enforcement.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The City is responsible for maintaining an Emergency Response Plan and works with the County's Emergency Manager in preparing plans and their execution in times of need. Being the hub of a 50-mile region, the City has an important role in the response to any emergency. The City participated in the creation and approved the latest version of the Butler County FEMA Approved Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2023. The natural hazards identified as most likely to impact Butler County and Poplar Bluff include flooding, severe weather, earthquakes and wildfires.

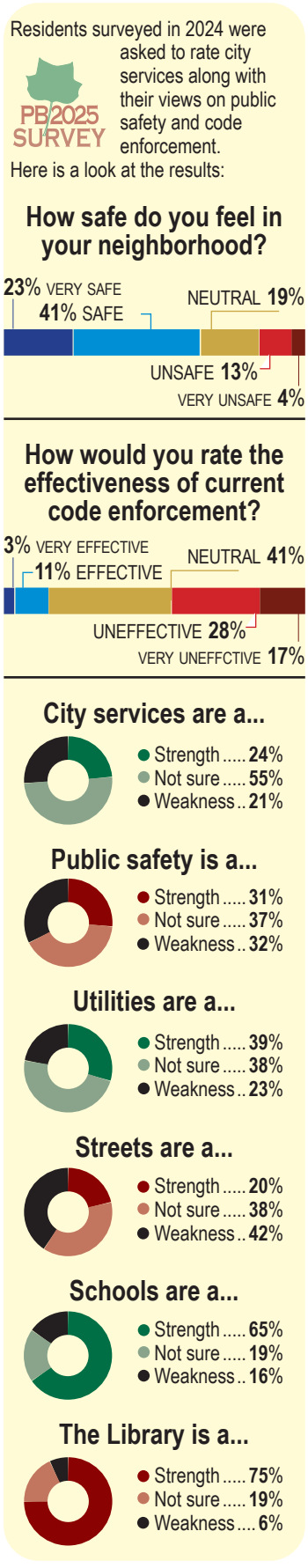
The current average of flash flood events occurring in Butler County is two per year while 10 of the top 25 flooding events on Black River have occurred since 2000, including three of the top four crests on record. There have been two 1-in-1,000-year rain events in the region over the last decade causing record-breaking flooding on the Current River to the west in and Black River north of Clearwater Lake.

Weather also includes thunderstorms, tornadoes, high winds, lightning, hail, freezing rain, snow and extreme temperatures. An EF-3 tornado blew through the City on March 14, 2025, killing one, injuring several and damaging approximately 300 structures. The City has experienced 16 snowfalls of 7 inches or more in a single day but none since 2015. The record of 20 inches was set January 17, 1978, one of just four days with 10 or more inches.

The overall average annual temperature is 58° with hot and humid summers and cold, wet winters. Temperatures generally range between 26° and 90° during the year but extreme conditions can occur resulting in the opening of warming or cooler shelters.

Butler County is on the western edge of the New Madrid Seismic Zone and the effects of a large quake will impact the entire area. There is an approximately 2% chance of experiencing an earthquake each year, based on prior occurrences, and the U.S. Geological Survey database states there is a 7-10% chance of a major earthquake occurring in the next 50 years.

Over the past 20 years, Butler County has averaged 82 wildfires per year with as many as 165 in 2022. A large portion of Butler County features areas of the Mark Twain National Forest and the City of Poplar Bluff is identified as a Wildland/Urban Interface which makes the City at greater risk for loss due to wildfire activity.



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



The Butler County Courthouse, located at 100 North Main in Poplar Bluff, was built in 1928 after the previous building on the site was damaged by a tornado the previous year.

Poplar Bluff is more than just the services provided by the City in creating a high quality of life and an attractive place to live. When asked, "This is a great place to live?" during the PB25 survey, 40% of respondents agreed (compared to 64% in 2007) while a third, 33%, were neutral (up from 26% in 2007). More people thought "city services" were a strength (24%) than a weakness (21%) but 55% were not sure. Among the most agreed upon strengths of Poplar Bluff was the Library (76%), schools (65%) and health care (58%) while among the weakest were arts and culture (54%).

These partners work with the City to help better the community.

BUTLER COUNTY

butlercountymo.com

The County Courthouse, built in 1928, is located at 100 North Main Street in Poplar Bluff. Three commissioners, the presiding commissioner and one each from the eastern and western districts, oversee the administration of the county. The clerk manages official county records, processes business licenses, and acts as the primary election authority for the county. The assessor determines the value of all real estate and personal property within the county while the collector collects the taxes and distributes the funds. The treasurer is the county's chief banker while the recorder keeps permanent public records, such as property deeds, mortgages, and issues marriage licenses. The circuit clerk runs the court while the public administrator serves as the legally appointed guardian or conservator for individuals.

BUTLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

bcsheriff.com

The Butler County Sheriff's Department provides public safety for county residents and operates the county jail, located at the Butler County Justice Center at 200 Phillip Kearbey Blvd. in Poplar Bluff, which opened in 1998 with a capacity of 150 inmates. Along with the Sheriff, which is elected every four years, the department features a Captain, Chief Deputy, Investigators (5), Evidence Tech / Investigator (1), Part-time investigator (1), Sergeants (3), Corporals (2), Road Officers (9), Process Server (1), Bailiff (1), SRO (1), Reserve officers (3), Corrections staff (19), Communication staff (9) and support staff (8).

The Butler County Coroner office is located at 614 Lindsay Street in Poplar Bluff.

The Butler County Prosecuting Attorney office is located at 106 S. 2nd Street.

POPLAR BLUFF AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

poplarbluffchamber.org

The Chamber serves as the tourism, industrial and commercial recruitment partner of the City. Its mission is "to provide leadership and service to promote economic growth and industrial development to the greater Poplar Bluff area. (Leadership, Economic Development, Education, Advocacy, Networking and Tourism)."

Poplar Bluff Industries is the Economic Development Authority (EDA) for the City of Poplar Bluff and Butler County Missouri. PBI started in 1947 to develop what is now the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERS

POPLAR BLUFF HOUSING AUTHORITY

pbhousing.org

The Housing Authority provides quality, safe and affordable income-based housing with locations that include the Twin Towers, Hillcrest and Wilson buildings as well as apartments at Karen West, Roxie Street, Peach Street and State Street. There were 572 units that housed 302 seniors along with 365 adults and 436 children in 2024. Its governing board is appointed by the City Council. Its mission is to "assist low income households through the provision of decent, safe and affordable housing, to create partnerships of awareness with the City, Community and local organizations, to improve the quality of life, promote self-sufficiency and economic vitality, ensure fair housing, and to encourage affordable housing opportunities for persons of low to moderate income."

OZARK FOOTHILLS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ofrpc.org

The Commission covers a five-county area and, "serves as a guide to local units of government in accomplishing a coordinated and efficient development of the region and the promotion of its public health, safety, general welfare, and economic prosperity in accordance with the area's existing and future needs." It prepares plans and grant applications for implementation of various capital improvements and assists county and municipal government in administration of grants-in-aid.It also oversees the following programs:

Ozark Foothills Business Incubator – Located in the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park, this facility assists business startup and expansion with 10 industrial spaces ranging in size from 2,300 to 5,000 square feet.

Ripley County Public Housing Agency – Provides affordable housing in a five-county region, including Butler County, with various programs that tops $1 million annually in rental assistance.

Ozark Foothills Recycling Center – Located in the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park, the center provides recycling and resource recovery efforts for residents and businesses in the five-county region served by the Planning Commission.

SOUTHEAST MISSOURI TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

ridesmts.org

SMTS is a non-government, non-profit general public passenger transportation service. It is governed by a board of directors and administered by a full-time executive director. Based in Cape Girardeau, it services 21 counties in Southeast Missouri, including Butler County with a facility in Poplar Bluff (2510 Kanell Blvd.).

NUTRITION CENTER / FOOD PANTRY

The Northside Nutrition Center, located at 508 Bartlett Street in Poplar Bluff, provides meals for home-bound residents and meals to the public. It is also one of several food pantries and soup kitchens located in Butler County. They include: (Poplar Bluff unless noted)

- Bread Shed / Breaking Bread, 203 North D Street
- Broseley Senior Center, 2470 County Road 650, Broseley.
- Feed & Seed Food Pantry, 703 Franklin Street
- Holy Cross Episcopal Church, 420 N. Main Street
- Lifeline Church Pantry, 5272 Highway 51, Fisk
- Neelyville Food Pantry, 154 Haynes Street, Neelyville.
- Qulin Food Pantry, 475 2nd Street, Qulin
- Qulin Nutrition Center, 235 2nd Street, Qulin
- Shepherd Fold Church, 1949 County Road 272, Neelyville
- St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, 215A Broadway
- The Timothy Foundation, 445 Proctor Drive
- United Gospel Rescue Mission Pantry, 421 West Pine
- United Gospel Rescue Mission Soup Kitchen, 400 S. Broadway.

TEMPORARY SHELTER

THE UNITED GOSPEL RESCUE MISSION provides safe shelter for homeless men since 1966, averaging 7,000 nights per year, at 400 South Broadway, along with meals, food boxes, clothing, household goods, among other assistance, and operates a thrift store at 421 West Pine Street.

HAVEN HOUSE of Poplar Bluff provides shelter, advocacy and outreach services for sexual assault or domestic violence victims and their children for more than 40 years. It features 31 beds for those seeking shelter.

HEALTH CARE

Poplar Bluff has been a regional hub for health care since 1950 when the John J Pershing Veterans Administration hospital opened on what was then the outskirts of town. Nearly a quarter, 22%, of jobs in Poplar Bluff fall in the health care and social assistance sector with two of the top five employers being Poplar Bluff Medical Center and the VA.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

butlercountyhealth.org

The Butler County Health Department was created in 1948 when county residents approved the establishment of a property tax to support public health activities. Public efforts are designed to prevent illness, prolong life and improve and protect the health of all the people in our community. Butler County ranked 108 out of 115 Missouri counties on health outcomes in 2024 according to the Department's annual report.

POPLAR BLUFF REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

pbrmc.com

PBRMC is an acute care hospital with 250 beds located at 3100 Oak Grove in Poplar Bluff. The 425,000-square-foot facility opened in January 2013 while the previous location at 2620 North Westwood, now PBRMC-Westwood, opened in 1980. The hospital, which started as Lucy Lee Hospital, celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2025.

JOHN J PERSHING VA MEDICAL CENTER

va.gov/poplar-bluff-health-care/

Since 1950, this Veterans' Administration hospital has provided care to the region's veterans. It features 10 general medicine beds and 40 extended care beds while offering a wide range of health, support and facility services on a 30-acre site at 1500 North Westwood in Poplar Bluff.

EDUCATION

Education is another key component of providing an attractive, livable community with a high quality of life. When asked "This is a great place to raise children?" during the PB25 survey, 34% of respondents agreed (compared to 58% in 2007) while nearly a third, 31%, were neutral (up from 29% in 2007). Schools, however, were also viewed as a strength to the community among 65% of respondents, while youth services were seen as a weakness by 47%.



Poplar Bluff High School, located at 3209 Oak Grove Road, opened in 2016 after the campus was expanded. (Poplar Bluff R-I Schol District photo)

POPLAR BLUFF R-I SCHOOL DISTRICT

pbmules.com

The district serves Poplar Bluff and portions of Butler County featuring a total enrollment of 4,619 for the 2024-2025 school year. A seven-person school board is elected for three-year terms. The district features an early childhood center, kindergarten center, four elementary schools, middle school for grades 4-6, junior high for grades 7-8, high school for grades 9-12, Technical Career Center (grades 10-12) and alternative school.

- R-1 School District (administration) is located at 1110 North Westwood.
- Poplar Bluff Senior High School (grades 10-12) is located at 3209 Oak Grove Road.
- Poplar Bluff Junior High School (grades 7-8) is located at 550 North Westwood.
- Poplar Bluff Middle School (grades 4-6) is located at 1300 Victory Lane.
- Eugene Field Elementary (grades 1-3) is located at 711 Nickey Street.
- Lake Road Elementary (grades 1-6) is located at 986 Highway AA.
- Oak Grove Elementary (grades 1-3) is located at 3297 Oak Grove Road.
- O'Neal Elementary (grades 1-3) is located at 2300 Baugh Lane.
- Kindergarten Center is located at 1200 Camp Road.
- Early Childhood Center is located at 1202 Camp Road.
- Poplar Bluff Technical Career Center (grades 10-12) is located at 3203 Oak Grove Road.
- Mark Twain School is located at 1235 North Main Street.

THREE RIVERS COLLEGE

trcc.edu

Founded in 1966, this public, two-year institution in Poplar Bluff provides higher education opportunities to earn associate degrees and certificates. During the Fall 2025 semester it had an enrollment of 2,654 students with 27,115.5 college credit hours taken. The college moved to its present location at 2080 Three Rivers Boulevard, a 70-acre campus, in 1979.

OTHER SCHOOLS / PROGRAMS

SHADY GROVE STATE SCHOOL dese.mo.gov - Located at 2400 High Street, this Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled ensures students learn authentic skills in a safe environment to be productive and integrated into their home, community, leisure and work.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC SCHOOL sacredheartpb.com - This parish school has served Poplar Bluff since 1916 and features students in grades preschool through sixth. It is located at 111 North 8th Street.

WESTWOOD BAPTIST ACADEMY wbapb.com - Located at 419 County Road 5231, this private school for grades four through 12 opened in 2003. It featured 230 students during the 2023-24 school year.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF THE HEARTLAND pgcpb.org - Offers an after school and summer program that serves students ages 6-17 at its location at 1306 Victory Lane. A 31,000-square foot Workforce Development Regional Teen Center is being built on the campus of the Poplar Bluff High School to serve 20 area high schools.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE COUNCIL thecrc.org - The CRC exists to promote coordination and cooperation between social services providers, churches, the business community and the educational system, in order to empower individuals to become more self-reliant, responsible and resourceful.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION extension.missouri.edu - The University of Missouri engages with communities across the state through programs and classes with staff located at 614 Lindsay Ave. Ste. 3.

MERS GOODWILL EXCEL CENTER excel.mersgoodwill.org - A tuition-free school that gives adults the opportunity to earn a high school diploma, it is located at 2233 North Westwood.

BLACK RIVER BEAUTY ACADEMY blackriverbeautyacademy.com - Cosmetology and barber school located at 445 South 2nd Street.

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CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT



LEFT: The Black River Coliseum located at 301 South Fifth Street opened in 1999 as an entertainment and recreation venue. It has also served as an emergency shelter and home to the city council chambers and municipal court.

BELOW: The Poplar Bluff Library, located at 318 North Main, was built in 1936 but it started in 1916 and has served the community since.

Entertainment, arts and culture are another component of providing an attractive, livable community with a high quality of life, but 54% of respondents to the PB25 survey said that arts and culture was a weakness of the community. While entertainment venues mostly fall within the private sector, the City of Poplar Bluff also provides parks and recreation services, which are discussed in another chapter, and owns some historical properties that are maintained by nonprofit civic groups.

BLACK RIVER COLISEUM

blackrivercoliseum.com

The 115,000-square-foot multi-purpose center was built in 1999 and features a seating capacity of 4,400. Located at 301 South 5th Street in downtown Poplar Bluff, it hosts concerts, conventions, banquets, sporting events and many other community events while also serving as an emergency shelter in times of need. It currently hosts the Municipal Court and Council Chambers in one of several meeting rooms with access from Cedar Street.



The main lobby was renovated in 2024 and features a ticket booth, administrative office and meeting rooms. The main arena features approximately 22,270 square feet of open space that can fit up to three full-sized basketball courts or a stage up to approximately 2,080-square feet with floor seating. The lower seating area featuring 14 sections of pull-out chair-backed bleachers seats while the upper fixed seating area has 22 sections of seating. There are two concession areas and three large restrooms accessible for the arena.

An additional fitness center is located on the north side of the building. It features an indoor swimming pool with a 25-yard, six-lane area for swimming, fitness rooms and several locker rooms. Access to the main arena provides a walking track.

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CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT

In front of the Coliseum along Fifth Street is a veteran's memorial wall. There are approximately 40 parking spots, including handicap spots, in the lot west of Fifth Street, with parking in the lot east of Fifth Street that is shared with the Frisco Depot and Farmer's Market, and in the lot south of Cherry Street along with additional parking along South Broadway, Cedar and Sixth streets and a gravel lot at the corner of Cherry and Fifth.

There are two full-time and six to nine part-time employees on the arena side and one full-time manager and nine to 11 part-time employees on the fitness side.

In 2025, the building featured 208 events with 94 set-up/teardowns while the recreation side featured 7,829 daily passes for swimming, 689 memberships, including 178 seniors, 327 birthday parties and 251 water aerobic classes held.

POPLAR BLUFF LIBRARY

poplarbluff.org

The library started in 1915 and has served the community at 318 Main Street since 1936 with approximately 79,000 visitors in 2024. The building was expanded in 1998 and 2008 while the Ridgel Branch, named for Dr. Gus T. Ridgel, at 3398 Kanell, opened in 2019. A nine-member board appointed by the City Council oversees the Municipal Library District which is funded by a quarter cent sales tax passed in 2012.

MARGARET HARWELL ART MUSEUM

mham.org

The City owns and operates an art museum, located at 421 North Main Street in the Moore-Dalton home which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Since it opened in November 1981, the museum has hosted works from artists both regionally and who have earned national and international praise. It is one of only five city-owned art museums in the state and sees approximately 14,000 visitors annually, hosting exhibits, festivals and special events. Art classes are also held here for children and adults.

HISTORY MUSEUM

pbmuseum.org

Located at 1010 North Main Street, it features exhibits on the history of Butler County and Poplar Bluff. The building itself is owned by the City and is on the National Register of Historic Places as the former Mark Twain School built in 1910. A group of citizen volunteers help, "preserve and display artifacts from Poplar Bluff and Butler County, Missouri history for the enjoyment of future generations." It features the Butler County Historical Society, Kanell Hall Veterans Museum, Poplar Bluff Sports Hall of Fame and exhibits including a number of topics.

WHEATLEY HISTORICAL SITE

The school, which opened in 1901 and named for poet Phillis Wheatley Peters, was the center of education for Black students in Poplar Bluff until the school district integrated in 1968. It remained a school until 2001 when the historic site located at 921 Garfield Street, was given to the City. It now has a park operated by the Park Department, and serves as a community center and Black History Museum cared for by a group of citizen volunteers.

FRISCO DEPOT



The Poplar Bluff Museum is located at 1010 North Main in the historic Mark Twain School.

The only remaining Spanish-style Frisco depot in Missouri, this historic building opened in 1928 and is owned by the City and maintained by a nonprofit volunteer group. It currently houses the Mo-Ark Regional Railroad Museum featuring several exhibits and includes a pair of caboose cars, a mail service car, along with a model train layout and hobby shop.

RODGERS THEATER

rodgerstheatre.org

The 1,100-seat movie palace opened in 1949 and served the community for a half century. Now the historic building, which is owned by the County, hosts concerts and other shows. A group of citizens, Rodgers Theatre, Inc., volunteers to "Restore the Rodgers" to its former glory while keeping it as a viable entertainment venue for the community.

TINNIN FINE ARTS CENTER

trcc.edu/tinnin

The Tinnin Fine Arts Center, located on the Three Rivers College campus at 2080 Three Rivers Boulevard, features a 500-seat theater, an art gallery, studio spaces, classrooms and faculty offices. Built in 1997, it provides a venue for community-sponsored conferences, lectures, political debates, concerts and plays performed by students and professional groups.

IRON MOUNTAIN DEPOT

ironmountaindepot.org

Built in 1910 by the St. Louis Iron Mountain and Southern Railway, the depot still serves Poplar Bluff as a passenger station – Amtrak's Texas Eagle stops there – but the historic building itself is closed. A group of citizens organized the Poplar Bluff Historic Depot Restoration Corporation to purchase it in 2003 and work on restoring the building.

MEDIA

The Daily American Republic newspaper (darews.com) has provided local news coverage for Butler County and the surrounding area since 1869.

Radio stations located in Poplar Bluff include KAHR (96.7 FM), KJEZ (95.5 FM), KLID (1340 AM), KLUE (103.5 FM), KLUH (91.7 FM), KOKS (89.5 FM), KPBM (101.9 FM), KPBR (90.3 FM), KPPL (92.5 FM), KWOC (930 AM), KYHO (106.9 FM).

RECOMMENDATIONS



The Black River Coliseum has been home to the City Council chambers and municipal court since the previous City Hall was closed in 2015 with an entrance on Cedar Street.

Perhaps no issue has plagued the city more than the location of City Hall for the better part of 60 years and it has been twice as long since Poplar Bluff last built a new home for its city services.

The current location at 501 Vine Street has been leased for $33,000 annually since the fall of 2016 when administrative offices moved there. The municipal court and council chambers were moved to the Black River Coliseum while the police department was located in another leased building from the spring of 2015 until a new location was built and opened in 2022.

The previous location on Oak Street, which was the McPheeters Clinic/Lucy Lee Hospital, was purchased in 1989 with departments, including police, moving there in 1990. Plans to move out of the building started in 2014 and the building was demolished in 2024.

Poplar Bluff's first city hall, located in the 300 block of South Broadway, was built in 1902 and served the city until a temporary location a block north was used starting in 1982. Plans to replace the aging building started when the old Post Office Building was considered as a replacement after the City purchased it in 1967 for $22,000 but a bond issue to raise an additional $42,000 to fix the building for a city hall failed a year later. The old Post Office Building, now the site of a parking lot, was torn down in 1975, the same year a plan called for a new fire station on Broadway, the current home of Station No. 1, along with two buildings for the police and city administration at what now is the parking lot between Fifth and Moran streets, which would have torn down the now historically protected Frisco Depot.

When asked, "What amenities could be improved?" during the PB25 online survey, 55% of respondents chose the Community Center option, which ranked second behind Parks and Recreation. A new city hall was mentioned only once among the 2,220 comments made during the survey, but the statement "Downtown should be restored" was among the most agreed upon in the survey with 48% absolutely agreeing and another 30% agreeing (compared to 36% and 35% in 2007).

Completing the city hall project should be the top priority over the next few years. The site on Second Street is nearly cleared with only the building at the south end of the lot along Pine Street still standing. The project should consider following the historic downtown guidelines and create a building that will serve the community for many years with the ability to grow and be flexible to the needs of the City.

The cost of building a new city hall, along with other funding commitments, has slowed the project and proposals to the City to take over other properties will continue until it is settled. One such proposal showed the community's desire to keep city hall downtown. Meanwhile, the delay will end up costing the City half a million dollars in rental fees with that amount increasing by $33,000 each year.

If a new building is out of reach, the City will have to consider other options. However, none will be cheap.

Removing the recreation side of the Black River Coliseum and turning the building's focus to more of a convention center and meeting place, keeping the municipal court here and relocating city offices to the current recreation side, could be an alternative for a city hall project. Removing the pool, should a new one be built as outlined in the Parks Master Plan, may help improve maintenance issues associated with the extra humidity on that side of the building. It could also provide another meeting area option so that one could select a small room, the lobby, the large main arena or a new room that is approximately 9,700 square feet. City offices would occupy the current recreation hallway with a dedication entrance from the attached parking lot. This option still features a costly renovation and does not give the downtown the desired redevelopment that is needed to spur growth.

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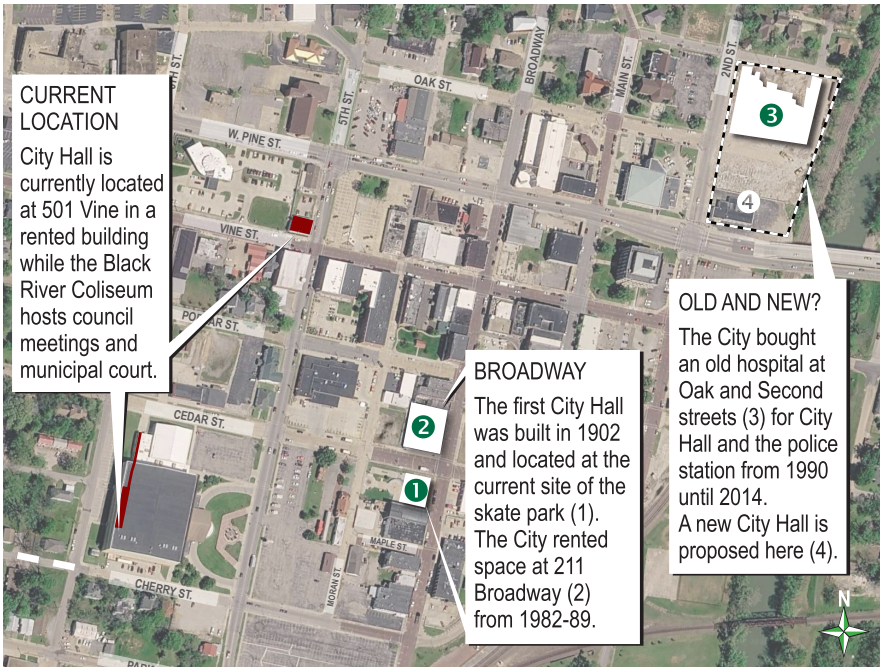
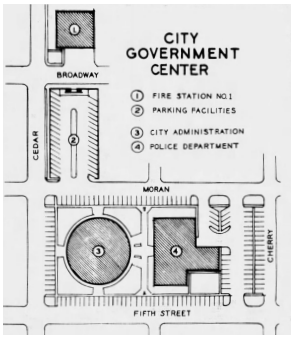
RECOMMENDATIONS

CITY HALL HISTORY





Previous plans to replace the original city hall (below), included using the old post office building, but voters rejected a bond issue in 1968 and the building was eventually torn down for a parking garage. A plan in 1974 (left) would have torn down the Frisco Depot for a complex. Only the fire station was built and the depot became the police station



Butler County Historical Society

Renovating a downtown building is also an expensive option, however, the benefits of saving a historic building could spur development in the area.

The City could use the Second Street location for another development, selling it to a developer or another agency. For example, a new county courthouse or office space could be built here or a new U.S. Post Office, which is rented by the federal government. The current Post Office location at 430 Poplar Street creates issues with truck traffic along Pine and Fifth streets, parking in the Black River Coliseum lots and around the building itself with large trucks backing into the facility. The Second Street site could provide more space and better security for the Post Office while keeping larger trucks on fewer city streets. This location could also be kept as open greenspace or a park in the meantime.

The 2.56-acre lot overlooking the Black River has been unused for a decade and the City has been in this position before.

It was estimated in 1968 that renovating the old Post Office building to become a new city hall and police station would cost $42,000 – approximately $402,000 today – but voters rejected a bond issue and the building was torn down to become a parking lot. When the City finally did replace the old city hall by moving into the Second Street location, it cost $900,000 – approximately $2.2 million today. That investment lasted 24 years until maintenance on the older building became too much for the City to maintain.

When the City built the original city hall in 1902 for what today would be half a million dollars, it served the community for 80 years, albeit an outdated location over its last 20 years. It took the City eight years to find a new home, renting space during that time.

A new city hall downtown will serve the community in a more fiscally responsible way for a longer period of time, if the citizens will invest enough resources in the project.

BLACK RIVER COLISEUM

The City should consider one of two options for the building – embrace the recreation role or remove it.

Moving operations under the Park Department would provide a better fit for the building in terms of daily use. The fitness area and pool already provide recreation opportunities for residents with the arena providing recreation opportunities with basketball, pickleball and soccer. A new city hall would open the space currently being used for the municipal court and council chambers for Park Department offices or additional recreation use.

Should a new indoor pool be built, as outlined in the Parks Master Plan, the Coliseum pool can be used more for recreation and therapy as those needs require a warmer temperature than competitive swimming. This space could also be converted into an open gym for basketball, volleyball, pickleball, indoor tennis or racquetball (also known as squash that requires a 32-by-21 foot area with 18-foot ceiling). This option still allows the building to host events such as concerts or meetings and does not change its operations, just the building's main purpose and overall management structure.

Removing the recreation side and turning its focus to more of a convention center and meeting place, could be an alternative to building a new city hall, if citizens reject funding that project. Removing the pool should help improve maintenance issues associated with the extra humidity on that side of the building. It could also provide another meeting area option so that one could select a small room (the lobby), the large main arena or a new room that is approximately 9,000 square feet.

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Office space could occupy the current recreation hallway with a dedication entrance from the attached parking lot for city departments or nonprofits. This option also features a costly renovation, but could save money in the longterm.

MUSEUMS

Built in 1896, the historic home of the art museum is itself a work of art, but it is in dire need of extensive renovations. This is also the case for the Frisco Depot and Wheatley School buildings owned by the City. The organizations that oversee these sites do their best at fundraising and caring for these community treasures, which provide popular cultural services that better the quality of life for residents.

The City currently features a director that oversees the art museum. The position could be adjusted to a museum coordinator that oversees the art museum and works with the other organizations to help with funding and volunteers for a coordinated effort to preserve these institutions.

It should also be considered to fall under a different taxing district, such as parks or the library, to provide a better fit and remove maintenance costs from the City's budget.

The Parks & Recreation Department, as noted in the Parks Master Plan, has a need for more recreation options as desired by the community and that does not always mean sports. The museums could be used in this capacity, providing services they already provide under the recreation umbrella.

Meanwhile, connecting the museums with the Poplar Bluff Public Library creates a larger educational service to the community.

Either option allows the nonprofit groups to continue the work they do while providing a coordinated effort in maintenance, programming and fundraising for these important cultural institutions.

ADMINISTRATION

One department that the City should look into expanding is IT, or information technology. Currently, the City shares an IT person with Municipal Utilities and uses contracted IT services. These services have become such an important part of daily operations and serving the community that another dedicated IT person is essential.

Better communication with the public was one of the issues that came up during this project. Communication has fallen on the City Manager and City Clerk in the past. Having staff with the sole purpose of informing the public frees up the City Manager, police and fire leaders to run their departments and could improve that communication issue with citizens.

The City should also consider reorganizing leadership roles. When the City Manager position was open, the City Clerk was the next person in line to assume those duties and ended up with the title Assistant City Manager to go with the City Clerk and Treasurer duties. These roles could be split up any number of ways with the Assistant City Manager also the Treasurer and a separate person as Clerk to provide a "Segregation of Duties" and follow state law (RSMO Chapter 78.600).

CODE ENFORCEMENT & ANIMAL CONTROL

These departments might be better suited aligning with the public safety departments. Code enforcement is essentially fire prevention and animal control enforces municipal laws just like the police department. This will free up the planning department and, more importantly, changes the perception of these roles.

Moving code enforcement into the fire department emphasizes the importance of fire prevention and ensuring the public's safety.

Having animal control under the police department emphasizes the role of enforcement of the city's laws concerning animals. The role could be expanded to include traffic control or used as an extra officer on duty when needed.

It may be better suited for nonprofits to provide sheltering animals with the City providing funding. This support allows the shelter to take in impounded animals from the City.

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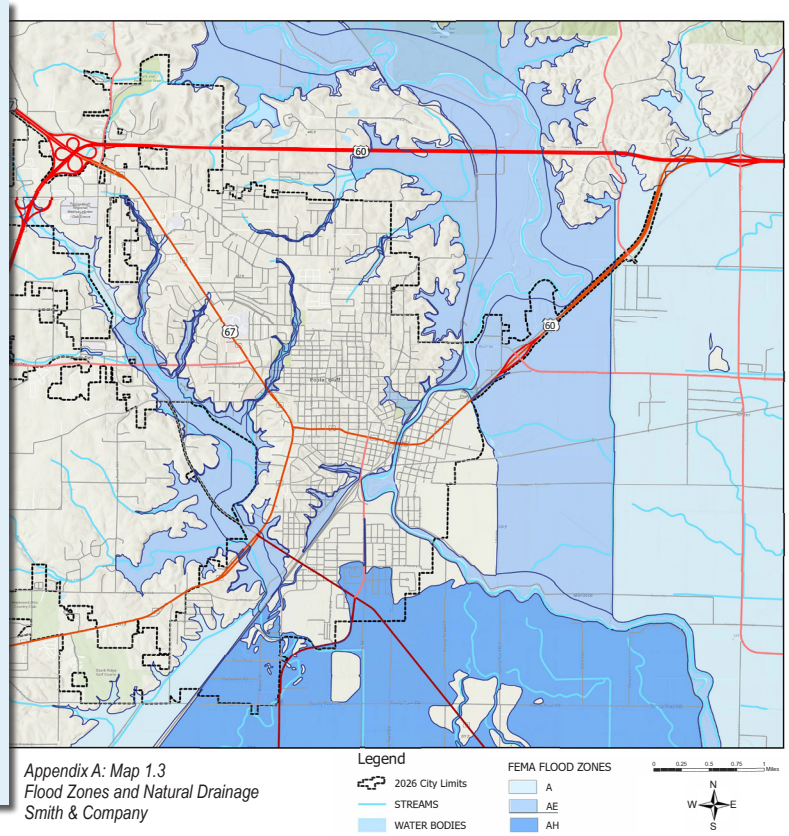
FLOOD PROTECTION

While much of the City of Poplar Bluff is protected from the Black River by a levee system, that system is aging and the community is not immune to flooding issues.

Heavy rains can cause flooding along creeks, including Pike Creek, and street flooding in low-lying areas within city limits.

The City should continue to monitor changes to flooding issues and update its stormwater plan when needed, and improve the flood-protection system, including flood walls and levees, while working with the County and Drainage Districts 7 and 12 that control the larger levee system.

The increase in major flooding events since 2000 shows the importance of protecting the residential and commercials areas south and east of downtown along the river.



Appendix A: Map 1.3
Flood Zones and Natural Drainage
Smith & Company

RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Recommendations from previous plans are again included here, such as retaining sufficient personnel, providing a high level of training and outfitting officers with the latest technology. These recommendations should be considered for a community closer to 32,000, as outlined in Chapter 2, but unfortunately the funding levels are for a community a little over half that size.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The previously recommended new fire station in the western portion of the City, to be located on Shelby Road next to the police station, would require a large expansion of the department's budget to include added firemen and equipment. This will improve the City's ISO rating, helping citizens save on their insurance, and lower response times in the central part of the city. For example, response time to the Poplar Bluff Middle School and surrounding area near the intersection of PP and Westwood, is currently a four-minute drive from Station 1 downtown, 1.8 miles away, while a new station, 1.4 miles away, would cut that time in half (based on navigation maps). A station located at Shelby can respond to anywhere in the city within 10 minutes compared to 13 minutes for the three current locations.

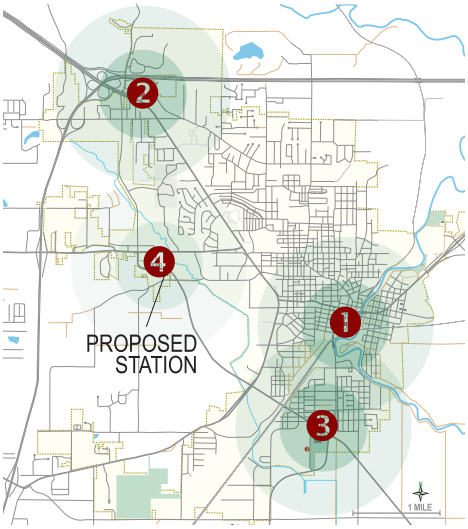
The proximity between Station 1 downtown and Station 3 on Highway 53 – only 1.5 miles – creates an overlap in coverage area that was necessary when downtown was the central business district along with the location of the Industrial Park to the south. While this was necessary when Station 3 opened in 1972 because there was no bridge over the railroad tracks, Station 1 can now quickly cover the south side.

With the growth of the community to the north and west sides of the city, and the addition of Shelby Road to provide better access to all parts of the City from the new police station location, overlapping coverage might be better suited for the intersections of PP with Westwood and Shelby. This was a reason the location of the new police station was chosen despite calls for it to return downtown. Unlike patrol units, which are equipped to be essentially mobile offices for the police department, fire trucks must stay in one location at the ready at all times.



Fire Station No. 2 on Barron Road, which covers the northern part of the City, opened in 1990.

FIRE DEPT. LOCATIONS



The Department could move Station 3 to Shelby and response times from Station 1 are approximately four minutes for residential neighborhoods on either side of Ditch Road. The response time to the Industrial Park would increase, however, a new Station (4) can respond in less than 10 minutes and mutual aid from the Butler County Fire Protection District's location on South Westwood is within five minutes. Keeping a station on Highway 53 while closing Station 1 doubles the response time to the east side of Black River, making this option less practical. Station 2 requires an addition to allow more room for trucks and equipment, among other repairs that are estimated to cost $360,000. However, abandoning this station is also not practical as it covers the north end of the city. Another option could feature a smaller station along Cheshire, next to the Whiteley Park, to be the fourth station with a staff only during times of high production in the Industrial Park.

TRASH SERVICES

Previous Comprehensive Plans recommended the City develop a unified trash, recycling and yard waste hauling contract. The contract should apply to all residential areas and require only one trash hauler to provide services. In addition to weekly solid waste pick-up, the contract should also include yard waste removal, recycling and monthly bulk item pick-up services for one competitive fee. By contracting solid waste removal services to one contractor, the City will reduce the number and frequency of trash trucks on city streets, thereby reducing wear and tear of the roads, improving safety, and aesthetics because the company would be responsible when trash escapes their truck.

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CHAPTER 4





Chapter 4

Parks & Recreation

Here is a summary of this chapter covering the City of Poplar Bluff's parks and recreation system:

System Overview and Governance

The Poplar Bluff Parks and Recreation Department operates 16 parks and three recreation facilities covering approximately 411 acres and nearly 7 miles of trails. The system is overseen by a Park Board, originally established on August 20, 1951. Daily operations are managed by a team of 12 full-time employees with an annual operating budget of approximately $1.5 million, primarily funded by a quarter-cent sales tax dedicated to parks since 2000.

Historical Development

While informal recreation existed earlier (such as Ferguson Grove hosting events since 1900), the department's formal growth began in the 1950s.

• Hillcrest Park (1952): The first official park under the new department, featuring the first swimming pool.

• Expansion through Donation: Many key parks were established via land donations, including Kiwanis Bacon Park (1948), Linc Park (1954), and McLane Park (2001).

• Ozark Ridge Golf Course: Created in 1981 and expanded to 18 holes in 1998, it serves as a major regional attraction.

Current Recreation Programs

The department served 3,131 residents in 2024, with 83.5% of those being children aged 6 to 12.

• Youth Sports: Includes baseball, softball, T-ball, basketball, and flag football leagues.

• Aquatics: Operates the R.W. Huntington Municipal Pool, offering open swim and lessons.

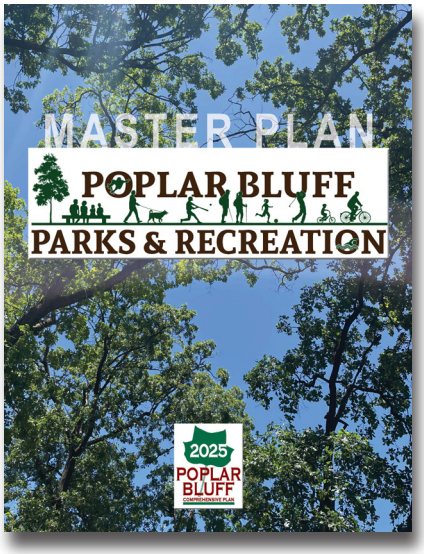
• Adult Sports: Features competitive leagues for softball, volleyball, golf, tennis, and a 5K race series.

Facilities and Standards

Poplar Bluff significantly exceeds national medians for parkland, providing 30.3 acres per 1,000 residents (national average is 10.6) and one park for every 954 residents. Specialized facilities includes the Skate Plaza for youth culture and the Downtown Dog Park.

Community Needs and Future Planning

A 2024 survey revealed high resident demand for improvements, with 34.7% identifying a need for more parks and trails. Future developments include Leist Park (focusing on a fishing pond and new access roads) and Pike Creek Park (planned to include a 3.25-acre stocked lake and trail connections).Regional Strategy: The plan emphasizes a "Level of Service" approach to ensure all city quadrants, particularly the growing north and west areas, have adequate access to recreational space.



This chapter is a condensed version of the Parks & Recreation Department's Master Plan, which was produced during this project and approved by the Parks Board in September 2025. It is included as an appendix.

TOP PHOTO: A golf ball is teed up on the first hole at Ozark Ridge Golf Course looking back at the clubhouse and memorial flag area.



Walking trail at Henderickson Park

The City of Poplar Bluff operates 16 parks and three recreation facilities that encompass approximately 411 acres and includes nearly 7 miles of trails. The park system features a variety of activities and amenities, including leagues for youth baseball, softball, basketball, football, soccer, tennis, volleyball, track and field, wrestling, along with adult softball and volleyball, recreational options to play basketball, golf, disc golf, tennis, pickleball, horseshoes, indoor and outdoor swimming that includes swim lessons and water aerobics, fitness trails and natural areas, playground equipment, pavilions and shelters.

HISTORY

Poplar Bluff Parks and Recreation was created when Mayor E.W. Robinson and the City Council approved a Park Board on Aug. 20, 1951 and named nine members. The first full-time director of parks was named in May 1953 when Bret McGinnis was hired by the Park Board. Lanny Corcimiglia is the Park Department's eighth director and has held the position since August 2019. Clark Allen (32 years) and John Lawson (25 years) were the previous directors while McGinnis (1953-55), Johnny Jones (1955-56), Ronald Perry (1956-57), John Cardwell (1958-59) and Charles Keller (1959-62) also served as directors.

When the first Comprehensive Plan was produced in 1962, it listed the following parks:

- Hillcrest Park (10 acres)
- Parkview Park (5 acres)
- Linc Park (1 acre)
- Bacon Memorial Park (20 acres)
- Whiteley Park (12 acres)
- Indian Hills Park (40 acres)
- Community Recreation Center (3)

The history of parks in Poplar Bluff, however, preceded the creation of the Park Department. Baseball teams played at the old Sportsman's Park on the east side during the turn of the century or the Boeving Ball Park south of the railyard where the high school football team also played. Ferguson Grove has hosted events since 1900 and owner Nan Ferguson leased the property to the city for a park in 1938. The Park Department took over the park in 1994. The Kiwanis Club has owned Bacon Memorial Park since 1948 when the land was donated in honor of D.P. Bacon and his son Fay.

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CURRENT CONDITIONS

Hillcrest Park was the Park Board's first park in 1952. It was named by 10-year-old Kittye Alice Hall and featured a swimming pool. A clay tennis court was added a year later. Linc Park, named for Linc Hinrich who donated the land, opened in 1954 followed by a 40-acre park three years later west of the city named Indian Hills Park that would later become the campus of Three Rivers College. Whiteley Park, named for the donors Joe Whiteley and his son Maynard, was created in 1959 to host baseball and softball games. Parkview Park also had a baseball field but it closed when the new high school was built. Whiteley Park hosted the high school and college baseball and softball teams for a time, as well as the high school soccer team when it started in the mid 1990s. The five-field baseball and softball complex at McLane Park opened in 2002.

Other parks that were created through a donation include Joe Wiseman Memorial Park in 1986, Ray Clinton Park (1995), Dr. Jerry F. McLane Park (2001), Downtown Park (2010) and Leist Park (2022). Hendrickson Park was one of the few parks that was purchased when the Park Board paid $21,000 in 1973 (it would have cost $148,726 in 2024). It opened in 1975 and was named for Jim Hendrickson, the first Park Board president.

The current Sportsman's Park was created by the Southeast Missouri Sportsmen's Association and leased to the City starting in 1963 while the Black River Industrial Park held events as early as 1988 before the creation of practice fields for baseball, softball and soccer in 1994.

A playground was first placed at Wheatley School in 1960 by the Park Board but the site was officially dedicated as a park in 2008 and was included in the previous Comprehensive Plan approved that year. Along with the addition of Downtown Park and Leist Park, one park was removed from the Park Department's lineup of parks. Rotary Park – also known as the Mini Park on Garfield and West Harper Street – was privately purchased in Sept. 2021 but maintained as a park. Smiley Park was transformed into the Downtown Dog Park.

Ozark Ridge Golf Course is an 18-hole championship course with large bent grass greens, protective bunkers and tree-lined fairways. It features a large driving range, practice green, fully stocked pro shop and concessions in the clubhouse. The course was created in 1981, featuring nine holes, while the second nine holes was developed in 1998, and hosts special events, league play and is open all year.

The Black River Coliseum also provides recreational opportunities for residents. The 115,000-square-foot multi-purpose center was built in 1999 and features a seating capacity of 4,400, hosting concerts, conventions, banquets, sporting events and many other community events. It also includes an indoor swimming pool, fitness center, walking track and can host three basketball courts.

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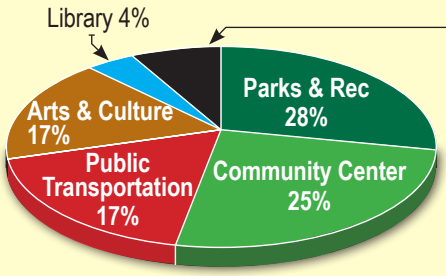
PB2025 SURVEY

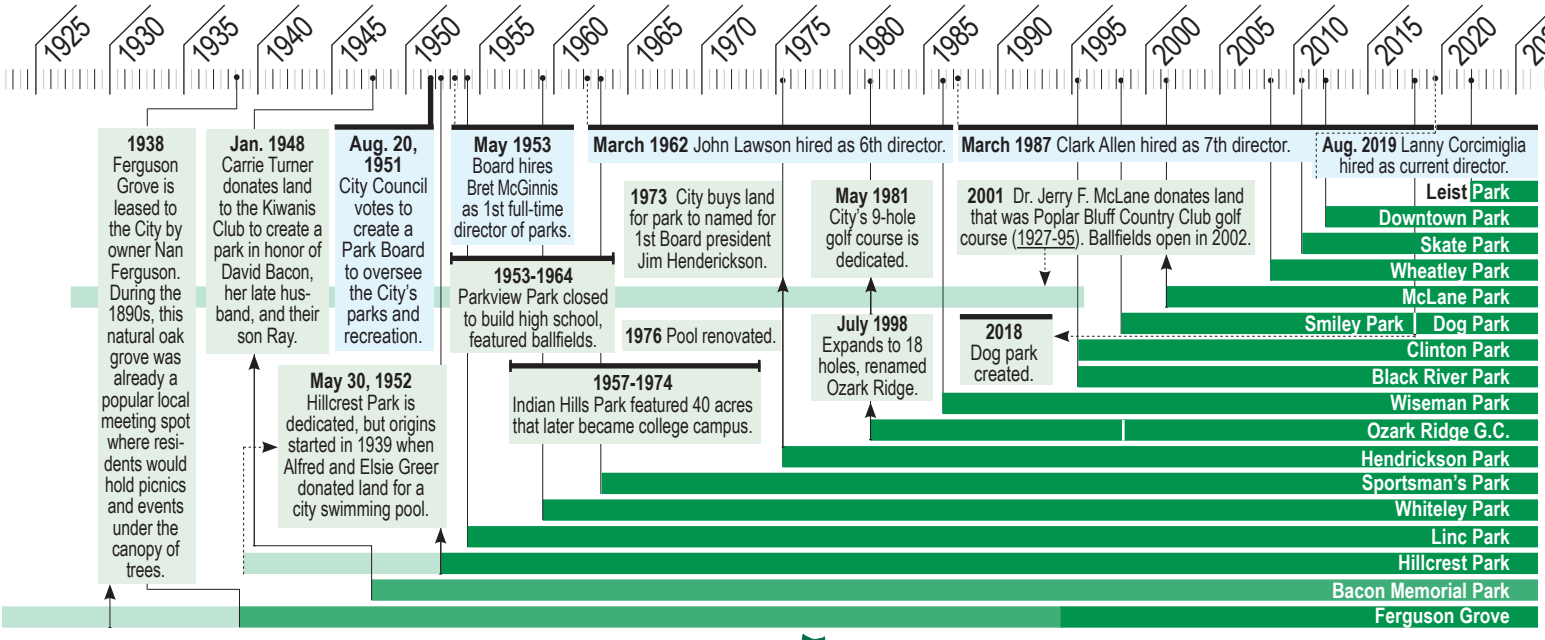
Residents surveyed in 2024 ranked parks and recreation the most when asked "What amenities could be improved" at 34.7% agreeing that the City should have more parks and trails. When asked if the City needs more recreation programs, 44.3% absolutely agreed while 36.2% agreed, making it one of the most agreed upon responses in the entire survey.

What community amenities could be improved or added?



Suggestions:

- **Bowling**
- **Activities**
- **Sidewalks**
- Entertainment
- **Water park**
- **Kid activities**
- **Splash pad**
- Trade school
- Book store
- Events
- Retail store
- Shopping
- Variety of restaurants
- **Sports**
- Community theater



CURRENT CONDITIONS



Along with maintaining the parks and trails, the Park Department is also charged with providing recreational activities for residents of all ages. There are 10 different programs for sports with the Park Department partnering with community groups to run soccer, swimming, and football. The Park Department also hosts events, training and lessons that entertain and educate residents. Among all recreation programs, a total of 3,131 residents were served in 2024 with 83.5% of those age 6-12.

A team of 12 full-time employees run the daily operations that span all but two days out of the year – Thanksgiving and Christmas – with a $1.5 million operating budget generated from a quarter-cent sales tax in the city dedicated to parks that started in 2000. The director oversees all parks and recreation within the City while various supervisors direct the daily operations in departments such as recreation, maintenance, aquatics and the golf course. The administrative staff includes a financial administrator, a program coordinator and two assistants. The maintenance staff includes the supervisor and three employees plus a horticulture supervisor. The golf course staff features a manager, course superintendent, maintenance and mechanic.



ABOVE: R.W. Huntington Pool at Hillcrest Park. LEFT: Soccer games are held at Whiteley Park.

EVENTS & CLASSES

The Park Department hosts a number of events throughout the year, many partnering with the Poplar Bluff Library, such as “Get Kids Outdoors” in April. Other partners include Poplar Bluff Library and the Community Resource Council. There were also six Cruise-In car shows scheduled for 2025 along with the “Welcome Summer” event in June, “Back to School Bash” in August, “Turkey Tumble” in November and “Santa Land” in December, among others.

The Park Department partners with the American Red Cross to host a babysitting and child care training program for six weeks along with CRP classes, lifeguard training and water safety instructor training.

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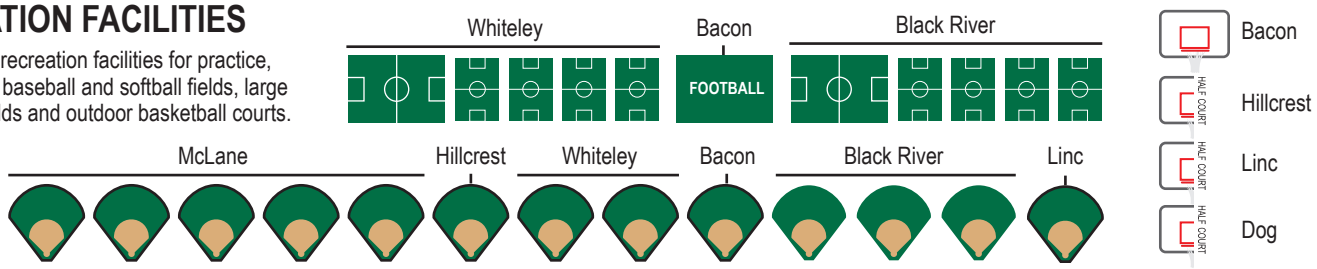
CURRENT CONDITIONS

RECREATION FACILITIES

A look at the recreation facilities for practice, by park, with baseball and softball fields, large and small fields and outdoor basketball courts.



YOUTH SPORTS

When it was created in 1951, the Park Board was tasked at providing recreational sports for the growing number of children in the city. Baseball and softball games have been apart of the summers in Poplar Bluff long before that and have taken on many different forms of leagues and names.

The current Park Department baseball and softball leagues are played at the McLane Park complex and feature leagues for boys and girls age 7 to 14. There were 302 baseball, 142 softball and 232 T-ball players in 2024. Registration fee is $20 for the league that starts in May. Batters face a pitching machine in leagues for players age 7-8 for boys and 7-10 for girls. A fall league that starts in September is held for teams featuring players age 7 to 13.

The Park Department hosts basketball leagues for boys and girls in grades 3-6 and a camp for players in kindergarten and grades 1-2. The league starts in November and his played at the Black River Coliseum with a registration fee of $20.

Providing residents with a safe place to swim was also among the first recreation programs for the Park Department, which upgraded the pool at Hillcrest Park in the 1950s when it was still more popular to swim in the Black River. Today, R.W. Huntington Municipal Pool at Hillcrest Park provides a safe place to cool off during the summer with open swim each day. Swimming lessons are also available for $40 in which students attend two lessons per week for a six-week program. A competitive swim team, the Poplar Bluff Piranhas, is organized for boys and girls age 5-18.

A flag football league is held in the fall for boys and girls in grades 1-4. Registration fee is $20 with games held on Saturdays at Morrow Stadium at the Junior High School. A introductory camp is held prior to the season. A traveling tackle football team is organized for players in grades 3-6 through the Poplar Bluff Elite organization.

A soccer league is organized by the Optimist Club and has served the area since 1982. The Optimist Soccer League (pbosl.com) features a fall season for boys and girls age 4 to 14 and a spring season for grades kindergarten through sixth with games held at Whiteley Park. Registration fee is $25.

A camp to teach tennis to boys and girls in kindergarten through eighth grade is held while players age 14 and older can compete in a league with adults.

The Poplar Bluff Youth Track & Field Club is for boys and girls age 5-18. Registration is $25 with practices and meets held in the spring at the Sam Giambelluca Track Complex at the Junior High School.

A volleyball league is held during the winter for boys and girls in grades 3-6 with a $20 registration fee.

Wrestling is held in the winter for boys and girls in kindergarten through sixth grade. Registration is $30 with practices held at the Senior High wrestling room.

ADULT SPORTS

Softball is one of the most popular adult programs with leagues for men, women and coed teams in the summer and fall. The men's and women's summer leagues are played at Hillcrest Park and McLane Park and cost $350 per team as is the women's and coed fall league. A men's church league is held in the summer and fall and costs $400 per team.

An adult volleyball league is held in the winter and costs $300 per team.

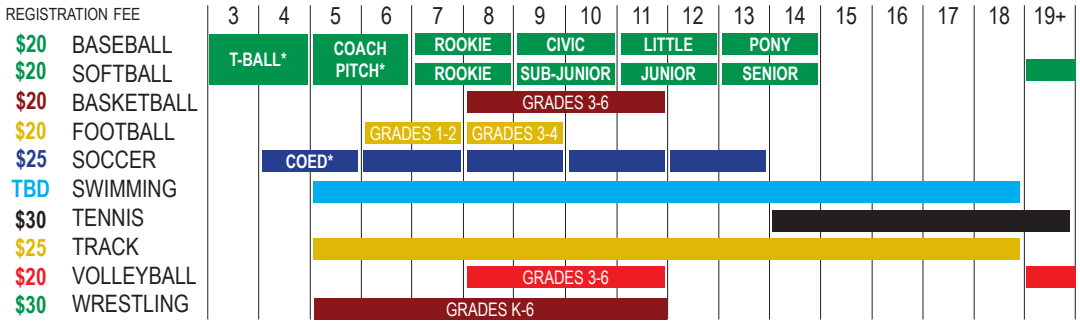
Ozark Ridge Golf Course hosts a golf league starting in April while tennis features a women's league starting in March and coed leagues in the summer and fall. Pickleball leagues are also starting to form with the completion of new courts at McLane Park.

The Park Department hosts a 5K Series for runners with races in March (McLane Park), April and May (Hendrickson Park), July (downtown), November (Hendrickson Park) and December (McLane Park).

A community group offers a league and tournaments to play disc golf at Hendrickson and Kiwanis Bacon parks while the Skate Park hosts competitions and exhibitions through groups.

Water Aerobics classes are held at the pool for $3 a session ($60/season) for 11 weeks.

RECREATION BY AGE



CURRENT CONDITIONS

PARK CLASSIFICATION

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) developed a classification system that describes several categories of parks, recreation areas and open spaces. This system was used in the previous Comprehensive Plan and is used here to show any changes since 2008.

Mini Park - Addresses limited, isolated or unique recreation needs (Service area: ¼ mile radius)

Neighborhood Park - Serves as recreational and social focus of a neighborhood; Emphasizes informal active and passive recreation (¼ to ½ mile radius)

Community Park - Serves similar but broader purposes of the neighborhood park; Focuses on meeting community-based recreation needs; May preserve unique landscapes/ open spaces (½ to 3-mile radius)

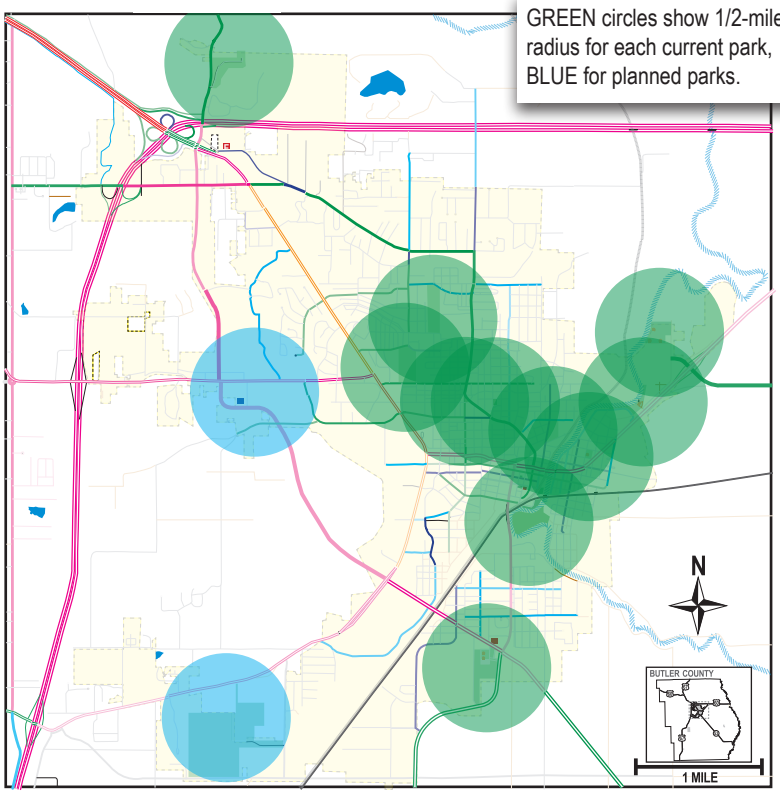
Natural Resource Area - Serves lower intensity of use; Lands set aside to preserve unique natural resources and remnant landscapes; May include open or green spaces and area of visual/aesthetics buffering (entire community)

Greenway - Serves to form interconnected park system; Ties park system components together with green corridors; Size is 25-foot width minimum, 200- or more feet optimal for right-of-way; actual path will vary, with 8 foot width minimum (Service area based on resource availability and opportunities)

School Park - Combines parks with school sites; Service area is based on school district site distribution but is frequently similar to neighborhood park function.

Sports Complex - Serves to consolidate a single purpose use; Concentrates programmed athletic fields to larger and fewer sites (Service area is the entire community)

Special Use - Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use (Service area is variable)



Poplar Bluff's growth since 2008 has been west and north since land to the east and south is mostly in a flood plain. City parks are all located east of the Westwood/Business 67 corridor and only one park (Whiteley) south of Pine/Business 60 that features a playground. There are currently plans for future parks in the works - Leist and Pike Creek - while a trail along the Black River has been sought since the early 1990s.

The NRPA establishes recommended acreage guidelines for mini-parks (0-1 acre, serves 5-minute walk, 0.25 to 0.5 acres per 1,000 people), neighborhood parks (1-10 acres, 10-minute walk, 1.0 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people) and community parks (10-50 acres, 3-mile radius, 5.0 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 people).

Based on the NRPA guidelines in the previous Comprehensive Plan, the City had a historic deficit of land dedicated to mini-parks and neighborhood parks while the community parks were up to NRPA standards based on acres per 1,000 population. Currently, the national average for acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is 10.6 acres with 2,396 residents per park. Poplar Bluff is above those averages at 30.3 acres per 1,000 residents and 954 residents per park.

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LEVEL OF SERVICE

Population (2020) **16,225**
City square miles ...**13.14**
Pop. per sq. mile....**1,234.9**

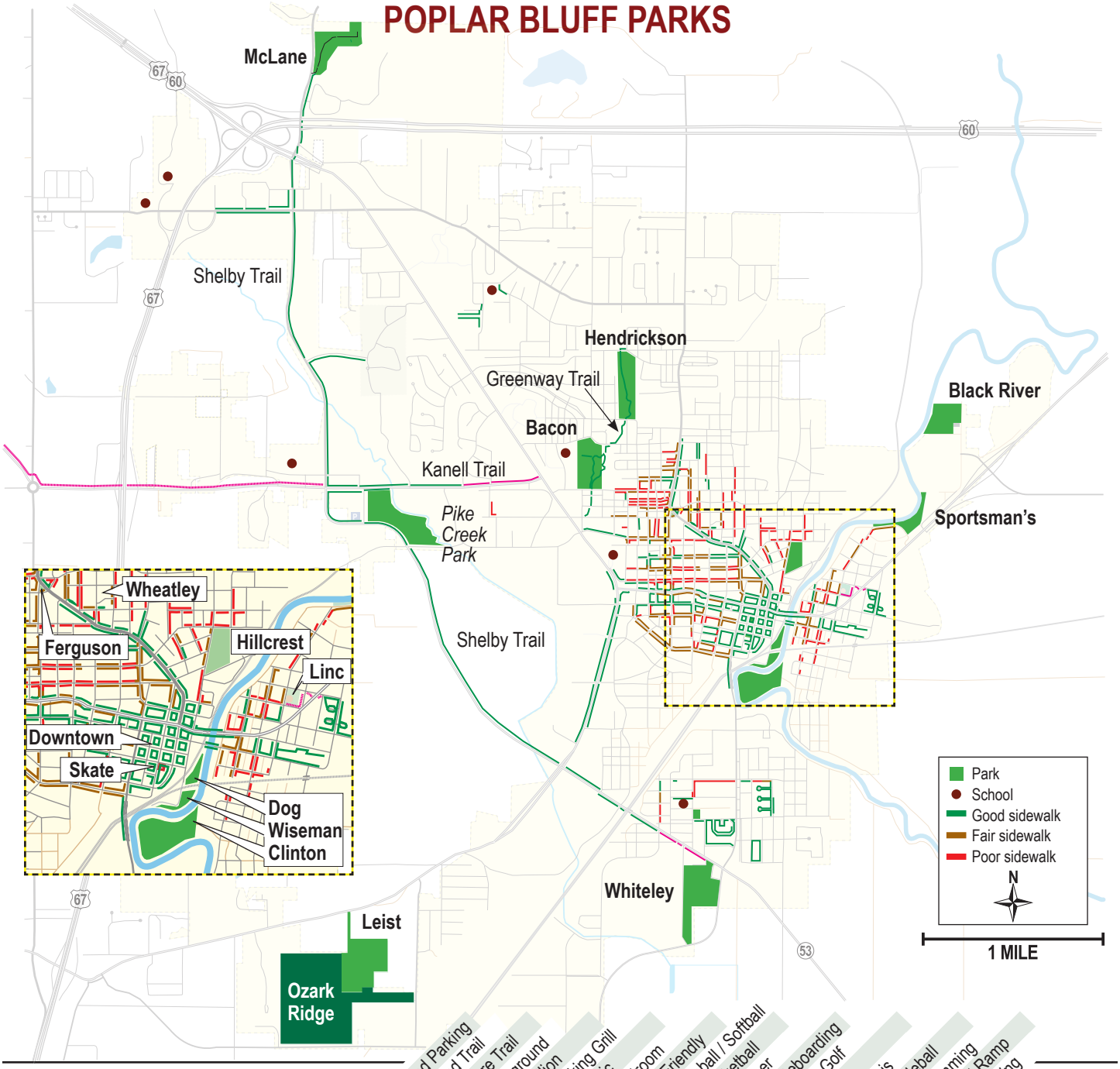
Parks: **16**
Acres: **348.85**

			NRPA MEDIAN
Residents Per Park	**1,014**	1,172	2,386
Acres per 1,000 residents	**21.5**	12.6	10.6
Miles of Trail	**7.7**	4.5	16.0
		Pop. less than 20,000	*Total Agencies*

The below table shows the City's level of service compared to NRPA suggested norms by specific park type classifications. For example, the City's total acreage for mini parks is below the suggested minimum and dropped slightly since 1990. It should be noted that school playgrounds are not included in this survey, which could serve as mini parks. Total acres do not include undeveloped or natural areas of parks and the golf course is not included because it is considered a special use park.

		POPLAR BLUFF		NRPA TARGET	
PARK TYPE		TOTAL ACRES	ACRES PER 1,000 POP.	TOTAL ACRES	ACRES PER 1,000 POP.
Mini Parks	2025	**1.4**	**0.08**	2.9	0.25-0.5
> 2 ACRES	1990	1.8	0.10	**(3.3)**	✗
Neighborhood Parks 2-10 ACRES	2025	**10.4**	**0.64**	11.6	1 to 2
	1990	8.2	0.48	**(1.2)**	✗
Community Parks 10+ ACRES	2025	**236.0**	**14.55**	58.1	5 to 8
	1990	170.4	10.02	**+117.2**	✓

POPLAR BLUFF PARKS



	ACRES	OPENED	Paved Parking	Paved Trail	Nature Trail	Playground	Pavilion	Cooking Grill	Picnic	Restroom	Pet Friendly	Baseball / Softball	Basketball	Soccer	Skateboarding	Disc Golf	Golf	Tennis	Pickleball	Swimming	Boat Ramp	Fishing
Kiwanis Bacon Park	26.4	1948	●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●				●						
Black River Park	15.6	1995										●		●								
Clinton Park	21.9	1995							●												●	●
Dog Park	2.5	1998	●								●		●									
Downtown Park	0.2	2010		●			●	●	●		●											
Ferguson Grove	4.6	1938	●	●					●		●											
Hendrickson Park	36.9	1975	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					●						
Hillcrest Park	9.3	1952	●			●	●	●	●	●		●	●					●	●	●		
Linc Park	1.3	1954	●			●	●	●	●			●	●									
Leist Park	37.4	2022	○	○	○	○	○	○	●		○											○ PLANNED
McLane Park	68.2	2001	●	●		○			●	●	●	●							●			
Ozark Ridge Golf Course	142.6	1981	●							●							●					
Skate Plaza	0.4	2012	●						●						●							
Sportsman's Park	4.7	1963	●				●	●	●												●	●
Wheatley Park	0.6	2008	●																			
Whiteley Park	31.7	1959	●			●	●	●	●	●		●		●								
Wiseman Park	4.6	1986							●													●

Hillcrest Park



The area located north of downtown Poplar Bluff became the City's first official park under the newly created Park Department on May 30, 1952, but its origins trace back to the late 19th century when the hill was a popular sledding spot. Hillcrest Park, named in a contest, features a playground, shelter, two tennis courts, half basketball court, lighted ballfield and an outdoor swimming facility, named for Dr. R.W. Huntington, a longtime member of the Park Board.

OPENED: **1952** ACRES: **9.22**

PARKING	✓ PAVED
	ACCESS OFF SECOND ST. AND RELIEF ST.
PLAYGROUND	✓ TOTAL: 1
PAVILIONS	✓ TOTAL: 1
TRAILS	✗ NONE
RESTROOMS	✓ AT SWIMMING POOL
FEATURES	✓ SWIMMING POOL
	✓ TENNIS COURTS
	✓ BALLFIELD
	✓ BASKETBALL COURT



Hendrickson Park

The area adjoining the City Cemetery was purchased in 1973 and developed into a park, which expanded in 1994 when the Butler County Health Department leased an additional 11 acres to the City. Named for Jim Hendrickson, the first president of the Park Board, this park features wooded and open land along Hogg Creek with playgrounds, shelters, an 18-hole disc golf course and a half-mile trail which is part of the Poplar Bluff Greenway trail system.

OPENED: **1975** ACRES: **36.97**

PARKING	✓ GRAVEL
	ACCESS OFF DAVIS, THIRTEENTH STREETS
PLAYGROUND	✓ TOTAL: 2
PAVILIONS	✓ TOTAL: 1
TRAILS	✓ MILES: 0.5 PAVED-GRAVEL
RESTROOMS	✓ SEASONAL
FEATURES	✓ NATURE TRAIL
	✓ DISC GOLF - 18 HOLES
	✓ MOMMY AND ME SWING
	✓ EDUCATIONAL AREA

Kiwanis Bacon Park

Established in 1948 through the generosity of Carrie Turner, Kiwanis Bacon Memorial Park honors her late husband David P. Bacon and their son, Ray Bacon, a charter member of the Poplar Bluff Kiwanis Club.

Centrally located along Hogg Creek, the park is still owned by the Club. It features playgrounds, shelters and areas for sports including a football field, baseball-softball field and basketball court. The half-mile paved trail that loops within the park is part of the Poplar Bluff Greenway trail system.

OPENED: **1948** ACRES: **26.45**

PARKING	✓ PAVED AND GRAVEL
	ACCESS OFF PERSHING ST. AND HARPER ST.
PLAYGROUND	✓ ALL-INCLUSIVE
PAVILIONS	✓ TOTAL: 4
TRAILS	✓ MILES: 0.52 PAVED LOOP
RESTROOMS	✓ SEASONAL, BALLFIELD
FEATURES	✓ BASKETBALL COURT
	✓ FOOTBALL FIELD
	✓ SOFTBALL FIELD



PARKS



McLane Park

This park features three distinct areas with a community park in the south that features a 1.33-mile paved walking trail, a five-field sports complex for baseball and softball along with covered pickleball courts, and a 63.5-acre natural area on the northern end of the property. The park is named for Dr. Jerry F. McLane who donated in the land and served on the Park Board. The sports complex opened in 2002s. The park is also part of the Shelby Trail.

OPENED: **2001** ACRES: **124.29**

PARKING	✓ PAVED
	ACCESS OFF HIGHWAY W
PLAYGROUND	✓ ALL-INCLUSIVE
PAVILIONS	× TWO GAZEBOS
TRAILS	✓ MILES: 1.33 PAVED
RESTROOMS	✓ BALLFIELD, TRAIL
FEATURES	✓ FIVE BALLFIELDS
	✓ CONCESSION STAND
	✓ PICKLEBALL COURTS
	✓ SMALL POND

Whiteley Park

This park has hosted recreational sports for over 65 years since the land was donated by Joe Whiteley and his son Maynard. The longtime home of youth recreational sports, there are two ballfields and nearly 11 acres of soccer fields following the expansion of the park in 2025 and features a concession stand with restrooms and portable bleachers. It also includes playgrounds and pavilions as the only park located on the south side of the city.

OPENED: **1959** ACRES: **31.70**

PARKING	✓ PAVED / GRAVEL
	ACCESS OFF HIGHWAY 53 OR CHESHIRE BLVD
PLAYGROUND	✓ TOTAL: 2
PAVILIONS	✓ TOTAL: 2
TRAILS	× 0.5 PARKING LOT LOOP
RESTROOMS	✓ AT CONCESSION STAND
FEATURES	✓ SOCCER FIELDS
	✓ CONCESSION STAND
	✓ TWO BALLFIELDS
	✓ SAND VOLLEYBALL





Ozark Ridge Golf Course

This 18-hole championship course features large bent grass greens, protective bunkers and tree-lined fairways. The course was created in 1981 featuring nine holes while the second nine holes were developed in 1998. It hosts league play, tournaments and special events. The 6,260-yard, par-70 course is open all year, weather permitting, and features a driving range, practice green and a clubhouse with concessions and a fully stocked pro shop.

OPENED: **1981** ACRES: **157.15**

PARKING	✓ PAVED
	ACCESS OFF CRAVENS ROAD
PLAYGROUND	×
PAVILIONS	× DECK AT CLUBHOUSE
CART PATH	✓ MILES: 4.4 PAVED
RESTROOMS	✓ CLUBHOUSE, ON COURSE
FEATURES	✓ DRIVING RANGE
	✓ PRACTICE GREEN
	✓ PRO SHOP
	✓ CONCESSIONS
WEBSITE	OZARKRIDGEGOLF.COM

Clinton Park



OPENED: **1995** ACRES: **21.9**

PARKING	✓ GRASS
	ACCESS OFF B STREET
PLAYGROUND	× NONE
PAVILIONS	× NONE
TRAILS	× NONE
RESTROOMS	× NONE
FEATURES	✓ RODEO ARENA
	✓ BOAT RAMP
	✓ BRIDGE OVER RIVER
	✓ RIVER ACCESS

Ray Clinton Park was created as a large multi-use fairground and event park. The land lies along the eastern bank of the Black River, which creates a horseshoe bend across from downtown, and was acquired by the City when the Ray Clinton family donated the land in January 1995. Clinton Park quickly became home to the Butler County Fair and other large regional gatherings. In 1996, Founders Bridge was constructed to link the park with Wiseman Park on the opposite side of the river.



Wiseman Park

OPENED: **1986** ACRES: **6.0**

PARKING	✓ STREET
	ACCESS OFF SECOND ST.
PLAYGROUND	× NONE
PAVILIONS	× NONE
TRAILS	× NONE
RESTROOMS	× NONE
FEATURES	✓ BRIDGE OVER RIVER
	✓ RIVER ACCESS

Officially the Joe Wiseman Memorial Park, this compact park on the west side of the Black River provides green space in downtown Poplar Bluff. One of its defining features is that it serves as the western anchor of the Founders Bridge, the pedestrian footbridge that connects downtown Poplar Bluff across the river to Ray Clinton Park on the east side. Because the park lies in a floodplain, no permanent buildings are on site.

Downtown Dog Park



OPENED: **1998** ACRES: **3.7**

PARKING	✓ PAVED
	ACCESS OFF SECOND ST.
PLAYGROUND	× NONE
PAVILIONS	× NONE
TRAILS	× NONE
RESTROOMS	× NONE
FEATURES	✓ FENCED AREAS
	✓ WATER FOUNTAIN
	✓ BASKETBALL HOOP

The area between the Black River and railroad tracks south of Vine Street was known as Smiley Park when the land was donated to the City in August 1993 and was the former site of the Smiley Container plant. By the early 2010s, the area was turned into an off-leash dog exercise area and rebranded the Downtown Dog Park. The park currently features two fenced sections to separate large and small dogs with agility obstacles and places for their owners to sit.

PARKS



Downtown Park

Nestled in a block of downtown Poplar Bluff near the Post Office on the corner of Poplar and Moran streets, this small park features a pavilion with picnic tables, benches and small walking loop lined with flowers and bushes. This area is the perfect outdoor lunch spot for employees of nearby businesses or residents of the senior housing complex across Moran Street which cleared the land and donated it to the City in 2010.

OPENED: **2010** ACRES: **0.24**

PARKING	✓ STREET
	ACCESS OFF POPLAR, MORAN STREETS
PLAYGROUND	×
PAVILIONS	× TOTAL: 1
TRAILS	✓ MILES: 0.07 PAVED LOOP
RESTROOMS	×
FEATURES	✓ FLOWERS
	✓ BENCHES
	✓ LIGHTS

Skate Plaza

Built on the site of the former City Hall and Jail location on South Broadway, the 19,000-square-foot plaza blends into the downtown area. It features a variety of ramps and elements designed for beginners and skaters with developing skills. Skate Plaza represents Poplar Bluff's commitment to youth culture and urban renewal, providing an inclusive and dynamic environment for skateboarding and community interaction. It has become a popular destination, fostering a sense of active engagement.

OPENED: **2012** ACRES: **0.43**

PARKING	✓ PAVED
	ACCESS OFF MORAN STREET
PLAYGROUND	×
PAVILIONS	× SHADED AREA
TRAILS	×
RESTROOMS	× PORTABLE
FEATURES	✓ WATER FOUNTAIN
	✓ PICNIC TABLES
	✓ BICYCLE RACK





Ferguson Grove

Located along North Main Street, Ferguson Grove has served as a meeting place since the late 19th century but it was not until 1938 that Nan Ferguson leased the land to the city and 1996 when the city acquired it. The park features a shaded, paved walking trail measuring 0.27 miles per lap, picnic tables and pet-friendly amenities. It stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of community collaboration and the importance of preserving natural spaces within Poplar Bluff.

OPENED: **1995** ACRES: **4.52**

PARKING	✓ PAVED
	ACCESS OFF NINTH STREET
PLAYGROUND	× NONE
PAVILIONS	× NONE
TRAILS	✓ MILES: 0.27 PAVED
RESTROOMS	× NONE
FEATURES	✓ PICNIC TABLES

Wheatley Park



OPENED: **2008** ACRES: **2.20**
PARKING ✓ GRAVEL
ACCESS OFF GARFIELD, BENTON STREETS
PLAYGROUND ✓ TOTAL: 1
PAVILIONS ✓ TOTAL: 1
TRAILS ✗ NONE
RESTROOMS ✗ NOT AVAILABLE
FEATURES ✓ HISTORIC SCHOOL

Once the site of Wheatley School, the Park Board first placed a playground here in 1960. Currently, the Park Department and Wheatley Historical Preservation Society have partnered to create a park, officially dedicated on April 26, 2008, with a pavilion and new playground equipment. The school, built in 1928 and named for poet Phillis Wheatley, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998 honoring the city's diverse heritage.



Black River Industrial Park

OPENED: **1995** ACRES: **15.58**
PARKING ✓ GRAVEL
ACCESS OFF BARNHART ROAD
PLAYGROUND ✗ NOT AVAILABLE
PAVILIONS ✗ NOT AVAILABLE
TRAILS ✗ NOT AVAILABLE
RESTROOMS ✗ NOT AVAILABLE
FEATURES ✓ BALLFIELDS
✓ SOCCER FIELDS

Featuring open space for practice fields that can host soccer or baseball and softball, Black River Industrial Park was developed by the Park Department in 1994. The area located near the eastern city limits also hosted a festival six years prior to becoming a park and its name comes from the surrounding industrial park district. Because much of the land lies within the floodplain along the eastern bank of the Black River it was converted to park land.

Sportsman's Park



OPENED: **1963** ACRES: **4.67**
PARKING ✓ PAVED, GRAVEL
ACCESS OFF EAST PINE ST. - BUS. 60
PLAYGROUND ✗ NOT AVAILABLE
PAVILIONS ✓ TOTAL: 1
TRAILS ✗ NONE
RESTROOMS ✓ PORTABLE - SEASONAL
FEATURES ✓ RIVER ACCESS
✓ BOAT RAMP
✓ ACCESSIBLE FISHING

Located on the Black River on the east side of the city, this park is a partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation, which built a new boat ramp in 1991 and a handicap accessible fishing platform in 2019. The area was first developed in 1963 by the Southeast Missouri Sportsmen's Association and is owned by the City. The eight-acre park serves as a beloved destination for outdoor enthusiasts, featuring picnic areas and offering a scenic retreat along the river.

PARKS



Linc Park

OPENED: **1954** ACRES: **1.20**
PARKING ✓ PAVED
ACCESS OFF NORTH D STREET
PLAYGROUND ✓
PAVILIONS ✓ TOTAL: 1
TRAILS ✗ NONE
RESTROOMS ✗ NOT AVAILABLE
FEATURES ✓ BALLFIELDS
✓ BASKETBALL COURT

Established in 1954 through a generous donation by Abraham and Mary Hinrichs, Linc Park was envisioned as a dedicated playground for children. The half-block of land on the East Side of Poplar Bluff along D Street features a playground, pavilion, basketball hoop and lighted ballfield. Linc's park was the first home of a youth baseball league and it continues to serve the neighborhood and the legacy of Hinrichs providing a cherished space for recreation and joy to local families.

Leist Park

OPENED: **2022** ACRES: **37.45**
PARKING ✓ PAVED
ACCESS AT GOLF COURSE OFF CRAVENS RD.
PLAYGROUND ✗ PLANNED
PAVILIONS ✗ PLANNED
TRAILS ✗ PLANNED
RESTROOMS ✓ AT COURSE CLUBHOUSE
FEATURES ✓ NATURAL PONDS

Land for this park was secured by the Park Department in the spring of 2022 when John W. and Tammy A. Leist sold it at a reduced price. The first phase of the plan is to expand the fishing pond and create access to it for the public, which is currently the parking lot at Ozark Ridge Golf Course. The next phase is to build a road off South Westwood (Business 67) to the golf course then building walking trails, playgrounds, pavilions with options of a recreation center and nature center in the future.



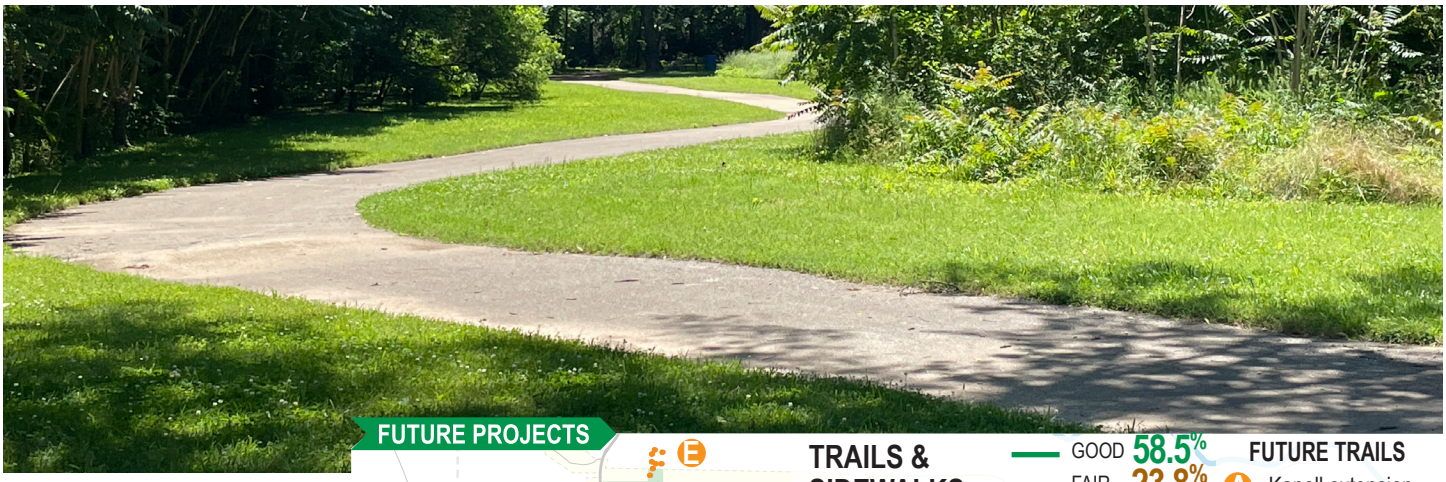


Pike Creek Park

OPENED: **TBD** ACRES: **29.38**
PARKING ✗ PLANNED
ACCESS OFF ROXIE ROAD, WHITELEY WAY
PLAYGROUND ✗ PLANNED
PAVILIONS ✗ PLANNED
TRAILS ✗ PLANNED
RESTROOMS ✗ PLANNED
FEATURES ✗ PLANNED FISHING POND

The area along Pike Creek is located south of PP Highway and northeast of the Shelby Road, Roxie Road intersection. It was secured by the City in the spring of 2020 as part of the police department project. Efforts to create a park started in 2022 to secure grant funding but no development has taken place. Plans call for a 3.25-acre lake to be stocked for fishing, a paved trail around the lake and connecting to the Kanell Trail and Shelby Trail with a parking lot and entrance off Roxie Road. Future projects include pavilions, playgrounds and restrooms.

TRAILS



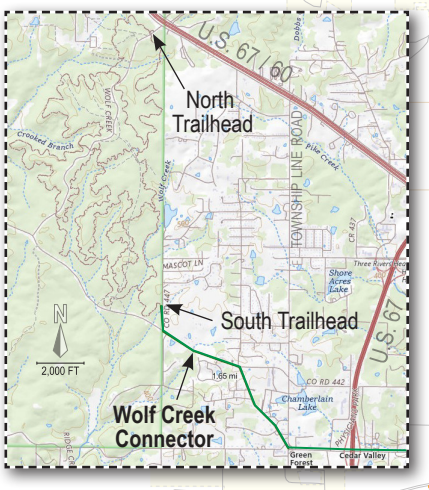
FUTURE PROJECTS

Walking and biking trails, along with sidewalks connect several parks in an ever-growing network that already totals approximately 50 miles throughout Poplar Bluff.

The 1.2-mile Poplar Bluff Greenway Trail, which opened in 2016, connects Hendrickson Park and Kiwanis Bacon Park with Maud Street while a 5-mile paved path along Shelby Road connects McLane Park to the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Highway 53. A path along PP Highway connect Westwood to Shelby (Kanell Trail) and the Wolf Creek Trail in the Mark Twain National Forest that features 21 miles of trails.

The network can connect to several Poplar Bluff R-I schools, walking loops located at both the Regional Medical Center and VA as well as Three Rivers College.

Several projects were identified to extend the network and better connect the city's sidewalks and trails to better serve residents. These projects can be split between the Park Department and the City.



RECOMMENDATIONS

LONG-TERM PLANNING

Each park has its own plan for future projects within the Park Department's Master Plan, such as this one for McLane Park. Some of the most popular projects include splash pads, playground upgrades, improved parking, more courts for basketball or tennis and pickleball. Fundraising efforts by the public for the Robert's Adventure Playground at McLane Park is an example of alternate means of funding large projects in the future.



Nature Area Trail Create a trail through wooded area for trail walking/running with 0.5-mile loop connected to a 1-mile loop.

Ballfield Upgrades New lighting, bleachers, shade canopy.

Splash Pad Create water feature near new Playground.



Robert's Adventure Playground



Parking Expand and pave parking off Highway W to create easy access for trail - northern trail head of Shelby Trail.

When the City of Poplar Bluff's 2008 Comprehensive Plan was created, it called for "creation of four to six mini-parks, playgrounds or small neighborhood parks in the city currently under-served by parks" and provided a map of such areas to consider. Much of the proposed areas for park development were along creeks to create green zones to protect the sensitive natural features. One such area included the Pike Creek greenway.

The City was able to acquire land within the this greenway while developing the new police headquarters site along Shelby Road. This additional land south of PP Highway and north of Roxie Road is within the regulatory floodplain with open fields and woods. Pike Creek Park would be the only City park west of Westwood/Business 67 and centrally located.

This project, along with Leist Park, will expand the Park Department's portfolio but also tie up funding over the next several years. Unless more land is donated to create a park, there are few options for expansion. There are, however, other opportunities to create small neighborhood parks in areas that are under-served.

The Parks Department partners with the Poplar Bluff R-I School District on a number of recreational projects. They could also partner to upgrade a mini park on the south side near Eugene Field Elementary School. The small park is located between Nickey and Henry Streets east of Cross Street. It already features some playground equipment and one basketball hoop but is closed during school hours. There is also an open field north of Nickey Steet. In 1972, this land was purchased using federal grant fundings. "The proposal was introduced with the cooperation of the City Park Department and given state agency approval," according to a newspaper report.

Another partner is the Housing Authority of Poplar Bluff, which currently serves approximately 435 children. There are already playgrounds at the Roxie Street and State Street locations. Expanding and including these areas and developing others within the city limits to include them in the parks system would benefit all citizens.

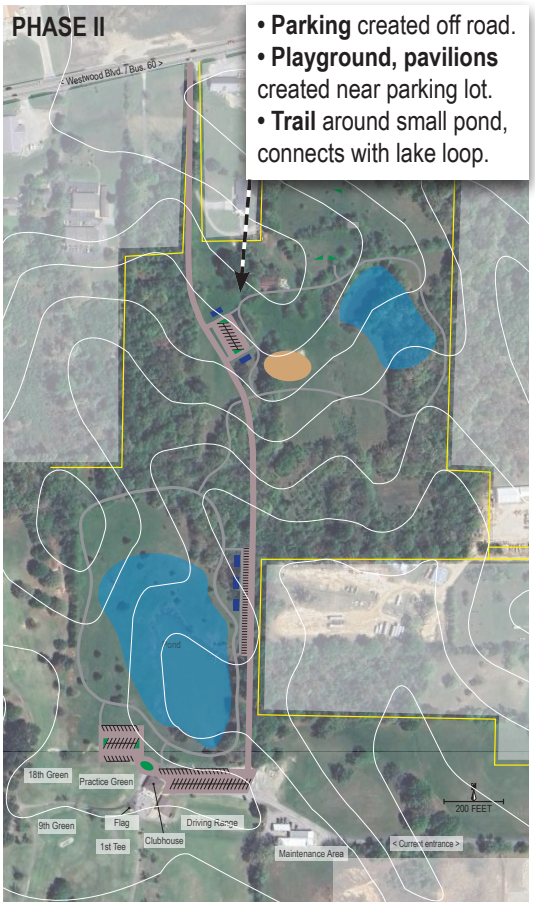
The Park Department recently started a partnership with Three Rivers College to open the Ben and Martha Bidewell Fitness Center to the public.

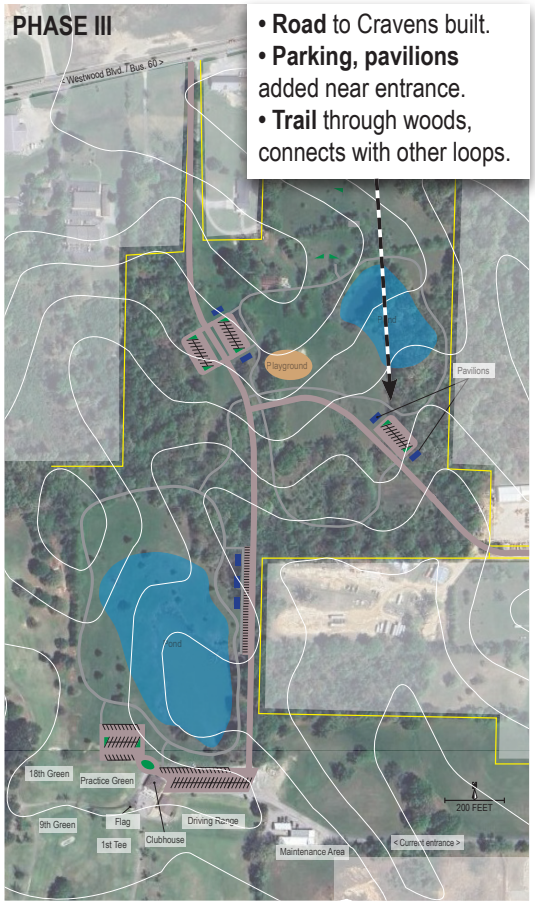
The 2008 Comprehensive Plan noted that "an indoor recreation facility is needed, in addition to the Black River Coliseum." A new indoor recreation facility was included in the long-range plan for Leist Park as an option.

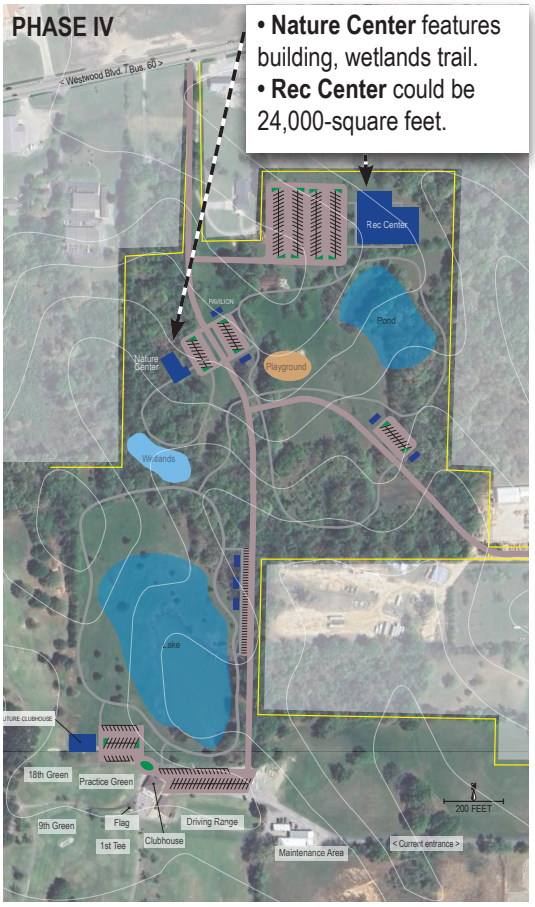
The Park Department could also partner with the R-I School District to create an indoor practice facility that many other districts in the state have created to ensure student safety from excessive heat. A facility could also feature basketball and volleyball courts or a pool. The Coliseum pool is unable to host competitive swim and dive meets due to its depth so partnering with the school district to build a facility could serve as a regional attraction for competitive swimming and other sports.

RECOMMENDATIONS









LEIST PARK DEVELOPMENT

Park Entrance
A road from South Westwood (Business 67) connects the park and Ozark Ridge Golf Course. This will give the park and golf course a easy-to-find entrance.

Parking
The golf course lot, which features 70 spots, is expanded north of the practice green while parking along the park road is included near the large pond and near the entrance.

Fishing Pond
The current pond on the south end of the park is expanded and stocked with fish. A smaller pond on the northeast side of the park is also expanded.

Trails
A trail around each pond is created and connected, creating a 1.25-mile trail while an additional trail through the woods on the eastern side of the park could be a nature trail. The park could be connected to Shelby Trail with a 1.4-mile extension.

Pavilions & Playground
Picnic areas will be near the parking lots located at the entrance and the large pond. A playground will be near the entrance parking lot.

Nature Center
A building to house a nature center could be included on the west side of the park road with a natural trail through the wetlands.

Recreation Center
A 24,000-square foot building could be included in the north-east corner of the park featuring basketball, volleyball courts as well as other indoor activities.

REGIONAL RECREATION



Lake Wappapello

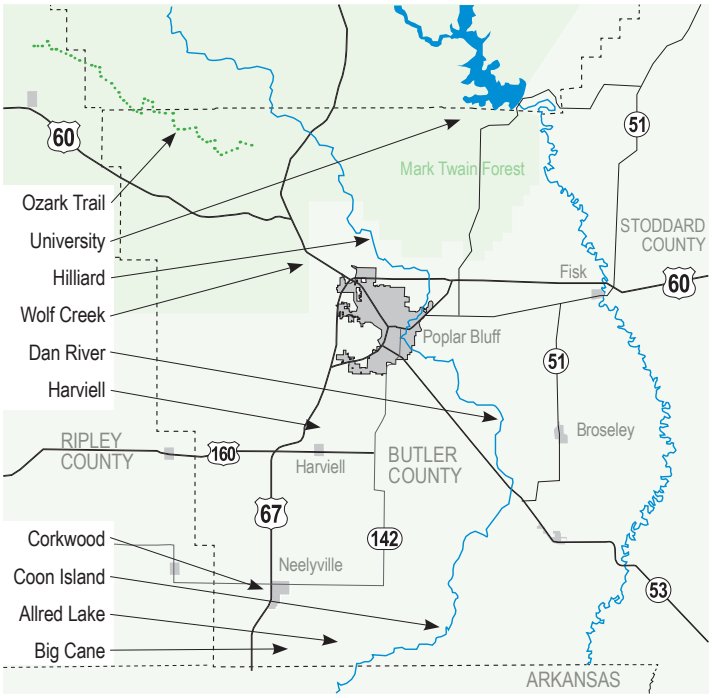
There are several local, state and federally owned natural areas near Poplar Bluff. The area provides superior hunting and fishing opportunities year round. Hunters and anglers have traveled to Poplar Bluff, known as the "Gateway to the Ozarks," to enjoy the many outdoor opportunities of the region. These recreational opportunities put Poplar Bluff in a unique position as a regional hub for outdoor recreation tourism.

PARKS WITHIN CITY LIMITS

MINI PARK Located at Garfield and West Harper Street, this park – also known as the Rotary Park in the 2008 Plan – features a basketball court, picnic tables and grill. The property was purchased from the Park Department in 2021 and is still maintained as a park.
THE POPLARS ON THE BLUFF Created in 2006, this mini park owned by the County was created by the Butler County Historical Society, with support from the Parks Department, and funded by the Rotary Club to celebrate the 60th anniversary of their Poplar Bluff chapter. It includes a "Liberty Tree" tulip poplar grafted from the last standing Revolutionary War-era tree.

PARKS WITHIN BUTLER COUNTY

WOLF CREEK Part of the Mark Twain National Forest, this area features 21 miles of trails designed for biking, hiking or trail running. The trail crosses several tributaries of Wolf Creek and can be accessed at three trailheads - the North Trailhead at County Road 429 west of the Highway 67 Outer Road, 2.2 miles north of the City limits; the South Trailhead at County Road 447 (West Lakeview Drive) north of Highway PP, 2.3 miles west of the City limits; and the Central Trailhead on County Road 429. Each offer gravel parking areas while a restroom is located at the North Trailhead.



OZARK TRAIL With over 430 miles of trail throughout the region, two sections can be found in Butler County. The Victory Trail features 19 miles of trail. The primary trailhead for this section, located off County Road 410, features a large parking area. The Wappapello Trail is 35 miles long starting at the southern trailhead located at the Hendrickson Recreation Area.
ALLRED LAKE NATURAL AREA (MDC) This 76-acre area southeast of Neelyville features lowland swamp and bottomland forest around Allred Lake and can be accessed from County Road 260 and 2601.
BEAVER LAKE Part of the Mark Twain National Forest located off County Road 434, this 15 acre lake is stocked with fish while primitive camping is allowed but no facilities are provided.
BIG CANE CONSERVATION AREA (MDC) This 2,154-acre area can be accessed from County Road 276 and features a boat ramp to Cane Creek Ditch and primitive camping areas.
COON ISLAND CONSERVATION AREA (MDC) This 3,222-acres of swamps along the Black River provides habitat for waterfowl and features a boat ramp off County Road 244 and another off County Road 240
CORKWOOD CONSERVATION AREA (MDC) This 433-acres of bottomland forest can be accessed off Highway 142 one mile west of Neelyville.
DAN RIVER ACCESS (MDC) This boat ramp into Black River is located southeast of Poplar Bluff on County Road 611 and features parking.
FISK ACCESS (MDC) Located north of the Highway 51 bridge over the St. Francis River, it features a boat ramp.
HARVIELL ACCESS (MDC) This 35-acres site along Cane Creek can be accessed off County Road 321 and features a boat ramp and parking.
HILLIARD ACCESS (MDC) Located at the Highway W bridge over Black River, this area features a boat ramp.
JAMES CLARK ACCESS (MDC) This 12-acre site on the south side of the St. Francis River can be accessed from County Road 579 and features a parking lot for hand-launching boats.
HENDRICKSON ACCESS (MDC) This boat launch on the Black River near the town of Hendrickson off County Road 501 features an accessible loading platform and parking.
POPLAR BLUFF AND STEPHEN J. SUN CONSERVATION AREA (MDC) This 1,106-acre area north of Poplar Bluff on the Black River can be accessed from Route NN and features a trail to an oxbow lake and forest.
RINGO FORD ACCESS (MDC) Located at the Highway 160 bridge over the Little Black River, this 1-acre area features parking.
UNIVERSITY FOREST CONSERVATION AREA (MDC) This 7,149-acre area, which can be accessed from Routes W, KK and T, features trails that connects to the Ozark Trail.
WILHELMINA CONSERVATION AREA (MDC) This 1,519-acre site of bottomland forest can be accessed from County Road 203.
FISK CITY PARK (Fisk) Located on Garfield Street, this park features a walking trail, playgrounds and shelter.
KRAMER MEMORIAL PARK (Neelyville) Located on Park Street, there is a playground and picnic shelter along with historical markers.
QULIN LIONS PARK (Qulin) Located on 5th Street, this park features a walking trail, playgrounds and shelter.

NEARBY PARKS

CLEARWATER LAKE (USACE) Approximately 52 miles northwest of Poplar Bluff, this 2.5-square mile lake features boating, swimming, camping and trails.
LAKE WAPPAPELLO (USACE) Located approximately 16 miles northeast of Poplar Bluff, it includes boating, swimming, camping, trails and features Lake Wappapello State Park.
OZARK NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAYS NATIONAL PARK (NPS) The first national park to protect a river system, it was dedicated in 1974 and features 80,000 acres along the Current and Jacks Fork rivers.
SAM A. BAKER STATE PARK (MoDNR) Located in Wayne County along the St. Francis River and Big Creek, this 5,323-acre recreation area features camping, trails, and a nature center.
MINGO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (USFWS) This 21,592-acres of swamp and marsh land in Stoddard County north of Puxico is a refuge for waterfowl and other wildlife.



2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CHAPTER 5



2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 5

Mobility

Here is a summary of this chapter covering the City of Poplar Bluff's transportation network:

Poplar Bluff serves as a vital regional transportation hub for Southeast Missouri, strategically positioned at the intersection of US Highways 60 and 67, which will be strengthen with the future extension of Interstate 57. While the city is well-connected for freight and regional travel — supported by Union Pacific rail lines, daily Amtrak passenger service, and the Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport — its local pedestrian and bicycle networks are severely limited, covering only a third of total street mileage.

Planners utilize a standard Functional Classification System to categorize the city's 144.2 miles of locally maintained streets into Arterials, Collectors, and Access Roads. Currently, 92.6% of city streets are paved with asphalt or concrete, 1.6% with brick, and 5.8% remain unpaved. State-maintained principal arterials (Routes 60, 67, and 53) carry traffic outside the region. Locally, minor arterials like Westwood Boulevard handle dense commercial traffic and experience severe congestion. Poplar Bluff lacks an integrated collector street network. Many local roads were annexed without being updated to collector standards, forcing traffic to "jog" across commercial lots or residential streets, driving local gridlock.

Recommendations

The plan shifts from vehicular-centric planning to a "Complete Street" approach, designing future infrastructure to safely accommodate motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists simultaneously:

- **Pedestrian Connectivity:** High-priority sidewalk extensions are recommended for major thoroughfares (e.g., Barron Road, Main Street, Westwood Boulevard) alongside highly reflective, illuminated crosswalk enhancements to reduce pedestrian fatalities.
- **East Bypass**: To remove an estimated 85 to 100 daily trucks from downtown roads, the plan proposes an "inner or outer ring" East Bypass connecting Highway 53 to Highway 60 and Route AA.
- **Road Management:** Improvements to existing collector streets, including upgrades to intersections, and expansion of network to relieve traffic volumes from Westwood, Kanell, Barron and Main.
- **Airport Upgrades**: Capital projects planned in five-year increments include a new terminal building, added hangars, and extending the runway to 5,500 feet.

Driven by upcoming interstate expansions, Poplar Bluff must aggressively secure future arterial corridors, bridge gaps in its collector grid, and implement multimodal updates to handle incoming regional growth effectively.



The 2025 Active Transportation Plan for Poplar Bluff created for the Butler County Health Department is included as an appendix.

TOP PHOTO: South Shelby Road and the adjacent trail south of PP Highway opened in 2019.



A car waits for the signal to change at the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Shelby Road.

Transportation systems are a vital part of any community and are a major emphasis of any comprehensive planning effort. This chapter describes the existing transportation systems within the environs of Poplar Bluff, Missouri and provides a long-range plan for future modifications to and expansion of the existing transportation network. Significant emphasis is placed on the local streets. The local street system was identified as having the greatest need for improvement and also receives the highest utilization among local residents.

BACKGROUND

Located at the intersection of two major highways – US 60 and US 67 – Poplar Bluff is a regional transportation center for Southeast Missouri. This position will be further strengthened with Interstate 57 planned to be extended from Sikeston in the coming years. Highway 60 already connects Interstates 57 and 55 at Sikeston to Interstate 44 at Springfield while Highway 67 provides a connection to St. Louis to the north and Little Rock, Arkansas, to the south. Poplar Bluff also features state routes 53 and 142 along with 160 that provides a lower functional capacity but provide critical connections to regional destinations.

In addition to the highway network, rail lines also provide an important role in local and regional transportation. Railroads were one of the principal drivers for Poplar Bluff's growth and development throughout the previous century and still provide transportation for freight goods to, from and through Poplar Bluff and provide a competitive advantage to the City's Industrial Park. Limited passenger travel is also available through daily Amtrak service.

Another transportation asset for the City of Poplar Bluff is its airport. The Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport is a general aviation level facility that provides air travel access mainly through charters and private business planes. Currently, there is not a regularly scheduled commercial carrier based at the airport. Recreational flying is also supported by the facility.

Other modes of transportation typically included in a municipal transportation system include bus, light rail, bicycle and pedestrian. While Poplar Bluff is too small to support a light rail system, the City does feature limited public transportation choices. There is a limited bus service that operates both a limited fixed route system as well as an on-demand service, very similar to a shuttle service. The City's pedestrian and bicycle network is extremely limited, featuring 50.1 miles that covers only a third of the total street mileage.

→

ROAD SYSTEM

Transportation planners and engineers use a Functional Classification System to describe the different levels and types of use of city streets. Most street ordinances also use this system to establish minimum standards of design and construction for different types of streets. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) provides the standard for street and highway functional classifications in its publication "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets" (AASHTO, 2018). The following definitions may be inferred from the Green Book for urban streets:

ARTERIAL ROADS

A street that provides the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance, with some degree of access control. This classification is generally subdivided into principal arterial and secondary arterial.

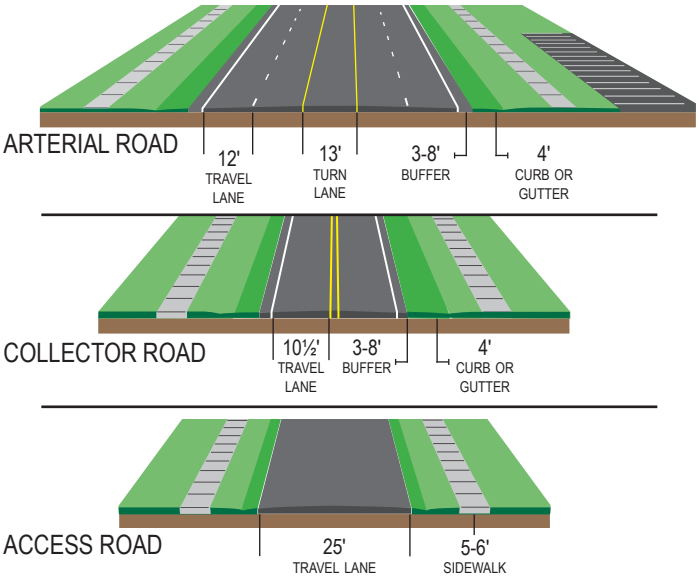
COLLECTOR ROADS

A street that provides a less highly developed level of service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them to arterials. Since collectors provide a dual function of distributing traffic to local streets while at the same time moving increasing volumes of traffic to an arterial, provisions must be made to allow left hand turns and move traffic forward at a reasonable rate of speed.

ACCESS ROADS

A street that consists of all roads not defined as arterials or collectors; primarily provides access to land with little or no through movement.

ROAD CLASSIFICATION



	ARTERIAL ROAD	COLLECTOR ROAD	ACCESS ROAD
Number of lanes	More than 2	2	2
Width	12 feet	10 to 12 feet	8 to 10 feet
Inside shoulder width	None	None	None
Outside shoulder width	4 to 8 feet	1 to 6 feet	0 to 2 feet
AADT	1,500+	300-2,600	0-400
Design speed (mph)	35 to 40 mph	30 to 35 mph	25 to 30 mph
Parking Lanes	None	1	1
Width	—	8 to 10 feet	8 to 10 feet
Right-of-Way width	80 feet	60 feet	50 feet
Stopping sight distance	300 feet	200 feet	200 feet
Max grade	6%	8%	10%
Minimum grade	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Access intervals			
ROW to curb	150 feet	30 feet	20 feet
Between curbs	200 feet	30 feet	20 feet
Bridge Standards			
Vertical clearance	15 feet	14.5 feet	14.5 feet
Pavement width	50 feet	32 feet	25 feet
Loading	H-20	H-15	H-15
Examples	Westwood Blvd. Kanell Blvd.	Main St. Barron Rd.	

MoDOT **15** MILES*

Roads within the city limits are managed by the City's Street Department and MoDOT.

**Does not include Highways 60-67*

144 MILES

While there is no direct relationship between functional classification and traffic counts, traffic counts and speeds are typically higher on higher functionally classified roadways. Arterial streets have the highest traffic counts. Local streets have the lowest traffic loads. Collector streets have intermediate levels of traffic. Since they carry more traffic, arterial streets should be wider to handle more lanes. Points of access to adjacent lots should be limited and on-street parking is generally prohibited on arterial roadways. These elements increase the frequency of stops and turning movements, both of which create conditions that are contrary to driver's expectations. Major intersections with arterial roads should be grade-separated to maintain constant, uninterrupted traffic flow. Local roads have fewer lanes and slower posted speed limits allowing for more points of access and narrower lane widths. On-street parking is common, especially if adjacent lot sizes are small.

In an ideal world, a completely planned community would develop a branching network of collectors and arterials to funnel traffic from local streets to various destinations. In reality, though, growth occurs in phases. Frequently, streets that are originally thought to serve a local function gradually change in use as traffic patterns change. As traffic on a local street increases, a point is logically reached at which the local street is no longer functioning as a local street and is beginning to function as a collector. At that point, the street should ideally be upgraded (widened, etc) to match the geometric characteristic desirable for a collector street. Similarly, as traffic patterns change, a street that was formerly an arterial may be downgraded to a collector status. The problem lies in assigning a quantitative value to the traffic count that triggers a change in functional classification. Since municipalities and state transportation agencies frequently collect traffic data on a recurring basis, having some information relating traffic load to functional classification would be immensely helpful to local street departments and planners. Unfortunately, this type of information is currently not available and costly to obtain.

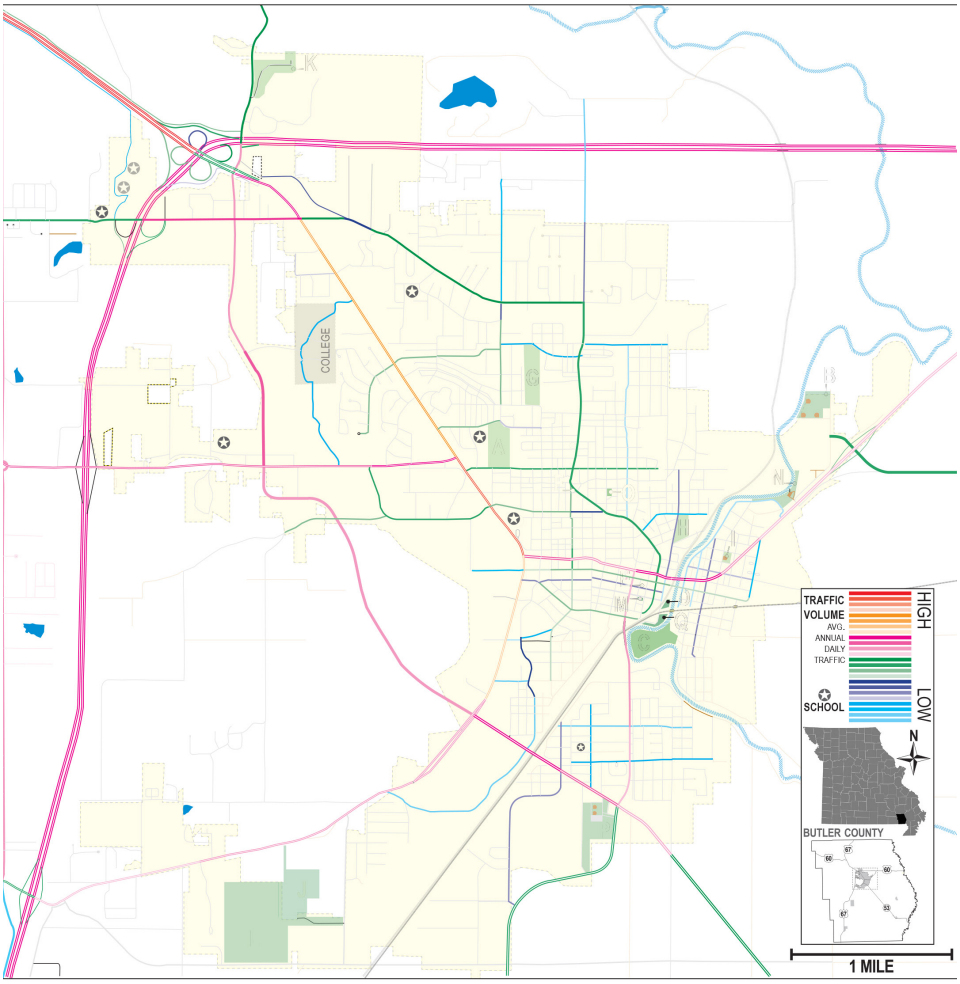
CURRENT CONDITIONS

The City's street department records include limited inventories of the street network dating back to the 1970's. In 1994, the department began assembling a more detailed inventory, including length and pavement type, for all the street segments inside city limits. For this plan, a separate map and inventory was created showing 144.2 miles of streets inside the city limits. This does not include roadways that are maintained by MoDOT. Annexations that have occurred since the previous plan have increased the total road mileage by 16 miles under the City's control. The department is encouraged to continue expanding the data collected on the streets. Among the findings:

- 92.6% of City streets (133.5 miles) are paved with asphalt or concrete
- 1.6% of City streets (2.35 miles) are paved with bricks or cobblestones
- 5.8% of City streets (8.3 miles) are not paved
- Ward 2 has the most roads at 25.7% with Ward 5 the fewest at 17.83%
- Ward 3 has the most unpaved roads at 18% followed by Ward 1 at 9.4%
- All of the streets paved with bricks are located in Ward 3.

The following assessment is not exhaustive, but is generally qualitative, based on the local authors' knowledge of and experience with the local street network.

TRAFFIC VOLUME



MoDOT

PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS

For the purpose of this plan, principal arterials have been defined as those major thoroughfares that move traffic to and from Poplar Bluff and other destinations outside of the Poplar Bluff area. This definition is generally consistent with AASHTO. All of the Principal Arterials in the Poplar Bluff area are state-maintained infrastructure. These include Route 60, Route 67, and Route 53. It is important to note that only very small portions of these highways are inside the incorporated limits of Poplar Bluff. Although the City of Poplar Bluff has little to no influence on the maintenance and/or development of these highways, discussions of their significance to the area and the needs identified by the planning team are included.

US Highway 60 is the principal east-west arterial in the Poplar Bluff area. Route 60 is presently a four-lane expressway from Interstate 44 in Springfield – located about 200 miles west of Poplar Bluff – to its intersection with Interstate 55 about 45 miles east of Poplar Bluff. East of I-55, Route 60 merges into Interstate 57, which continues to Chicago, Illinois. In general, there are no major deficiencies on Route 60, other than the need for more interchanges and grade separations to replace numerous at-grade crossings.

US Highway 67 is the principal north-south arterial in the Poplar Bluff area. Route 67 can be described as connecting Little Rock, Arkansas with St. Louis, Missouri (although it continues as far as east-central Iowa to the north and all the way to the Texas-Mexico border to the south). In April 2005, the City of Poplar Bluff passed a dedicated sales tax that enabled the expansion of about 46 miles of two-lane roadway north of Poplar Bluff to a divided four-lane highway. This sales tax also allowed for expansion of 67 south of Poplar Bluff to the state line, roughly 12 miles. The Future I-57 project in Butler County, which upgrades 67 to interstate standards from Route 160/158 interchange south to the state line, started in the Summer of 2022. The project constructs four new lanes west of the existing U.S. 67 pavement and converts the existing road into an east outer road. Work to extend I-57 west from Sikeston has already begun with upgrading the existing road to interstate standards by removing at-grade intersections.

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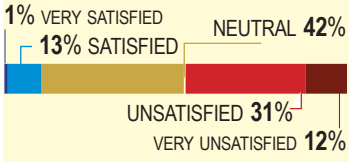
CURRENT CONDITIONS

Residents surveyed in 2024 were asked for their views on transportation among other issues. Here is a look at the results:

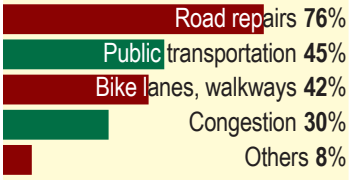
PB2025 SURVEY

How satisfied are you with the current transportation infrastructure?

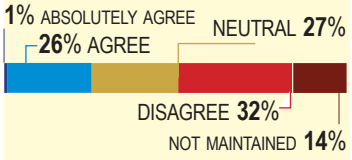


What transportation improvements are needed?

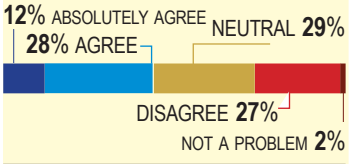
SELECT ALL THAT APPLY



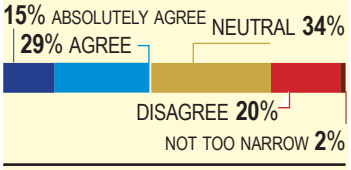
City streets are generally well maintained



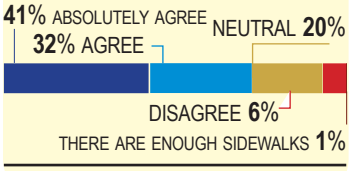
Traffic movement in the city is a problem



City streets are too narrow



City needs more sidewalks



State Route 53 is a two-lane rural arterial that runs southeast from Poplar Bluff and terminates at Route 25, at Holcomb, Missouri. It is the primary transportation route to and from the agriculturally rich region of the Missouri Bootheel and partially facilitates transportation between Poplar Bluff and Memphis, Tennessee. MoDOT is scheduled to add turn lanes on 53 between Route 142 to County Road 306 in late 2027. Route 53 features a 1.1 mile segment within the city limits Starting at its intersection with Westwood (Business 67), there is a 0.2 mile segment of five-lane roadway between the intersection and the bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad. This bridge presently carries two lanes with a dedicated left turn for the westbound land to southbound 11th Street. East of the bridge, the roadway is three lanes for 0.9 miles to the intersection of South Broadway (Ditch Road) and State Route 142. Route 53 then transitions into a two-lane roadway and continues southeast from Poplar Bluff. It was recommended in the previous plan that Route 53 needs to be widened and curbed within the city limits.

In general, the principal arterial system in the Poplar Bluff area is believed to be adequate. The existing roadways need upgrading, as discussed, but no new principal arterials are believed to be necessary.

SECONDARY (MINOR) ARTERIALS

For the purpose of this plan, secondary arterials have been defined as those arteries carrying traffic to destinations within the city limits or to the city limits. The secondary arterials maintained by MoDOT are Westwood Boulevard (Business 67), Pine Street (Business Route 60), Kanell Boulevard (Route PP), South Broadway-Fifth Street (Route WW) and the portions of Route 53 inside city limits. City maintained secondary arterials include Main Street, Barron Road, Maud Street, Oak Grove Road, Shelby Road, along with Vine and Bartlett streets.

Westwood Boulevard (Business Route 67) is the principal north-south arterial running through Poplar Bluff and connecting to interchanges with US 67 at the northern and southern limits of the city. The most congested section, between PP and Maud, saw an average annual daily traffic (AADT) count of 15,539 northbound and 12,543 southbound in 2025. The present alignment of Business 67 was constructed before 1935 and has been the primary driver of commercial development in the city since its construction. Until 2001, Business 67 was US 67, carrying the full load of through traffic, until a bypass was constructed to the west of town. The roadway transitions from a divided four-lane roadway to a five-lane roadway at the north end of town, which continues south approximately 3.75 miles to the intersection of State Route 53. This five-lane section of Westwood Boulevard is the main commercial area in the City and was resurfaced in 2026. South of Route 53, Westwood Boulevard returns to a divided four-lane roadway for 0.5 miles, then transitions to three lanes for 2.5 miles to its intersection with US 67.

Pine Street (Business Route 60) is the principal east-west arterial in Poplar Bluff. The most congested section, between Westwood and Ninth, saw an AADT of 7864 westbound and 6,981 eastbound, while east of Black River the AADT was 6,118 westbound and 5,985 eastbound. The present alignment was US 60 until a limited access bypass was built north of the city in 1986. Business 60 exits from westbound US 60 (there is no exit from eastbound US 60) east of the city limits as a divided four-lane roadway. The divided four-lane continues about 1.8 miles to near the present city limits, whereupon it transitions to an undivided four-lane with no center median or barrier as Pine Street for a distance of about 3 miles to its intersection with Westwood Boulevard. From this intersection, Business 60 continues north coincident with Westwood Boulevard. Business 60 provides access to the historic Downtown.

Business 60 should be widened to five lanes from Westwood Boulevard to the city limits; however, there are several physical obstructions that would make this impractical and likely cost-prohibitive. As an alternative, MoDOT proposed a "road diet" in 2025 with three lanes, one a dedicated turn lane, and room enough for bike lanes, when the road was set to be resurfaced in 2026. However, significant opposition to the plan scrapped the project.

State Route PP (Kanell Boulevard) begins at its intersection with Westwood Boulevard and travels west from Poplar Bluff until it intersects with US 60 about 20 miles west of Poplar Bluff. The AADT count was 6,514 eastbound and 5,776 westbound in 2025.

→

Route PP is actually a former alignment of US 60. From Westwood Boulevard to Physicians Park Road, 2.4 miles, it is a five-lane roadway since 2015 and a two-lane roadway west featuring a roundabout with Township Line Road which was completed in 2023. Resurfacing of this road is scheduled for 2028.

Main Street is a north-south minor arterial with approximately 3,000 ADT in 2025 and is 2.7 miles from Broadway Street downtown to the city limits where the road turns into Marble Hill Road. It is two lanes with room for parking on either side south of Harper Street. Nearly a mile (0.9) of Main Street north of Pine to Harper streets is paved with bricks.

Oak Grove Road is an east-west road between Westwood and Township Line Road outside the city limits. It has five lanes, including a turn lane, between Westwood and Tom Hoover Way (Poplar Bluff High School) and two lanes further west. The AADT count for the 1.8-mile road is highest west of Shelby to Highway 67 at 7,185.

Shelby Road is essentially a western bypass for Westwood. The north-south four-land road connects Route W at Westwood to Route 53 at Westwood. Construction of the road between Oak Grove and PP Highway was completed in 2010 while the southern section to Highway 53 was finished in May 2019. The AADT count north of PP Highway is 5,011.

Barron Road is an east-west two-lane road from Westwood to Main Street. The 1.9-mile stretch also features approximately 1,200 feet of Katy Lane east of Westwood to the point where Barron continues north to Route W. The AADT count is 3,581 between this point and 14th Street and 3,374 between 14th Street and Main through a mostly residential area.

South Broadway Street / Fifth Street is better known as Ditch Road. This north-south road that is 1.5 miles extending from Pine Street to Route 53. It starts as Fifth Street south of Pine for 0.3 mile where it meets South Broadway at an intersection that includes Park Avenue. This section is two lanes with left-hand turns at Vine and Poplar streets. The roadway continues as South Broadway on a bridge over the railroad tracks before it parallels a large drainage ditch approximately 3,300 feet south of Ashcroft Road. This section is three lanes including a turn lane while a gravel access road on the east side of the ditch to commercial land is maintained by the city and not officially named but these businesses all have South Broadway addresses, which is why most people refer to this as Ditch Road. The AADT count is 3,290 between Park and Victor streets while Fifth Street north of Park is 2,814.

MoDOT also considers Maud, Vine, Bartlett and G streets as minor arterial streets, however, their size and traffic counts currently put them in a major collector category. There are several other lettered state routes and one numbered state route that are in the secondary arterial/major collector categories and are of significance to Poplar Bluff. These include Route 142 (south from South Broadway), Route B (east from Business 60), Route M (southwest from South Westwood), Route NN (north from Business 60), Route T (north from US 67), Route UU (south from 53), and Route W (north from North Westwood). All of these roadways are maintained by MoDOT. They serve to connect the City of Poplar Bluff with the surrounding countryside, which is primarily residential or agricultural land use.

COLLECTORS

For the purposes of this study, existing collectors have been defined as streets and roads that connect to arterials or other collectors. Thirty-six (36) feet is the minimum practical width to allow a center turn lane, which is an important requirement of a major collector street. This definition is somewhat of a departure from convention in that it does not consider the actual functional use of the street. Portions of several streets originally constructed as local streets or roads are now functioning as collectors. However, most of these streets functioning as collectors are in need of significant upgrades to allow them to function effectively as collectors.

→

BENEFITS OF BRICK STREETS

Poplar Bluff's brick streets were completed in 1913 following the specifications established for similar streets in New York City. There were 3.3 miles of bricks laid along Main and Vine streets for $86,645 (approximately $2.9 million today).

Today, there is 2.3 miles of brick streets (1,2446 feet) in the City.

The benefit of having brick streets include:

- **Cost:** Not having to repave the road surface every 20 to 30 years and easier access to underground utilities. A study by Carnegie Mellon University found that maintaining brick streets saves up to $200,000 over 50 years.
- **Aesthetic:** Brick streets boost neighborhood character while homes located along historic brick streets often see increased property values and strong buyer demand with studies showing a boost of 25% to 30% in values;
- **Environment**: Bricks allow rainwater to seep through naturally, reducing runoff into storm sewers, and retain less heat than asphalt, helping to reduce urban heat;
- **Safety:** The texture and variations of the bricks slow down vehicles naturally creating traffic calming which creates safer and more walkable areas. Between 2002-26, only two of the 182 pedestrian-related accidents in the City occurred on brick roads while two others occurred at an intersection where a paved street met a brick road (2.1% of accidents).



CURRENT CONDITIONS

To map all of the streets presently functioning as collectors, but not designed with the collector function in mind, could give a false sense of a working network, which is not the case in Poplar Bluff. It is also important to note that not all of these streets meeting the width criterion are presently functioning as collectors. The existing streets within Poplar Bluff that meet the MoDOT criterion for a major collector, with their AADT for 2025 if known, are:

- Sunset Drive (1,955)
- Ninth Street (1,609)
- Maud Street (1,535)
- 14th Street (1,335)
- Harper Street (1,111)
- Cravens Road / Industrial Park Road
- Three Rivers Boulevard

Other than the original sections of town, it is obvious that the streets and road were not laid out with the collector function in mind. The lack of a good collector network is believed to be the major cause of traffic congestion in Poplar Bluff.

LOCAL STREETS AND ROADS

All other streets and roads in Poplar Bluff not identified above are functionally classified as local streets and roads. Although several of the local roadways actually function as collectors in that they gather traffic from other local streets – they have not been constructed to that standard or planned with that function in mind. These streets include:

- 11th Street
- Vine / Bartlett Streets
- C Street
- G Street
- Second Street
- Alice Street
- Charlton Lane
- Fair Street
- Highland Drive
- Iron Bridge Road
- Pershing
- Relief Street
- Roxie Road
- Seifert Drive
- Thomas Street
- Victor Street

BRIDGES

Major bridges within the present city limits include the Pine Street bridge and the Vine Street Bridge which both cross over the Black River. The bridges on Route 60 over the Black River are regionally significant, although outside the city limits. The westbound Pine Street bridge was replaced by MoDOT in 2023 and included a pedestrian walkway while the eastbound bridge was built in 1975. The Vine Street bridge was built in 1970.

Smaller bridges are also found over Pike Creek on Route PP (upgraded in 2015), Roxy Road (replaced in 2024), Westwood Boulevard (southbound in 1997, northbound scheduled for 2027), 11th Street (2020), Route 142 (1972, refurbished 2025), Fair Street (2015), and Lone Star Road (2005). There are three bridges over railroad lines, along Route 53 (1990), Broadway (1981) and Cravens Road-Industrial Park Bypass (2019).

The bridges over Black River are regionally important structures that support transportation within Poplar Bluff and the movement to and from other important trade centers such as St. Louis, Memphis and Little Rock. Damage to or loss of any of the bridges supporting the traffic network for Polar Bluff should be addressed in the City's emergency plans.

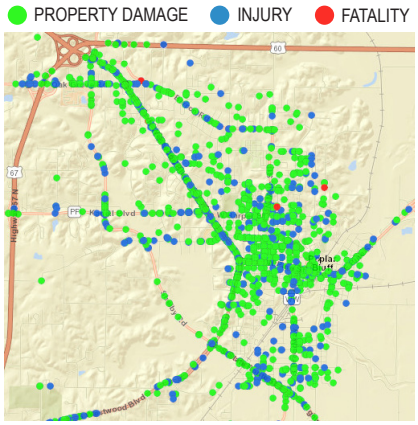
VEHICLE CRASHES 2020-25

Crash report data in the City of Poplar Bluff between 2020-25 was reviewed. Here are the findings:

Accidents per day:
1.84

Injuries per year:
206.8

Deaths per year:
2.3



Source: Mo. State Highway Patrol

The vast majority of accidents occurred along Westwood Boulevard (Business 67), which accounted for 27% of all accidents, followed by Pine Street (Business 60), which accounted for 9.1% of all accidents. When looking at specific intersections, the single most dangerous spot for overall collisions is Westwood and Kanell (PP) with 166 total accidents.

TOP 10 INTERSECTIONS WITH MOST INJURIES

1	Westwood & Kanell (PP)	INJURIES ..... 55 ACCIDENTS 166	6	Shelby Rd. & Kanell (PP)	INJURIES ..... 22 ACCIDENTS 48
2	Westwood & Highland Drive	INJURIES ..... 30 ACCIDENTS 97	7	Westwood & Cherry St.	INJURIES ..... 20 ACCIDENTS 70
3	Westwood & Sunset St.	INJURIES ..... 27 ACCIDENTS 46	8	Westwood & Highway 53	INJURIES ..... 19 ACCIDENTS 65
4	Westwood & Maud St.	INJURIES ..... 26 ACCIDENTS 105	9	Westwood & Spring St.	INJURIES ..... 19 ACCIDENTS 41
5	Oak Grove & Shelby Rd.	INJURIES ..... 26 ACCIDENTS 68	10	Fifth St. & Park Ave.	INJURIES ..... 16 ACCIDENTS 24

PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS IN POPLAR BLUFF (2020-25)

Total injuries: **34**

Total deaths: **4**

A pedestrian hit by a vehicle traveling at...

25 MPH



HAS AN **89%** *CHANCE OF SURVIVAL*

35 MPH



HAS A **68%** *CHANCE OF SURVIVAL*

45 MPH



HAS A **35%** *CHANCE OF SURVIVAL*

SOURCE: Rosén, E., & Sander, U. (2009). Pedestrian fatality risk as a function of car impact speed. Accident Analysis & Prevention, 41(3), 536-542.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

AIRPORT

The Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport (POF) is located approximately 3 miles east of the city limits on Highway B and services air traffic into and out of the region. The airport does not have regularly scheduled commercial flights for passenger travel with the closest commercial flights located in Cape Girardeau (77 miles), Marion, Illinois (127), Memphis (152) or St. Louis (164).

Previously named the Earl Fields Memorial Airport for an alderman who helped start the facility in 1934, it now features 338 acres. The City of Poplar Bluff is the airport sponsor while a 10-member advisory board provides recommendations. Board members are appointed by the city council for three-year terms. Staff include a full-time manager and part-time employees who provide aircraft services including the sale of 100LL and Jet-A fuels, aircraft parking tiedowns, and hangar storage when space is available. Private flight instruction is also available but there are no aircraft maintenance mechanics based here.

The airport provided an economic impact of $5.8 million to the area, according to the Missouri Statewide Airports Economic Impact Study (MoDOT 2012), which adjusted for inflation is approximately $8.4 million today.

The 5,000-foot runway was reconstructed in 2021 and is 100 feet wide with a full-length taxiway that is 40 feet wide with a 12,000 square foot apron that features five tiedowns. This provides an adequate runway length for most of the private commercial and recreational aircraft that currently use the facility.



An aircraft is towed at the Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport. The 5,000-foot runway was reconstructed in 2021

The terminal building is 3,100 square feet, 68 feet by 46 feet, featuring a lobby, office space, kitchenette, meeting room, flight planning room and restrooms with five courtesy cars available. There are currently six hangars with construction underway to add additional space that will be able to accommodate 47 aircraft. The airfield has navigation aids available for non-precision instrument approach to the runway.

The airport has a specialized master plan called the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) that identifies improvements recommended for the airport. The ALP was updated in May 2025 and approved by the Missouri Department of Transportation. It details the existing airport facilities and the scheduled plans for improvements and upgrades to the facility in five-year increments.

RAILWAYS

The Union Pacific railroad owns and operates the rail lines that run through Poplar Bluff. It has a switchyard that is located in the central area of Poplar Bluff. The rail line provides freight transportation for the agricultural and industrial businesses in Poplar Bluff. Amtrak provides passenger service. This service allows rail passengers from the area to reach the major passenger rail terminals at St. Louis and Dallas, Texas.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation in Poplar Bluff is provided through Southeast Missouri Transportation Service, Inc. (SMTS - www.ridesmts.org). SMTS is a non-governmental, nonprofit general public transportation service, available to all residents regardless of age, in a 21 county region, offering local services to major cities within the region, such as Poplar Bluff, Piedmont, Van Buren, and Ellington. According to SMTS, the transportation is available for "shopping, medical, nutrition, recreation, and personal business" purposes. SMTS provides a wide variety of "curb-to-curb" passenger transportation services to all age groups throughout south central and southeast Missouri. Services include local service which is used to fulfill basic transportation needs such as shopping, medical appointments, nutrition, recreation and personal business and long distance medical service, linking rural residents with state-of-the-art medical technology in St. Louis, Springfield and Cape Girardeau. SMTS also provides transportation for groups and organizations on a contract basis. SMTS is funded through direct grants from MoDOT and contracts for service with Southeast Missouri Area Agency on Aging. Long distance medical services link rural residents with major medical facilities in three states. Transportation is offered to Missouri cities such as St. Louis, Cape Girardeau and Springfield. Other optional destinations are Memphis, Tennessee, and Paragould, Arkansas. SMTS contracts with the City of Poplar Bluff, to provide a public transportation system or other organizations to provide transportation for groups such as sheltered workshops, dialysis patients, and Medicaid recipients.

Commercial transportation (including ride-share apps and taxis) that may be publicly subsidized but typically operate to make a profit are also present in Poplar Bluff. (Ozark Foothills Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, 2023)

PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE FACILITIES

Sidewalks are limited in the City of Poplar Bluff. Most of the sidewalk networks are located in the older, central parts of the City. Most of these areas were developed prior to the 1950s. After 1950, automobile ownership soared and became the primary mode of travel during the latter half of the 20th century, during which time sidewalks were not required.

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CURRENT CONDITIONS

However, today City ordinances require sidewalks for all subdivisions that are developed inside the city limits. However, the city has frequently waived the requirement for many years.

The survey conducted as part of this report had 73% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the question "The City should have more sidewalks." This high response rate, up from 68% in 2007, indicates that pedestrian walk routes have again become important to the community. An inventory and study of the condition of the City's sidewalks was completed in 2023 for the regional transportation plan and found that there was 50.13 miles of sidewalk that serves citizens with approximately half, 58.5%, rated good, or unlikely to hinder mobility for the average pedestrian.

Pedestrian walk and bike trails have become very popular in communities in recent years as sources of recreation and exercise for citizens of all ages. Poplar Bluff has been proactive in providing at least the walk trail facilities linking and within parks, including Kiwanis Bacon Memorial Park, Hendrickson Park, Ferguson Grove and McLane Park.

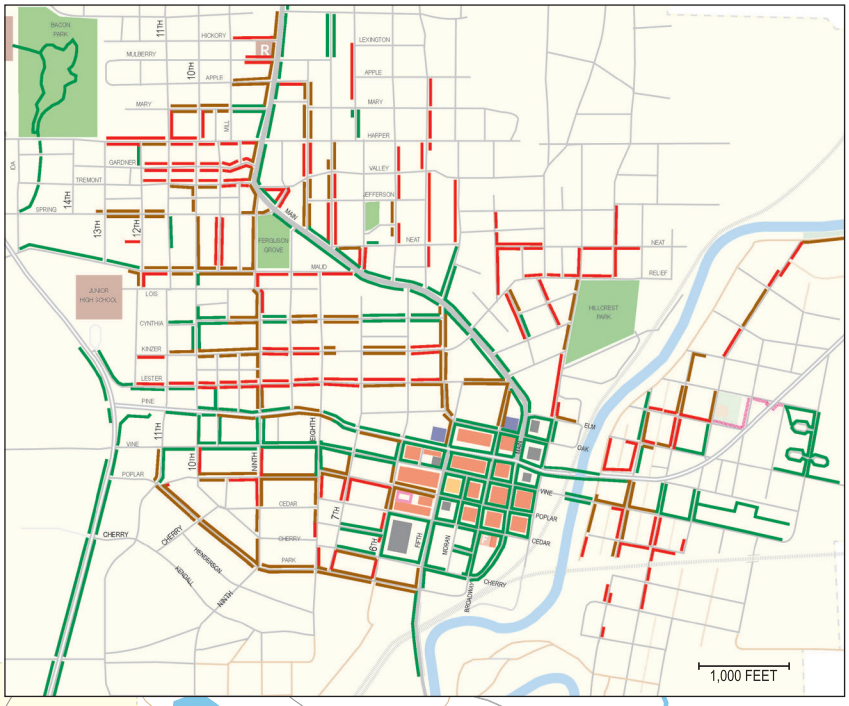
SIDEWALKS ASSESSMENT

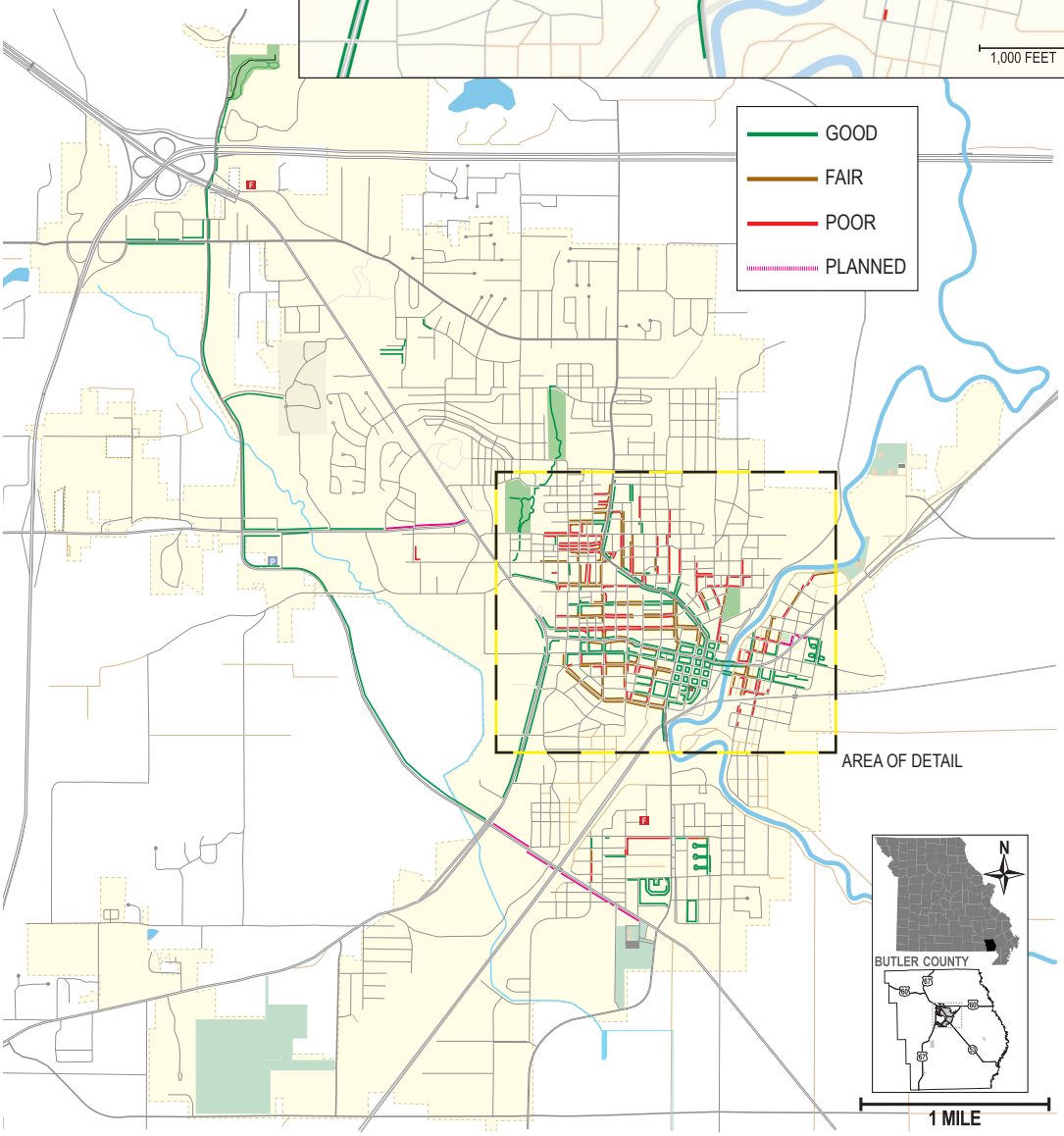
Sidewalks in Poplar Bluff were assessed for the Regional Transportation Plan and updated for an Active Transportation Plan and this project to show the state of the City's sidewalk network, which totals 264,674 linear feet, or **50.13 miles** in all. *Below is the total linear feet and percentage of all sidewalks:*

GOOD
58.5%
154,965 FEET

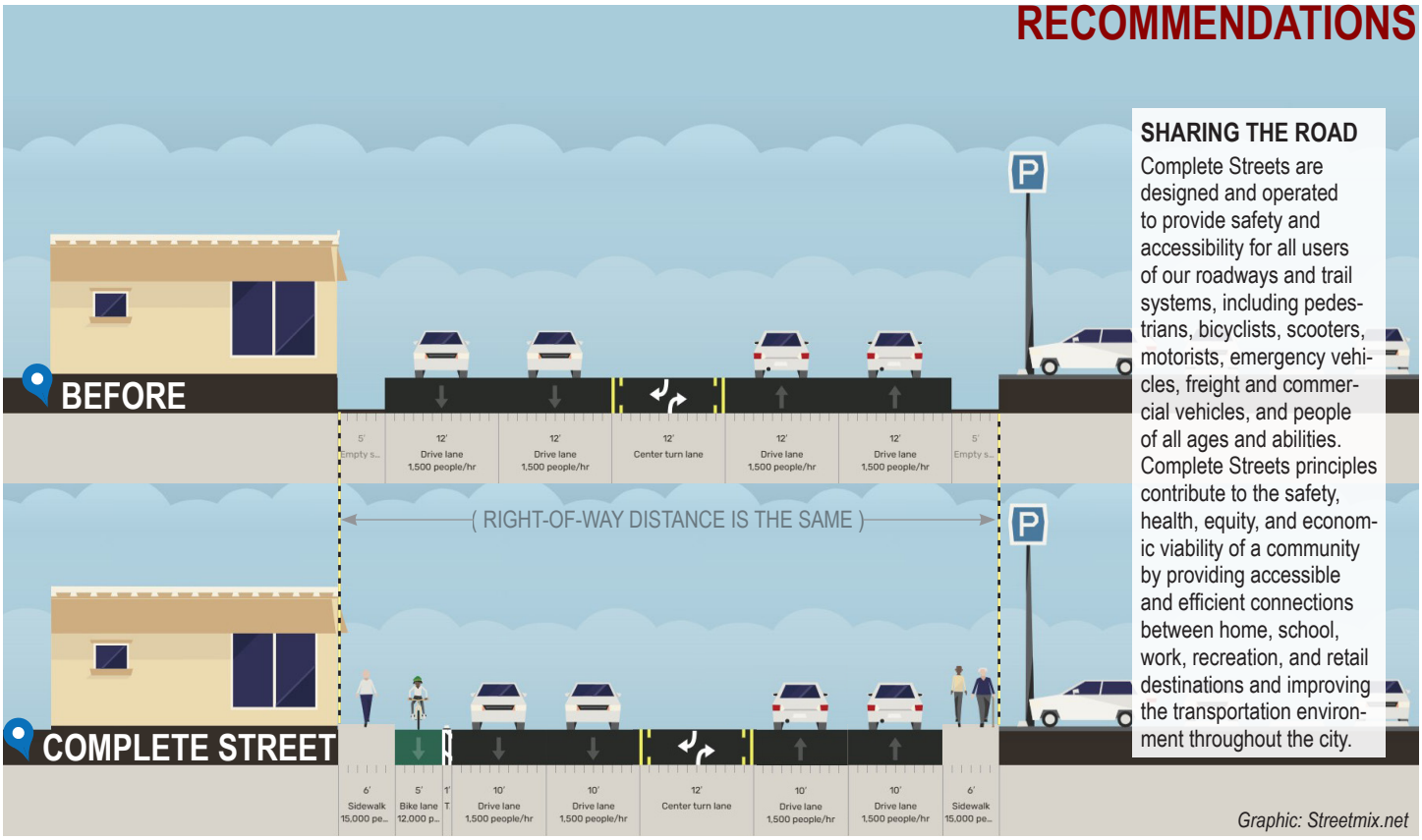
FAIR
23.8%
63,182 FEET

POOR
17.5%
46,527 FEET





RECOMMENDATIONS



SHARING THE ROAD

Complete Streets are designed and operated to provide safety and accessibility for all users of our roadways and trail systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, scooters, motorists, emergency vehicles, freight and commercial vehicles, and people of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets principles contribute to the safety, health, equity, and economic viability of a community by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation, and retail destinations and improving the transportation environment throughout the city.

Graphic: Streetmix.net

This section discusses the future transportation needs identified by the planning team. While past plans focused largely on the vehicular mode of transportation – i.e., the street network – this plan recommends taking a "complete street" approach to provide access to vehicles and pedestrians.

For the vast majority of residents, sidewalks do not connect residential areas to commercial areas, the parks or trail system. As previously noted, sidewalks were not included in developments outside city limits that were later annexed. Also, many roads feature an open-channel ditch because it was the most economical method to produce drainage. This feature makes adding sidewalks along existing roadways with the City more expensive. An active transportation report produced by the Butler County Health Department in 2025, and included as an appendix to this report, recommended projects to expand the existing network of sidewalks throughout the city to better serve all residents. These projects focus on adding sidewalks along collector streets and the few remaining arterial streets without them.

Among the top priorities identified by this project was pedestrian access on Highway 53 over the railroad tracks, extending Main Street north of Davis to Barron, along Barron Road, Westwood from Oak Grove to Pine Street, and Pine Street east of the Black River. Harper, 14th, Sunset, Garfield, and Henry streets, along with an extension of Oak Grove would provide safer paths to school for students. Several crosswalks are proposed, including PP Highway at North Street, and several on Westwood, including Pine, Cherry, Crestwood, Sunset streets and near the VA, are the top priorities.

Following the 2008 Plan, the City and Parks Department did implement a greenway trail system that connected Kiwanis Bacon Park to Hendrickson Park while also adding a trail along Shelby Road that connected to McLane Park to PP Highway, which is currently extending a trail to Westwood and Kiwanis Bacon Park to the east and west to Wolf Creek Trail.

ROAD PROJECTS

The most obvious problem with the traffic network in Poplar Bluff, as identified in the 2008 plan, is the lack of an integrated collector-level street network. Many of the existing streets were developed as local roads – frequently as county roads before the City incorporated those areas – that now are functioning as collectors and carrying relatively high levels of traffic. In addition, the streets that are functioning as collectors are not continuous – traffic may have to "jog" over a block or cross a commercial parking lot in order to continue in the desired direction. For visitors unfamiliar to the area, the lack of connectivity can be a daunting challenge.

The proposed Transportation Improvement Plan presents a comprehensive grid of collector streets that will support the traffic movement through the City and reduce congestion on the existing arterials. These proposed collector corridors are laid out to support both north and south movement as well as east and west movement throughout the City and in the future planning areas.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

SHELBY ROAD

The 2008 plan recommended two new arterial corridors. One became Shelby Road and even though they were completed nearly nine years apart, the two projects to complete the road, north and south of PP Highway, ended up with the same issue — an uneven surface.

Finding a solution to this problem and resolving it should be a top priority for the City before expanding the street network. This should also include fixing the intersection with Raider Way (Three Rivers College entrance) and adding a turning lane north to Oak Grove.

ARTERIAL EAST OF MAIN

Another arterial corridor previously planned connected North Second Street to Grand Avenue and extending Grand to Highway 60 for a new interchange before connecting to Marble Hill Road to the west. While this plan opens development to land in the northeast part of the City, much of that land is in the Black River flood zone. Extending Alice Street north may provide a better option.

Creating an interchange at Highway 60 and Marble Hill Road was a goal in the 1998 plan, however, citizens opposed it due to concerns about increased traffic through a residential neighborhood and impacts to Marble Hill Cemetery, among other challenges. This project is addressed later in this chapter.

NINTH STREET

This project is from Main Street to Park Avenue and includes a roundabout at the intersection of Ninth, Main and Spring. This project extends the arterial corridor of Main Street to Pine as Main turns east and is paved with bricks.

Extend 14th Street

This project is problematic due to Kiwanis Bacon Park unless a new road is constructed behind the current Middle School connecting Highland to Harper. North of Davis Street, 14th Street is narrow for an arterial corridor but north of Barron Road it could be a key north-south arterial and connect to Highway 60.

NORTH SIDE COLLECTOR

A project to extend White Oak Road to create a collector parallel to Highway 60 and Barron by extending the current road past 14th Street and connecting with Charlton Lane west to Barron Road near Highway W was also previously proposed. However, development has cut off this connection near Charlton.

A new option could be south of White Oak, connecting Marble Hill Road to 14th, then west intersecting with Charlton, Vaughn and Morrison before reaching Barron. This project is named Kennedy as it extends from that road east.

EAST BYPASS

Another project proposed in 1998 was to create a bypass east of the City to connect the Industrial Park to Highway 60. The 2008 plan proposed two projects – an inner ring and an outer ring. The original plan extended the current Industrial Park Bypass using County Road 306 to Highway 53 and then County Road 608 over the Black River to Highway AA.

The inner ring plan used the levee protecting the east side of the City, crossing the river and using Henry Street to reach Highway WW (Ditch Road). The outer ring project would be a 9-mile bypass to the Industrial Park and require approximately 5 miles of pavement and a new bridge over Black River while the inner ring project would require half of the pavement but still provide a bypass for trucks to avoid roads downtown.

Changing the inner ring bypass from connecting to Henry Street to a direct path to Highway 53, and extending to Highway 142, shortens the bypass to 3 miles and could provide flood protection from the river to the south end of the City.

A bypass could save nearly a quarter of a mile and remove idling time at two stoplights but, more importantly, it would remove trucks, estimated at approximately 85 to 100 per day, from going through downtown. While these are all MoDOT maintained roads, the removal of this traffic from downtown also relieves congestion from the area.

The inner ring could spur development there along with the east side where City streets — Sycamore, Peach and Holly — could be extended to the bypass. This will also allow residents east of the river a shorter route to Highway 53 and the Industrial Park.

The "outer ring bypass" plan extends the Industrial Bypass across the Black River to connect with Route AA, which reaches Highway 60 approximately 4.5 miles to the north. This plan uses County Road 608 east of Highway 53 and would require a bridge over the river and approximately 3 miles of new pavement.

Butler County was awarded a $1.2 million federal grant in 2026 to study a new roadway connecting Route 53 with Route AA. The new roadway will be at least two complete 12-foot-wide lanes, with a 4-foot shoulder on both sides, realign an intersection and include a new bridge over the Black River.

One project that the City and County should pursue in the near future is extending the Industrial Park Bypass to Highway 53 using County Road 306. This would require approximately 1.5 miles of pavement to save trucks coming north on Highway 53 to the Industrial Park over a mile. It would also provide a direct route from Highway 53 to Highway 67 and future Interstate 57.

These projects are still needed to improve traffic flow while other projects were identified as potential improvements due to the more recent changes to traffic patterns. They include:

I-57 OUTER ROADS

One project that was proposed from public comment was creating an outer road east of Highway 67 (future I-57) to connect PP Highway with Oak Grove Road. The previous plan extended Iron Bridge Road north to Oak Grove and included a collector street along County Road 442 (Vandover Road) that connected Three Rivers College to Highway 67. A bridge over Highway 67 at County Road 442 could not feature highway access because the PP Highway exit is too close (approximately 1,500 feet), but it could relieve traffic from PP Highway and offer an alternate route from Township Line Road to Shelby Road while opening up a large portion of undeveloped area.

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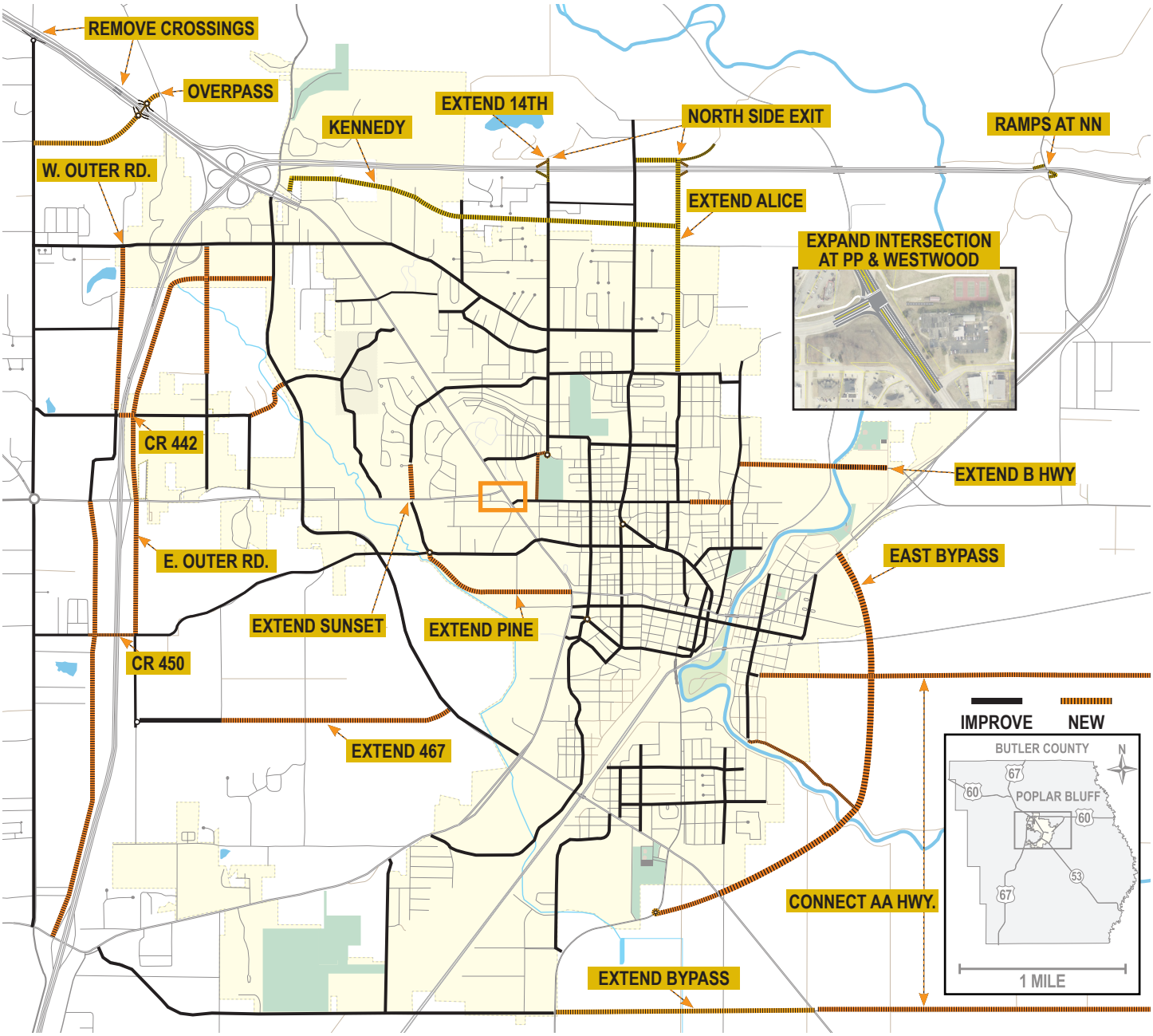
RECOMMENDATIONS



PROJECT		LENGTH	PRIORITY
North Shelby	(Westwood ‹› PP)	1.85	● ● ●
South Shelby	(PP ‹› Westwood)	2.15	● ● ●
Barron Road*	(Katy ‹› Main)	1.82	● ● ●
North Main*	(Harper ‹› 67)	1.68	● ● ●
South 11th*	(Pine ‹› 53)	1.25	● ● ●
North 9th*	(Main ‹› Pine)	0.40	● ● ●
Intersection:	Westwood-Kanell*+	—	● ● ●
Intersection:	Main-9th-Spring*	—	● ● ○
South 9th*	(Pine ‹› Oakwood)	0.48	● ● ○
Park Ave.*	(Fifth ‹› 11th)	0.60	● ● ○
Intersection:	Park-Poplar-11th*	—	● ● ○
Harper*	(Westwood ‹› Grand)	1.28	● ● ○
North 14th*	(Highland ‹› Barron)	0.72	● ● ●
Intersection:	Highland-14th*	—	● ● ○
North 11th*	(Davis ‹› Maud)	0.65	● ● ○
Davis*	(14th ‹› Alice)	0.77	● ● ●
Seifert-Baugh*	(Barron ‹›14th)	0.73	● ● ○
Maud*	(Westwood ‹› Main)	0.70	● ● ○
Charlton Lane*	(Barron ‹› Elaine)	0.49	● ● ○
Cravens Road*	(Bus. 67 ‹› Bypass)	0.93	● ● ○

PROJECT		LENGTH	PRIORITY
Grey Street*	(14th ‹› Main)	0.31	● ● ○
E. Sunset*	(Westwood ‹›14th)	0.23	● ● ○
W. Sunset*	(W. of Westwood)	0.70	● ● ○
11th S of 53	(53 ‹› Westwood)	1.06	● ● ○
Roxie Road*	(Maud ‹› CR450)	1.88	● ● ○
Marshall*	(Victor ‹› 53)	0.31	● ● ○
Victor*	(Fair ‹› Broadway)	0.42	● ● ○
W. Henry*	(Marshall ‹› Broadway)	0.35	● ● ○
E. Henry*	(Broadway ‹› Saxon)	0.48	● ● ○
Thomas*	(Roosevelt ‹› Division)	0.58	● ● ○
Arthur*	(Marshall ‹› Broadway)	0.35	● ● ○
Lucy Lee Drive*		0.36	● ● ○
Oak Grove*	(67 ‹› Westwood)	0.96	● ● ○
White Oak*	(W. of Marble Hill)	3.10	● ● ○
Peach Street*		1.67	● ● ○
Grand Avenue*		0.81	● ● ○
CR 471	(Westwood ‹› 468)	0.46	● ● ○
Iron Bridge Road Extension*»		2.23	● ● ○
Kennedy Road Extension*»		2.27	● ● ○
Pine Street Extension*»		0.93	● ● ○

PROJECT	LENGTH	PRIORITY
Crestwood Extension*»	1.00	● ● ○
Sunset Extension*»	0.20	● ● ○
N. 14th Extension*»	0.50	● ● ○
Alice Street Extension*»	1.00	● ● ○
Hwy. 67 Exits at 14th / Alice»	0.76	● ● ○
OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS		
Extend Industrial Bypass to 53	1.52	● ● ●
Create East Bypass (2 bridges)	3.15	● ● ●
Hwy. 67 Overpass/No crossings+	0.65	● ● ●
N. Township Line* (North of PP)	2.75	● ● ●
S. Township Line* (South of PP)	2.56	● ● ●
Highway 60 Rams at NN+	0.17	● ● ○
I-57 East Outer Road (North of PP)	1.64	● ● ○
I-57 West Outer Road (North of PP)	0.81	● ● ○
Oak Grove* (West of 67)	0.84	● ● ○
Woodland Meadows*	0.84	● ● ○
Connect CR 442 (bridge)	0.15	● ● ○
CR 467 Extension»	0.74	● ● ○
CR 450 Extension (bridge)»	1.31	● ● ○
Highway B Extension (bridge)»+	1.31	● ○ ○

KEY: *length in miles* » -new construction; * -complete street project; + -involves MoDOT;

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXTEND PINE STREET

The section with the most traffic on Westwood is between Kanell (PP) and Pine (Business 60) even after the development of Shelby Road helped reduce traffic congestion.

There are fewer vehicles using the PP-Westwood interchange from 2016 to current AADT rates, however, there are now higher traffic rates on West Maud and Roxie Road. These narrow streets in a residential neighborhood intersect near a bend in Maud as it turns north toward Highway PP. This three-way intersection could be improved with a roundabout and the road widened to include a sidewalk connecting Shelby Trail to Westwood. There has been an average of one vehicle crash with an injury per year over the last five years here.

Connecting Sunset to Kanell (PP) at the intersection with Maud, while difficult due to the hill that separates it, could reduce traffic on Westwood and save drivers 1.5 miles.

Extending Pine (Business 60) to Shelby should reduce the need to use Maud-Roxie, or Pine could be extended to Roxie along Pike Creek at the previously proposed roundabout, creating an option to reach both Shelby and PP from Pine while bypassing Westwood.

Adding a turn lane at the lighted intersections of Pine with 5th and 9th streets is also recommended to improve traffic between downtown and Westwood. MoDOT proposed a road diet for Pine Street — reducing it to two lanes with a center turn lane — that was rejected by the City leaders and general public. MoDOT announced a plan for adding a turn lane at 9th and Pine starting in 2027. Expanding the intersection at 5th and Pine is also highly recommended.

INTERCHANGES

Currently, the City of Poplar Bluff and the surrounding region are served by five fully functional interchanges and one interchange with partial access to the expressway system maintained by the state transportation department. The interchanges consist of a cloverleaf interchange at US 67 and US 60 and diamond interchanges at US 67 and Route M, Westwood Boulevard, US 67 and Route PP, and US 60 and Route T/Route AA. A partial high speed flyover interchange serves westbound traffic from US 60 to Business 60 and eastbound traffic from Business 60 to eastbound US 60. The westbound traffic from Business 60 to US 60 and the eastbound traffic from US 60 to Business 60 must travel to the diamond interchange for US 60 and State Route T to reverse direction and utilize the flyover ramp.

The US 60 and Business 60 interchange should be improved to allow access to Business 60 from the eastbound lanes of 60 and to allow traffic from Business 60 to access the westbound lanes. The recommended solution is to install additional ramps and an overpass bridge at the interchange. An alternative would be creating the needed ramps from Highway 60 to Route NN. These would include an exit from eastbound 60 to NN and an entrance from NN to westbound 60. Route NN connects to Business 60 approximately 5,000 feet to the south.

This project will require extensive involvement with MoDOT and additional studies to determine the best possible solution.

A new interchange was previously proposed between the existing interchanges of US 60 on the north side of Poplar Bluff. This interchange would support traffic flow to and from the proposed Grand Avenue arterial to serve the eastern side of the City. This project will need to be west of the area that can flood from the Black River.

As previously mentioned, concern over increased traffic removed a plan for an exit at Main Street.

If the exit off Highway 60 were split between two points, for example, at an extended 14th Street and at Main Street or a new road to the east, this could reduce the traffic through these residential areas while still providing an access point to the highway. The exact level of service for this interchange would be established after more in-depth studies and coordination with MoDOT.

A bridge over Highway 67, between the PP and M highway exits connecting County Road 467 to Township Line Road could alleviate traffic on PP and M as more residential neighborhoods are built to the southwest of the city limits. Additionally, a bridge over the highway connecting County Road 442 would connect Township Line and Iron Bridge Road to alleviate traffic on PP Highway and Oak Grove. This road was previously planned to connect Three Rivers College to Highway 67 at the Shelby Road entrance.

INTERSECTIONS

Several intersections saw improvements as targeted in the previous plan, however, there are issues that still need to be addressed. Among the factors that make these intersection problematic are space constraints, narrow pavement widths, intersection offsets, and/or extreme intersection angles. These existing intersections include the previously mentioned Main, Ninth and Spring streets, the intersection of Maud and Roxie Road, and along Pine Street at 5th and 9th. Another previously targeted intersection included Highland Drive and North 14th Street with Pershing Street with the Kiwanis Bacon Park entrance.

The five-way intersection of Park, Poplar and 11th streets should also be improved. There has been four injuries in accidents at this intersection over the past five years compared to six at the other end of Park and the much busier 5th Street intersection.

Westwood and Kanell (PP)

There is approximately 450 feet between Harper Street and the intersection of Westwood and Kanell (PP). During peak traffic times, vehicles northbound on Westwood making a left onto Kanell will line up, making it difficult for vehicles southbound on Westwood to make a left onto Harper. A second lane for turning left onto Kanell, or perhaps a flashing yellow for the left turn could reduce the queuing enough from extending to Harper. There are also a number of accidents occurring in the turn lane from Kanell to southbound Westwood, for example, as vehicles wait for a window to reach the turn lane at Harper and end up being hit from behind. In the last two years, there were 16 injuries related to crashes at this intersection.

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In addition to these existing intersections, the major intersections of the proposed arterial and collector roads depicted in the future transportation plan will need to be improved. Additional detailed studies and traffic modeling will need to be conducted to determine the specific improvements needed at each location. It is recommended that roundabouts and other traffic calming techniques be considered at these intersections.

TRAFFIC CALMING

The Institute of Transportation Engineers describes traffic calming as changes in street alignment, installation of barriers, and other physical measures to reduce traffic speeds and/or cut-through volumes, in the interest of street safety, livability, and other public purposes. While traffic calming can occasionally use such physical measures to make traffic uncomfortable, thereby lowering traffic speeds, most traffic calming devices are meant to slow traffic in comfortable and often subtle ways.

Traffic calming measures should be considered at all pedestrian crossings to reduce vehicular speeds, increase driver awareness and help establish right-of-way for pedestrian users. Traffic calming measures, include but are not limited to, alternative paving materials, on-street parking, lighting, landscaping, reduced lane widths, choke points, traffic circles or any combination thereof that reduce apparent street width and protects pedestrians from moving traffic. Traffic calming is also recommended downtown to slow traffic, beautify and increase pedestrian safety and convenience. Using traffic calming at key corner locations in the downtown will provide safer pedestrian crossings and better orientation for both pedestrians and drivers.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

The goals of access management, which limiting points of access within the roadway system, are to improve roadway safety, increase traffic flow and capacity, minimize congestion, protect taxpayers' investment in the roadway and create better conditions for non-automobile transportation modes. The 2008 Plan proposed having the City draft access management standards, as described by MoDOT (below), into a city ordinance and implemented.

Access management is recommended along all major collector roads and arterials, including but not limited to, Westwood Boulevard, Kanell Boulevard, Pine Street, Oak Grove Road, Shelby Road and Highway 53 as it passes through the city limits. These corridors experience peak period traffic congestion and should be considered for the above recommended access management techniques. However, these standards can only apply where sight distance allows. Driveways should not be allowed where sight distance is inadequate, even if the driveway spacing standard would otherwise allow or mandate it at that location.

AIRPORT

See the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) that identifies improvements recommended for the airport. The ALP was updated in May 2025 and details the scheduled plans for improvements and upgrades to the facility in five-year increments. They include:

- Construction of additional hangars, when funding is available, with an estimated cost between $2 million and $4 million per project.
- Replace the terminal building with a new 8,000 square-foot building, estimated to cost $6 million.
- Asphalt surface treatment on the apron and taxiway, estimated to cost $470,000.
- Electrical improvements to replace the beacon and tower with an LED fixture and tip-down pole, and to replace the tetrahedron with a windsock, estimated to cost $190,000.
- Runway extension to 5,500 feet in length and 100 feet in width, estimated to cost approximately $2 million.

RAILWAYS

Improvements to the multi-modal transportation resource are typically driven by economic factors between the railroad company and its customers. Railways are not identified as an item requiring future planning in this study, however, the Amtrak station in Poplar Bluff is in need of upgrades as outlined in the "Gateway Features" section.

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ACCESS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Roadways serve dual purposes of providing both efficient movement of traffic and access to adjacent property. A higher level of access management is necessary on major roads so that traffic can move safely and efficiently. Many minor roads may also warrant some level of management. However the techniques used are to provide an appropriate balance between the through movement and the need to access the adjacent properties. At a minimum, it is important to maintain adequate sight distance.

"Decisions regarding the spacing and design of interchanges, public road intersections and driveways must reflect a balance of access to homes and businesses with sound traffic engineering principles. Decision points could include:

- Spacing between interchanges
- Clearance of functional areas for interchanges;
- At grade intersections spacing;
- Traffic signal spacing;
- Driveway spacing and density;
- Driveway corner clearance;
- Raised medians;
- Spacing and clearance for right-in, right-out driveways;
- Clearance of functional areas of public road intersections;
- Sight distance;
- Driveway geometrics;
- Two-way left-turn lanes ("five-lane" facilities);
- Frontage and backage roads.

Reducing the frequency and number of driveways and intersections and restricting turning movements at intersections or driveways help reduce potential traffic conflicts and congestion. Various techniques can be applied to reduce the existing frequency of driveways or curb-cuts. These include:

- Providing alternative parcel access;
- Eliminating unnecessary or redundant curb cuts;
- Consolidating curb cuts by requiring shared entrances; and
- Relocating access points to adjoining streets, where possible.

High volume roadways and driveways on opposite sides of an arterial or busy collector roadway should generally be lined up across from each other. The maximum offset for such driveways should be no more than 6 feet. When driveways cannot be aligned, the minimum offset spacing should be 125 feet. The presence of a non-traversable (e.g., raised) median would of course mitigate any such requirement. Roadways containing a raised median can generally allow a higher concentration of right-in and right-out driveway access points than it can accommodate when left-turns into and out of driveways are permitted. Regardless, the presence of too many driveways has a serious negative impact on the roadway that leads to congestion, even if they only allow right-in and right-out movements. As a result it is recommended that the spacing of driveways along arterial roadways and busy collectors is limited subject to parcelization and adjoining use constraints.

Source: MoDOT

RECOMMENDATIONS

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

It is recommended that sidewalks and bicycle lanes should be considered for all of the City's planned roadway improvements in areas where pedestrian and bicycle facilities are not currently present and in the locations where new roadways are to be built.

As previously mentioned, it is recommended the City take a "complete street" approach to provide access to vehicles and pedestrians.

For a vast majority of residents, sidewalks do not connect residential areas to the parks or trails system. That is due to the fact that the city's sidewalk network is centrally located around the downtown area and within what was the city limits prior to 1930. As areas were developed outside the city limits, and later annexed into the city, sidewalks were not included in that development. Many of the roads feature an open-channel ditch because it was the most economical method to produce drainage. This feature makes adding sidewalks along existing roads within the City more expensive.

The City should build upon the current network to tie in the parks and trails to the residential and commercial areas. Residents should be able to safely walk, cycle and use wheelchairs or motorized scooters to navigate the community for their everyday needs. The following streets have been identified as needing sidewalks as a priority:

- Barron Road
- North Main Street
- Westwood north of Pine
- Broadway to Highway 53
- Harper Street
- North 14th Street
- Maud west of Westwood
- Sunset
- Henry Street
- Garfield
- South 11th Street

Of the 11 fatal accidents involving pedestrians since 2002, the majority have involved residents crossing a road. Upgrading or creating crosswalks along Westwood Boulevard (Business 67), Pine Street (Business 60), Kanell Boulevard (PP Highway), Highway 53 and South Broadway (WW Highway) should top the list of projects. Crosswalks that have been identified as a priority include:

- Westwood at the VA entrance or Highland
- Westwood at Sunset, Maud, Pine, Cherry and Butler
- W. Pine at Ninth, Fifth, Broadway and Second streets
- E. Pine between B and C
- South Broadway at Victor and Henry streets
- Highway 53 at Fair and Cross streets
- Kanell (PP) at North or Maud streets
- Main at Davis and Harper streets

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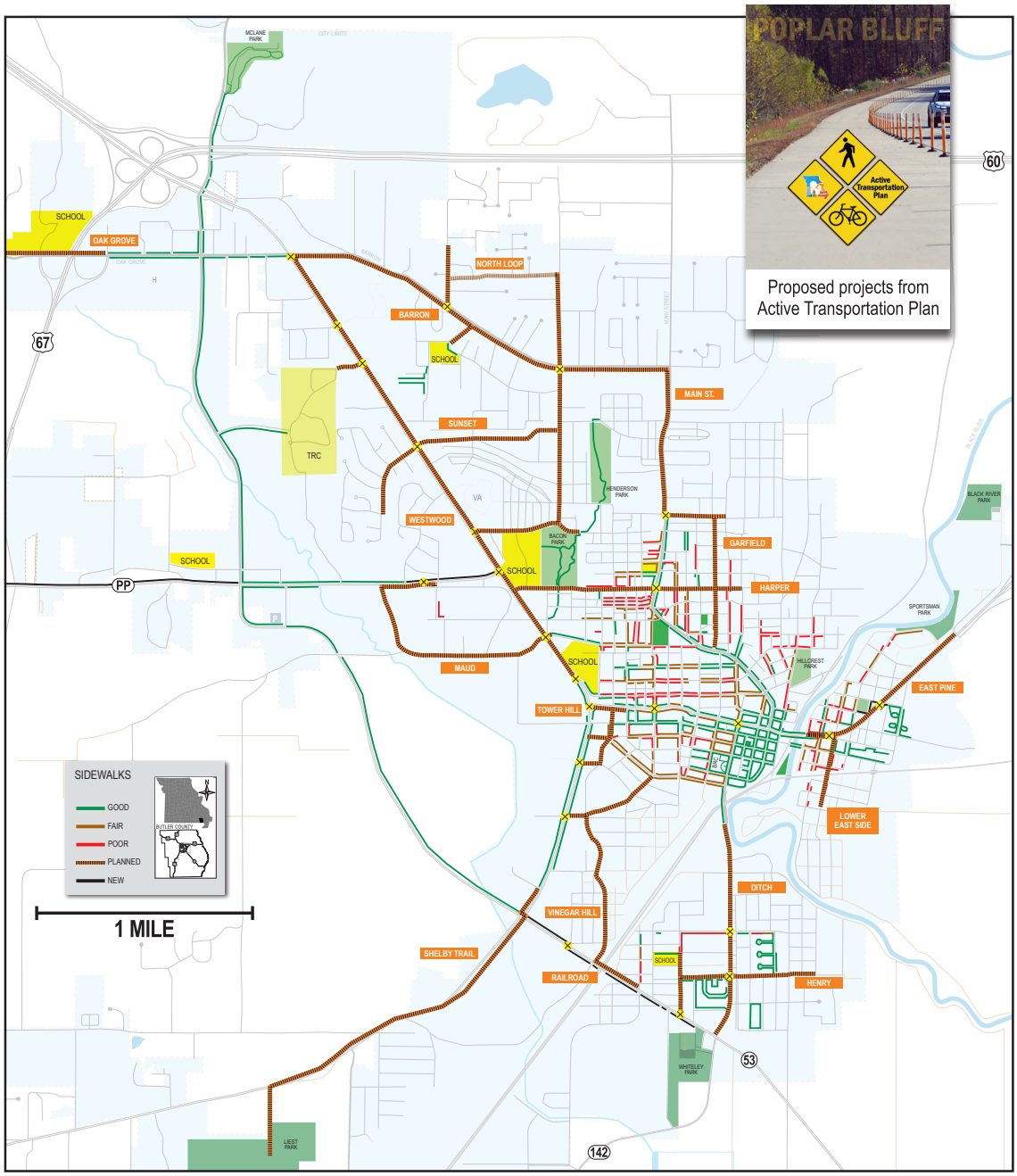
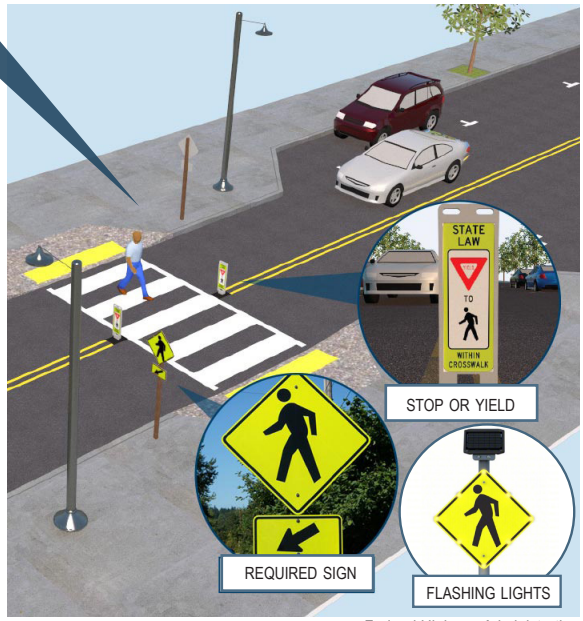


Proposed projects from Active Transportation Plan

CROSSWALK SAFETY

Curb extensions narrow the roadway, creating safer and shorter crossings for pedestrians while increasing the available space for benches, plantings, and trees. Benefits include decreasing the overall width of the roadway, tightening intersection curb radius and encourage slower turning speeds, allowing pedestrians and drivers to see each other when parked vehicles might otherwise block visibility. Along with concrete curbs, these can be created with painted road markings, barriers, bollards, or the addition of planters or benches.



Federal Highway Administration

Three main crosswalk visibility enhancements help make crosswalks and the pedestrians, bicyclists, wheelchair and other mobility device users, and transit users using them more visible to drivers. These enhancements can also assist users in deciding where to cross. These features can be used as standalone or combination enhancements to indicate the preferred location for users to cross.

HIGH-VISIBILITY CROSSWALKS These use patterns (i.e., bar pairs, continental, ladder) that are visible to both the driver and pedestrian from farther away compared to traditional line crosswalks. They should be considered at all midblock pedestrian crossings and uncontrolled intersections. Agencies should use materials such as inlay or thermoplastic tape, instead of paint or brick, for highly reflective crosswalk markings.

IMPROVED LIGHTING The goal of crosswalk lighting should be to illuminate with positive contrast to make it easier for a driver to visually identify the pedestrian. This involves carefully placing the lights in forward locations to avoid a silhouette effect of the pedestrian.

ENHANCED SIGNING AND PAVEMENT MARKINGS On multilane roadways, use of "YIELD Here to Pedestrians" or "STOP Here for Pedestrians" signs 20 to 50 feet in advance of a marked crosswalk to indicate where a driver should stop or yield to pedestrians, depending on State law. To supplement the signing, agencies can also install a STOP or YIELD bar (commonly referred to as "shark's teeth") pavement markings.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The City's public transit service, as provided by Southeast Missouri Transportation Service, Inc., should be monitored periodically to insure that the needs of the riders and potential riders are being met and should be promoted by the City to ensure that the public is aware of these services.

GATEWAY FEATURES

Several key intersections and corridors within Poplar Bluff serve as a primary means of access to the community. These intersections and points of interest are often a visitor's first impression of the city. These key intersections, corridors and entries function as "gateways" into Poplar Bluff and should be improved to positively influence visitors' perceptions of Poplar Bluff and promote the quality of life and vitality of the community. As such, special attention and planning consideration should be given to these gateway locations, including the airport and rail station.

The planning and design considerations given to gateways should be based upon a hierarchy of importance, based upon purpose, location, traffic volumes, street function and visibility. Gateways should be identified as primary, secondary and transition gateways. The creation of gateway features including professional landscaping, crepe myrtle plantings, monument signage and other aesthetic features should be planned at the City's primary, secondary and transitional gateways.

Primary gateways should be located at the main entrances to the city and identify Poplar Bluff as a whole. The locations of the primary gateways are Business 67 at Shelby (North), Business 67 at M Highway (South), Business 60 at Highway 60 (East), PP Highway at Highway 67 (West).

Gateways features at Business 67 at Shelby (North) and Business 60 at Highway 60 (east) are already in place and should be matched in some ways at the other gateway locations, including:

- Signage to clearly identify entrance into Poplar Bluff.
- Landscaping, including crepe myrtle plantings, to accent the gateway features.

The airport and rail station are also main gateways to the City and should be considered for upgrades to welcome visitors. They include:

- The 2025 Airport Layout Plan provides information on upgrading the terminal building and runway extension projects.
- Improving the Amtrak depot service facility at the historic Iron Mountain depot is among MoDOT's high-priority unfunded needs project list since 2021.

Secondary gateways should identify the City of Poplar Bluff as a whole, but on a smaller scale than the primary gateways. These gateways are identified as the intersections between major roadways. Secondary gateways include intersections such as at Westwood Boulevard and Pine Street. As opposed to primary gateway features, secondary gateways are intended to be at a pedestrian scale.

The major features of the secondary gateways are:

- A prominent features such as public art, statuary, fountains, gardens or park-like settings;
- Signage of brick, stone or other high-quality material;
- Landscaping, including crepe myrtle plantings, to accent the surrounding corridor and prominent features. A combination of street trees, ornamental trees, shrubbery, ground covers and ornamental plantings should be used to accent and coordinate the design;
- Benches, trash receptacles, pedestrian scale lighting, unique paving patterns at crosswalks, and other streetscape elements.

→

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transition gateways are identified for those areas where a distinct change in activity or land use takes place or a specific district begins along an arterial or collector roadway. Transition gateways are used to identify the entrance into unique destinations or corridors. Special interest should be given to the Downtown area, specifically as one enters from Main Street and Pine Street.

Transition gateways are also appropriate for entrances into business parks, industrial parks, parks & recreation facilities, institutions and residential neighborhoods.

Transition gateway features should be smaller in scale and magnitude than primary or secondary gateways, potentially as simple as a single element. The major features of the transition gateways are the same as secondary gateways.

The City should work closely or partner with local developers to ensure that adequate aesthetic considerations are given to development near identified gateway locations. As part of the site plan review process the City should consider the visual impacts of development at the "gateway" locations. Building, design, orientation and parking should also be carefully planned to minimize any negative physical or visual impacts.

Many of the gateway locations identified have been developed, making the efforts to establish the gateway concept difficult. For those areas that are not currently developed or in which limited development has taken place, efforts to establish the gateway concept should begin. Conceptual plans for development of gateways in these locations should be developed, so that as development does begin to occur a clear vision can be presented.



The City of Poplar Bluff is an important transportation center in the Southeast Missouri region. Its significance will likely increase with the extension of the Interstate 57 project. Communities located at intersections of four-lane highways and along interstates tend to show growth levels that outpace other regional communities. As part of this growth, Poplar Bluff should identify the areas adjacent to the existing city limits where this growth is most likely to occur and plan for the road networks in these areas.

The City needs to upgrade corridors for arterial and collector level roadways to relieve the traffic on the limited existing arterial and collector level roadways. These corridors need to extend through significant portions of the existing city and areas planned for future growth. Upgrading the existing network, including Shelby Road, should be a top priority.

The City should maintain as a planning consideration the construction of an arterial level bypass route to the east, connecting Highway 60 and Route 53. This route would support heavy transport traffic to and from the City's Industrial Park and remove it from downtown streets. Additional, detailed studies of this and other projects are needed in order to determine the most advantageous routes and more accurately determine the advantages, disadvantages and costs involved.

Additionally, the City should implement Complete Streets in all projects, providing access to pedestrians, cyclists and other forms of mobility other than vehicles so that all residents can safely move throughout the City.

While this section mainly focuses on ground transportation, the Poplar Bluff Regional Business Airport plays an important role in the City's future. It is a gateway into the City, the first impression for many visitors, and an economic driver to the region. "The Airport Layout Plan" developed in 2025 outlines future projects and recommendations and is included as an appendix for reference.

For the majority of citizens, mobility is the City service that impacts their daily lives the most and it should be treated as such among the City's priorities.

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CHAPTER 6





2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 6

Future Land Use

Here is a summary of this chapter covering the City of Poplar Bluff's Future Land Use Plan:

This chapter outlines the city's Future Land Use Plan, a fluid framework designed to guide orderly, long-range growth, managed economic development, and community revitalization while preserving a small-town atmosphere.

Current Conditions and Growth Challenges

Poplar Bluff's established inner core—including its historic downtown, mature neighborhoods, and the Westwood Boulevard corridor—is largely built out, shifting recent large-scale commercial and residential growth north and west. Because undeveloped land within existing city limits is sparse, future expansion requires selective land annexation and managed infrastructure placement. The city's primary challenge is balancing limited fiscal resources between maintaining existing infrastructure and investing in expansion.

A 2024 citizen survey reflected community desires:

Business & Retail: High demand for entertainment (86%), retail (50%), and restaurants (43%). 70% agreed the city should encourage more retail space, and 80% strongly favored restoring downtown.

Housing: Over 40% expressed dissatisfaction with current housing availability. 46% backed expanding apartment options, highlighting a crucial need for diverse residential infill.

Core Future Land Use Categories

The development framework divides Poplar Bluff and its prospective annexation zones into clear categorical strategies, balancing standard land classifications with flexible architectural design boundaries.

Commercial Corridors: Directs intensive commercial development along major corridors like Westwood Boulevard and Highways PP, 60, 67, and 53. The plan recommends transforming Highway PP into the city's premier regional shopping, dining, and hospitality destination (e.g., lifestyle centers), emphasizing design controls like professional landscaping and monument signage to replace cluttered pole signs.

Nodal Commercial & Mixed-Use: Concentrates compact, mixed-use commercial developments at major roadway intersections to boost consumer convenience and walkability while decreasing vehicle miles traveled.

Downtown Revitalization: Targets the historic core for adaptive reuse, aiming to attract older adults and multi-family residential projects. It emphasizes maintaining the area's authentic historical character through strict architectural review, offering density bonuses or parking waivers to incentivize redevelopment.

Industrial Land Use: Restricts manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution to environmentally "clean" operations. It mandates masonry, concrete, or tilt-up structures, entirely bans pole buildings, and requires strict sight-proof screening for outdoor storage.

Rural Residential / Agriculture: Limits density to 1 unit per 3 acres, focusing on cluster subdivisions to preserve regional farmlands.

Low-Density Residential: Mandates detached single-family homes with minimum lot sizes of 10,000 square feet, requiring paved roads and utility hookups.

Medium-Density Residential: Accommodates 4 to 7 units per acre on lots down to 5,000 square feet, heavily focusing on harmonious infill projects.

Multi-Family Residential: Permits higher densities (over 7 units/acre) near commercial transitions, requiring buffer zones to isolate low-density neighborhoods.

Institutional, Parks, and Open Spaces: The plan emphasizes public upgrades, including a potential new City Hall downtown. For recreation, the document prioritizes public-private partnerships (e.g., with local schools) to expand the greenway trail system and fund upgrades at parks as outlined by the Parks Master Plan. Key projects include developing Leist and Pike Creek parks, and expanding the Black River Trail.

TOP PHOTO: The Historic Rodgers Theater, built in 1949 and located at 204 North Broadway, hosts movies, concerts and events in downtown Poplar Bluff.



A rainbow appears over the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park, Riceland Foods and Cravens Road.

The Future Land Use Plan serves as a guide for the planned and orderly growth of the City of Poplar Bluff. Zoning changes, subdivisions, new development or redevelopment should be reviewed for compliance with the future land use plan during the planning & zoning process. The Plan anticipates modest, well planned growth provided the long-range goals of this plan are implemented incrementally. The Plan includes the Future Land Use Map and supporting text, both of which must be considered when making decisions regarding a new use or change in use. The Plan is a fluid document that should be periodically reviewed and updated to accommodate the latest trends in development and lifestyle changes.

The future land use recommendations were developed with consideration given to the comments recorded during the public engagement sessions, public opinion surveys, Comprehensive Advisory Committee meetings and collaboration with City staff, boards and commissions and the current and past land use practices and development trends. The future land use recommendations consider the compatibility of various land use categories and indicate how land may be best utilized or redeveloped in a manner that helps achieve the community's vision, which states:

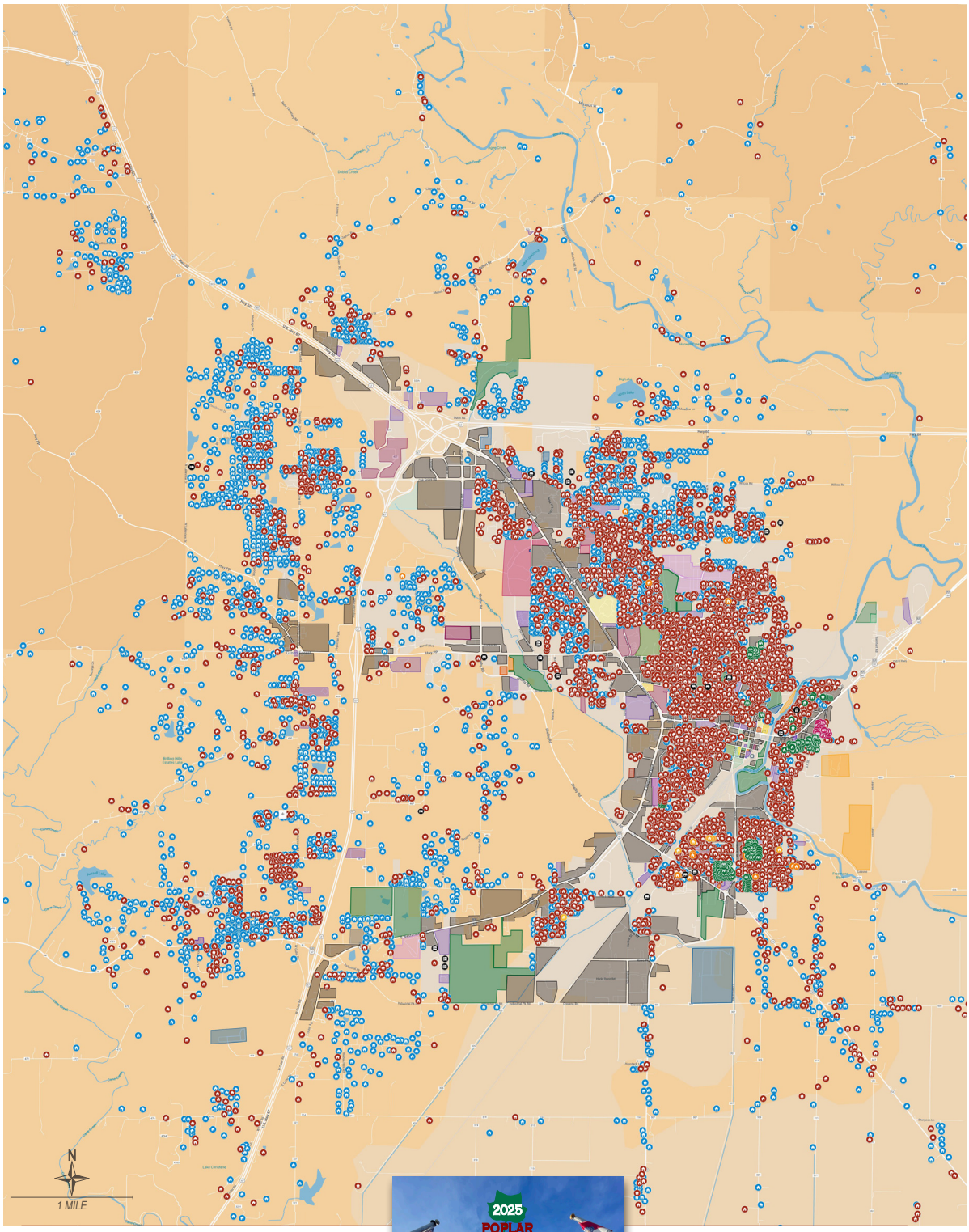
"To promote the City's small-town atmosphere, quality work force and natural amenities while providing a more livable, well-planned community through managed growth, economic development and revitalization efforts."

The Future Land Use Plan depicts a number of traditional land use categories and provides a range of land use growth and revitalization strategies. These strategies seek to create opportunities for a wide range of uses while ensuring compatibility through design rather than through the delineation of physical boundaries on the map. The decision to locate new uses and activities in the City should be based upon an understanding of the existing conditions, anticipated growth projections and factors such as land use externalities, the principles of sustainable planning and design and the need for compatibility between the built and natural environments. The purpose of the following sections is to provide the background knowledge necessary to turn community goals into productive community action

→

CURRENT CONDITIONS

The existing core community, which includes the downtown area, the city's established neighborhoods and the Westwood Boulevard commercial corridor, is essentially built-out. While these areas are mostly developed, they are considered growth areas as they provide great opportunities for infill and redevelopment. Growth along Oak Grove Road, Kanell Boulevard and Shelby Road has pushed the center of the community north and west. These areas offer opportunities for new large-scale development and are easily served by city services and already have infrastructure in place. However, most new residential development will have to occur in undeveloped areas outside the existing city limits or as limited infill development in existing established areas. The biggest challenge facing the city in the area of future land use is the ability to balance its resources by protecting and preserving the built community while investing in infrastructure to expand into new areas. The Future Land Use Plan includes strategies for both revitalizing the city's inner core and the designation of growth areas outside the present City limits to accommodate future development.

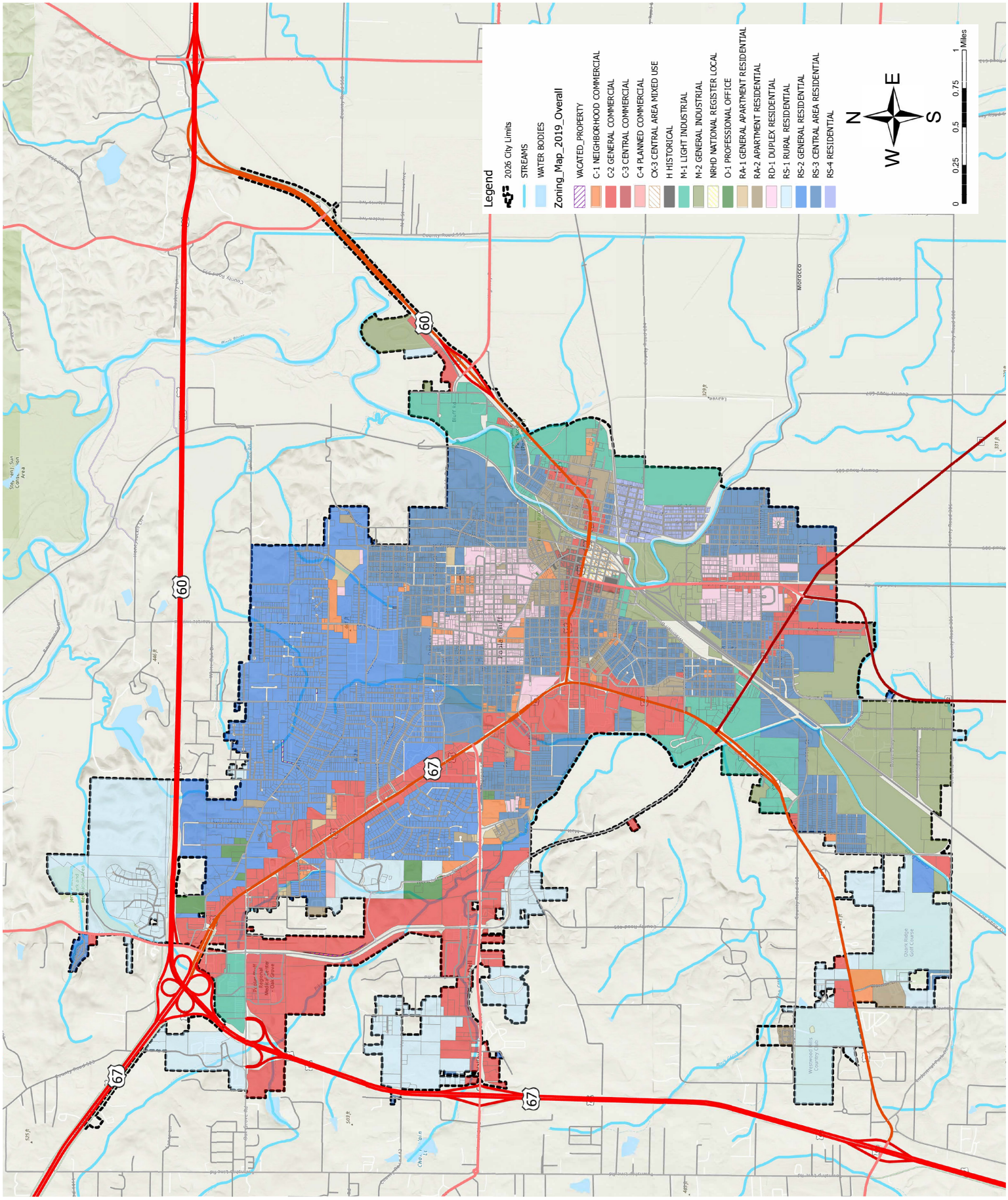


Land use and housing units were mapped within the six-mile radius of Poplar Bluff's center with blue representing units in which the owner had the same address as the unit and red representing units in which the owner's address was not the same as the unit, indicating the unit is used as a rental property.



This map project was completed as part of the Poplar Bluff Housing Study, which was completed in December 2025 and included in this plan as an appendix.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

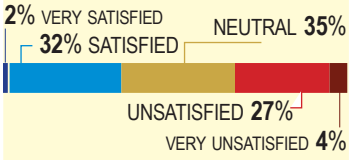


CURRENT CONDITIONS

Residents surveyed in 2024 were asked for their views on retail, business and housing among other issues. Here is a look at the results:

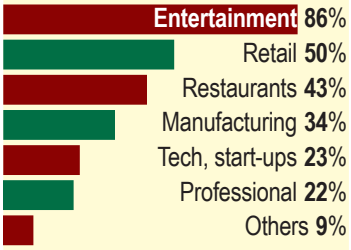
PB2025 SURVEY

How satisfied are you with the current state of businesses?

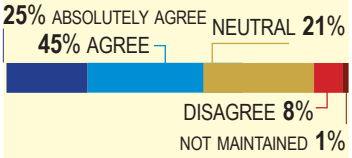


What businesses are lacking?

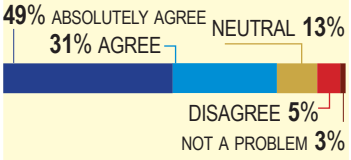
SELECT ALL THAT APPLY



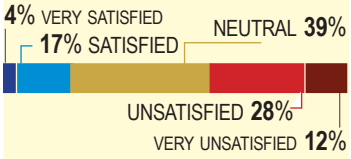
City should encourage more retail space



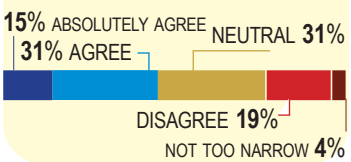
Downtown should be restored



How satisfied are you with the current availability of housing options?



City should encourage more apartments





POPLAR BLUFF'S HISTORIC DEPOTS

Among the many historical places within Poplar Bluff include a pair of train stations — the Iron Mountain Depot (above) and Frisco Depot (below). **IRON MOUNTAIN DEPOT** was built in 1910 and still functions as an Amtrak stop. In 2003, Union Pacific turned over the historic depot to the newly formed nonprofit Poplar Bluff Historic Depot Restoration Corporation. **FRISCO DEPOT** was built in 1928 after the previous building was destroyed by a tornado. The City of Poplar Bluff currently owns the building, which was at one time the City's police station, and is now the MO-ARK Regional Railroad Museum.



Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places lists 25 properties and districts within Butler County. They include:

- **Butler County Courthouse** (Built: 1928) Location: 100 North Main, Poplar Bluff. (Listed: Dec. 1, 1994).
- **Cynthia-Kinzer Historic District** (1907-67) 900-1000 block of Cynthia and Kinzer; 918-924 Maud and 838-842 Kinzer streets. (July 21, 2015).
- **Garfield Historic District** (1908-63) 914-16, 921 Garfield, Poplar Bluff. (Oct. 2, 2017).
- **Alfred W. Greer House** (1915) 955 Kinzer, Poplar Bluff. (Feb. 12, 1998).
- **Hargrove Pivot Bridge** (1917) County Road 159 over Black River. (Oct. 15, 1985).
- **Koehler Fortified Archaeological Site** (prehistoric) County Road 352. (Dec. 18, 1970).
- **Little Black River Archaeological District** (prehistoric) County Road 275. (April 21, 1975).
- **Mark Twain School** (1910) 1012 North Main, Poplar Bluff. (Feb. 5, 1998).
- **J. Herbert Moore House** (1938) 445 North 11th, Poplar Bluff. (Feb. 12, 1998).
- **Thomas Moore House** (1896) 435 Lester, Poplar Bluff. (Feb. 12, 1998).
- **Moore-Dalton House** (1883) 421 North Main, Poplar Bluff. (Dec. 1, 1994).
- **North Main Street Historic District** (1880-1954) 400 block of Main, Poplar Bluff. (July 14, 2011).
- **John Archibald Phillips House** (1891) 522 Cherry, Poplar Bluff. (Feb. 12, 1998).
- **Poplar Bluff Commercial Historic District** (1880-1930) South Broadway from Cedar to Vine, and Vine from 5th to Broadway, Poplar Bluff. (Dec. 1, 1994).
- **Poplar Bluff Public Library** (1936) 318 North Main, Poplar Bluff. (Dec. 1, 1994).
- **Rodgers Theatre** (1949) 204 North Broadway, Poplar Bluff. (July 19, 2001).
- **South Sixth Street Historic District** (1880-1917) 205-225-303 South Sixth, Poplar Bluff. (Feb. 12, 1998).
- **St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad Depot** (1910) 400 S. Main, Poplar Bluff. (Dec. 1, 1994).
- **St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad Depot - Frisco Depot -** (1928) 303 Moran, Poplar Bluff. (Dec. 1, 1994).
- **Wheatley Public School** (1928) 921 Garfield, Poplar Bluff. (Feb. 13, 1998).
- **Wilborn-Steinberg Site** (prehistoric) East of County Road 355. (Nov. 9, 1972).
- **Williams-Gierth House** (1892) 848 Vine, Poplar Bluff. (Nov. 6, 2012).
- **Williamson-Kennedy School** (1922) 614 Lindsay, Poplar Bluff. (Feb. 12, 1998).
- **Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building** (1928) 201 South Main, Poplar Bluff. (April 12, 2006).
- **Zehe Building** (1911) 203 Poplar, Poplar Bluff. (Dec. 1, 1994).

FUTURE LAND USE

The City of Poplar Bluff experienced plenty of growth over the past 25 years in terms of large developments and expansion of the community, however, that growth did not translate into population. The previous Comprehensive Plan in 2008 estimated that the City's population could reach 20,000 by 2020. That did not happen for a number of reasons outlined previously in Chapter 2. As a regional economic center in Southeast Missouri, the City will continue to experience demand for new land area as residential, commercial, retail and medical service demands increase. In order for Poplar Bluff to accommodate anticipated growth levels, the City will need to consider implementation strategies, such as infill and redevelopment. Since the availability of large undeveloped sites within the current city limits is very limited, annexing land will be necessary. A major consideration of future annexation is identifying areas to be preserved and areas where growth can occur in a well planned manner following efficient expansion and management of infrastructure.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

The Future Land Use Map and future land use recommendations will not become reality unless the daily decisions and implementation activities in Poplar Bluff support the proposed plan. The decision to locate new uses and activities in the City should be based upon factors such as impact on existing development, capacity of adjacent streets, planning and design principles, and the need for compatibility between the built and natural environment. The recommendations of this plan should be used with a sense of flexibility. Development proposals that do not exactly match the Future Land Use Map and future land use goals, objectives and recommendations, but reflect market place demands, should be given reasonable consideration so long as they do not present significant new public service burdens on the community or negatively impact the health, safety and welfare of the community.

The areas shown on the Future Land Use Map include all land within the City plus areas identified by the community as desirable for annexation. The future land use categories include:

- Rural Residential / Agriculture
- Low-Density Residential
- Medium-Density Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Nodal Commercial
- Commercial
- Downtown
- Industrial
- Park / Open Space
- Public / Institutional

The Future Land Use Map is meant to portray a conceptual plan, with the understanding that the general areas identified on the map are correct, but there may be slight modifications to their precise boundaries when a lot-by-lot analysis is conducted during plan implementation. The intent of the Future Land Use Map is to preserve and enhance the City's successfully established residential and commercial areas and promote revitalization efforts along the City's corridors and in the historic downtown.

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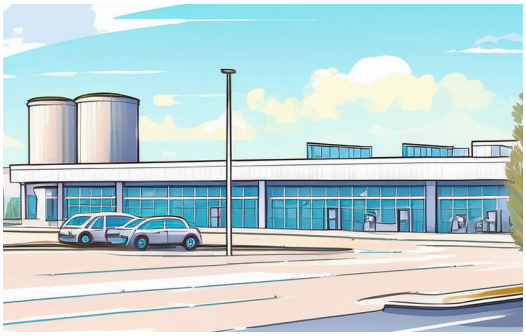
The Future Land Use Plan builds on five different Place Types which are identified and described as follows:



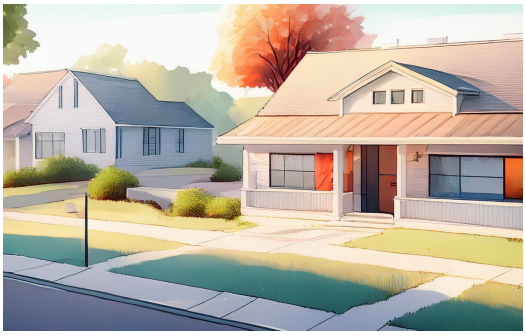
Commercial features both multi-tenant and single-tenant spaces.



Mixed-Use features both multi-use spaces of commercial, professional and residential spaces.



Industrial features the manufacturing spaces.

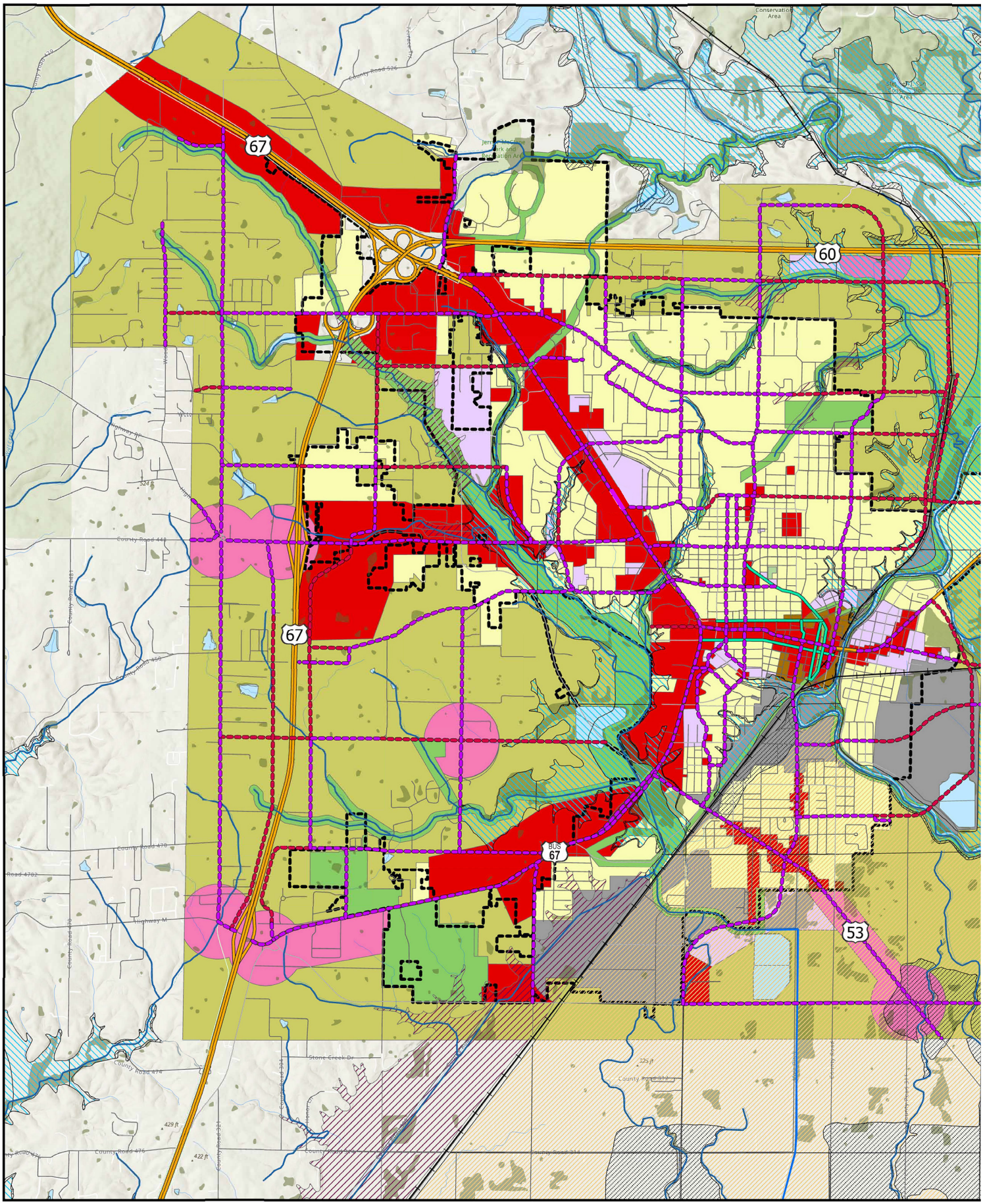


Residential features single- and multi-family units in both established neighborhoods and subdivisions.

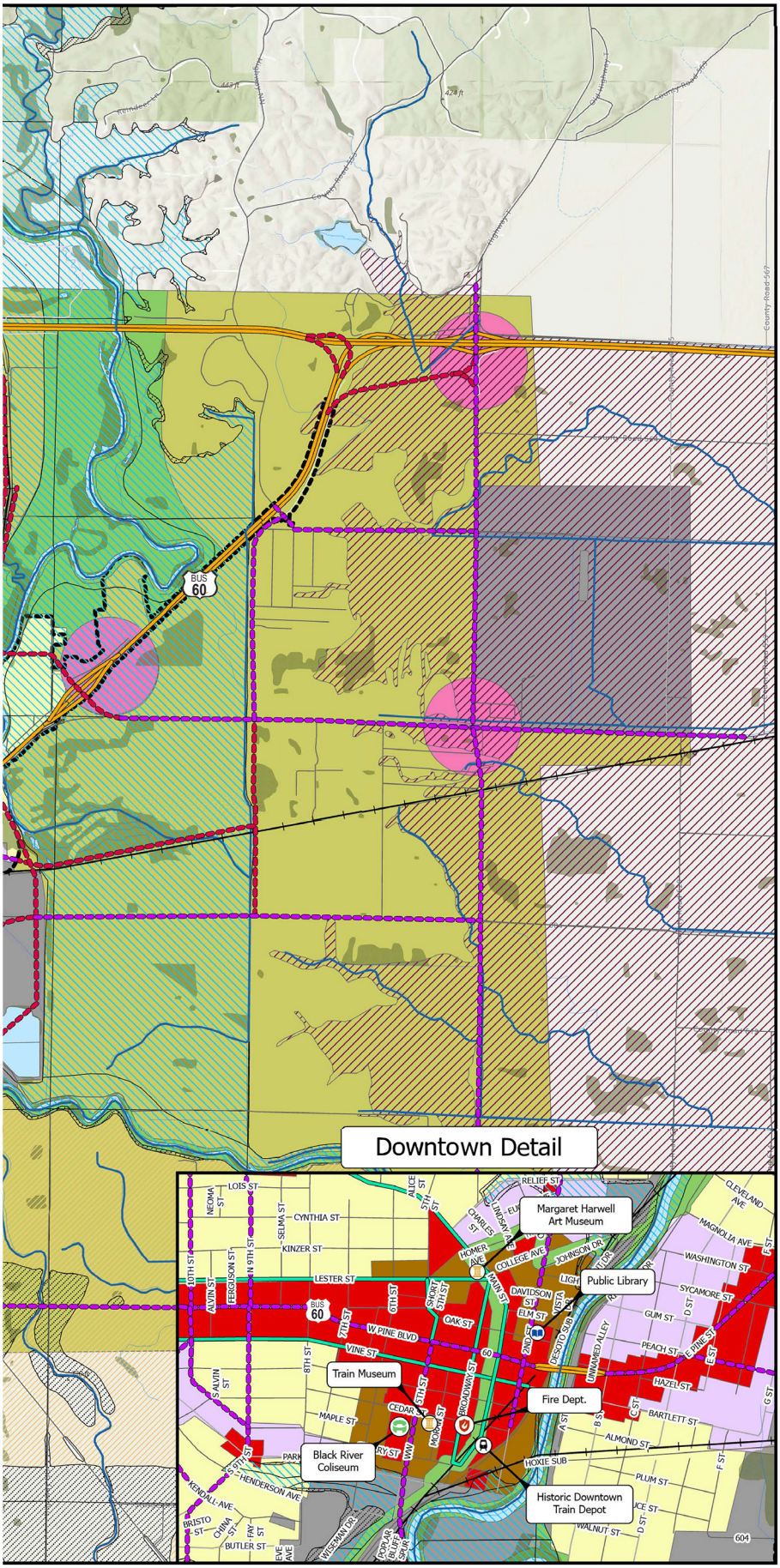


Recreational is restricted to parks, greenways or open spaces for use by the entire community.

FUTURE LAND USE



FUTURE LAND USE



Legend

- 2026 City Limits
- Parks

Future Land Use

- Commercial
- Downtown
- Historic
- Industrial
- Nodal Commercial
- Parks & Open Spaces
- High Density Residental
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Denisty Residential & Agricultural
- Railroads

Flood Plain

- A
- AE
- AH
- X500

Transportation

- Existing Collector
- New Construction
- Widen & Reconstruct

N W E S

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

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Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA

FUTURE LAND USE



COMMERCIAL

FAR for new uses ½ to 1 by-right and 1 to 1 for planned developments

Commercial service and retail, Office, Medical, Mixed-Use, Institutional uses, Parks

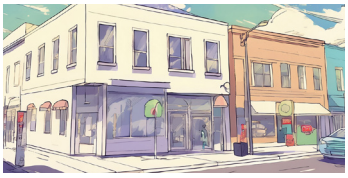
Retail sales and services, medical, office, financial uses, restaurants, hotels, entertainment, convenience stores and automobile-oriented sales and services located along major commercial corridors are envisioned in the City's Commercial areas. Compact developments containing a horizontal and/or vertical mix of tenants and uses are encouraged. Big box developments, uses with drive-through accommodations and other uses that generate high volumes of traffic are recommended as planned or special uses. Commercial developments should have direct access to a major road(s). New commercial development should be concentrated along the City's existing commercial corridors along Westwood Boulevard and Highways PP, 60, 67 and 53. Access control, professional landscaping, buffering, and monument signage (in lieu of pole signage) is recommended to minimize traffic and/or other visual and physical land use impacts. Smaller, less intense commercial uses should be encouraged to be tenants in an existing development.

NODAL COMMERCIAL

Generally lots over 2 acres and buildings greater than 10,000 square feet.

Mixed Uses, Limited retail, Limited commercial service, Limited office, Limited medical.

Nodal commercial areas are generally located at intersections of major roads. Mixed-use is encouraged. Small-scale commercial uses, including limited retail, commercial services, office, daycare, financial services, dental or medical services, dry cleaning, food or drug sales, automobile oriented uses, postal/mailing services and any mix of the above uses are envisioned. Uses should serve a wide range of local and regional users, while being sensitive to the adjacent residential or rural uses–both existing and permitted. Developments containing drive-through lanes or outdoor storage should require a special use permit. Requirements addressing signage, parking, buffering, landscaping and the preservation of existing structures are recommended whenever proposed development adjoins existing development, residentially zoned areas or public use areas. Development with multi-story buildings may have increased density.



MIXED-USE

FAR 1 to 2 (on a case by case basis)

First floor retail-commercial-service, Second floor residential-office, Institutional Uses

The City's downtown should serve as a focal point for economic development and revitalization efforts. Multi-family residential dwellings, commercial service (tailors, barbers, salons, etc), specialty retail, small offices, parks and public/institutional uses are encouraged in this area. The scale and character of any development or redevelopment should be compatible with the surrounding uses. Detailed architectural plans should be required to ensure the historic character of the downtown is maintained. Density bonuses and waivers from the City's parking requirements and other restrictions are recommended to encourage redevelopment efforts. Public improvements, streetscape enhancements and other amenities may be required to mitigate any deviations from the City's parking and density standards.

*** FAR (Floor to Area Ratio) ratio of a building's total floor space compared to the size of the land it sits on.*



INDUSTRIAL

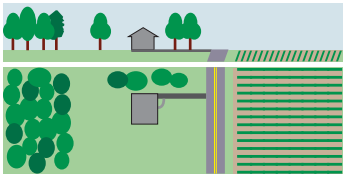
Density should be determined on a case by case basis.

Manufacturing, Assembly, Warehousing, Distribution, Storage, Equipment sales

Areas designated as "Industrial" are intended for environmentally "clean" manufacturing and industrial operations, including warehousing, transportation and distribution related uses. All industrial uses should provide on-site buffering to screen outdoor storage areas and other operational impacts from any existing or proposed uses that are less intense, including any public use area or right-of-way. Building types include concrete, masonry and tilt-up buildings. Metal buildings should meet the design recommendations provided in this chapter. Pole buildings should be prohibited. All uses that include the storage of inoperable automobiles, boats, RVs or other such inoperable equipment should contain sight proof screening, approved by the City. Any new use or extension of an existing use that requires the storage of inoperable vehicles or other inoperable equipment should be required only as a special use.

RESIDENTIAL

Within this group are sub-groups based on density, or the number of structures within a given area

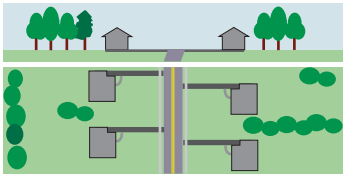


Rural Residential - Agriculture

No more than 1 dwelling unit per 3 acres

Agricultural, Single-Family Detached, Planned Cluster Subdivisions, Public-Institutional Uses, Parks

Areas designated as "Rural Residential/Agriculture" generally have limited access to infrastructure such as paved roads and connections to municipal utilities. Therefore the uses should be limited to existing agricultural and residential uses, new single-family homes located on lots greater than 3 acres and future parks and other uses where public utilities are not immediately necessary. Compact, cluster subdivisions, schools and other institutional uses are recommended as planned uses in areas that are served by city utilities. The cost to extend or improve utilities and roads should be shared by the developer and installed prior to occupancy of any new homes or buildings.

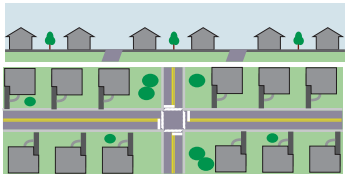


Low-Density Residential

Average minimum lot size no less than 10,000 square feet. Paved roads and connections to city utilities required

Single-Family Detached, Planned Cluster Subdivisions, Public-Institutional Uses, Parks

Development in areas designated as "Low Density Residential" should have access to infrastructure such as paved roads and connections to municipal utilities. Low Density Residential areas are intended for subdivisions containing an average lot size of over 10,000 square feet. Areas designated as Low Density Residential that do not have paved roads or proper utility connections should adhere to the Rural Residential categorical recommendations, until such time the necessary road and utility improvements are provided. Single-family attached dwellings (villas) and cluster homes are recommended as planned uses. Homeownership is encouraged.

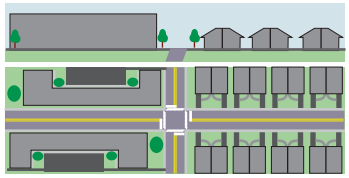


Medium-Density Residential

No more than seven dwelling units/acre on lots generally greater than 5,000 square feet

Single-Family Detached, Single-Family Attached, Public-Institutional Uses, Parks

Areas designated as "Medium-Density Residential" generally consist of existing single-family and attached single-family homes. The area is characterized by subdivisions containing lots between 5,000 and 10,000 square feet, a mix of residential styles served by municipal services and paved roads and driveways. New development should follow similar patterns of growth and be served by city sewer, water and residential streets that comply with the City's subdivision, roadway and storm water standards. Single-family attached dwellings (villas) and cluster homes are recommended as planned uses. Homeownership is encouraged.



Multi-Family Residential

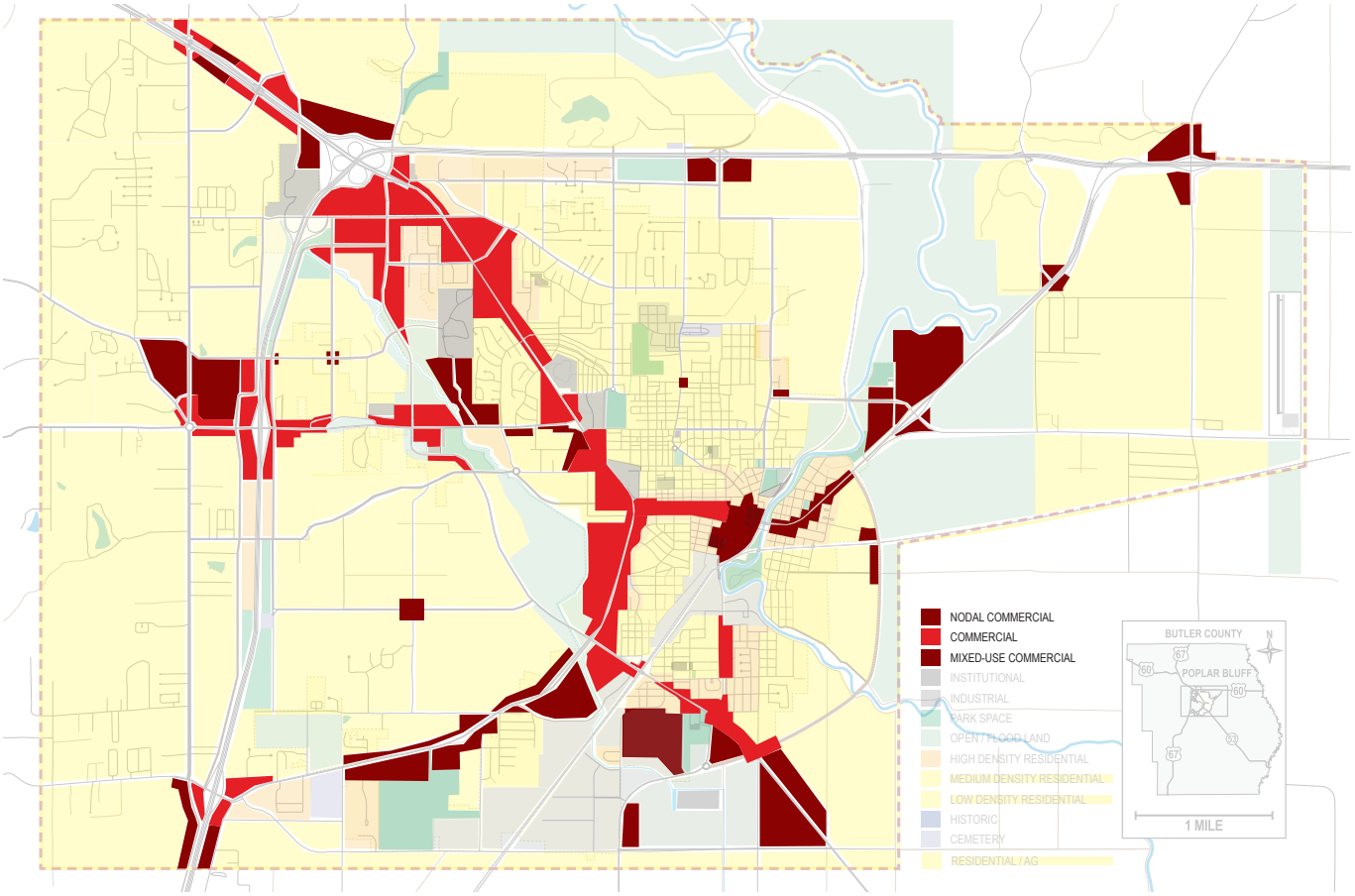
No more than 10 dwelling units/acre.

Duplex, permitted use, Apartments, Zero Lot Line, Single Family Homes, Public-Institutional Uses, Parks

Areas designated as "Multi-Family Residential" generally contain attached single-family homes and multifamily dwellings. Multi-family residential areas should be served by municipal utilities and infrastructure including sewer connections and paved streets and parking surfaces. Any new use or major redevelopment of an existing multi-family structure should provide buffers between single family residential and non-residential uses and any improvements necessary to bring streets and other infrastructure into compliance with the City's standards. Single or unified ownership and perpetual control and maintenance of any multi-family structure and common use areas (parking, playgrounds, clubhouses, etc) are encouraged.

FUTURE LAND USE

COMMERCIAL



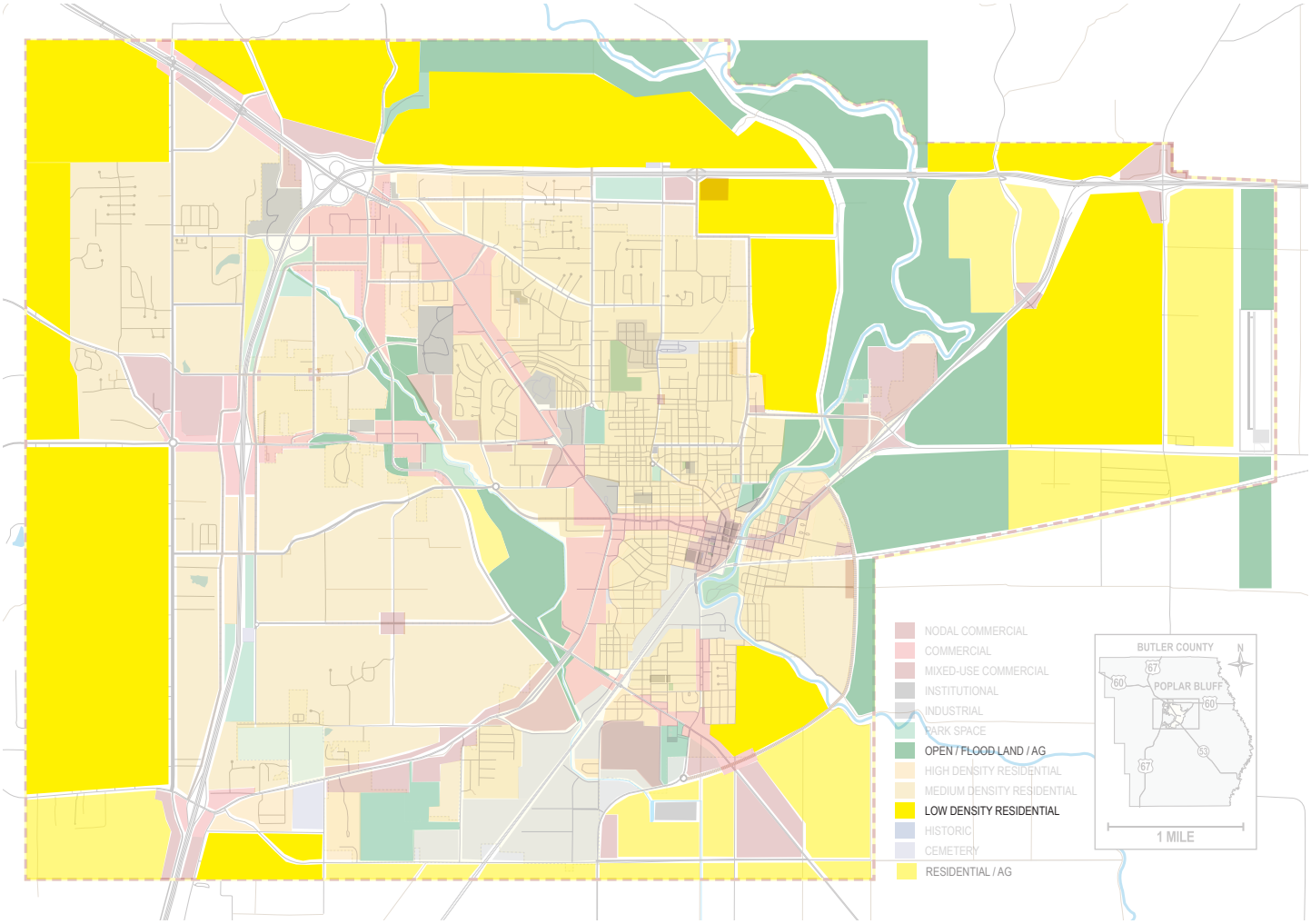
Areas designated as Commercial include Poplar Bluff's existing retail and commercial areas which consist primarily of strip centers and stand alone buildings. Over the last 60 years, commercial development has occurred along the City's most traveled roadways, resulting in commercial corridors. This continues today as virtually all of Poplar Bluff's major businesses have highway frontage. Unlike the early commercial structures in downtown Poplar Bluff, today's commercial buildings are predominantly large, single story structures with large parking areas in front. As a result, Poplar Bluff's commercial areas, such as along Westwood Boulevard, consist of single-story retail strip centers and stand-alone mercantile structures. Some of the city's commercial areas have suffered from years of disinvestment and are becoming underutilized. Visually, these areas lack architectural integrity and appear cluttered. Many of these properties suffer from vacancy and high turn-over rates which further diminish their vitality and character. While there are many exceptions, the City's existing commercial corridors are in need of beautification and in some cases redevelopment. The challenge faced by the City of is finding the balance between investing in new development or reinvesting in what is already there. To remain competitive with other cities in the region, Poplar Bluff must allow and encourage improvements to its existing commercial districts. The future economic stability of Poplar Bluff will rely on the revitalization of these existing commercial districts along with new commercial development along Highway PP and near the Highway 60-67 interchange along Oak Grove and Shelby roads, and future commercial development and annexation of the City's key commercial nodal opportunity areas.

Most of the recent commercial development activity in Poplar Bluff has occurred along Oak Grove and Shelby roads. The City should continue to support well-planned commercial development within this area and this plan recommends making it the City's "premier" commercial corridor and a regional destination for shopping, entertainment and hospitality. Among the future land use recommendations that received the most support from the community was redevelopment of downtown. Therefore, any future land uses or development types that support this recommendation should be directed to downtown. Mixed-use development is recommended downtown and East Pine, near Three Rivers College, and other corridors to allow flexibility.

Recommended land uses for the northern retail triangle near the Highway 60-67 interchange include retail, big-box stores, commercial services, medical, financial, hospitality and any combination thereof.

The synergistic mixture of like uses increases the frequency and duration of consumer visits. Clustering together also increases the convenience and walkability of the City's commercial districts and decreases the average vehicles miles traveled per family or consumer.

FUTURE LAND USE



RURAL RESIDENTIAL / AGRICULTURE

Rural residential areas are characterized by single-family dwellings on large lots and farming operations. A density of one dwelling unit per three acres is considered low density. Generally, the areas anticipated for future rural residential development are outside the City's present limits. The City should annex any areas that might be developed in the near future to ensure greater control of the timing, density and type of development.

The areas designated as Rural Residential/Agriculture on the Future Land Use Map should be limited to existing agriculture uses or agriculturally related uses, single-family detached residential dwellings, parks and institutions. No multiple-family development is recommended. Conservation subdivisions are recommended as a tool to help preserve sensitive natural areas, reinforce the area's agrarian culture and small-town atmosphere and protect the area's agricultural lands, which are the most productive in the region.

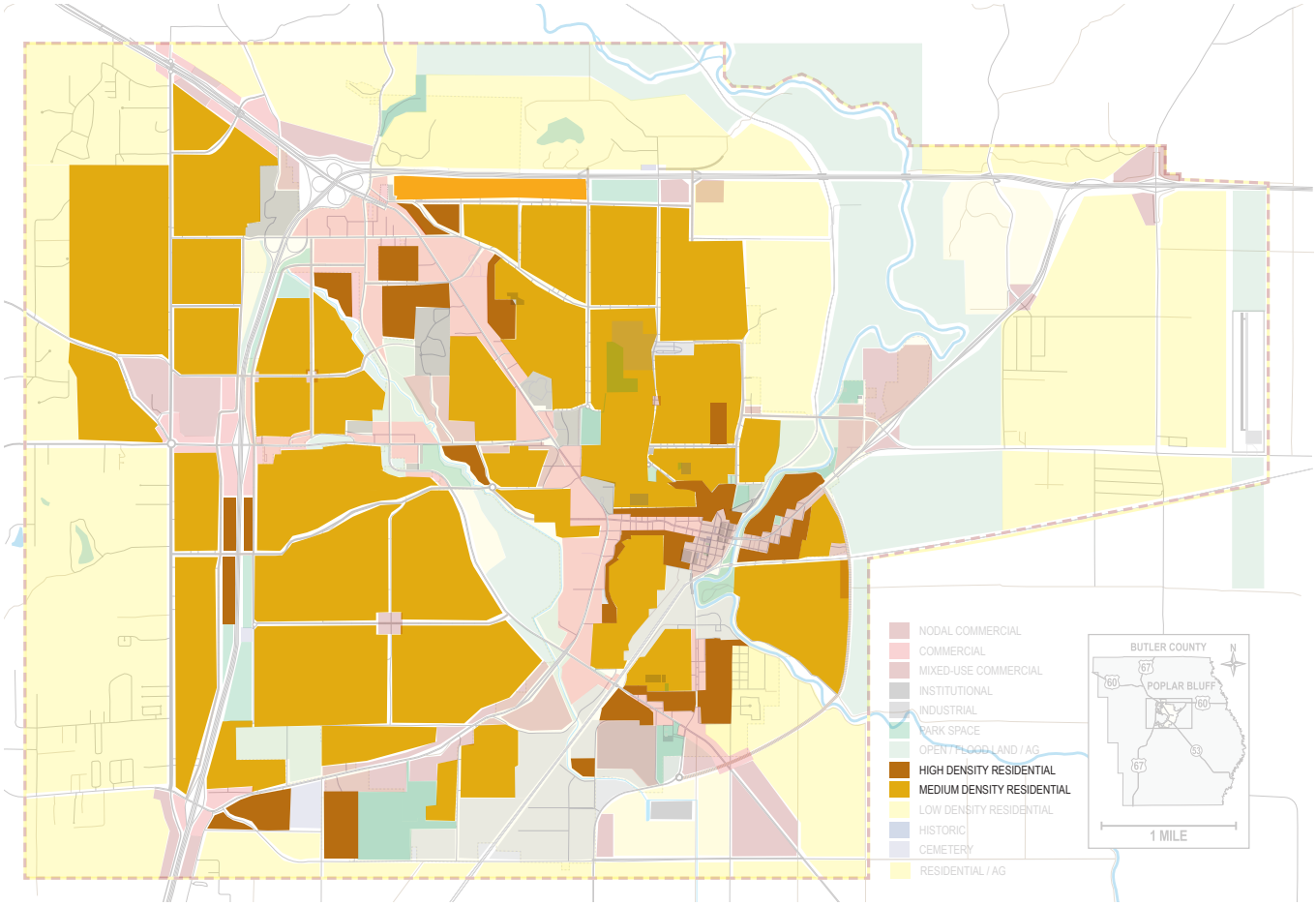
LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Low-density single family residential areas are characterized by single-family detached dwellings with an average lot size of 10,000 square feet or approximately four dwellings per acre.

Areas designated as low-density residential are located adjacent to existing rural residential and agriculture areas and at the fringe of the City's present limits. Low-Density Residential areas should be limited to single-family detached residential dwellings, parks and institutions. No multiple-family development is recommended. All proposed residential development that is not served by city sewer or water should provide at least three acres per house lot.

Conservation subdivisions are recommended as a tool to help preserve sensitive natural areas, reinforce the area's agrarian culture and small-town atmosphere and protect the area's agricultural lands, which are the most productive in the region.

FUTURE LAND USE



MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Medium-Density Residential areas are characterized by single-family detached dwellings with some attached and multiple family dwellings developed at densities of four-to-seven (4-7) units per acre. Future "Medium-Density Residential" development should include subdivisions with lots that are generally no less than 5,000 square feet and no more than 10,000 square feet and in keeping with the character and densities of the surrounding neighborhoods. No multiple-family development, other than attached single-family dwellings (duplexes and villas), are recommended in the areas designated for medium density single family residential use, except as approved as a planned development.

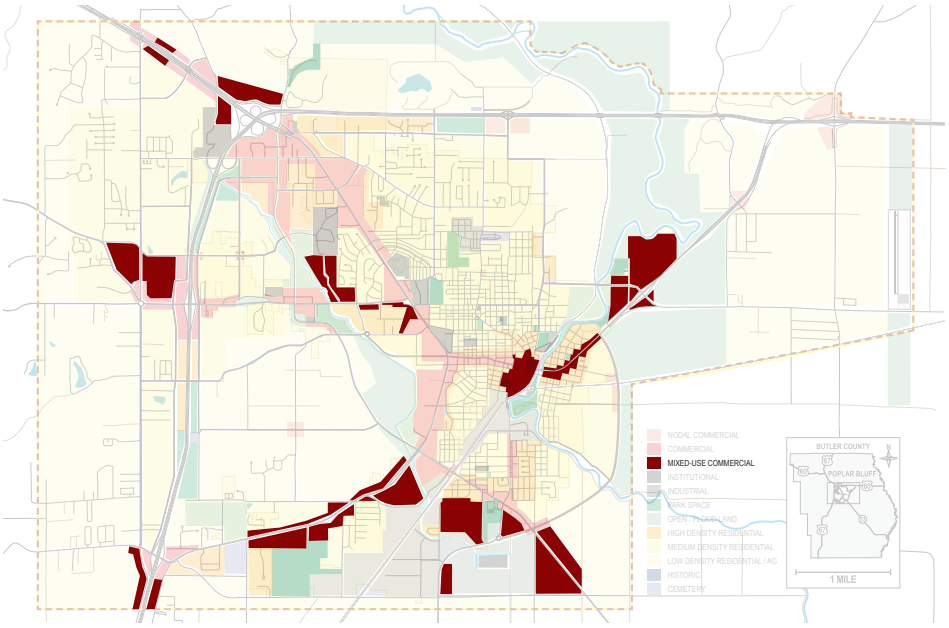
Much of the areas designated as Medium-Density Residential within the city limits on the Future Land Use Map are already developed or built-out. Therefore, most future development activity will be in the form of infill, tear-down or redevelopment projects. All infill and redevelopment proposals should be consistent with the surrounding residential neighborhood and blend harmoniously with the surrounding land uses with regard to general character, density, structure height, and bulk requirements. Infill densities should be limited to not more than 125% of the average density of the surrounding residential development(s). All proposed Medium-Density Residential development should comply with the future residential design and compatibility standards.

HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Multi-family residential areas are characterized by single-family attached or multi-family dwellings at densities greater than seven (7) units per acre. The "High-Density Residential" Future Land Use Category is proposed for several relatively small areas that are either already zoned or developed as multi-family or viewed as transitional. Transitional refers to single-family residential areas that have been converted to two or more family units and adjacent to commercial or higher density residential areas that are typically suitable for higher density residential development than is allowed by the present zoning. These areas are recommended for a planned and coordinated mixture of single and multiple-family residential types that are compatible with the nearby residential neighborhoods. Developments in these areas should, at its perimeter, represent the adjoining neighborhood's average densities transitioning to smaller lot sizes and/or higher densities in the interior of the proposed development. Any future development, redevelopment or infill development in these areas should be consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhoods and blend with the surrounding land uses with regard to architectural character, density, structure height and bulk requirements. Infill densities should be limited to the average density of the existing adjacent densities. All future high-density residential development shall have direct access to a major road.

FUTURE LAND USE

MIXED-USE

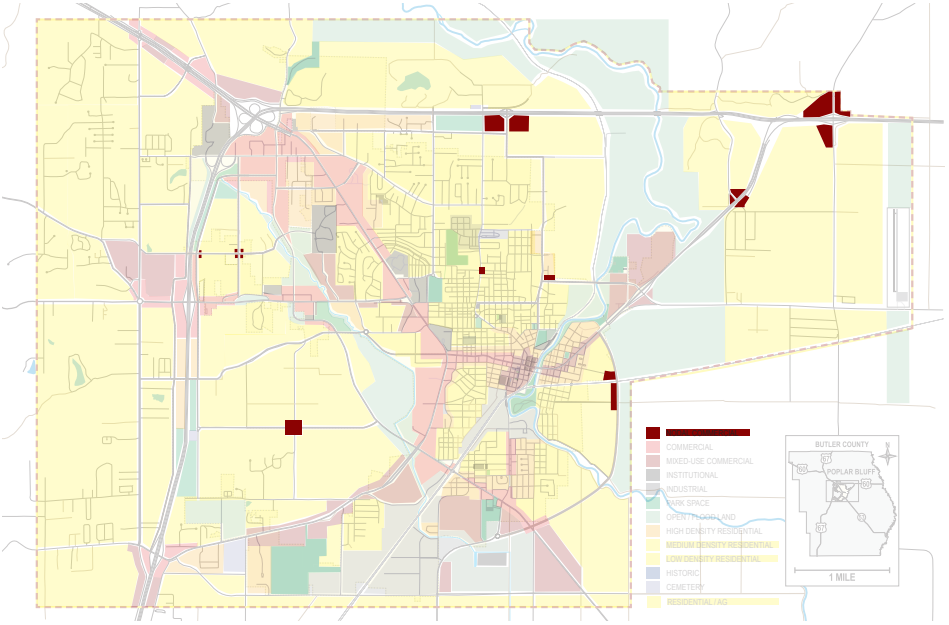


Providing a buffer between commercial and residential land, this allows for multiple uses of land. From single-family homes, duplexes and apartments, to professional and small commercial buildings or churches, this land allows for flexibility.

The area designated as downtown is the City's original historic central business district and consists of a wide array of commercial, civic and residential uses. Poplar Bluff's historic downtown is in need of revitalization. Over the years many of the businesses and residents have abandoned the city's urban core, leaving vacant buildings behind and accelerating the deprecation of the city's once vibrant downtown and historic neighborhoods. However, these same vacant buildings and homes also provide opportunities for future adaptive reuse and revitalization efforts. Many of the older, large homes have already been converted to apartments or businesses. While this Plan supports these efforts, careful planning is needed to mitigate the negative effects of these conversions, such as incompatible land uses, increased density, increased traffic and over-crowding that may detract from the character and quality of life of the community.

The character of the city's downtown and historic building stock cannot be duplicated. Downtown Poplar Bluff is authentic; it houses the city's historic structures that front brick streets and tell the story of Poplar Bluff's past. Today, there is a strong resurgence of older adults moving back to the downtown areas. This plan envisions downtown Poplar Bluff as an area to attract new housing types and reestablishing it as the cultural, entertainment, recreation and hospitality center of the City and the region.

NODAL COMMERCIAL



Nodes are places where commercial activity is concentrated at intersections of major roads. Business owners tend to prefer locating at intersections due to their ease of access and high visibility. The commercial concentration at the intersection of Highway PP and Westwood Boulevard is a good example of an exiting commercial nodal opportunity area. Commercial nodal development is recommended at most intersections of two or more major roads. All future nodal development should include public right-of-way improvements necessary for safe, convenient vehicular and pedestrian accessibility. Compact, mixed-use development is the preferred land use in the nodal areas.

New, smaller scale commercial, office and retail development is recommended along existing and future intersection(s). Development in these areas and other areas that can serve dispersed residential neighborhoods is recommended. This increases the convenience, choice and competition within the marketplace by dispersing commercial services throughout the city. Nodal development may include a wide range of light retail (up to 10,000 sf) and office uses in newly developing districts as well as redeveloping areas within the city's core. Development may consist of single, stand alone uses or multi-tenant developments containing a mixture of uses. Generally, ground floor uses should be limited to retail, hospitality and commercial service and the upper stories reserved for office and residential uses.

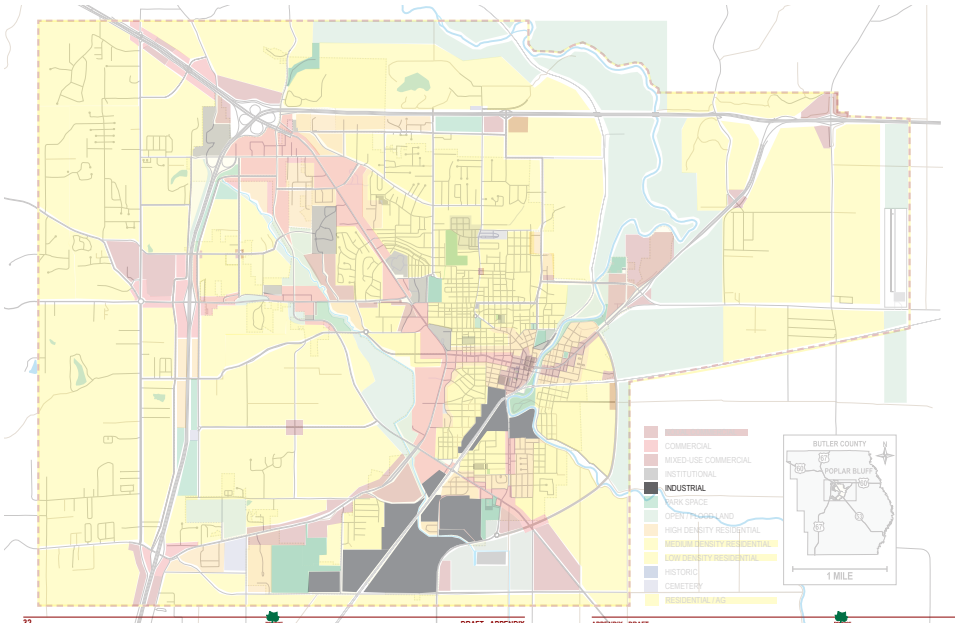
FUTURE LAND USE

INDUSTRIAL

The industrial use category includes a range of industrial uses from warehousing to heavy manufacturing and including office warehouse, contractor yards, motor vehicle repair, wholesale uses and business parks. In addition to the recommendations stated previously, the following items should be addressed prior to the approval of any new or expanded industrial use:

1. Building types should include concrete, masonry and tilt-up buildings. Pole buildings should be prohibited.

2. Buildings should avoid long, monotonous, uninterrupted walls or roof planes on any building face visible from adjacent uses or public right of ways. Metal buildings should contain architectural features such as textured/masonry/stucco surfaces, accents and fenestration such as windows, doors and other offsets or other breaks in the wall or roof planes.

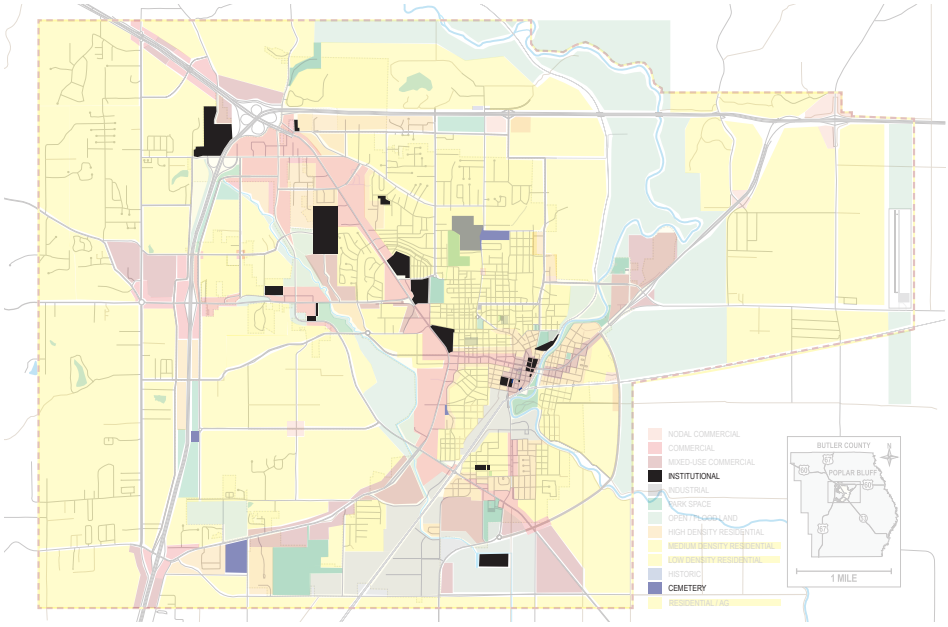


3. All uses that include the storage of inoperable automobiles and other equipment should contain sight proof screening, approved by the City.

4. Any new use or extension of an existing use that requires the storage of inoperable vehicles or other inoperable equipment should be required only as a planned use.

INSTITUTIONAL

The Institutional Land Use category includes governmental and quasi-public uses and places of assembly-such as churches. All public facilities and places of assembly should have direct access to a major roadway and employ the use of alternate access roadways. Institutional uses should be permitted in most future land use categories, subject to site plan review and compliance with the applicable zoning and design regulations. If an institutional land use stops being used as an institutional use, the future land use category should revert to the adjacent future land use classification. In the event there are two adjoining uses, the most restrictive use should apply. The following institutional and public improvements are recommended;



1. Revitalize city hall or develop a new city hall facility in its present location or somewhere else in the downtown area.

2. Install a new water tank north and east of the existing Bypass and Highway PP.

3. Develop a future infrastructure plan to extend utilities in the city's anticipated annexation areas and develop an ordinance that requires developers to share in the cost of related roads, utilities and other infrastructure costs.

4. Continue improving emergency preparedness/first responder plans relating to homeland security and natural disasters relating to the New Madrid Fault / Earthquake and other acts of God.

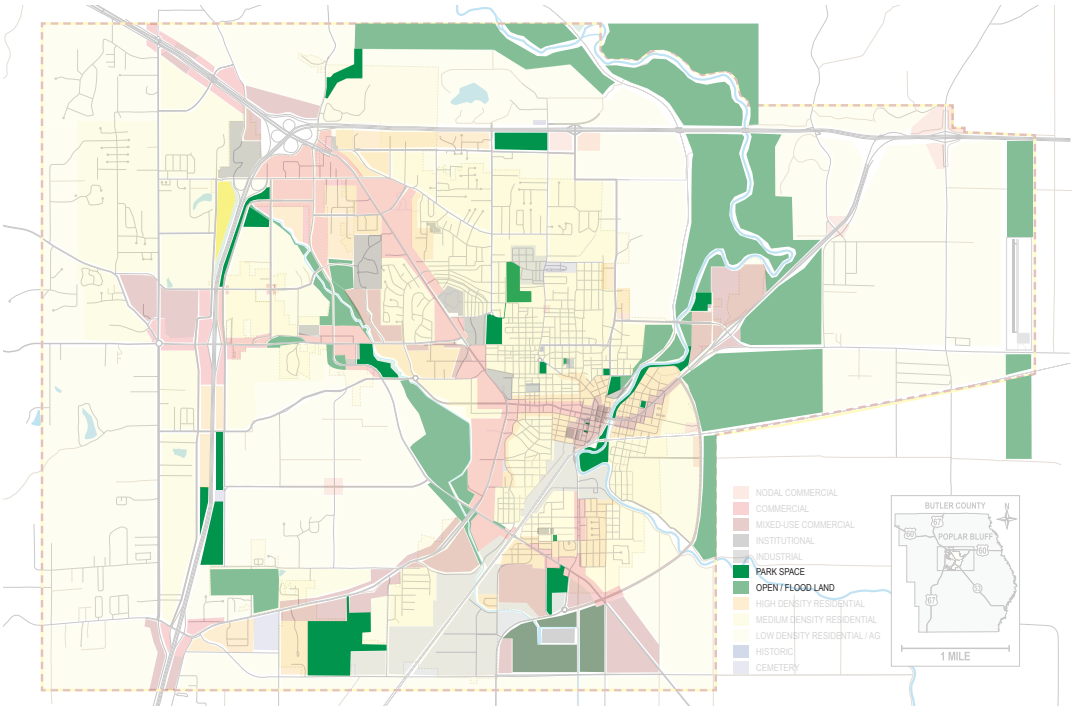
5. Promote, expand and continue to improve the Three Rivers College.

6. Develop strategies to increase the utilization and generate more revenue at the Coliseum and all other City-owned park & recreation facilities and community events. Develop a plan to finance ongoing, escalating maintenance costs of the Black River Coliseum.

7. Provide more ongoing educational opportunities to better position the City's workforce for the new job market and quality, salaried jobs.

FUTURE LAND USE

PARKS & OPEN SPACES



The City's park system should include trails, linear parks, community parks, neighborhood parks and regional parks that meet the needs of all residents. The City must continually look at opportunities to purchase property adjacent to existing parks and property for new parks in areas that are presently not located near a park or public use area. Along with the expansion of existing park and development of new parks, the City must continue to maintain and enhance existing parks. Improving pavilions, benches and other equipment in the City's existing parks and providing new pavilions and equipment in parks that currently do not have pavilions, etc. is recommended. In addition, the City should develop and sponsor more recreational activities for teens and young adults. Sports oriented activities such as bowling, skating, racket sports and a youth center were all highly-ranked park and recreation activities recommended during the public engagement process. Providing a greater range of activities, including concession stands and vending machines at select parks is also recommended.

Parks should utilize the opportunity to connect to each other, primarily through the development of a greenway system. The greenway system should include trails, trailheads, nature areas, and be designed to help control flooding. Parks, recreation and greenway should be viewed as a community-wide responsibility rather than the sole responsibility of the City. While the Future Land Use Plan depicts several areas for future park/open space, property owners should not be expected to contribute property to public park/open space without fair compensation or the ability to develop the property according to the surrounding future land use categories. If more than one future land use category exists- the less intense land use category shall apply. Generally the areas designated for future parks/open space are located within a floodplain or other environmentally sensitive areas, therefore not suited for future development.

Many funding organizations prefer public-private and multi-jurisdictional partnerships when considering grant allocations for the development or improvement of parks and greenways. Poplar Bluff should investigate the establishment of partnerships with other public and private sector providers of recreation. The City should partner with the local school district, Three Rivers College, the Chamber, local churches, Butler County, local businesses and statewide agencies such as the Missouri Department of Conservation to help procure funding and implementation support for future park improvements.

Additional Park and Open Space recommendations and implementation strategies are outlined in the Park Department Master Plan. Some include:

- Development of Leist Park and Pike Creek Park
- Development of a recreation center in a partnership with the R-I School District to create an competitive indoor swimming pool featuring eight lanes and diving well, large gym area for basketball and volleyball, multipurpose rooms and an indoor practice facility.
- Black River Trail connecting parks along the river and downtown area. The trail should feature information kiosks, parking areas and park amenities, such as age-appropriate play equipment, fitness trails and landscaping are recommended to increase the utilization and enhance the overall park/trail experience at Black River Industrial Park, Sportsman's Park, Clinton Park, Wiseman Park and Hillcrest Park.
- Trails should be provided to connect the City's parks, schools, neighborhoods and other destinations and to reduce the reliance on automobile use.
- Recreational trails should be provided in the City's parks to encourage outdoor recreation and strengthening connections between people.
- Park improvements should be focused in all City parks. Future projects are recommended for each park.
- New development should include park or open space or payment in-lieu of parks to ensure a balanced supply of parks for all areas of the community.

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2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CHAPTER 7



Chapter 7

Implementation

Here is a summary of this chapter covering the City of Poplar Bluff's implementation plan:

This section details the strategic, physical, and financial roadmap required to translate the community's long-term planning goals into actionable public and private projects. Although Poplar Bluff benefits from strong logistical positioning, robust manufacturing, and essential regional services, it faces distinct growth management and revenue challenges. A key issue is the disparity between municipal boundaries and functional population — while official census numbers rank the city 46th in Missouri, the broader urbanized footprint serves roughly 32,500 residents. Furthermore, repeated failures to pass a local Use Tax have resulted in an estimated loss of $7 million to $9 million over the past decade, leaving municipal operations heavily dependent on traditional sales tax generated by major retailers.

Primary Land Use Strategies

To ensure balanced growth and preserve small-town character, the plan establishes a clear hierarchy of land use preferences:

• Downtown Revitalization & Adaptive Reuse: Ranked as the top growth priority, strategies focus on converting historic structures into lofts and commercial venues, creating a historic downtown overlay district, and developing public civic spaces, such as a multi-department City Hall plaza and scenic overlook along Second Street.

• Commercial Redevelopment & Infill: Aging strip malls and overbuilt parking lots are identified as "land reserves" for compact infill and mixed-use "lifestyle centers" that combine retail, dining, and pedestrian amenities.

• Residential Infill & "Missing Middle" Housing: To address shifting household demographics and an aging population, the plan targets the shortage of multi-unit, house-scale developments (such as duplexes, townhomes, cottage courts, and Accessory Dwelling Units). Recommendations include pre-approved housing designs to lower permitting delays and land bank programs for vacant lots.

• Greenfield Development: For peripheral expansion, the plan advocates smart growth principles and conservation subdivision design—a density-neutral approach that clusters homes to preserve 50% or more of a site as natural open space and greenway corridors.

Neighborhood Stability & Growth Management

To enhance living conditions, the chapter recommends requiring sidewalks on both sides of residential streets, de-emphasizing dominant street-facing garages, encouraging front porches to build community cohesion, and implementing a tree preservation initiative to add trees to the urban canopy.

Growth management recommendations emphasize proactive annexation along expanding commercial and residential corridors—such as Highways 60, 67, and PP—to ensure new developments adhere to city building codes, receive centralized utilities, and contribute to the municipal tax base.

Governance & Financial Implementation

Executing the plan requires coordination among key entities — the Planning and Zoning Commission (the sole authority of the plan), the Board of Adjustment, City Council, municipal staff, and regional partners like the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission.

Because public safety accounts for nearly 43% of municipal expenditures, funding new infrastructure requires leveraging varied capital mechanisms. The plan outlines available options, including local Use Tax adoption, improvement districts, grants, loans, and tax credits.

TOP PHOTO: The historic Depot grand staircase renovation project cost $540,758 and was completed in 2015, replacing the stairs that led from the depot to Main Street.



The water tower in the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park.

Being a regional hub strategically located at the center of the continental United States, the City of Poplar Bluff is positioned for growth. Because it offers quick access to major arterial interstates, is bisected by two Class 1 railroads and near the Southeast Missouri Port on the Mississippi River, the city can leverage its strong logistical positioning, robust manufacturing sector and regional service assets to maintain a steady economic footprint.

Some of the challenges facing other rural communities across the country – access to health care and broadband, or the overall cost of living – are some of Poplar Bluff's greatest strengths.

While the national economy can influence any community, Poplar Bluff's position as a regional epicenter shields it from sharper declines seen in more isolated rural communities. Continued investments in local infrastructure, youth and technical education programs and workforce training, such as programs run by Three Rivers College, are vital to sustaining the City's economic momentum. Investing in roads, sidewalks and utilities will attract business while creating vibrant public spaces like parks, plazas and community centers that foster social interaction and events will attract visitors while improving the quality of life for residents.

However, the City is not alone in this endeavor as it partners with local and regional entities as previously outlined in Chapter 3. These working partnerships are essential for the greater Poplar Bluff region. Having the same long-term goals and working together to achieve them – such as the Industrial Road Bypass and overpass project – benefits residents within and outside Poplar Bluff's city limits.

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing the City of Poplar Bluff is the perception that the population is smaller than it truly should be. Due to the disjointed nature of the city limits and the growth of residential housing outside that boundary, Poplar Bluff is more like a city of 32,500 but not collecting the revenue it needs to support a city that size. Poplar Bluff ranks as the 46th largest city in Missouri in actual population but it could be in the top 20 and near the size of Cape Girardeau if the city limits included everyone within a six-mile radius.

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IMPLEMENTATION

To compound the issue, the City of Poplar Bluff does not collect tax revenues on goods purchased from certain online and out-of-state vendors for delivery and use in Poplar Bluff. An attempt to collect the Use Tax through a vote of residents has failed multiple times. It is estimated that Poplar Bluff lost between $7 to $9 million in revenue in the last decade without the Use Tax, approximately $1.8 million in 2025. That number will likely go up as more people do more shopping online. That will likely mean less sales tax revenue for the City, of which makes up nearly two-thirds of the total revenue.

Nearly half of the sales tax revenue generated within the City comes from eight businesses, and the City's Municipal Utilities, led by Walmart (17.78%) and Walmart Neighborhood Market (5.97%), Menards (7.53%) and Home Depot (4.88%). Meanwhile the 10 largest property taxpayers in the City featuring health care providers, banks, commercial retail and manufacturers but account for just 15.75% of the total assessed valuation.

Small businesses are often the lifeblood of rural economics, providing essential goods and keeping wealth within the community. Using the same techniques to attract large corporations could also be used for small local businesses who have already invested in the community. However, the community must always use these techniques carefully and determine if the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

A thriving economy is important for the long-term success of Poplar Bluff. A diverse economic environment demands a skilled workforce that continues to improve job skills, education and knowledge to compete.

Poplar Bluff will assist the education and business communities in developing a competitive workforce. The City's main partners in education feature the Poplar Bluff R-I School District and Three Rivers College.

Along with promoting educational services provided by these partners, the City can enhance the quality of life to retain and recruit a highly skilled workforce for the community.

The City can only invest in infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks and utilities, to attract business along with creating vibrant public spaces like parks, plazas and community centers that foster social interaction and events to attract visitors and improve the quality of life for residents.

Among the most agreed upon questions from a survey of residents for this project was the City creating more sidewalks, recreation programs and restoring downtown.

Potential projects were identified through meetings and surveys of the public. They are included in the following pages as examples of how the City of Poplar Bluff can develop a sense of community and improve the quality of living for residents.

These projects were developed as practical solutions to issues identified by the community.

Identifying solutions and creating future projects is an ongoing process that the City of Poplar Bluff and its residents should always update as the community's needs change over the next decade and beyond.

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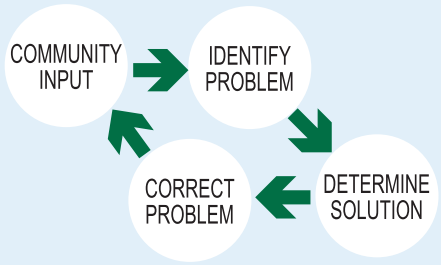
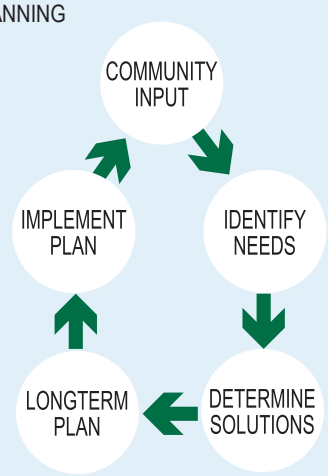
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Projects thrive on community-driven initiatives, focusing on leveraging local assets, enhancing quality of life, and improving economic diversity. Key strategies include creating public spaces, boosting downtown revitalization, supporting local entrepreneurs through workshops, and improving digital infrastructure. Common projects include pop-up retail, community gardens, and creating murals or art centers.

REACTIONARY CYCLE



LONGTERM PLANNING



KEY STRATEGIES:

Placemaking: Convert empty lots into pop-up retail spaces, farmers' markets, or seating areas to encourage community engagement.

Economic Diversification: Support local entrepreneurs by creating "buy local" programs, business networking events, and supporting local mentorship or pitch events.

Infrastructure Improvements: Utilize existing assets, such as upgrading community centers and libraries for, co-working spaces and high-speed internet to attract remote workers.

Cultural Enhancement: Hire local artists for live performances or public art installations to build community pride.

Recreation Development: Build or improve parks and community trails to increase quality of life and attract visitors.

ACTIONABLE STEPS:

Build Coalitions: Connect with local stakeholders — business owners, residents, and local government — before finalizing projects.

Identify Local Assets: Assess what makes the town unique (e.g., history, natural, or arts) rather than replicating larger city projects.

Start with Quick Wins: Use low-budget demonstrations, such as pilot programs or pop-up events, to demonstrate success and build momentum.

Seek Funding: Explore grants, such as federal, state or private grants, or raise the funds locally through a community campaign.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



Despite Poplar Bluff's modest population declines over the last two decennial censuses, growth is inevitable. The US Census Bureau forecasts that between 2003 and 2025 the United States will grow by 58 million people, roughly 2.75-3 million a year. As demonstrated in the 2000 census findings, Missourians' appetite for open country living will continue to steer development in areas that are previously undeveloped, known as Greenfields. These areas are characterized by low-density areas located outside the city's urban limits and often including significant natural and agricultural resources. The majority of Poplar Bluff's future growth will occur as Greenfield development. However, redevelopment, adaptive reuse and infill development plays a critical role in the stabilization and revitalization of the City's urban core.

The following sections provide adaptive reuse, redevelopment, infill and Greenfield development strategies. By implementing these strategies and avoiding low-density single-family subdivisions and strip centers that lack connectivity, usable open space and the efficient use of infrastructure, the City of Poplar Bluff can grow responsibility while maintaining its small town atmosphere and hometown family values. The following sections provide the recommended future land use strategies, in order of importance. Promoting Downtown Revitalization and Adaptive Reuse are the most preferred growth option.

REVITALIZATION & ADAPTIVE REUSE

Downtown Poplar Bluff has undergone many revitalization projects over the years. The most recent improvements included the construction of the Black River Coliseum, the Skate Plaza and infrastructure improvements along Vine Street. These improvements are critical in increasing the confidence to invest in the downtown and bringing life and vitality to the streets and establishments of the City's downtown. The City must work to eliminate barriers, perceived or real, that might slow or deter the redevelopment process and to ensure ongoing successful revitalization efforts. Grants and technical assistance have been sought through programs such as the DREAM Initiative and the Missouri Main Street program.

A new light pole with lights strung across the street stands in front of the Begley Building along Vine Street in the historic Downtown district.

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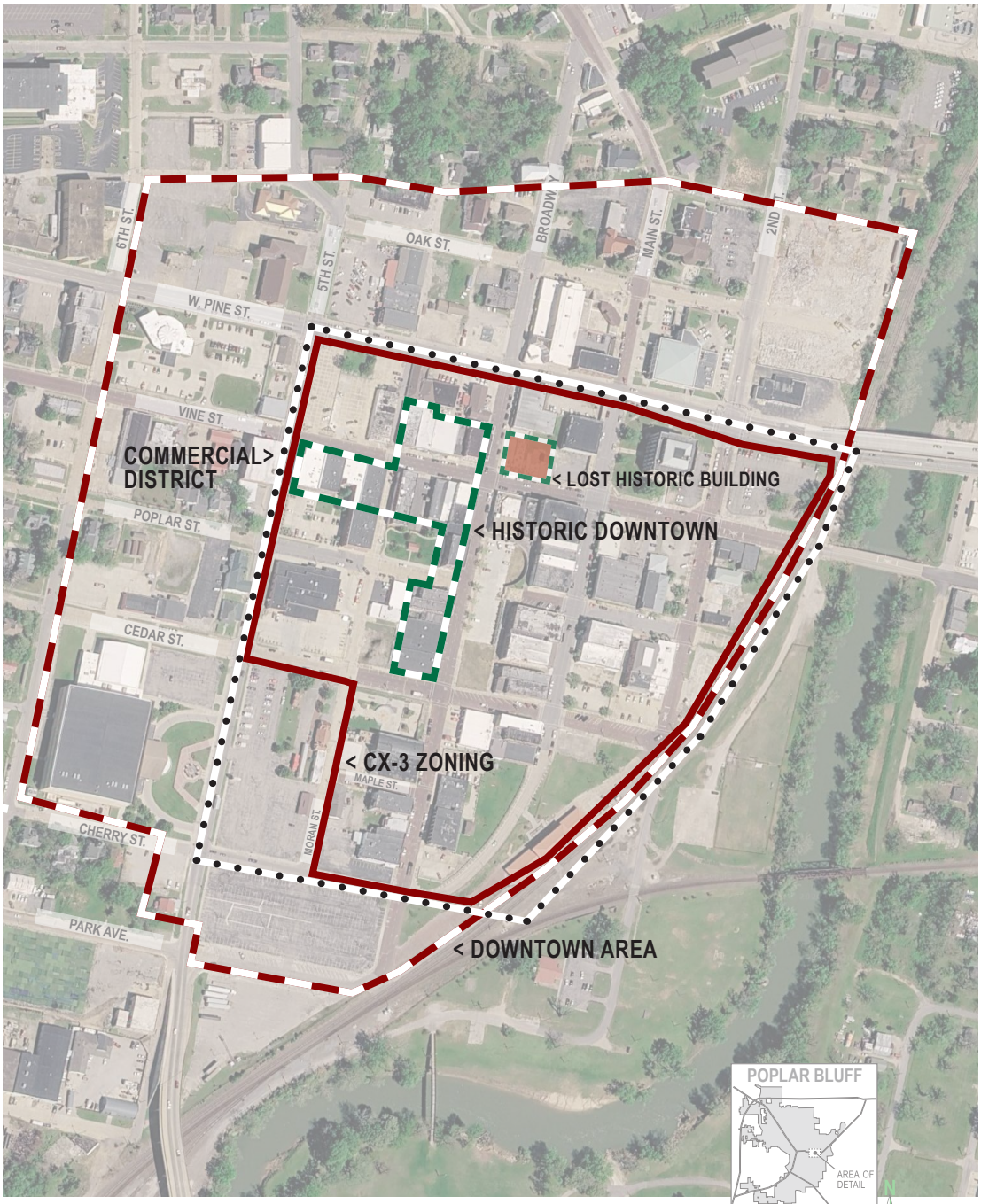
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Adaptive reuse and revitalization recommendations include:

- Market Downtown Poplar Bluff as the premier location for new housing types and as the cultural, entertainment, recreational and hospitality center of the region.
- Promote the adaptive reuse and revitalization of the city's older buildings and homes, specifically those located in the Historic Downtown and urban core.
- Evaluate past adaptive reuse projects and other land use conversions to evaluate the most effective approaches for the future and avoid duplicating past mistakes.
- Track down the ownership of dilapidated buildings and facilitate steps toward code compliance and reinvestment to reverse depreciation. Help procure funding in the form of grants or tax credits to help fund the adaptive reuse or revitalization of historic or architecturally significant structures or sites.
- Develop zoning procedures and development incentives to encourage horizontal and vertical mixed-use revitalization efforts and redevelopment and permit mixed use, including lofts, live-work units and relief from parking requirements. One recommended strategy for implementation is the development of a historic downtown overlay district.
- The City should continue to create a walkable, outdoor shopping district Downtown with integrated shops, entertainment and restaurants offering unique, high quality merchandise, alfresco dining (roof-top & sidewalk), cultural attractions, art galleries and annual street festivals and entertainment.



WHAT EXACTLY IS CONSIDERED DOWNTOWN POPLAR BLUFF?

There are three different definitions of Downtown Poplar Bluff, all located west of the Black River (map above).

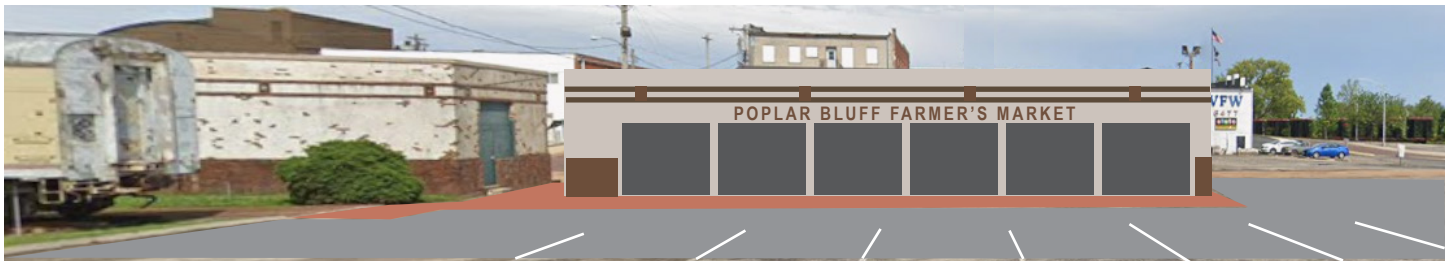
- The small area is the Poplar Bluff Commercial Historic District.
- The larger area is the overall downtown area.
- The middle size area is the zoning area known as downtown, which features the CX-3 zone for mixed-use. *This also includes the area noted in the Historic Preservation Commission's guidelines (dotted line).*

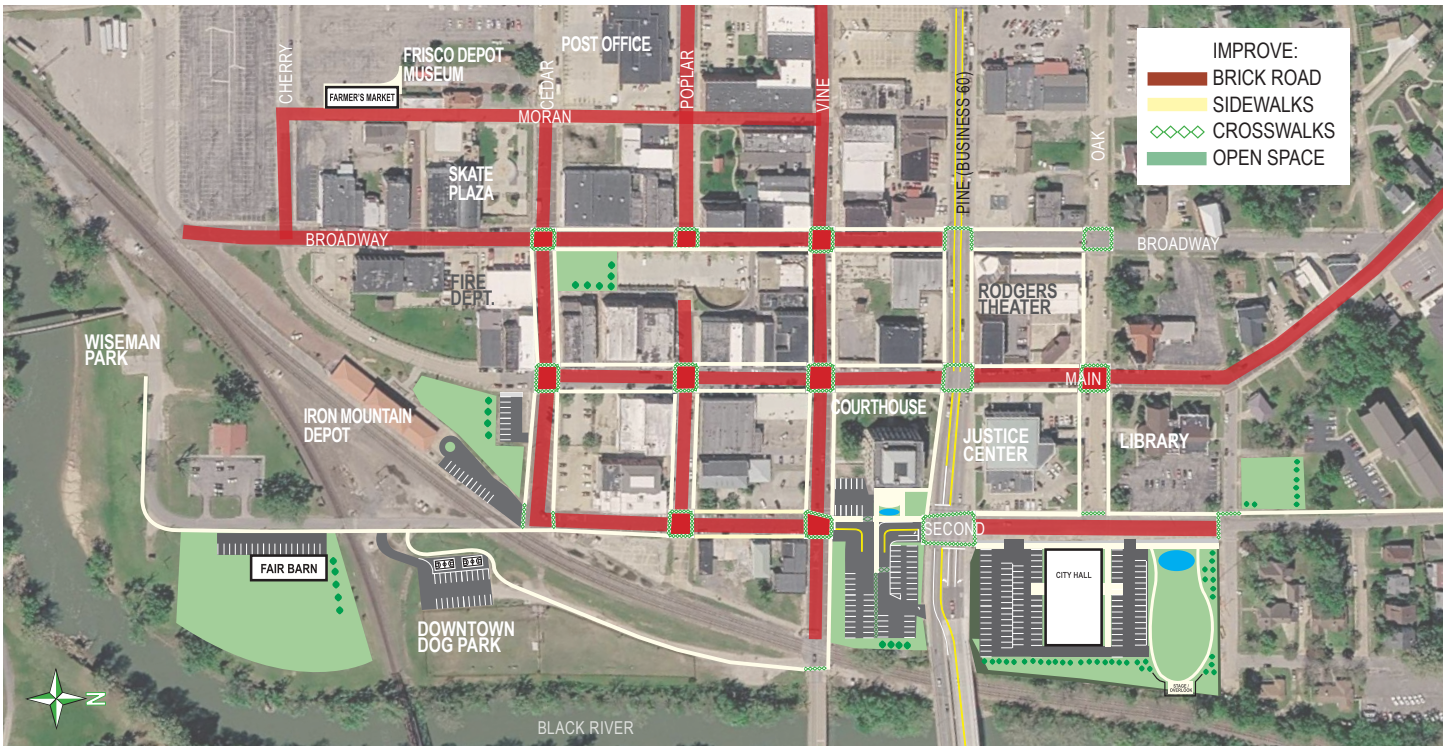
The historic district was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1994. This area also included one building to the east along Vine that was lost to a fire.

Efforts to spark development in downtown started with the previous Comprehensive Plan. The City was designated a DREAM community by the state in August 2007. From this, a nonprofit was started in 2010, Downtown Poplar Bluff, Inc., which led efforts to promote businesses and events, and carry out the Comprehensive Plan's actions. Among these efforts includes a 2020 strategic vision for downtown, which featured a five-year plan that included — like the previous Comprehensive Plan — the creation of a Community Improvement District. The CID was never approved and the Downtown Poplar Bluff disbanded in late 2025.

In 2026 a new group was formed to promote the area — Grow Our Downtown Poplar Bluff. The nonprofit oversees the Downtown Farmer's Market and continues to promote the City's downtown area.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT









DOWNTOWN CONCEPTS

Downtown Poplar Bluff has featured a large empty lot along Second Street since the former City Hall building was demolished in 2024. Plans to build a new City Hall at this site should be large enough to house all of the City's departments, Council Chambers and Municipal Court.

The project could also feature a scenic overlook to view the river from the bluff above the railroad track. This area should be lined with poplar trees and the viewing area could double as a stage so concerts or other events could be held. A fountain or water feature opposite the library could mark the entrance for this public space.

Previous plans suggested closing Second Street between Pine and Vine streets to provide safer access for pedestrians entering the Courthouse. The east entrance as become the main access point for the public to increase security. Creating a plaza in front of the entrance by removing some of the parking and connecting that plaza to the parking on the east side of Second Street makes the entrance more visible and safer. Pedestrians would no longer need to use the crosswalk at either end of the block or dodge traffic walking between parked cars on the street. The lost parking could be created on the north side of Pine Street next to a new City Hall.

Other suggested improvements to downtown include:

- Brick roads, sidewalks, crosswalks
- Improved location signage
- Planting trees, flowers in open lots
- Improved parking and entrance at the Amtrak station
- Expand, match Farmer's Market building to Frisco Depot
- Addition of Black River Trail, creating a space for the Butler County Fair in Wiseman Park (see Parks plan).

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Valley Plaza, seen at the top of this undated photo featuring First Baptist Church, opened in November 1961 anchored by Newberry's, which was previously located downtown at Main and Poplar streets. (Butler County Historical Society.)

COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT

In 2025 there was an estimated 12.2 billion square feet of retail space in America, up from 5 billion square feet in 2007, despite record-low construction levels with just under 55 million square feet of newly constructed retail space, according to the Colliers. Traditional malls, which were once highly sought by Poplar Bluff residents, currently see significantly higher vacancy rates (8.6%) than general retail properties (2.6%). Closures from companies like big-box retailers vacated over 120 million square feet of leasable area in 2025.

The success and dominance of certain big-box retailers cannibalizes all competing retailers leaving behind a patchwork of vacant stores. Revitalizing these vacant stores and redeveloping the city's existing commercial districts with market-driven infill will increase the confidence to invest and slow property depreciation.

Older commercial strip centers built during the last 30 years followed inefficient land use practices. For example, parking areas in most of the commercial areas, excluding downtowns, have been overbuilt. Local ordinances required parking capacities that were far in excess of what was needed on a day-to-day basis. This plan views the city's large, empty parking lots as a form of land-banking. These "land reserves" provide access to existing infrastructure, employment centers, schools, institutions and roads all within walking distance to many of the city's existing neighborhoods and shopping districts. This plan recommends developing these prime commercial areas as infill development that blends-in or enhances the existing development.

The introduction of synergistic land uses such as cafes, coffee houses, retail and financial institutions can interject new life into these aging, underutilized commercial centers. Permitting underutilized parking areas to be used as strategic commercial infill sites offer property owners the opportunity to procure more return on their investment. The new development also attracts and retains more consumers, creating a spontaneous marketplace where visitors park once and patronize multiple businesses. However, oftentimes the years of disinvestment combined with the ever changing retail and commercial markets make these older buildings and commercial centers unsuitable for rehabilitation. When rehabilitation is deemed too costly or impractical, redevelopment is recommended.

Recommendations for infill, tear down and redevelopment include:

- A blight study is recommended to help identify blighted commercial areas and to initiate redevelopment efforts and reinvestment.
- Expedite the demolition process for buildings that cannot be feasibly brought into code compliance, are not historic or architecturally significant in accordance with the blight study referenced above, and as needed to protect the integrity of the downtown and other aging commercial areas.
- The City's zoning code should be reviewed and updated to encourage/incentivize compact, mixed-use development on existing infill lots and regulate undesirable land use conditions.
- Replace or retrofit old commercial structures by making them more energy efficient and compatible with the latest market trends and choices.
- Promote the utilization of underutilized parking areas as commercial infill sites that compliments the existing commercial tenants, increase property values and generate more tax revenues.
- Updated the city's parking regulations to better respond to the latest land use trends. For example, the latest trend in retail development is to relax or eliminate parking requirements and let the market dictate the most appropriate parking configuration.

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COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SHOPPING & ENTERTAINMENT

There is strong public interest to increase the selection and quality of retail and entertainment opportunities within the City. Two options have emerged in the development of regional retail centers – big box centers and mixed-use center.

BIG BOX CENTERS

Big box centers contain several large retail stores as anchors along with a variety of smaller supporting services and shops. These centers are characterized by their large parking areas and monotonous, box-like buildings – the origin of their namesake. The distance between shop entrances and parking is vast, violating the pedestrian scale and decreasing walkability. Due to the overall scale, brightly lit parking areas and high traffic, big box commercial centers are not compatible with residential land uses and most commercial uses. Additionally, big box centers are often plagued by vacancies as the volatile retail industry is susceptible to high levels of turnover. Finding compatible replacement tenants for large spaces, oftentimes exceeding 100,000 square feet, is very difficult. When one tenant vacates, a huge dead zone negatively impacts the entire center. If the space is not leased by desired tenants, second and third rate tenants will eventually move in, paying reduced lease rates and selling questionable merchandise and services.

Despite the above analysis, conventional big-box development has and will continue to succeed in most markets. However, the construction of new big-box retail centers have slowed as market demands shift. Changing consumer tastes, boredom with redundant formats, and time constrained lifestyles has sent shopping center developers searching for new formats.

MIXED-USE

High construction costs have limited new builds with developers and investors focusing on retrofitting existing spaces, embracing mixed-use environments and sustainable land use to minimize urban sprawl. Instead of outward facing malls with large parking lots, the recent trend is an old, proven one – Main Street or "town centers." These typically include residential dwellings, which bring people to the center, and fashion-oriented boutique stores and unique shopping experiences along with services, dining and entertainment. These "lifestyle centers" provide a festival marketplace that features casual public settings that encourage civic-oriented activities such as meeting, mingling, strolling, exercising and people watching. Designers have learned that shops alone do not bring back repeat visitors. A successful town center needs quality public spaces that relate to an identifiable architectural theme and interactive storefronts that reinforce the human scale.

Having multiple, diverse shopping options in one place, like a downtown setting, allows visitors to become citizens again and not feel like consumers, which in turn increases the length of visits to the site and the number of visits. Non-retail activities bring life to shopping districts around the clock and increase public accessibility, creating a spontaneous marketplace. This results in a development wherein the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Mixed-use developments have become very successful and are gaining considerable popularity.

The most suitable locations for a town center include:

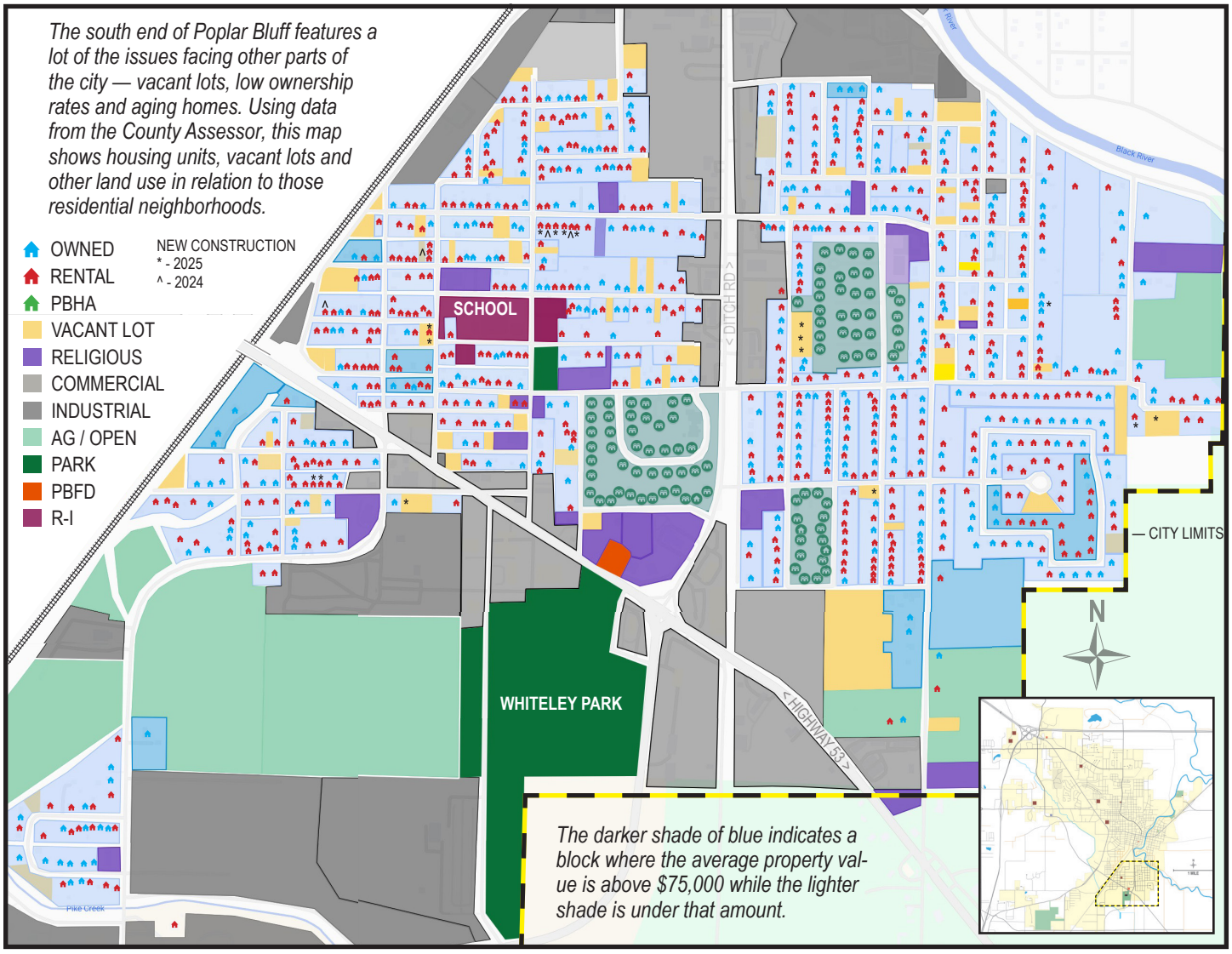
- **DOWNTOWN** – Over the past decade there has been redevelopment of both commercial and residential development along Vine Street while pockets of commercial redevelopment have been seen in other areas downtown. There is potential for growth along Broadway and Main streets south of Pine for affordable housing options to bring more life into downtown.
- **SHADY DELL** – The intersection of Kanell (PP Highway) and Shelby roads was known as this on older maps. Commercial development here has removed the trees from the valley, which only lacks a mixed-use residential development to create a town center. The proximity of Three Rivers College also makes this an attractive area for growth, however, there is no town center and development so far has been in the form of strip malls, fast food, a big-box store and soon a bank office building.
- **TWIN TOWERS** – Completed in 1969, the Twin Towers and surrounding residential area provide plenty of life to the east side of Poplar Bluff. Businesses along Pine Street, however, cater more to drivers coming into town than the local residents since the only grocery store closed. Additionally, the network of sidewalks is in need of upgrading for residents to reach these businesses.

The key to successful mixed land use planning is connectivity, compatible design and synergistic land uses located in compact, integrated setting that adheres to the following design elements:

- Design to the human scale and maintaining a traditional town center atmosphere throughout
- Balance the neds of retailers/consumers and civic facilities/citizens in an integrated unifying setting
- Buildings on the edge must provide a smooth transition with the surrounding uses
- Architectural design must maintain a high level of visual interest
- Buildings should be pulled close to the street to accommodate pedestrians by providing easy access, window displays and shelter. Incorporate architecture and building technology that allows the outdoor areas of the town center to adapt to the local climate and seasonal changes
- Awnings, stoops, balconies and porches should be used to established a connection between indoor and outdoor space
- Provide outdoor amenities such as public art, benches, fountains, dramatic lighting, the use of crepe myrtles and other festive landscaping, banners or ornamentation.
- Include a combination of sit-down restaurants and outdoor vendors. Restaurants create excellent land use synergies with retail as they comfort consumers, provide spontaneous meeting places and prolong consumer stays.

Mixed-use development is likely the best option to revitalize downtown and east of the Black River where there are numerous opportunities.

RESIDENTIAL IN-FILL DEVELOPMENT



The City's present housing stock does not provide the variety needed to meet current and anticipated future housing needs. This was confirmed by the public engagement results and a 2025 housing study. Further analysis of the city's housing stock discovered that the higher density housing types, such as small lot detached single family dwellings, attached single-family villas, condominiums and townhouses are in short supply. Meanwhile these higher density housing types are frequently preferred by young families, singles and seniors who make up the majority of the city's homeowners. As the average age of the head of household increases, the ability or desire to maintain large properties decreases, resulting in less demand for larger homes. Therefore, as the City's population ages, the demand for housing types suitable to the city's aging population will increase. As a result, the demand for maintenance-free living coupled with the limited income levels in the region indicates an increase in the market demand for low-maintenance, high-quality dwelling types that are modestly priced.

The only remaining residential growth opportunities within the city's current boundaries is the redevelopment of existing sites and the occasional vacant or underutilized site that has escaped previous development. The Future Land Use Map shows higher density residential development at locations north and south of downtown as a redevelopment option for sites that are already zoned multi-family. The construction of mixed-use developments within the City's commercial areas will also allow for some new, moderately priced, housing types not currently available in Poplar Bluff.

The preservation of existing neighborhoods is a critical goal of this plan; therefore, infill development must be carefully planned and designed to blend with surrounding neighborhoods. Well planned residential infill development will allow the City to increase the number of housing units without radically changing the character of the neighborhoods, provided the following development guidelines are followed and any anticipated negative land use externalities such as traffic, noise, glare or light are mitigated.

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RESIDENTIAL IN-FILL DEVELOPMENT

MISSING MIDDLE

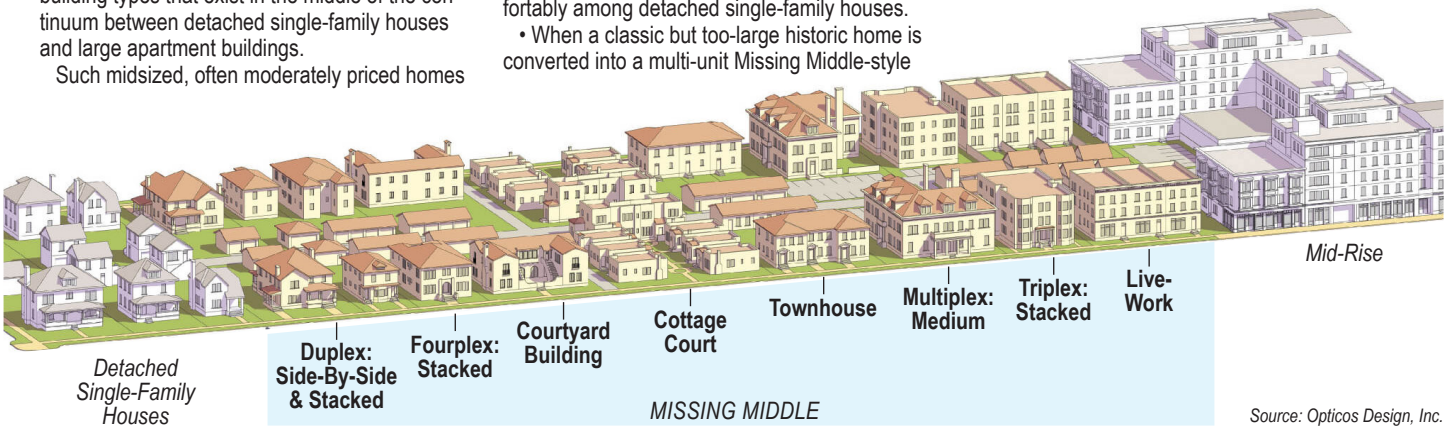
With the limited space available within the city limits of Poplar Bluff to build affordable single-family homes, other housing options could provide a good fit.

"As a nation, we need a shift in how homes are designed and developed. So-called Missing Middle Housing is a critical part of the solution," wrote architect and urban designer Daniel Parolek, the founder of Opticos Design. He coined the term "Missing Middle" to describe a set of residential building types that exist in the middle of the continuum between detached single-family houses and large apartment buildings.

Such midsized, often moderately priced homes are referred to as missing because very few have been built in the U.S. since the early 1940s. The shortage is largely due to zoning constraints, the shift to car-centric patterns of development, and the challenges of financing multi-unit dwellings. That's a problem, because the benefits of this largely missing housing type include:

- Missing Middle homes provide the size and affordability options that people of all ages — including older adults — need but often can't find.
- Since Missing Middle dwellings are house-scale, the design and size of the buildings fit comfortably among detached single-family houses.
- When a classic but too-large historic home is converted into a multi-unit Missing Middle-style residence, the housing type can help preserve existing houses as well as an area's look and feel.
- The housing type can enable family members to live with or near one another while having their own space or residence.

Other benefits of this building option include shared land costs between multiple households, reduced transportation costs as residents are within walking distance of stores and services, smart land use with the ability of fitting into small plots of land which could be vacant or underdeveloped.



Source: Opticos Design, Inc.

Recommendations for infill and redevelopment include:

- Unless identified otherwise on the Future land Use Map, areas that are presently being used for residential purposes should remain residential.
- Encourage higher density residential redevelopment and infill north and south of downtown.
- All development should blend well with the existing built and natural environment. For example, when developing in or adjacent to established neighborhoods containing larger lots than those proposed, the proposed lot sizes should best represent the existing neighborhood lot sizes and densities adjacent to the development and transition to smaller lot sizes and/or densities within the interior of the proposed subdivision. Allowing an increase in density for infill development helps off-set the cost of development and compensate for added site features or other amenities.
- When an infill or redevelopment site is located within 50 feet of a site with an existing dwelling structure, and fronts on the same street, a front yard setback that is within 5 feet of the setback of the established dwelling structure should be used. For example, if an existing dwelling structure has a front yard setback of 20 feet, then the new building should have a front yard setback between 15 and 25 feet. If there is more than one dwelling structure fronting on the same street within 50' of the site, then an average measurement should be taken of the setbacks of the impacted dwelling structures.
- Relate the size (bulk) and proportions of new structures to the scale of adjacent buildings. Avoid buildings that violate the existing scale of the area in height, width, or massing.
- Break up uninteresting boxlike forms into smaller, varied masses. Avoid single monolithic forms that are not relieved by variations in massing and architecture similar to the techniques utilized with adjoining structures.
- Avoid roof shapes, directional orientation, pitches, or materials that would cause the building to be out of character with buildings in the area.
- The City should consider a program to pre-approve housing plans for infill development. The benefits of this include shortening the permit process, ensuring that the project will adhere to neighborhood design standards and lower costs for development that can translate into more affordable housing.

"Delays caused by the permitting process are one driver of the high cost of new housing development — before construction even begins. Across the United States, research has found that cities with high degrees of housing regulation take 2½ times longer to approve projects than less regulated cities. ... Added costs can also price out consumers, because developers might pass them on and increase the eventual price of both for-rent and for-sale homes. One study estimates that for every additional $1,000 that a home costs, more than 115,000 households can no longer afford that home."

— The Pew Charitable Trusts

- The City should consider either a land bank program to acquire, manage, and repurpose vacant, abandoned, and tax-delinquent properties, or offer those empty lots to the adjoining property owners. Splitting an open plot into smaller sections to be added to the adjoining properties ensures that the property is cared for and the lost tax is absorbed by the adjoining properties if those lots don't get redeveloped.

GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT



While adaptive reuse, redevelopment and infill development are the preferred development alternatives, the city cannot rely solely on them to accommodate future growth and the latest development trends. There are not enough in-fill sites available to make infill the only viable growth strategy. Additional factors that may limit adaptive reuse and infill include:

- The infrastructure within the City's urban core areas is too small or in some cases too old to serve the functional capacity of most large-scale new development, and the necessary infrastructure upgrades are typically cost-prohibitive.
- Land assembly within the city's inner core typically involves many different landowners (many with different interests) making it very difficult, costly and time consuming to obtain unified ownership.
- The cost of land and construction within the city's core is much higher compared to the land and construction costs outside the city's core.
- The NIMBY (not-in-my-backyard) sentiments from residents will generally prohibit or at least prolong the approval process necessary for any large-scale infill development within an established area.

Due to these constraints, infill development is limited to small-scale redevelopment and adaptive reuse of single lots or clusters of adjacent lots under single ownership. In light of these infill development constraints, Greenfield development becomes the more practical, affordable and achievable solution when contemplating large-scale development options.

The first step in the Greenfield development process is deciding where to build and where not to build. During the 2008 plan process, the community identified connecting the City's parks via a system of greenways and trails as a priority. The 2008 plan recommended preserving watersheds, greenbelts and other natural features to help implement the recommended greenway system. The City should still take a proactive approach to preserve sensitive natural areas such as riparian zones, wetlands and significant woodlands. These areas provide irreplaceable environmental benefits, such as erosion control and habitat protection. Increasing environmental regulations, combined with the recommended greenway and open space requirements will result in mixed-use development that is more vertical, compact and walkable than conventional land consumptive conventional subdivisions.

Land preservation efforts must take place before development occurs to make sure sufficient green space is preserved. Protecting and restoring the natural features in and around Poplar Bluff should not be viewed solely as an amenity, but a necessity, just like a utility or other public infrastructure. Identifying the green infrastructure first will make identifying the "hard" infrastructure, such as roads and utilities much easier. Therefore, the first step in achieving sprawl-free Greenfield development is to identify both ecologically sensitive land and land suitable for development.

The next step is to begin meeting with developers and landowners to inform them of the City's future land use plans and desired preservation areas. Keeping all parties informed of the development process and forming partnerships among the development players will increase the level of predictability within the development process.

Greenfield development recommendations include:

- The City should take steps to acquire or preserve areas designated as future greenways or environmentally sensitive areas, first by annexing the areas into the City then by preserving the areas in perpetuity by establishing a conservation easement, land trust or through deed restrictions. Preservation efforts should take place before development occurs. Refer to the Future Parks and Greenway map to identify preferred environmental corridors. Preference should be given to greenbelts that connect to the city's parks and other destination centers and provide habitat corridors that connect to larger wildlife areas.
- All future development should follow the principals of smart growth, which include:
  - Compact, multi-use development
  - Open space conservation
  - Expanded mobility
  - Enhanced livability
  - Efficient management and expansion of infrastructure
  - Funneling infill, redevelopment and adaptive use in areas already built-up when possible.
- The City should form partnership with the local landowners and developers and keep appraised of the latest development proposals and development trends.

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GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT

- Development should have adequate access to the City's existing road network.
- All new development shall provide a high level of accessibility and connectivity. Cul-de-sacs should be minimized and all future development shall provide connections to existing and anticipated developments. All new development shall be accessed from a fully improved, dust-free right-of-way built to City standards and providing connections to a major arterial roadway.
- New housing shall provide a variety of choices to the homebuyer. The City's housing stock needs to provide options for home-buyers to assisted care facilities.
- The development footprint should be reduced to the extent possible to avoid disturbing natural water courses, ponds, wetlands, steep slopes, wooded areas, rock outcrops, view sheds (both urban and natural) and other significant natural and man-made features. The developer should utilize development approaches such as the principles of low impact development (LID) including but not limited to clustering, site feature preservation, innovative use of stormwater management techniques, vegetation preservation, etc.
- The City should adopt development standards for all new commercial and high-density development. Well-planned development requires careful attention to details, from the design of the streets to the form and appearance of a building.
- The City should encourage higher density housing alternatives in new residential development areas that provide better affordability and efficiency. The use of small housing clusters, common areas, natural landscaping and thoughtful site selection and neighborhood design can make higher density residential areas more livable and help reinforce the perception of spaciousness.

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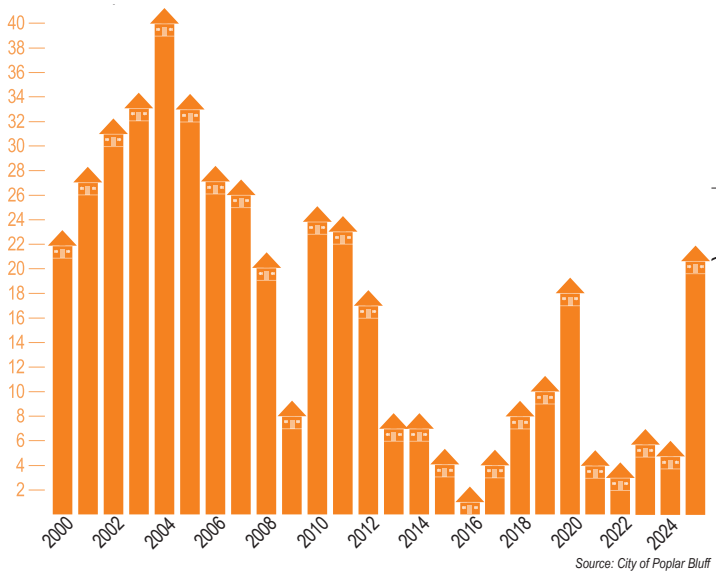
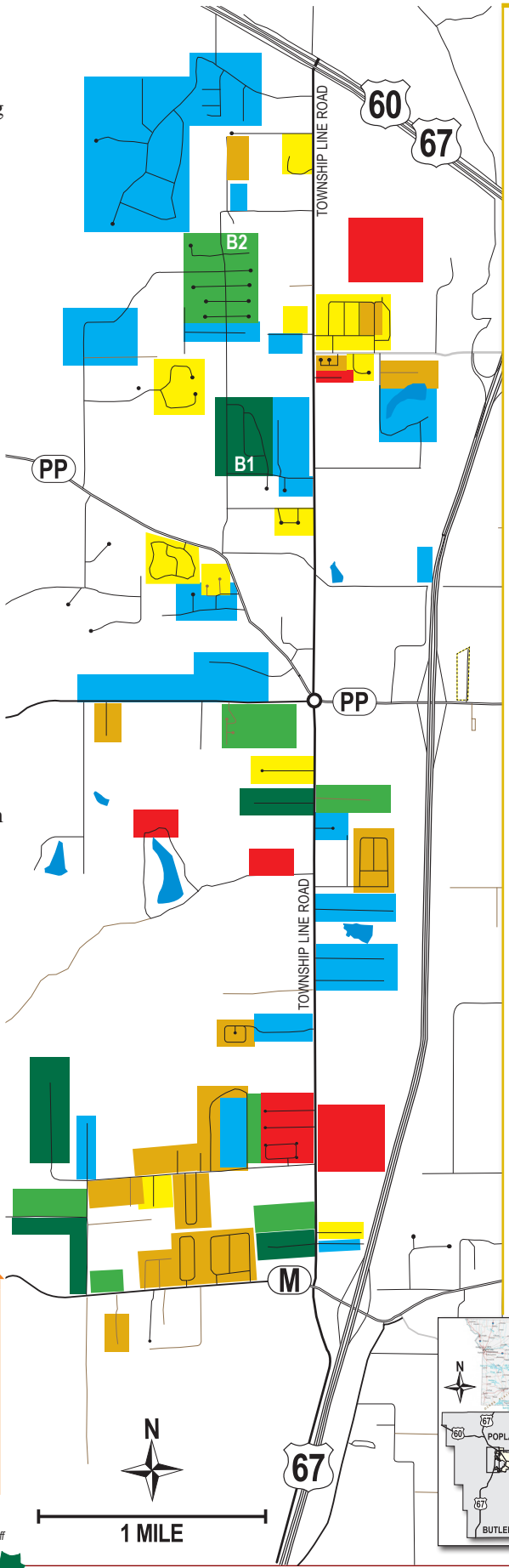
NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION

Construction permits in Poplar Bluff



Source: City of Poplar Bluff



WESTWARD EXPANSION

While there has been pockets of new construction within the city limits, mostly north of Barron Road or the western edges, new subdivision construction has centered along the Township Line Road corridor with the Batson Mini Farm subdivision in the 1970s (B1) and 1980s (B2).

Traffic along Highway PP east of Township Line Road has nearly doubled since 2000 with an Average Annual Daily Traffic count of 7,808 that year to 11,772 in 2024 (MoDOT traffic volume).

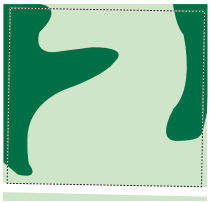
Approximate construction of subdivision:

- 1970
- 1980
- 1990
- 2000
- 2010
- 2020

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

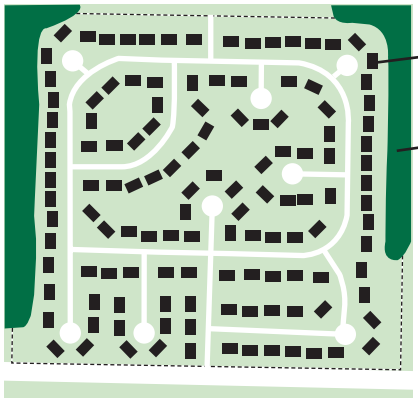
Rethinking Subdivision Design

When a community grows it usually occurs when a block of land is divided into smaller plots to build single-family homes — for example, at right, this 40-acre block with a road on the south end. The wooded areas (dark green) could be cleared to allow more room for development, such as the Black River Acres example (below left), or left in place such as the Black River Estates example (below right). These cookie-cutter types of development have been the recent patterns used to maximize the investment for a higher return with more units per acre (left) or higher housing prices with larger lot sizes (right).



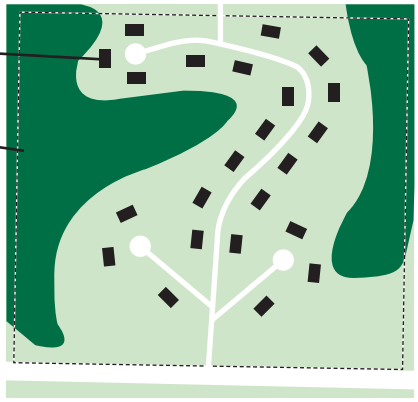
A balanced or mixed-use approach to development, where different types of housing units are combined with open or commercial spaces that are walkable for residents. Developing environmentally sensitive lands this way provides for a more sustainable use of land and resources while also providing different types of housing than the traditional single-family home. Here are some examples.

BLACK RIVER ACRES



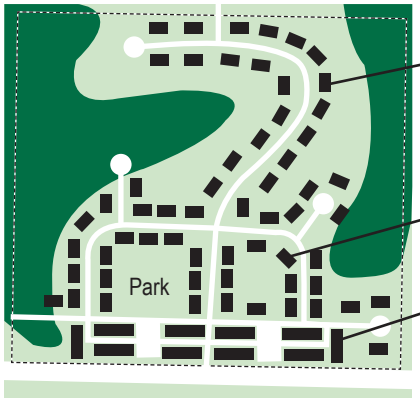
Total units: 100 to 130 Type: Single Family
Density: 3.2 units / acre Parcel size: 0.18-0.38 acre
Streets: 1.46 miles (60 feet per unit)
Strengths: Proven market; consist with recent development patterns.
Considerations: Lack of housing types, price points; subdivisions all look similar.

BLACK RIVER ESTATES



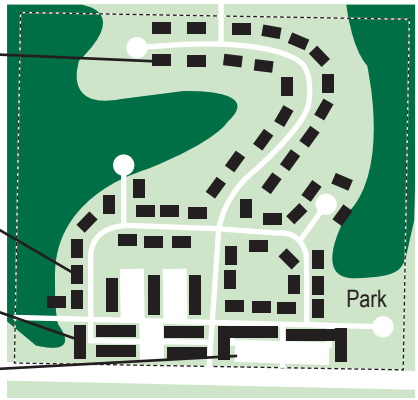
Total units: 10 to 25 Type: Single Family
Density: 0.3 units / acre Parcel size: 2-3 acre
Streets: 0.39 miles (170 feet per unit)
Strengths: Preserves existing natural areas; attracts high-income households.
Considerations: High per capita cost of infrastructure (roads, water, sewer); high price point may not align with market demand.

BALANCED NEIGHBORHOOD



Total units: 125 to 150 Type: Multiple
Density: 3.7 units / acre Parcel size: 0.18-1 acre
Streets: 0.98 miles (35 feet per unit)
Strengths: Mix of housing types, price points and lot size; preserves natural area, provides open space.
Considerations: Potential complexity in policy and regulatory requirements.

MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD



Total units: 100 to 112 Type: Multiple
Density: 2.8 units / acre Parcel size: 0.18-1.0 acre
Streets: 0.98 miles (46 feet per unit)
Strengths: Mix of housing types, price points and lot size; commercial that is walkable; preserves natural area, provides open spaces.
Considerations: Potential complexity in policy and regulatory requirements.

What's an ADU?

A majority of Americans, according to AARP surveys, prefer to live in walkable neighborhoods that offer a mix of housing and transportation options and are close to jobs, schools, shopping, entertainment and parks. In fact, in the 2021 AARP Home and Community Preferences Survey, adults age 18 or older who would consider creating an ADU said they'd do so in order to:



- Provide a home for a loved one in need of care (86%)
- Provide housing for relatives or friends (86%)
- Have a space for guests (82%)
- Create a place for a caregiver to stay (74%)
- Increase the value of their home (69%)
- Feel safer by having someone living nearby (67%)
- Earn extra income from renting to a tenant (63%)

Since ADUs make use of the existing infrastructure and housing stock, they're also environmentally friendly and respectful of a neighborhood's pace and style. An increasing number of towns, cities, counties and entire states have been adapting their zoning or housing laws to make it easier for homeowners to create ADUs.

These preferences — coupled with the rapid aging of the United States' population overall, the decrease in households with children and the national housing shortage — will continue to boost the demand for smaller homes and affordable, quality rental housing.

As small houses or apartments that exist on the same property lot as a single-family residence, accessory dwelling units — or ADUs — play a major role in serving a national housing need.

This traditional home type is reemerging as an affordable and flexible housing option that meets the needs of older adults and young families alike.

NEIGHBORHOOD STABILITY

The "traditional household" has changed dramatically over the last 20 years. Today only 18% of homebuyers are the traditional two parent/two child household, down from 25% in 2008, and it is 14% in Butler County. Additionally, 34% of Butler County residents live alone. This change in household demographics requires a diverse mix of housing types, sizes and prices ranges. Fourty years ago golf courses, subdivision pools and other materialistic amenities "sold" homes. Today's homebuyer wants more intrinsic elements, such as neighborhoods that possess a sense of place, connectivity, safety, convenience and diversity. Today home purchases are driven by local or regional access to good jobs, education, medical, recreation and a full range of hospitality, entertainment and shopping opportunities where one can feel a part of the community.

The small town character and family values found in many of the local neighborhoods are defining characteristics of Poplar Bluff and highly valued by the community. Quality neighborhoods offer housing choices, provide residents with a sense of identity and connection to their community, and encourage continuous renewal and reinvestment. The following recommendations are intended to promote the preservation of the City's neighborhoods and promote quality neighborhoods in all future residential infill and new development.

Conservation residential subdivision design is recommended as a development option whenever a new residential subdivision is proposed in an undeveloped area, primarily in the suggested annexation areas. These areas are largely undeveloped, but contain precious agricultural land and sensitive natural areas that should be preserved. The intent of conservation subdivision design is to preserve natural areas while permitting residential densities that are equal to the City's underlying residential zoning districts. It is recommended that Poplar Bluff develop a conservation residential overlay zoning district that encourages appropriate development in these areas.



The historic brick Main Street north of downtown creates a unique neighborhood characteristic for Poplar Bluff.

Generally, conservation subdivision design maintains the same density as a conventional subdivision and allows the same uses as permitted in the underlying zoning district. This is a concept known as "density neutral". The biggest difference is that a conservation subdivision preserves 50% or more of the development site. This is accomplished by minimizing the development footprint by building compact subdivisions with smaller lots, leaving vast areas undisturbed. Lake and golf course developments follow the same subdivision design concept as conservation subdivisions. Conservation subdivisions would require relief from the City's minimum lot sizes and setbacks. Developing environmentally sensitive lands in this manner provides for a more sustainable use of land and resources. The land conserved as a result of cluster or conservation subdivision design should be dedicated in perpetuity as undeveloped common ground or open space.

Future Residential Development Guidelines

- The City should adopt a Conservation Overlay as part of the City's Zoning Code to be used in conjunction with the City's conventional residential zoning districts. The overlay should be used as an option for all new residential subdivisions. The intent of the conservation overlay is to preserve the natural environment and provide significant areas for public use while achieving the same residential density as a conventional subdivision. The conservation overlay should allow greater design flexibility by reducing the minimum and maximum standards for setbacks, lot widths and lot area. Developers are able to achieve the same density because the lots can be smaller, and clustered closely together leaving much more area for open space.
- The conservation overlay should allow greater design flexibility by reducing the minimum and maximum standards for setbacks, lot widths and lot area. "Cluster developments" typically consist of homes that are moved closer to the street with side set-backs that are minimized and in some cases eliminated. Developers are able to achieve the same density because the lots can be smaller, and clustered closely together leaving much more area for open space. "Cluster developments" typically consist of homes that are moved closer to the street with side set-backs that are minimized and in some cases eliminated. To achieve a sustainable balance between public and private spaces in residential developments, quantitative performance standards are recommended in the City's zoning code to regulate the quantity, configuration and quality of open space to be established as a part of the Conservation Overlay District.

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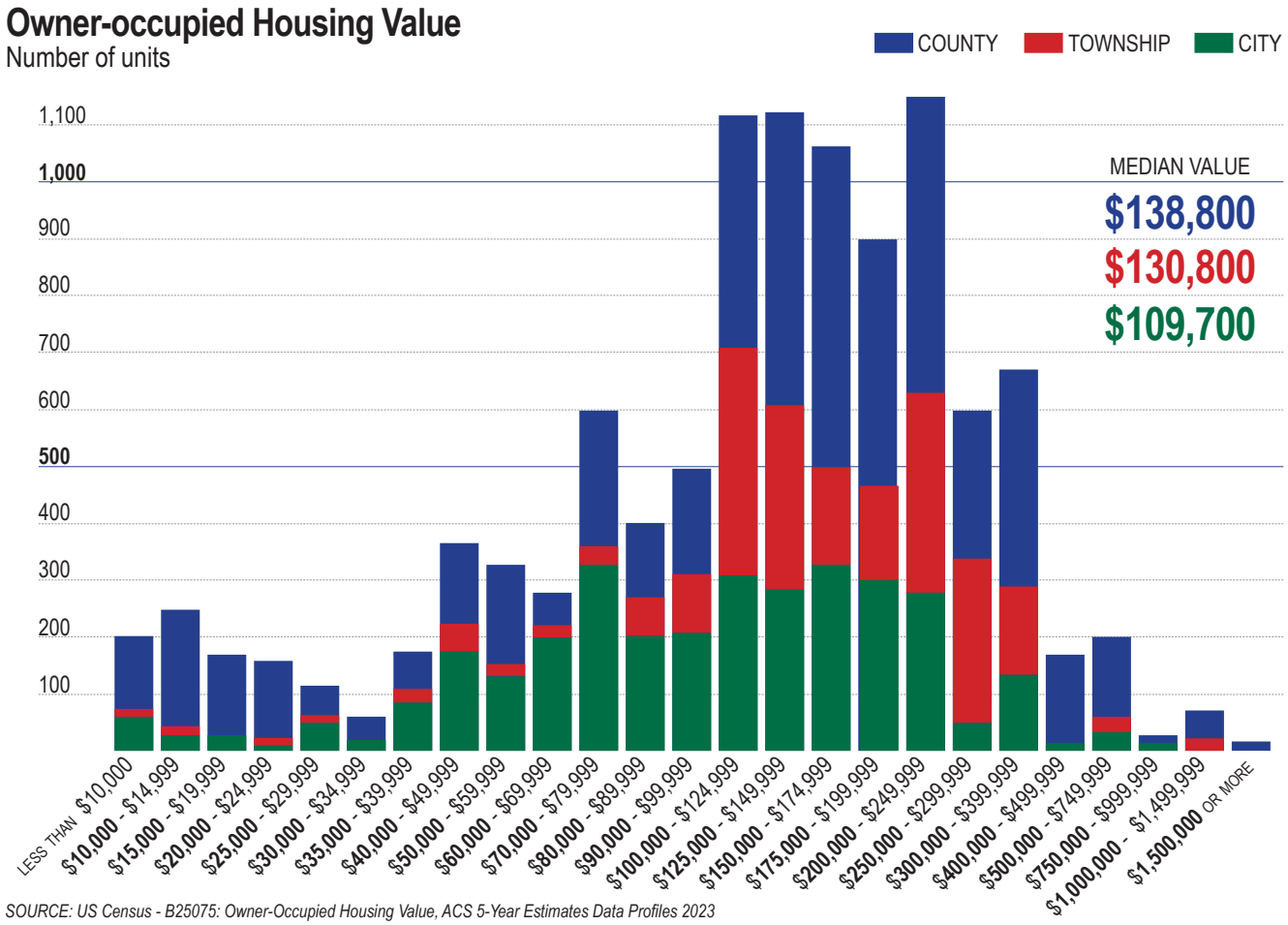
AFFORDABLE HOUSING



SOURCE: US Census - B25075: Owner-Occupied Housing Value, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles 2023

Multiple family housing is a necessary housing option for residents of Poplar Bluff who cannot afford to own a house or who chooses not to accept the responsibilities. Total units in a multiple family housing complex range from two and up. Rents vary greatly depending on the location and quality of the units. Concern surrounding many multiple family housing units stems from instances where buildings are poorly maintained, trash and personal items are stored incorrectly, and traffic generated from many people living in a small area causes problems. These negative land use externalities can be avoided by proper planning and administration of city ordinances. Strict implementation of safety and maintenance codes, zoning ordinances and law enforcement can resolve some on-site problems, but the building must also have considerate tenants and a good owner. Enforcement of tenants' rights and empowerment through self-policing can initiate change on the part of residents.

The City of Poplar Bluff can offer two kinds of assistance for neighborhood improvements; direct support and indirect support. Direct support involves action and spending on the part of the City of Poplar Bluff that goes directly to the residents of the city. The first step in direct neighborhood assistance involves improving infrastructure in neighborhoods where conditions are deteriorating. The city can initiate neighborhood revitalization by identifying deteriorating streets and budgeting capital improvements to improve street surfaces, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. The City of Poplar Bluff should conduct a housing conditions survey of every neighborhood to classify and identify housing as well as infrastructure conditions, throughout the city. Then by mapping these conditions, areas may be prioritized for assistance.

In addition to direct spending on neighborhood infrastructure, the City of Poplar Bluff can collect and distribute state and federal funds that can be used for home mortgages and improvement loans. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has a number of programs aimed at housing for which a unit of local government must apply. HUD offers Community Development Block Grants which are applied for by units of local government or non-profit organizations and are used to "fund a wide range of activities to provide decent housing, create suitable living environments, and expand economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons." Many more such programs exist and more information can be obtained from those agencies directly.

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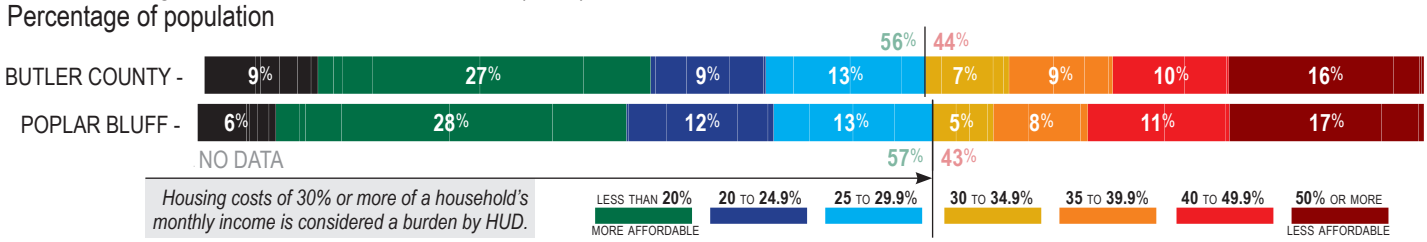
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Monthly Renter Housing Costs

As a Percentage of Income the Past 12 months (2023)
Percentage of population



The second type of assistance the City of Poplar Bluff can offer for improving the city's housing stock is indirect support. This can be accomplished through encouragement of homeowner and neighborhood associations and by managing construction through smart city growth. Homeowner and neighborhood associations enable residents of Poplar Bluff to accept the responsibility of improving the conditions within their neighborhoods. Through the establishment of homeowner associations, by-laws can be created that legally bind residents of the neighborhood to design restrictions and maintenance standards.

Neighborhood associations have less legal standing than homeowner associations, but provide a venue for neighbors to meet and act as a group. Peer pressure for maintaining houses and local initiatives for neighborhood improvements are responsibilities that neighborhood associations usually reinforce.

Smart growth is a policy intended to keep the number of available housing units equal to the demand. The result of such a policy would be to limit the availability of new houses on the edge of town while promoting the occupancy of houses and use of vacant parcels in established neighborhoods. This policy should be adopted in conjunction with other actions mentioned above to work towards a better overall living environment for the entire city. The above table provides an overview of the recommended housing program policy implementation strategies.

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HOUSING PROGRAM POLICY & ACTION PLAN

The City of Poplar Bluff will directly assist efforts to improve and maintain the City's housing stock through direct spending, application for state and federal grants and other legal means.

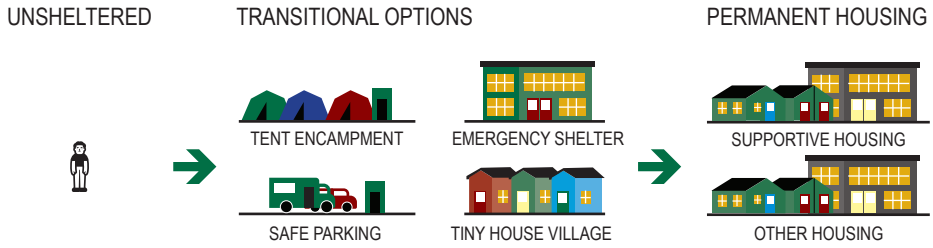
- **HIGH** ▶ Develop programs and financing options that facilitate home repairs and maintenance.
- **HIGH** ▶ Conduct a housing survey of every neighborhood, map results and prioritize areas in need of assistance.
- **HIGH** ▶ Provide assistance by collecting and disseminating information on public and private funds for residential improvements, mortgage assistance.
- **MEDIUM** ▶ Apply for appropriate CDBG grants.
- **MEDIUM** ▶ Develop a plan to extend utilities to all existing neighborhoods and new developments.

The City of Poplar Bluff will indirectly support efforts to expand and maintain the City's housing stock by adopting appropriate programs, policies and ordinance amendments.

- **HIGH** ▶ Assist in the establishment of neighborhood associations. Associations should act as the organized voice and representation of Poplar Bluff's neighborhoods - both old and new.
- **MEDIUM** ▶ Encourage a balance range of high-quality housing options that meet all socio-economic needs.
- **MEDIUM** ▶ Encourage smart growth through the provision of utilities and infrastructure to new growth areas; and annex these areas as well as areas poised for growth prior to development.

PATHS TOWARD PERMANENT HOUSING

Planning for housing means working to ensure there is a supply of homes for everyone. A community also needs a range of housing solutions to help people transition from being unsheltered to being permanently housed. People without homes cannot always transition directly into permanent housing and need transition options. These might fall within overnight shelters or be more informal, such as a safe parking site. The right mix of transitional housing can meet the needs for people who are unsheltered.



POPLAR BLUFF HOUSING AUTHORITY

	UNITS
Twin Towers	104
Cottages	101
State Street	98
Karen West	84
Hillcrest	54
Peach Street	38
Roxie Street	36
Wilson	30
Others	30
TOTAL	**575**
Bedrooms	993

NEIGHBORHOOD LANDSCAPE

Trees enhance the economic value of properties. A study in Amherst, Massachusetts found that trees contributed 7% to the value of the average residential property and as much as 15% in some instances. Trees and supplemental landscaping features introduce a form, size, scale, texture, color and changing visual image associated with seasonal change or variation in wind and sun conditions which are pleasing, tranquil and desirable. Shade, wind breaks, and attraction of songbirds and other wildlife are also benefits of substantial plant communities within housing areas. By far the easiest way to capture these benefits for the residents of a housing area is to preserve the existing vegetation of a site as it is developed, rather than relying on newly planted materials to grow and mature, slowly recreating an environment which already existed in many cases. To enjoy these benefits, the Comprehensive Plan recommends landscaping, primarily through preservation of mature trees and existing vegetation for all new development and the implementation of an ambitious tree preservation program and landscape guidelines.

Recommendations

The following housing and neighborhood stability strategies are recommended for immediate implementation:

1. A range of housing choices is needed to meet the needs of residents of differing economic levels, age groups and lifestyles. Diversifying the housing stock is recommended so people can "age in place" rather than moving outside the city at any given stage of the life cycle. Neighborhoods should offer a choice of well designed and low maintenance housing types, sizes and values.

2. Affordable housing should be viewed as part of the infrastructure of the community. The City should consider requiring developers of large residential subdivisions (over 10 acres or 50 dwellings) to provide a percentage of homes for 1st time buyers and/or a percentage of maintenance-free homes designed for retirees, singles or busy professionals in much the same way as contributions to the capacity of roads or availability of parks are required.

3. All neighborhoods should be linked to surrounding residential areas and when possible, share commercial spaces and open space resources.

4. New neighborhoods should include distinct features at its boundaries to create a sense of entry and foster a sense of pride and belonging among residents. Distinct features may include monumental entrance features, enhanced street intersections and pedestrian crossings and public spaces such as common ground areas and neighborhood parks.

5. All residential streets should be pedestrian-friendly and include sidewalks on both sides. Sidewalks should be attractively landscaped and laid out in an interconnected network to encourage walking.

6. Higher density is recommended to achieve a more affordable housing stock. Higher density housing results in less land per unit, less site preparation, less infrastructure and typically less finished floor area, all of which hold down the hard costs of housing.

7. Encourage front porches on new houses. Front porches allow homeowners to comfortably spend more time near the front yard and street. This creates a greater opportunity to know ones neighbors, maintain a casual surveillance of the area, and thereby maintain a safe residential neighborhood. This also reinforces a small-town ambiance.

8. Require visually appealing, points of beautification within subdivisions. The development of points of beautification within new subdivisions can enhance the perception of neighborhood, a characteristic that is important in the development and maintenance of small-town atmosphere. Beautification areas should be encouraged particularly at entrances, but should not encourage the inclusion of subdivision identification monument signs. Recommended beautification amenities include fountains, public art and unique landscaping and planning designs.

9. De-emphasize garages that extend past the front of the house. Garages which extend out from the front of a house create an emphasis on the automobile system of a neighborhood, diminish the effects of inviting front doors and porches, and are simply less attractive than the house itself. All of these effects break down the pedestrian oriented quality which is sought for new residential areas in the City of Poplar Bluff. A maximum percentage of street façade devoted to garage area should be established as a control measure for visual quality.

10. Alleys are recommended in small lot neighborhoods. The use of alleys allow homes to be moved closer to the street and garages, trash receptacles and other utilities to be located in the rear, creating a more traditional, walkable neighborhood.

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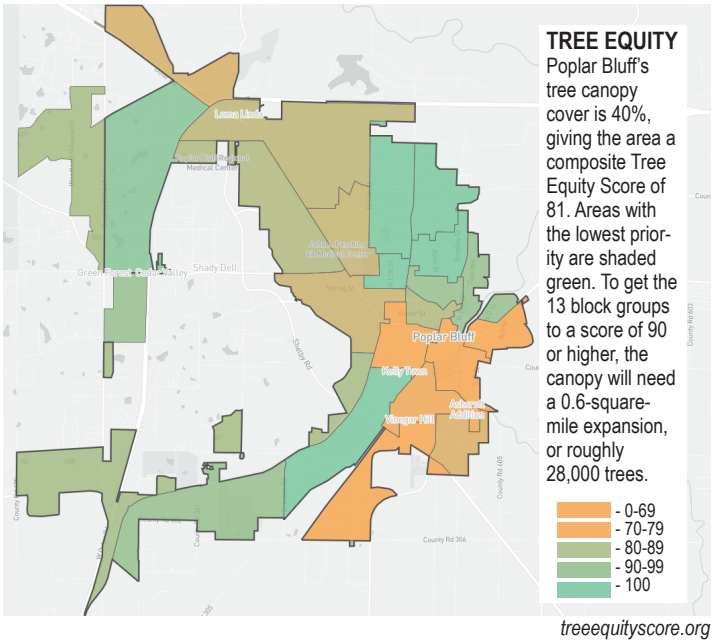
TREES IN THE COMMUNITY

Tree canopies provide critical, life-saving benefits to urban environments by reducing extreme heat, filtering air pollution, and mitigating stormwater runoff. They also deliver profound social and mental health advantages by encouraging physical activity and strengthening community connections.



treeequityscore.org

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Growth management can be described as a conscious public decision to restrain, accommodate or encourage development. Management techniques can be applied to any type of growth, but of particular concern to the City of Poplar Bluff is the current and future supply of quality commercial, residential and industrial development opportunities. The growth of the land uses mentioned above are managed in part by proposing areas of commercial, residential and industrial growth on the Future Land Use Map and developing strategies for each district. In addition to proposing land uses, the city can manage growth by extending the city boundary and concentrating municipal services within the planning area. This strategy will minimize sprawl and the inefficient use of the land, resources and municipal services.

The purpose for managing growth in the City of Poplar Bluff are multi-fold, they include:

- The preservation of farmland & the income generating potential of the natural land
- the prevention of overextending municipal services and infrastructure
- the prevention of vacancies and thus economic decline within existing city neighborhoods and commercial areas
- the control of types and quality of development at the city periphery.

The rate, manner and location in which the City of Poplar Bluff allows residential, commercial and industrial land uses to grow will have significant effects on conditions within the city's existing neighborhoods and commercial areas. In the current development environment, it is more economical for commercial and residential developers to construct new buildings on agricultural land than it is to redevelop an existing site or renovate an existing building within the city. As a result, most developers' prefer locations at a city's perimeter. When this growth is allowed to progress unchecked, older sections of the city tend to be left to deteriorate. For cities to avoid vacancies, deterioration, and eventual blight among older sections of town, new construction should be balanced with maintenance and renovation of existing buildings. To best accomplish this balance, the city may need to offer incentives to encourage inner city development.



The intersection of Vine and Fifth streets in Downtown Poplar Bluff featured a signal light that was later changed to flashing signal then removed in 2021.

The challenge faced by the City of Poplar Bluff is finding the balance between investing in new developments or reinvesting in what the city already has. To remain competitive with other cities in the region the City of Poplar Bluff must allow and encourage commercial development by providing adequate commercial and industrial property with good access to the City's transportation system and utility services. Potential for commercial development exists in several areas as indicated on the Future Land Use Map. Future commercial development in these areas can be used to generate city tax revenue, expand employment opportunities, and increase shopping and entertainment alternatives for area residents as well as tourists and travelers. However, this growth must not occur in a manner that will contribute to the further deterioration of downtown. Businesses that could feasibly operate in a downtown building should be given incentives to do so.

This was a missed opportunity since the previous Comprehensive Plan as four banking institutions built new headquarters outside downtown.

To manage the growth along Highway 67 and PP, the City of Poplar Bluff must be able to regulate the location, type, and quality of development. However, the City of Poplar Bluff has limited jurisdiction of land development outside its boundary. There are several areas along the bypass that are not located within the corporate limits of Poplar Bluff. These areas fall under the jurisdiction of Butler County, which does not have the same level of land use restrictions as the city. For the City to have full control of the type, quality, and nature of future land use, it must annex the appropriate growth areas prior to development activity. Another area poised for commercial expansion, which will also require annexation, is along Highways 60 and 67. Much of the land around these locations is undeveloped and prime locations for a future development. For this to be feasible however, the City of Poplar Bluff will need to extend its boundary as well as the needed municipal services to support such development.

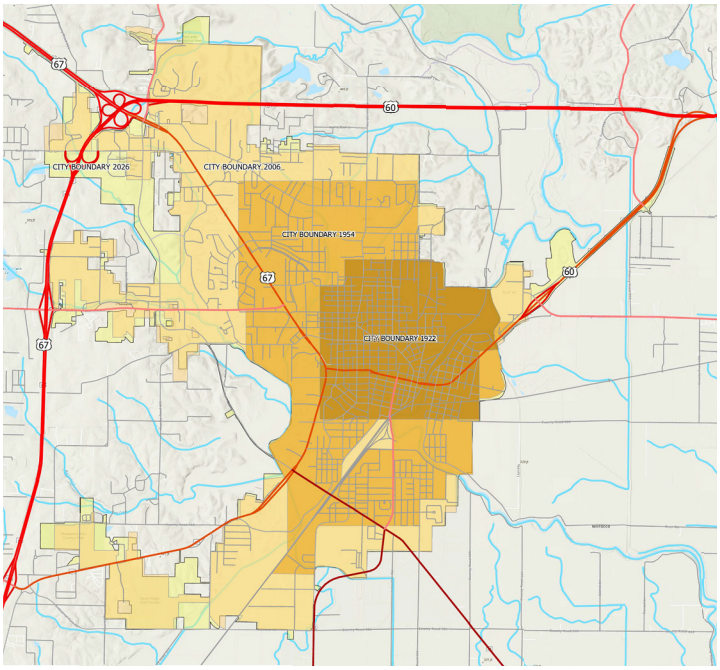
ANNEXATION

The community has expressed support for annexation throughout the comprehensive planning process. Many believe annexation is necessary to preserve the natural character of the area and provide for future residential growth. In response to the community's support, and due to the City's ability to provide centralized services to adjacent unincorporated areas, the City should continue an organized annexation plan that identifies and prioritizes the annexation of specific parcels within the City's growth areas. Partnerships between the City, property owners and developers should be established early in the process to help avoid unanticipated repercussions during or after the annexation process. To the fullest extent possible, future development and land uses within the annexation area should comply with the Comprehensive Plan's land use recommendations and the City's Zoning Code.

Annexation of any land into the City of Poplar Bluff should be considered carefully. While each situation is different, the end result should provide specific benefits to the city as well as the annexing area. The areas of land shaded on the Future Land Use Map that fall outside the City's limits are the areas the City should consider for future annexation. Before any annexation decisions are made, the following general questions should be considered:

- Will the annexation lessen demand to develop in-fill property or redevelop existing sites and buildings within the current city boundary?

Annexation History



Smith & Company

- Will the annexation place any unacceptable political, financial, physical or operational demands or expectations upon the City for the provision of services or infrastructure?
- Will the annexation allow for more appropriate guidance of future development within the annexation area?
- Will the annexation bring existing land uses into the City that are desirable and have some benefit to the City in terms of revenue or the sense of community?
- Is the annexation in the best interest of the City as a whole?
- Does the annexation make economic sense from both long- and short-range perspectives?

ANNEXATION PROCEDURES

The City Council of the City of Poplar Bluff processes all annexation petitions and determines if they comply with state statutes. The procedures for annexing unincorporated land in Butler County can be summarized by two methods of annexation; Voluntary and Involuntary Annexation.

Under the voluntary method, residents in affected portions of Butler County petition the city and request annexation. The petition is then reviewed by the City Council to determine if the annexation is reasonable and necessary. If the City Council agrees, the annexation can be approved without the time and expense of an election. Voluntary annexations can only be accomplished through a petition process involving 100% of the annexing property owners.

The involuntary method requires the preparation of a plan of intent. The proposal must legally delineate the area to be annexed and provide proof that the proposed annexation meets the statutory criteria. The annexation petition must be presented at a public hearing. Following the public hearing, an election is held in which all registered voters in the city and all registered voters in the annexation area must vote separately on the annexation. The vote must be a majority in favor in both the city and the annexation area to be approved.

Annexation & Growth Management Recommendations:

1. Formulate an annexation policy based upon future growth patterns, ability to provide public facilities and services, and suitability of land for development.
2. Encourage development in areas where municipal services can most easily be extended. New development should not be permitted until such time municipal services are available.
3. Conduct thorough inspections of all public infrastructure within the proposed annexation area and complete a thorough service provision evaluation-prior to annexation.
4. Develop partnerships with property owners and developers early in the annexation process to help avoid unanticipated repercussions during or after the annexation process.
5. All future development should comply with the Comprehensive Plan and the City's Zoning Code.
6. Promote the preservation, maintenance and renovation of the city's existing buildings and established districts. Direct business development towards the CBD.
7. Provide information for property owners near city limits on the benefits of being included within the City – lower costs for home and car insurance – outweighing the increase in their taxes.



The water tower that stood at the end of Pine Street at the intersection with Westwood Boulevard was removed in 2012 as part of an upgrade to the City's water system. The font used for the logo to this project is based on the design painted on the water tower.

Whatever projects or developments the City of Poplar Bluff and its residents determine to pursue, turning plans into progress requires an implementation strategy. This is a challenging process that requires commitment of the City's elected and appointed officials, along with residents, businesses and other organizations. The following is an outline of options which can, and will, change.

The primary vehicle of a comprehensive plan implementation is the zoning ordinance. These ensure that development fits in with existing and future needs of the community while promoting the public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity and general welfare of the community.

Once this plan is adopted, it is recommended that the City plan to undertake a review of the zoning regulations to reflect the current priorities. Responsibility for drafting zoning ordinances lies with the Planning and Zoning Commission but must include staff input and legal advice.

This plan does not contradict or change the existing city processes for handling building requests, zoning changes, variances, or annexations. The plan provides the foundation through the recommendations outlined through the plan to serve as the basis to whether a request is consistent with this plan. Consistency with the plan is essential to ensure it is implemented fairly and is a significant determination during regulation and development review process.

The concepts and recommendations outlined in this Comprehensive Plan, should considered, and emphasized that this plan is a living document to be used in all aspects of land use management and development. As such, all maps and recommendations included are advisory for the Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council, City staff, appointed officials, developers, residents to ask the question is a proposal consistent with the community's plan.

RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES

THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION is the sole authority of this Comprehensive Plan, as stated by Missouri Statutes. The commission oversees requests regarding land use and zoning changes. The commission serves the city by providing recommendations for changes to the City Council.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT hears and decides appeals where it is alleged there is an error in any order, requirement, decision or determination made by an administrative official in the enforcement of zoning. It consists of five members with four needed to reverse any order, requirement, decision or determination.

CITY COUNCIL the legislative policy-making body for the City of Poplar Bluff, it has the power to pass, amend and create local law, including zoning regulations, following consideration of recommendations from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

CITY STAFF is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the city, which includes, but not limited to, creating, and implementing a budget, making operations and personnel decisions, and planning for maintenance and improvements to community services and infrastructure.

PARTNER AGENCIES include partnerships with other levels of government including the county and state. For example, MoDOT and the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission, which can offer technical expertise and funding opportunities.

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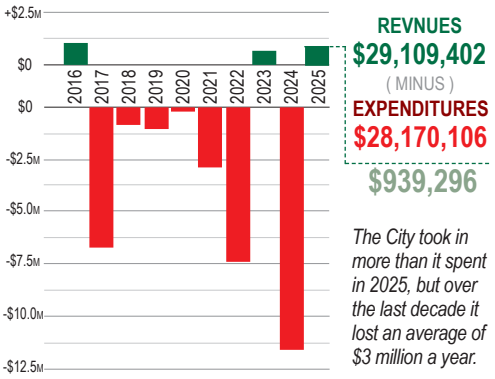
FUNDING

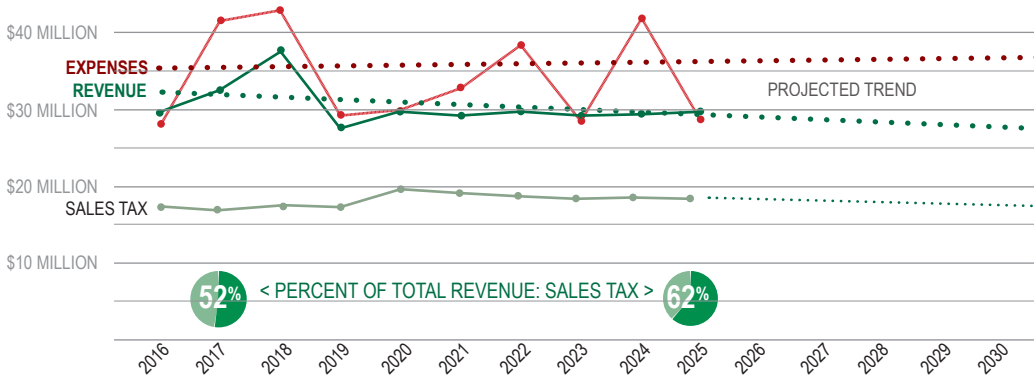
REVENUE VS. EXPENSES



REVNUES
$29,109,402
(MINUS)
EXPENDITURES
$28,170,106
$939,296

The City took in more than it spent in 2025, but over the last decade it lost an average of $3 million a year.

REVENUE & EXPENSES - ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION



City of Poplar Bluff

EXISTING FUNDING

While the City maintained a positive balance in 2025, funding projects remains a challenge. In order to fund new infrastructure and development projects while continuing maintenance, the city will need to secure additional funding, either through increased revenue in the form of taxes, or through outside funding, such as grants and financial programs on the local, state and federal levels.

Poplar Bluff's revenue and expenditures can be divided into two different types of municipal funds – governmental and proprietary. Governmental funds are those used for the general, daily operation of the city, while proprietary funds have separate, dedicated revenue streams and expenditures, typically directly related to their function and are often used for services and utilities such as water and sewer.

GENERAL FUND is Poplar Bluff's largest and most flexible fund, receiving sales and property tax revenues dedicated to city operations.

SPECIAL FUNDS The City also features special revenue funds that are either legally restricted to expenditures for specified purposes or designated to finance particular functions or activities for the City. These include:

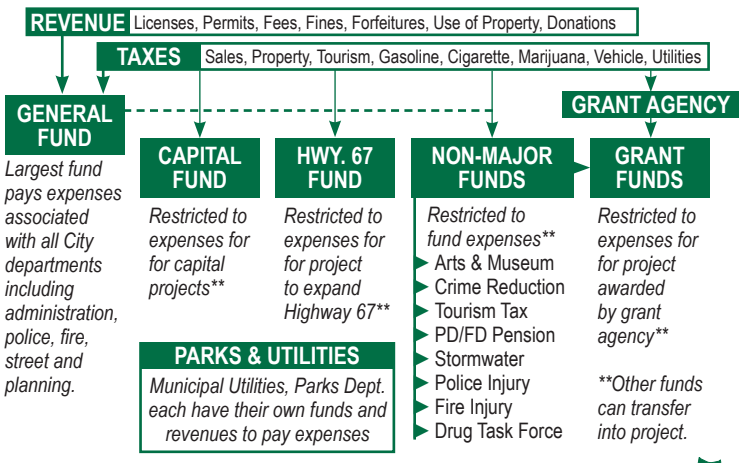
- Highway 67 Tax Fund, which accounts for monies received for the reconstruction of Highway 67
- Special Allocation Fund, which relates to the tax increment financing districts
- Airport Fund
- Arts & Museum Fund
- Crime Reduction Fund for municipal court revenues transfered to the police department for drug investigation, prevention and intervention
- Police and Fire Pension Fund
- Storm Water Fund
- Historical Commission Fund
- Tourism Tax Fund
- Capital Improvements Fund
- Police and fire injury funds
- Water and Sewer Fund
- Black River Coliseum Fund.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUNDS are used to account for resources restricted for the acquisition or construction of specific capital projects or items. This accounts for 87.5% of the half-cent sales tax Improvements Fund approved by voters in 1989 to be collected for funding of capital improvement projects and capital equipment. The Park/Golf Capital Fund receives 12.5% of this tax.

Revenue is currently produced through property tax and sales tax within the city limits. Poplar Bluff levies a property tax of $0.5998 per $100 of assessed property value with $0.0952 going to the Police & Fire Pension Fund. Residents pay property taxes to numerous taxing entities, including the Park Department, Butler County, Poplar Bluff R-I School District, Three Rivers College and library.

→

REVENUES & FUNDS



SALES TAX RATE BY CITY

Along with the state sales tax rate of 4.225%, each county, city and taxing district will have a rate included in the sale price. Here is a look at tax rates by city:

Highest combined rate within the city limit.	RATE*	CITY RATE	USE TAX
Cape Girardeau	10.475%	2.75%	YES
Sikeston	9.725%	3.00%	YES
Farmington	9.850%	2.50%	YES
Sedalia	9.725%	2.50%	YES
Poplar Bluff	**8.975%**	**2.25%**	**NO**
Moberly	8.475%	2.50%	YES
Rolla	8.600%	2.25%	YES

Missouri Dept. of Revenue

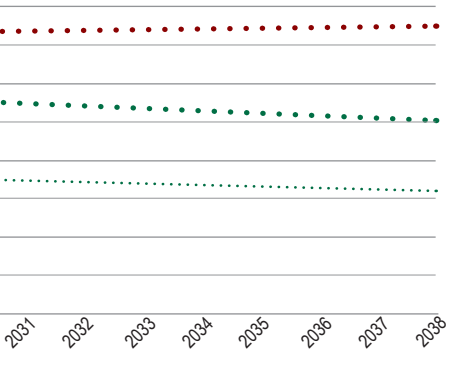
USE TAX VOTES

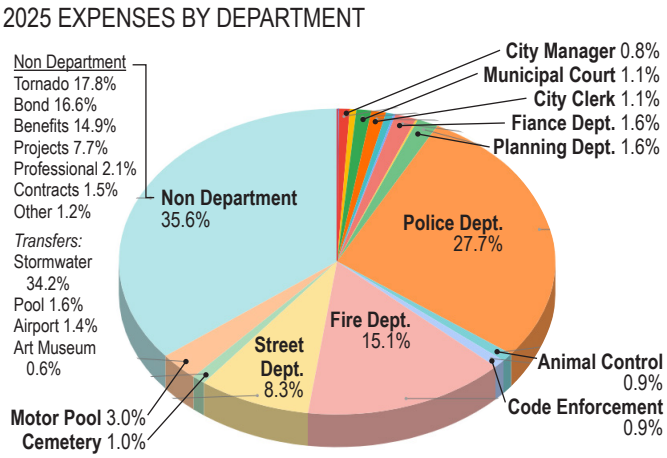
Poplar Bluff is among a shrinking number of cities in Missouri that has not approved a Use Tax. Here is a look at vote totals from recent efforts to pass it:

ELECTION	YES	NO	+/-
April 2023 ...	423	608	-185
April 2021 ...	377	381	-4
April 2020 ...	598	654	-56
Nov. 2019 ...	276	491	-215
Aug. 2017*..	436	448	-12

**A Use Tax for Butler County failed by a margin of 485 votes.*

FUNDING





	BUDGET	SALARY*
Police Department	$5,470,176	90.1%
Non Department	$3,159,967	—
Fire Department	$2,846,404	94.9%
Street Department	$1,560,434	91.7%
Motor Pool	$587,105	94.5%
Finance & Collector	$323,527	66.3%
Planning	$311,069	80.4%
Municipal Court & PA	$251,344	72.2%
Cemetery & Mosquito	$209,162	81.2%
City Clerk	$199,465	95.3%
Animal Control	$189,767	81.8%
City Manager	$187,260	96.6%
Code Enforcement	$176,659	87.3%
City Council & Attorney	$117,044	70.3%
Human Resources	$107,705	91.4%

*costs include salary, support and benefits

Sales tax is the most significant source of revenue for Poplar Bluff, accounting for 62% of all revenue for the City in 2025. The combined sales tax rate in Poplar Bluff is between 7.975% and 8.975%, while the state average in 2026 was 8.41%.

Poplar Bluff's sales tax rate of 2.25% ranks 185th out of 700-plus Missouri cities while only 61 communities have a rate of 3.0% or higher and 113 have a rate between 2.5-2.9%.

A one percent sales tax was approved by voters of the City in December 1970 while one-half cent capital improvement sales tax was approved by voters in April 1989. Voters also approved a one-half cent sales tax for Economic Development in April 2005 while a one-quarter cent Park Department Sales Tax was approved by voters in November 1999.

Unlike Poplar Bluff, over 230 communities also feature a Use Tax at the same rate as the sales tax. A Use Tax is applied only on goods purchased from certain online and out-of-state vendors for delivery and use in a city. As more consumers purchase items online instead of at their local store, communities without a Use Tax lose out on revenue.

Meanwhile, expenditures continue to climb for the City of Poplar Bluff, which include a variety of services, programs and infrastructure.

As is the case with most municipalities, Poplar Bluff allocates a significant proportion of its budget to public safety. The police department accounted for 27.7% of all expenditures in 2025 while the fire department accounted for 15.1% of the budget, meaning those two departments alone accounted for nearly 43% of the total budget.

Salaries for all departments accounted for nearly half the 2025 budget for the general fund while benefits pushed that percentage to 72%.

POTENTIAL FUNDING

Along with the City's capital improvement fund, which had revenues of $2.5 million in 2025, projects can be funded through state and federal grants, a list of which is included in the following pages.

For example, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds community projects for infrastructure, facilities and demolition for qualifying communities, including Poplar Bluff, during yearly cycles. Since 2009, the City has received approximately $4.8 million in grant funds.

Other funding options include donations and fundraising. McLane Park now features pickleball courts following a donation while the Robert's Adventure Playground, an all-abilities area, was created through community donations that raised $510,000.

Putting together multiple funding options will only speed up the process of turning plans into progress.

⌂

WHAT IS A USE TAX?

A local use tax is applied instead of a local sales tax to goods purchased from certain online and out-of-state vendors for delivery and use in Poplar Bluff.

A purchase would never be subject to both local sales tax and use tax.

If goods are purchased at a Poplar Bluff retail store, the City of Poplar Bluff's sales tax (2.25%) is applied.

With a local use tax in place, if goods are purchased from an out-of-state vendor, a use tax (2.25%) would apply.

The local use tax must match the local sales tax.

Voter approval is required for the City to receive local use tax revenue on goods purchased for use locally from out-of-state vendors. Over 230 cities in Missouri currently have a voter-approved use tax in place, including, Cape Girardeau, Farmington, Sedalia, Moberly and Rolla.





NO local use tax in place:

ORDER DETAILS

Subtotal: $85.87
Tax: $3.63
Total: **$89.50**

WITH local use tax in place:

ORDER DETAILS

Subtotal: $85.87
Tax: $5.56
Total: **$91.43**

FUNDING

Potential Funding & Revenues

General Revenue Sales Tax	May be imposed at a rate of 0.5 of a cent, 0.875 or 1 cent.
Utility Tax	Tax of 1% of metered services of water, electricity, gas for domestic use.
Capital Improvements	Sales Tax to generate funds for operation or maintenance of a capital improvement and/or the repayment of bonds that financed a project.
Economic Development	Sales Tax up to .50 cent can be used for acquiring land, installing and improving infrastructure and public facilities that relate to a long-term economic development project.
Transportation	Sales Tax may not exceed .50 cents and used solely for transportation purposes.
Storm Water / Parks	Sales Tax used for storm water control, parks or both. May not exceed .50 of a cent.
Local Use	A local use tax is applied in lieu of the local sales tax on transactions that individuals and businesses conduct with out-of-state vendors, including internet, catalog, and direct market sales. The rate of the use tax is applied at the same rate as the local sales tax
Parks and Recreation	Property Tax include park acquisition and maintenance with maximum allowed up to two million and requires voter approval and revenue funds be separated out into another fund. A park or pleasure grounds referred to Rs MO 90.010 can be levied as an amount of cent per $100 and approved by voters.
Foundation funding	Varies by program
Crowdfunding	Varies by program
Government Funds	Varies by program and department
Business Licensee	Municipalities may charge a fee based on a percentage of gross receipts, number of employees, square footage of a business or a flat rate depending on the type of business.
Liquor License	Municipalities may charge up to one and one-half times the rate charged by the state to license liquor providers.
Municipalities Utility Gross Receipts Taxes	Missouri municipalities may levy a utility tax based on gross receipts, but a few levy the tax by a flat fee arrangement. Five-percent is the most common rate, but many municipalities levy a higher tax. In addition, city-owned utilities often contribute either a percentage of gross receipts or a transfer from the utility fund to the general fund in lieu of taxes.
Special Assessments	Many types of special assessments are levied by boards, districts, and municipalities. Some special assessments are levied for construction or improvement projects administered by the boards, districts, or municipality and these assessments may be for a certain number of years.
Special Business District (SBD)	A separate political subdivision of the state that may impose additional property taxes and business license taxes to fund certain public improvements and services within the district.
Community Improvement District (CID)	A local special taxing district that collects revenue within designated boundaries to pay for special public facilities, improvements, or services. CIDs are created by ordinance of the local governing body of a municipality upon presentation of a petition signed by owners of real property within the proposed district's boundaries. A CID is a separate political subdivision with the power to govern itself and impose and collect special assessments, additional property, and sales taxes.
Neighborhood Improvement District	A special taxing district that collects revenue within designated boundaries to help pay for public infrastructure, facilities or other improvements that confer a benefit on property within the district. NIDs are created by election or petition of owners of real property within the proposed district's boundaries and typically generate funding for projects through the sale of municipal revenue bonds backed by the district's special property assessments which may be extended beyond retirement of the bonds to pay for maintenance and upkeep.
Impact Fees	Are payments required of new development for the purpose of providing new or expanded public capital facilities required to serve that development. The fees typically require cash payments in advance of the completion of development, are based on a methodology and calculation derived from the cost of the facility and the nature and size of the development, and are used to finance improvements offsite of, but to the benefit of the development.
Franchise Fees	A municipality can impose a fee on utility companies that use the public rights-of-way to deliver service. The village can determine the amount, structure, and use of collected franchise fees. Generally, they are structured in two ways: a flat rate per utility account or a percentage of consumption used by each utility account.
Transportation Development Districts (TDD)	Missouri statutes authorize a city to create transportation development districts (TDDs) encompassing all or a portion of a city. The purpose of TDD is to promote, design, construct, improve, or maintain one or more transportation projects. Funding TDDs is accomplished through an addon sales or property tax and/or real property special assessments.

FUNDING

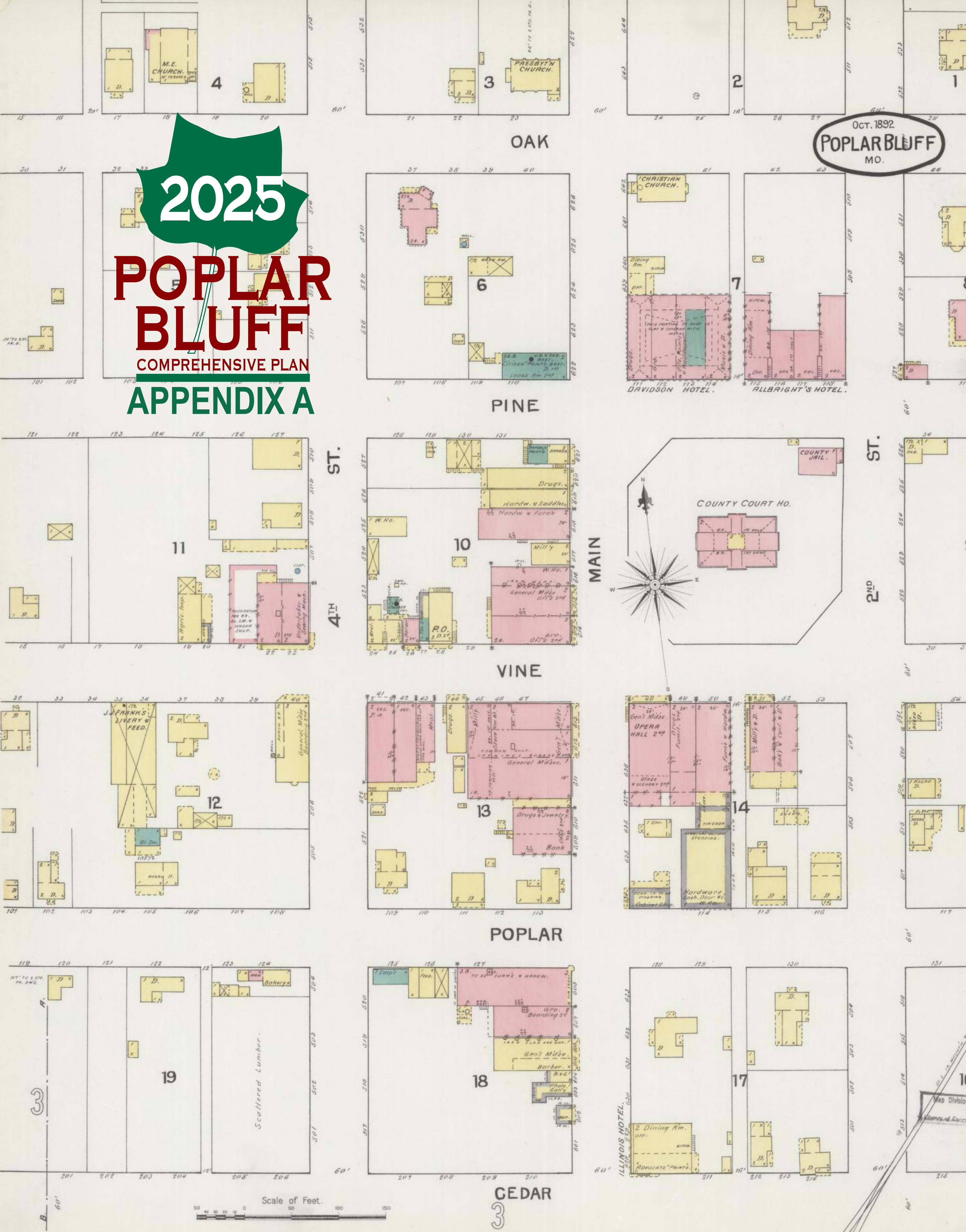
Grants, Loans & Bonds

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) –	Missouri Department of Economic Development: Addresses concerns and issues related to health, safety, and the overall wellbeing of a community. This program also addresses improving local facilities, road networks, senior centers, and community centers.
Section 604(b) Water Quality Management Planning Grant	The Water Quality Management Planning Grant is administered by Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and is available for Missouri Regional Planning Commissions and Councils of Governments such as OFRPC. This grant aims as sub-awards to assisting RPC and COG's with helping local governments in planning efforts for issues of identifying water pollution, developing/implementing a Source Water Protection Plan, Stormwater Compliance, and the implementation of management programs.
Missouri's Drinking Water Revolving Fund (loans and grants)	Rs MO 640.107. refers to funding opportunities for local governments with a populations less than ten thousand people and when funds are available for public water systems, with 20% available to systems serving less than 3,300 people and 15% for systems serving 3,031-9,999.
The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)	A federal-state partnership that provides communities a permanent, independent source of low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects.
Clean Water Engineering Reports Grant - PUB2485	A program to assist small communities serving a population of 10,000 or less with engineering costs.
Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program	US Department of Agriculture: Direct loans and grant opportunities provided through the USDA target the development and maintenance of essential public facilities in rural areas of Missouri.
Municipal Bonds	Municipal Bonds are debt obligations issued by states, cities, counties, and other government entities to fund day-to-day obligations and to fund capital projects such as building schools, highways, or sewer systems. Two types: • General Obligation bonds are used to raise immediate capital to cover expenses, Supported by the taxing power of the issuer. • Revenue Bonds are used to finance infrastructure projects and supported by income generated by the projects.
State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)	This program can be used to replace lost public sector revenue, public health, invest in water, sewer, and broadband as well as pay for essential workers.
Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)	The objectives of the AFG Program are to provide critically needed resources that equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience. Eligible applicants: Fire departments, nonaffiliated emergency medical service (EMS) organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTAs)
Homeland Security	The Department of Homeland Security offers a variety of programs options including the Counter Terrorism Officer Equipment program, SHSP Protection of Soft Targets/Crowded Places, SHSP Regionalization Grant.
Federal Emergency Management Agency	FEMA offers a wide range of funding through a few of the following: Nonprofit Security Grant Program, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), and FEMA Preparedness Grants.
MODESA	The Missouri Downtown Economic Stimulus Act (MODESA) Program can be used for to redevelop areas focused on downtown and to create jobs through essential public infrastructure.
USDA Rural Development	The USDA offers a variety of programs to support businesses and housing to name a few: Rural Businesses Development Grant, Single-family or multi-family direct and guaranteed loans, as well as other business programs related to agriculture, biobased products, energy, food, livestock and more.
Missouri Main Street Connection (MMSC)	This organization offers matching grant programs, educational trainings, and other services. Main Street is releasing a study involving the impacts of Main Streets and historic preservation in Missouri over the past 10 years. Potential Grant opportunities: the Community Empowerment Grant, People Energizing Places (PEP) Grant, Strategic Teams Engaging Places (STEP) Grant.
Historic Preservation (State & Local)	-- CDBG Special Purpose grants and Planning grants -- MO State Parks offers grant applications and funding from federal government including the National Register and Survey Grant, Planning and Outreach Grant, Predevelopment (Preconstruction) Grant and Missouri Historic Tax Credits
Historic Preservation (Federal)	National Register of Historic Places – up 20% tax credits for rehabilitation costs Historic Preservation Easements – A voluntary legal agreement, typically in the form of a deed, which permanently protects a significant historic property. Perpetual (forever) easements assured the property owner the historic character will be preserved. Donations may allow the owner to be eligible for one or more forms of tax benefits.
America Walks Community Change Grants	Organizations can seek funding opportunities through this private sector to encourage walkability.
PeopleForBikes Grant	PeopleForBikes aims to make bicycling better for everyone and accepts Letters of Interest for its Community Grant Program. Through the annual program, grants of up to $10,000 will be awarded to important and influential projects that leverage federal funding to build momentum for bicycling in communities across the United States.
Recreational Trails Program (RTP) – Missouri State Parks	Open to local and state governments, school districts and nonprofit organizations for the purposes of restoration of recreational trails, development of trails, facilities, construction of new trails, acquisitions of easements and properties, and assessing a trails conditions concerning accessibility and maintaining trials.
Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)	The transportation alternatives program provides funding for a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities and trails. This program is administered through the Missouri Department of Transportation.
Various Foundations	Foundation grants for small towns focus on rural development, infrastructure, community, and economic revitalization. Key funders include T-Mobile Hometown Grants ($50k), the Hart Family Fund ($2.5k–$15k for preservation), among others. These grants support nonprofits, local governments, and projects in communities with populations under 50,000.


2025
POPLAR BLUFF
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
POPLAR BLUFF
Gateway to the Ozarks

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

APPENDIX A



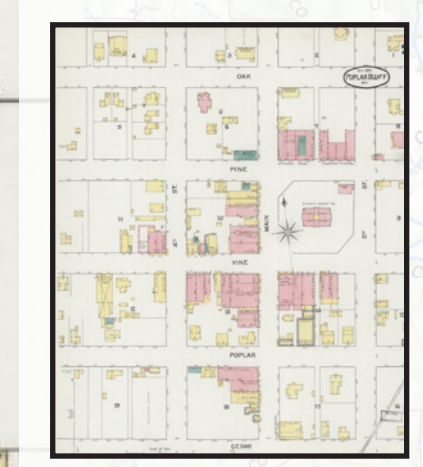
MAPS

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

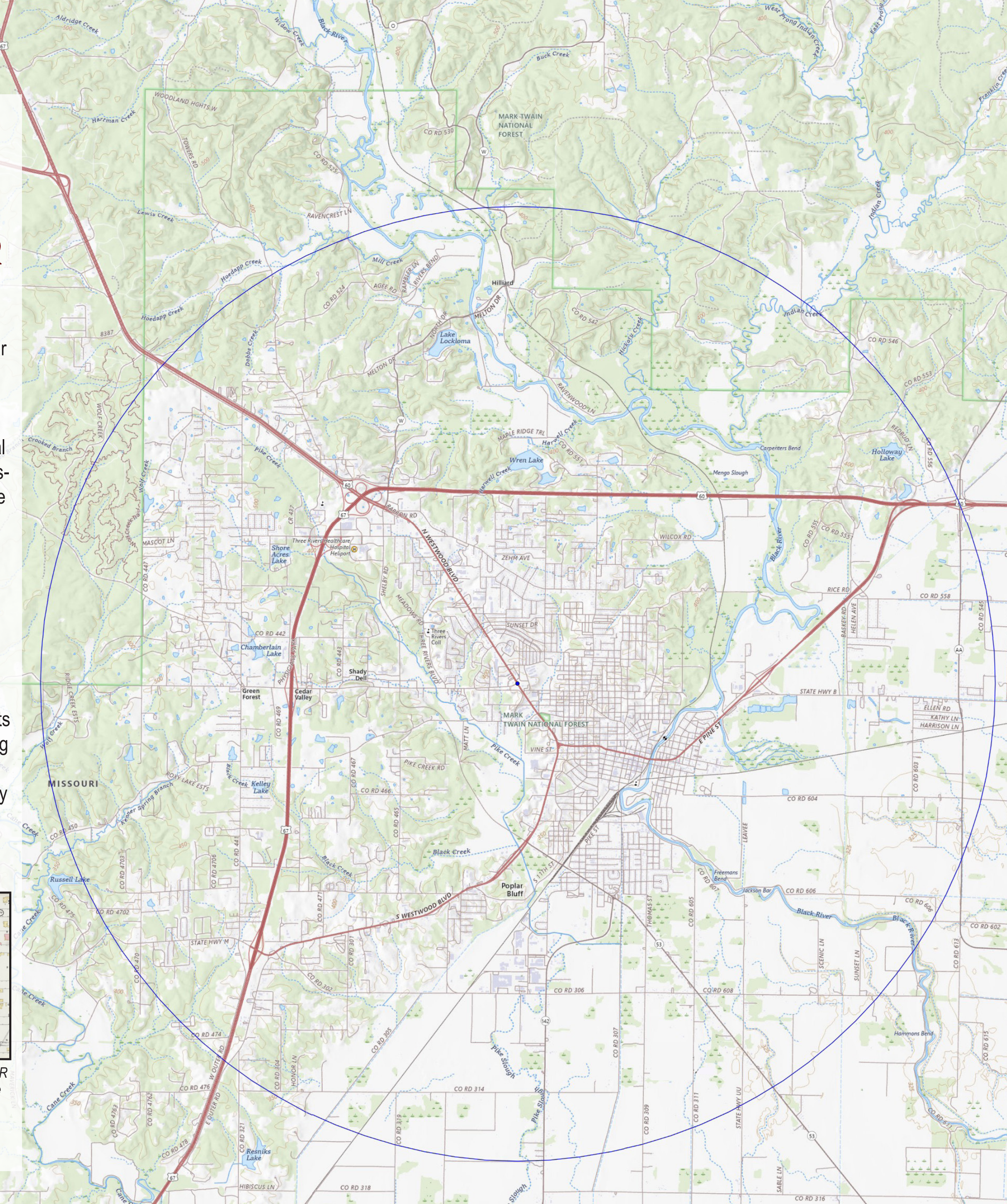
The City of Poplar Bluff entered into an agreement with the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission to update the Comprehensive Plan by applying for grant funding as partners.

The Delta Regional Authority awarded a grant on October 1, 2023, as part of its Strategic Planning Program.

Smith & Company updated maps it created from the previous plan.



ON THE COVER Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Poplar Bluff maps downtown in 1892. (Source: Library of Congress)





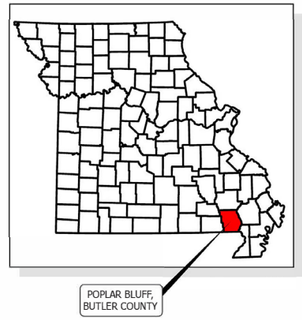
Source: The National Map, U.S. Geological Survey

Located in the middle of the continental United States at the crossroads of two highways, geography is a key factor to Poplar Bluff's growth. With the foothills of the Ozark Mountains to the west and the flat Mississippi Alluvial Plan to the east, this area is known as the Ozark Escarpment. Nestled along the Black River between the rich farmland to the east and south and the wooded hills to the west and north, the City of Poplar Bluff sits within a six-mile radius from the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Kanell Boulevard (PP).

OPEN

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MAP 1.1
LOCATION MAP



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SMITH&CO. ENGINEERS
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(573) 785-9621 FAX: (573) 785-2651
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Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA

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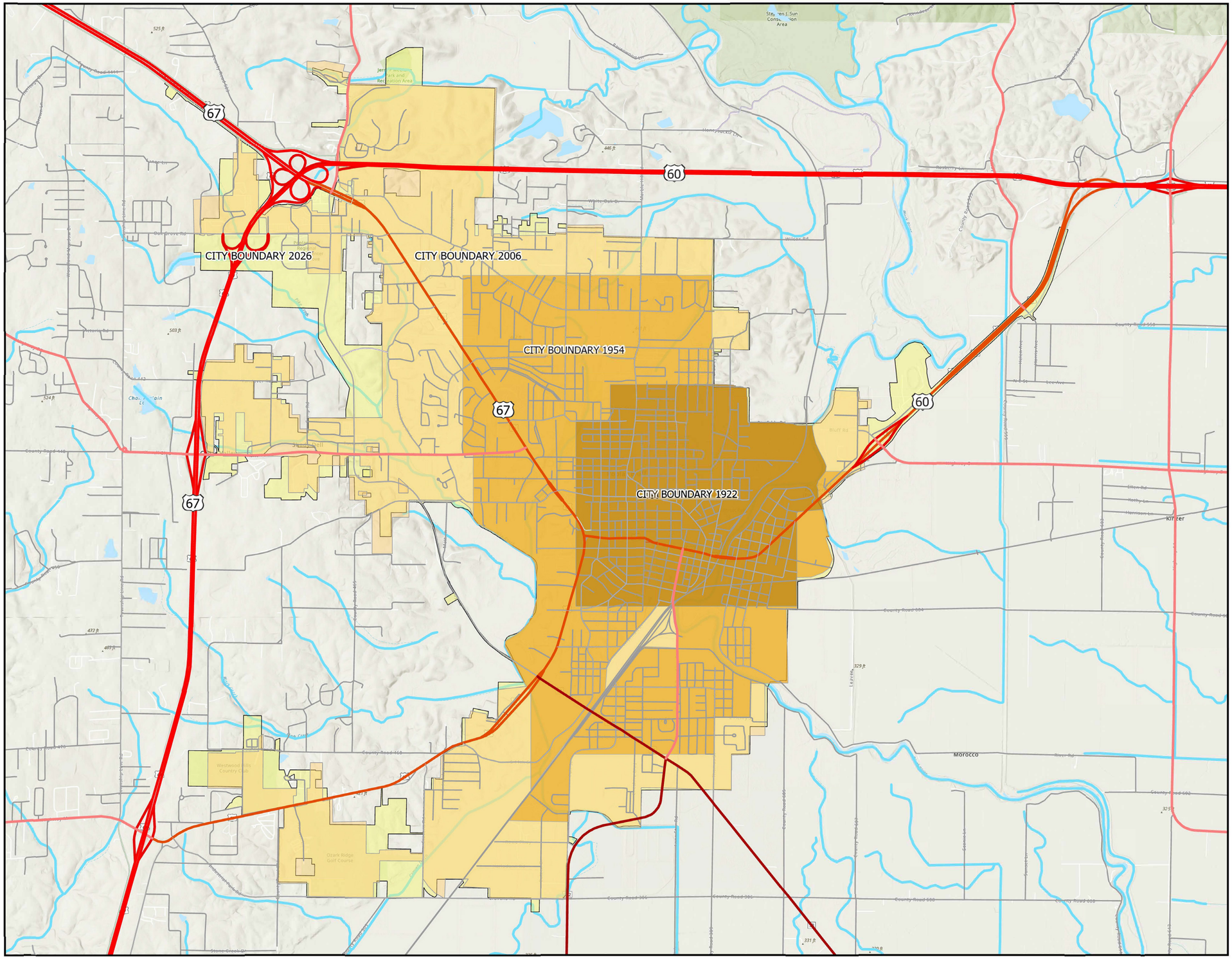
2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MAP 1.2
HISTORIC CITY BOUNDARIES



Legend

- 1922 City Limits
- 1954 City Limits
- 2006 City Limits
- 2026 City Limits

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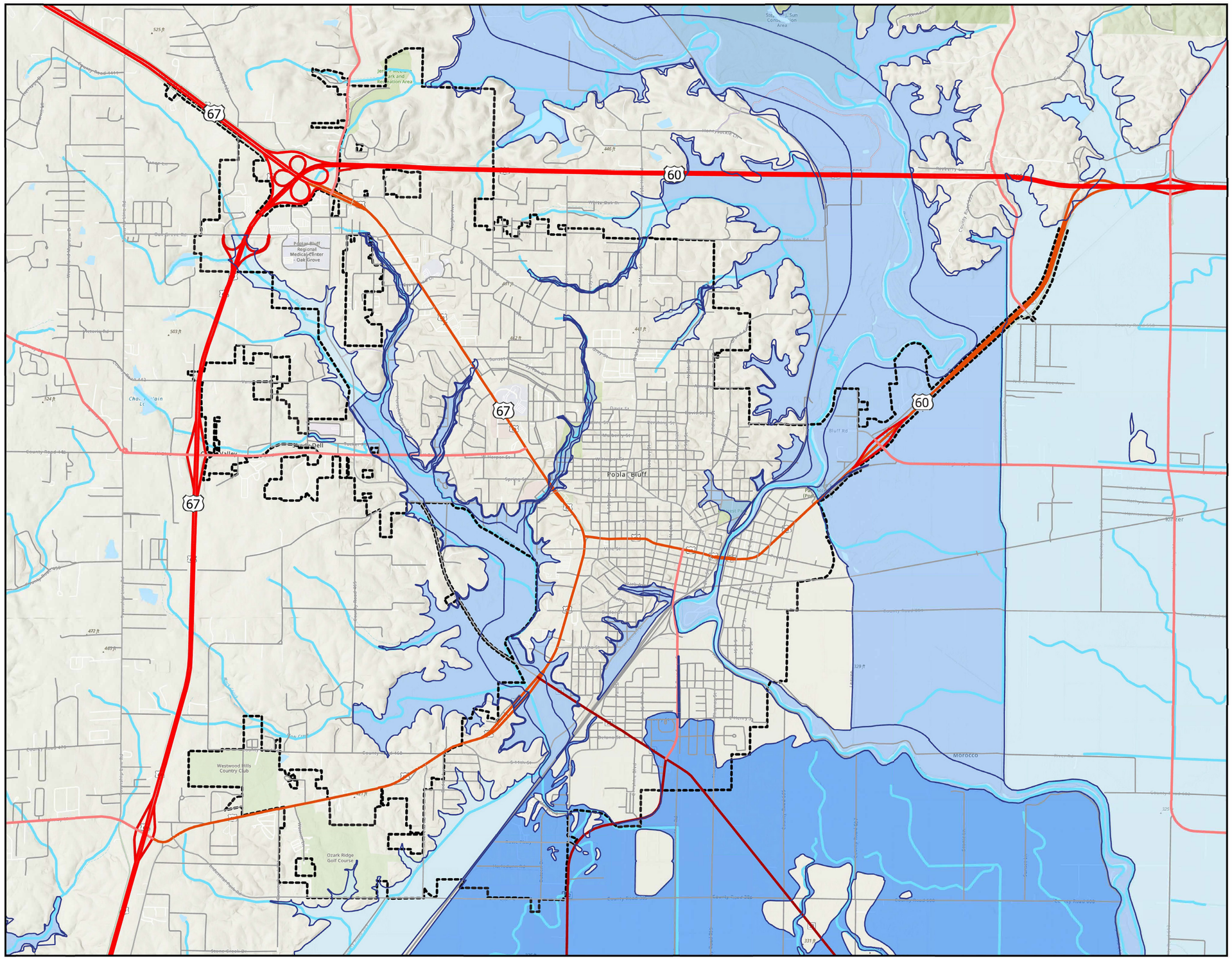

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CITY OF POPLAR BLUFF BUTLER CO. MISSOURI

MAP 1.3
FLOOD ZONES AND
NATURAL DRAINAGE

Legend

- 2026 City Limits
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES

FEMA FLOOD ZONES

- A
- AE
- AH

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2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MAP 1.4
SLOPE & WETLANDS WITHIN THE POPLAR BLUFF STUDY AREA

Legend

- 2026 City Limits
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES
- Wetlands

Slope in %

- 0 - 1
- 1 - 3
- 3 - 5
- 5 - 8
- 8 - 15
- 15 - 64

N
W E
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0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

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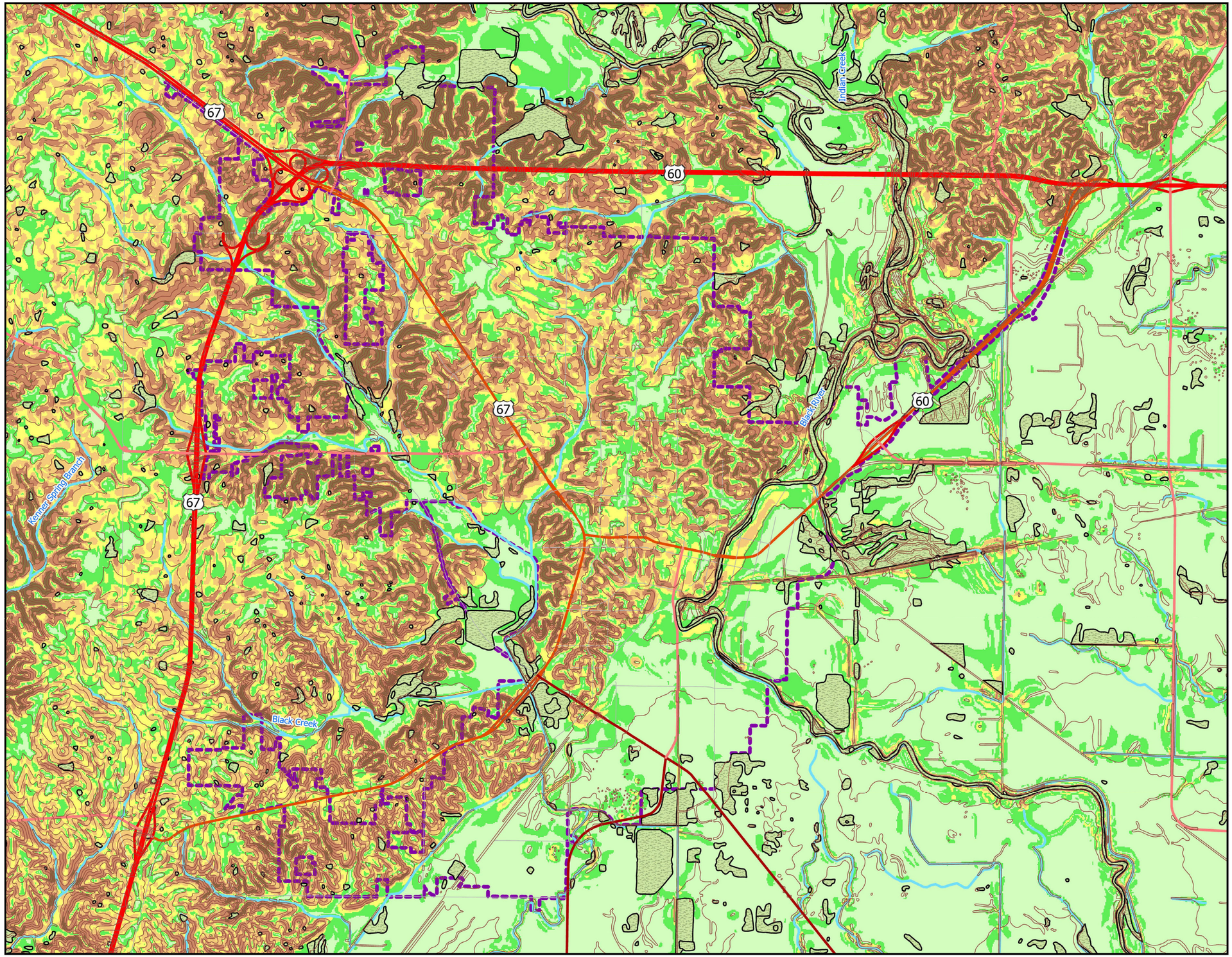

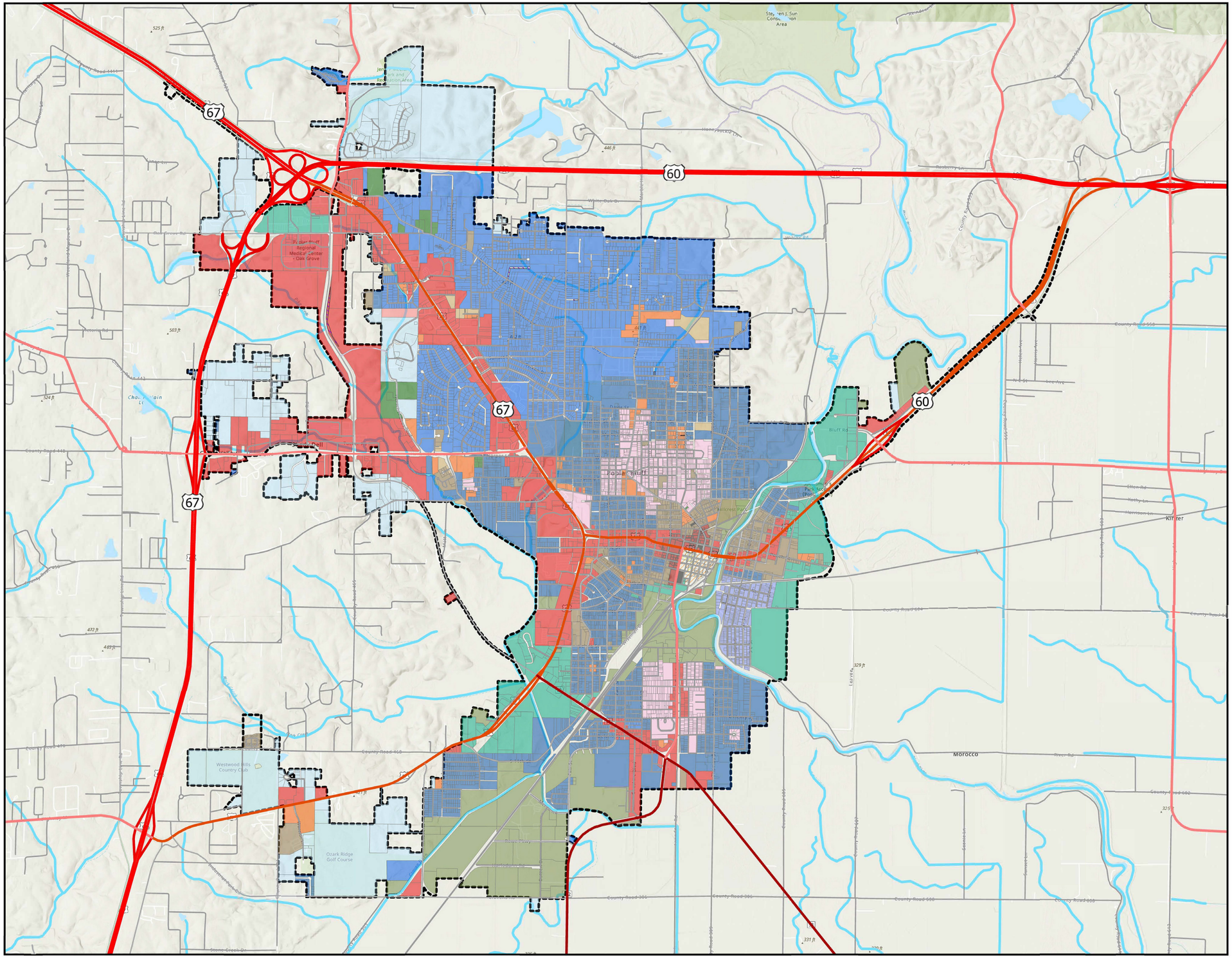
67
60
67
60
67
Poplar Bluff Regional Medical Center - Oak Grove
Westwood Hills Country Club
Ozark Ridge Golf Course
Morocco
Kinzer
Stephen J. Sun Conservation Area
Jeffers Park and Recreation Area
Poplar Bluff
Bluff Rd
Hillcrest Park
Lee Ave
Lee Ln
Oak Grove Rd
Victoria Rd
Westwood Blvd
Westwood Dr
Chalk Bluff Rd
Honey Rock Rd
Wilcox Rd
Wilcox Oak Dr
Meadowlark Rd
Mockingbird Ln
Robin Rd
Robin Ln
Robin Hood Rd
Robin Hood Ct
Robin Hood Dr
Robin Hood Cir
Robin Hood Ln
Robin Hood Trl
Robin Hood Pl
Robin Hood Ave
Robin Hood Rd

2025 POPLAR BLUFFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MAP 7.1
Future Land Use

Legend

- 2026 City Limits
- Parks

Future Land Use

- Commercial
- Downtown
- Historic
- Industrial
- Nodal Commercial
- Parks & Open Spaces
- High Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Denisty Residential & Agricultural
- Railroads

Flood Plain

- A
- AE
- AH
- X500

Transportation

- Existing Collector
- New Construction
- Widen & Reconstruct

N W E S

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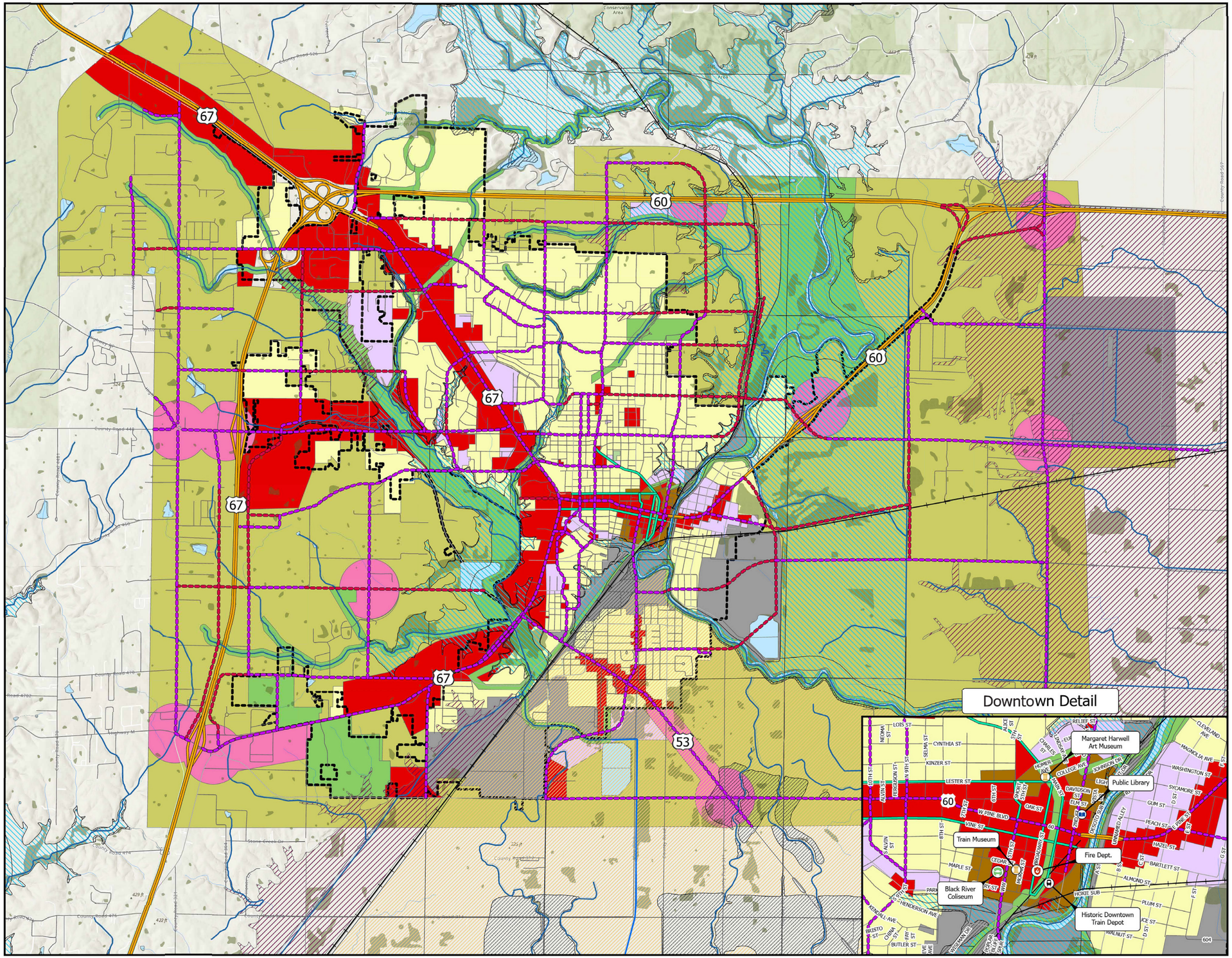

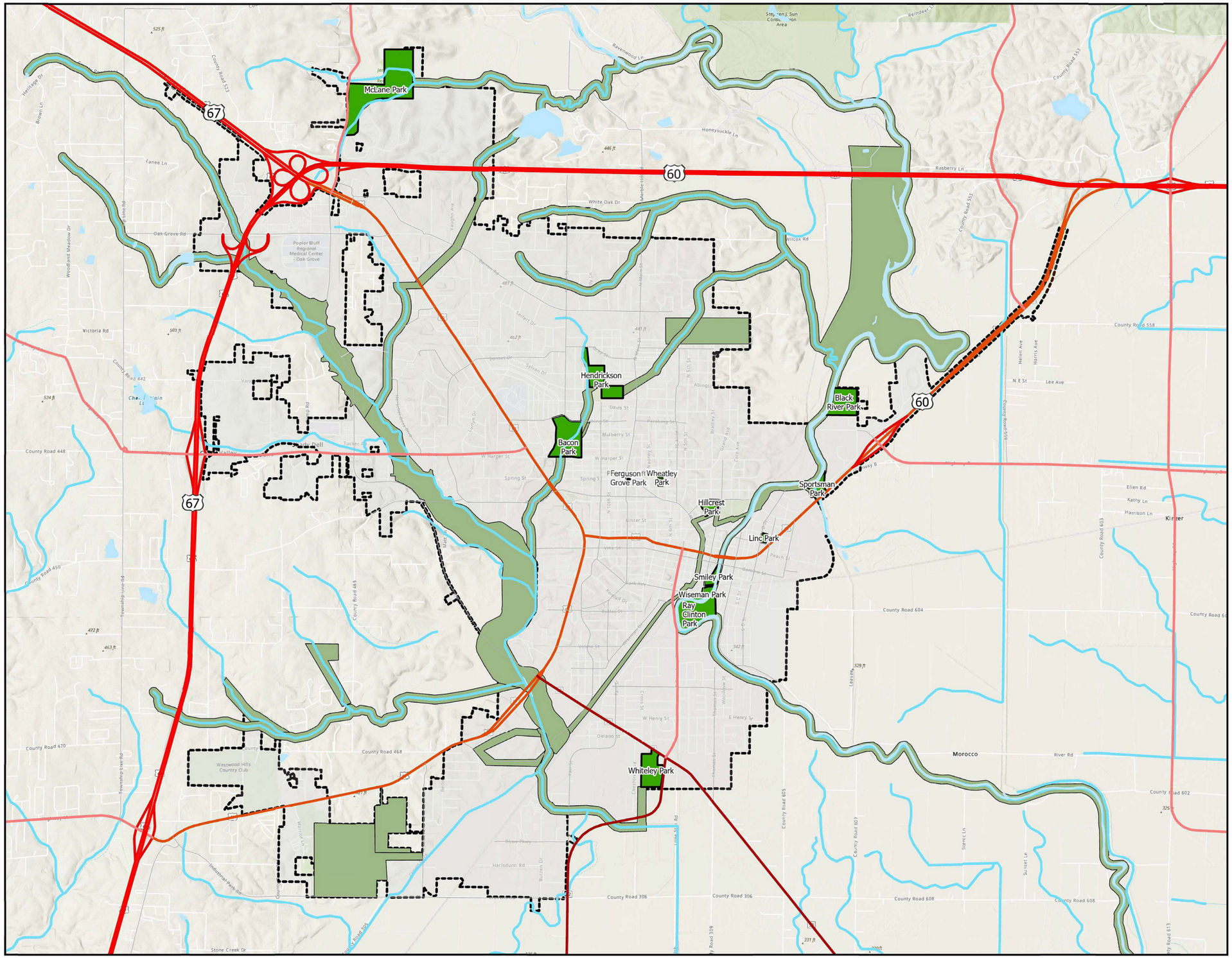

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CITY OF POPLAR BLUFF BUTLER CO. MISSOURI

MAP 4.1
EXISTING PARKS AND PARKLAND ADDITIONS

Legend

- 2026 City Limits
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES
- Parkland Additions
- Existing Parks

N W E S

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

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(573) 785-9621 FAX: (573) 785-2651
WWW.SHSMITHCO.COM

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA

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2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MAP 4.2
OUTDOOR RECREATION AREAS IN THE POPLAR BLUFF REGION

Legend

- 2026 City Limits
- WATER BODIES
- Railroads
- MDOC Lands
- Missouri State Parks
- National Park Service
- Mark Twain National Forest
- Trails

N
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0 10 20 Miles

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Esri, BLM, DoD, NPS, USFWS, USFS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS

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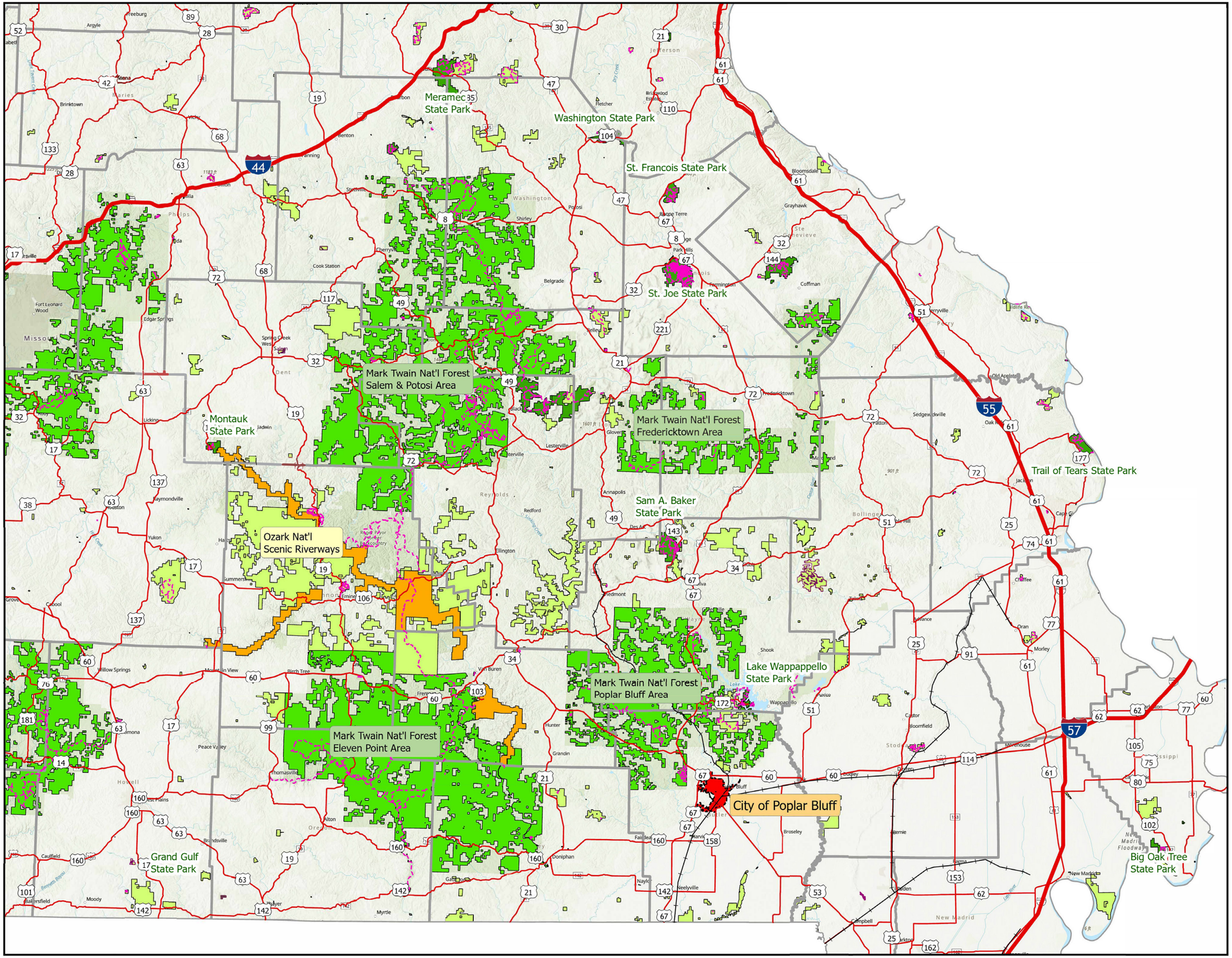

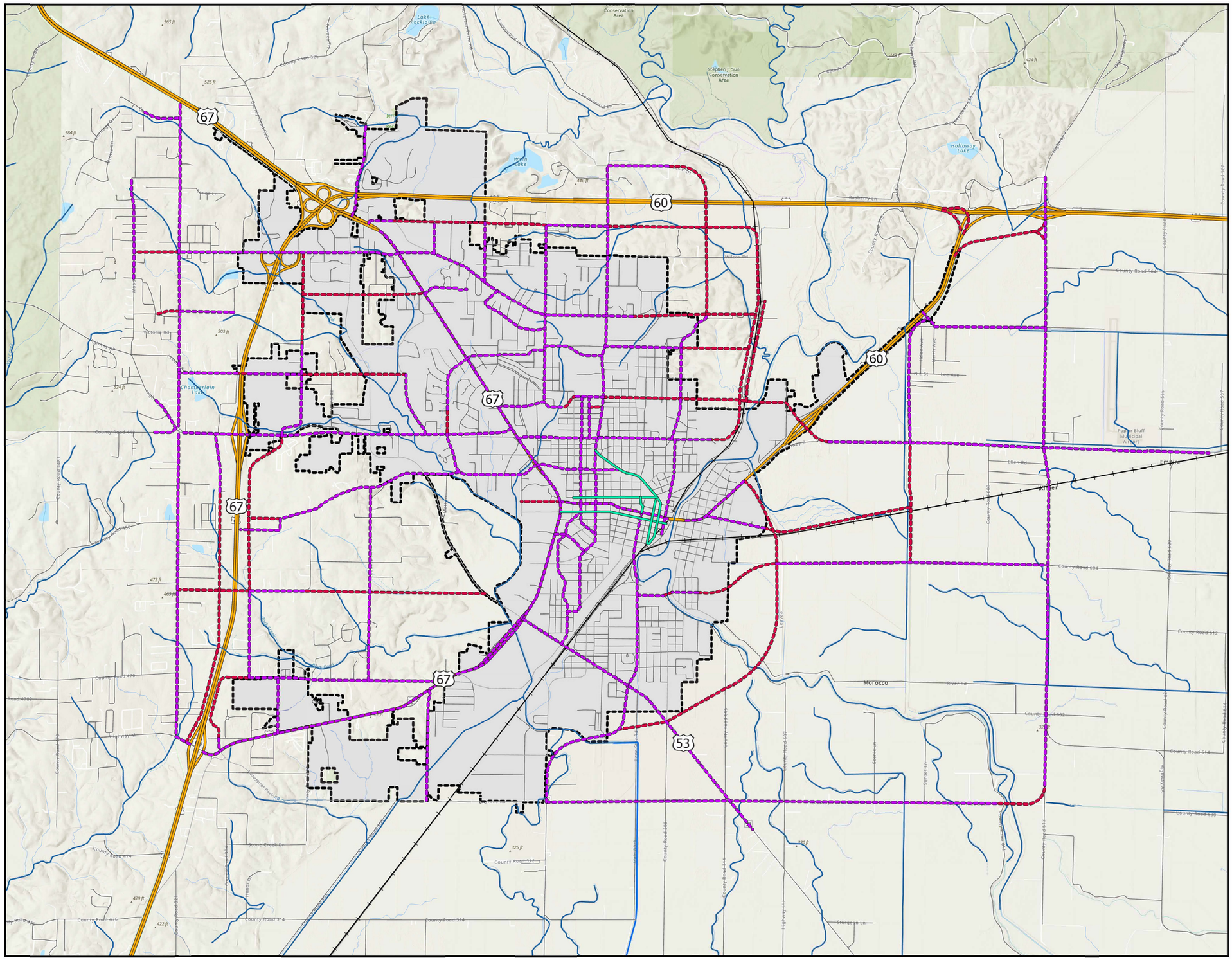

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CITY OF POPLAR BLUFF
BUTLER CO. MISSOURI

MAP 5.1
Transportation Improvements

Legend

- 2026 City Limits
- Railroads
- New Construction
- Widen and Reconstruct
- Existing Collector

N
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0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

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POPLAR BLUFF

BUTLER COUNTY
MISSOURI
SOUTHEAST DISTRICT
2026

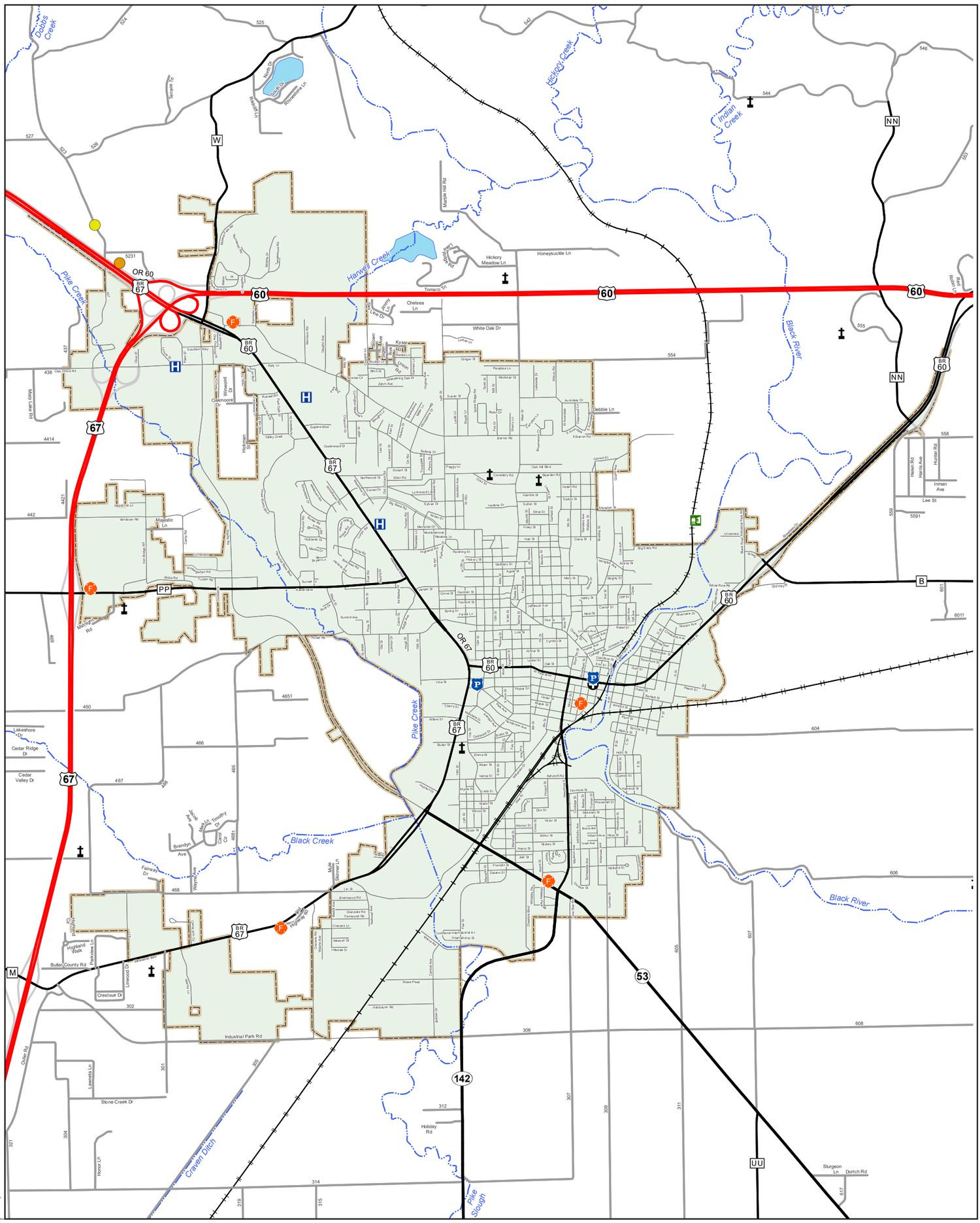
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
1-888-ASK-MODOT
WWW.MODOT.ORG
January 2026

Legend

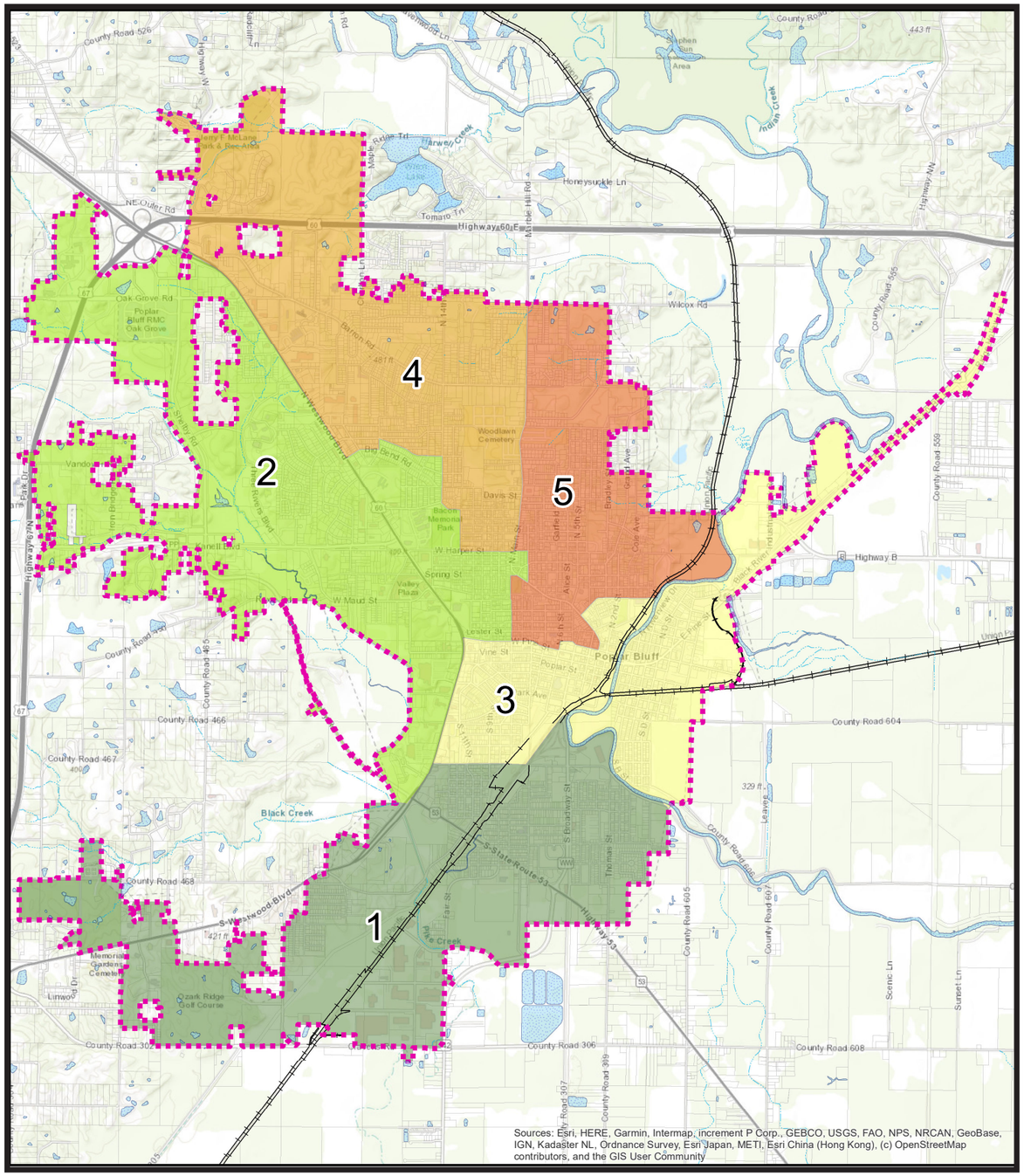
- Fire Station
- Police Stations
- MSHP Office
- Hospitals
- Airports
- County Courthouse
- MoDOT Maintenance
- MoDOT Office
- Cemetery
- Amtrak Stations
- MetroLink Stations
- MetroLink Lines
- City Limits
- Interstate
- Interstate Loop
- US Route
- Business Route
- Missouri Route
- Letter Route
- County Road
- Railroad
- City Street
- Other Routes
- River/Stream
- Lake/Large River
- County

N W E S

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles



WARD MAP



N W E S

0 2,500 5,000 10,000
Feet

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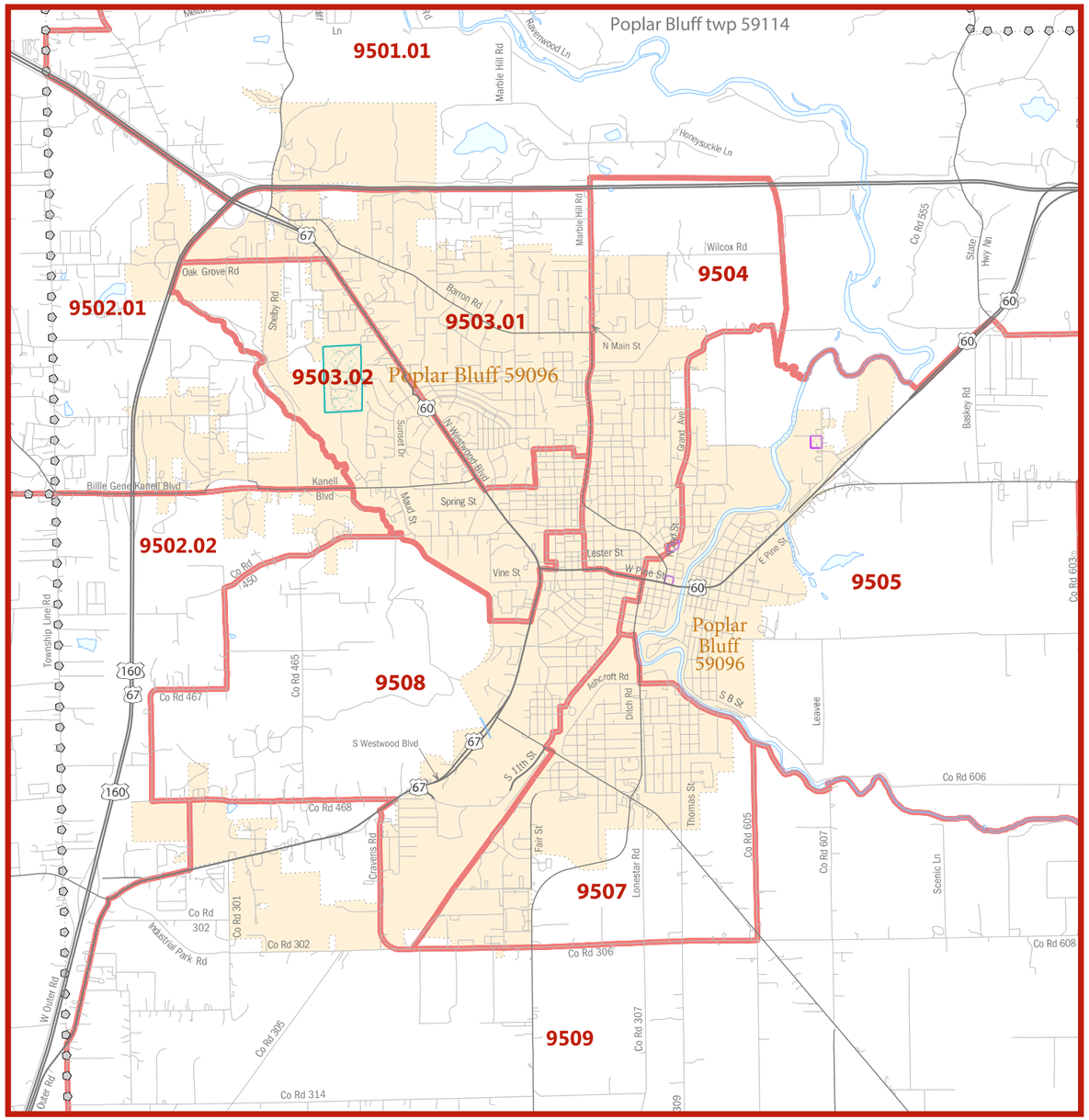
US CENSUS MAP



Incorporated Place [1,2]

Census Designated Place (CDP) [2]

Census Tract [3]

Geographic area names are followed by either their FIPS or census code.

1 A '°' following an MCD name denotes a false MCD. A '°' following a place name indicates that a false MCD exists with the same name and FIPS code as the place; the false MCD label is not shown.

2 Place label color corresponds to the place fill color.

3 Census tracts are identified by an up to four-digit integer number and may have an optional two-digit suffix; for example 23 or 1457.02. The census tract codes consist of six digits with an implied decimal between the fourth and fifth digit corresponding to the basic census tract number, but with leading zeros, and trailing zeros for census tracts without a suffix. The tract number examples above would have codes of 002300 and 145702, respectively.

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

APPENDIX B

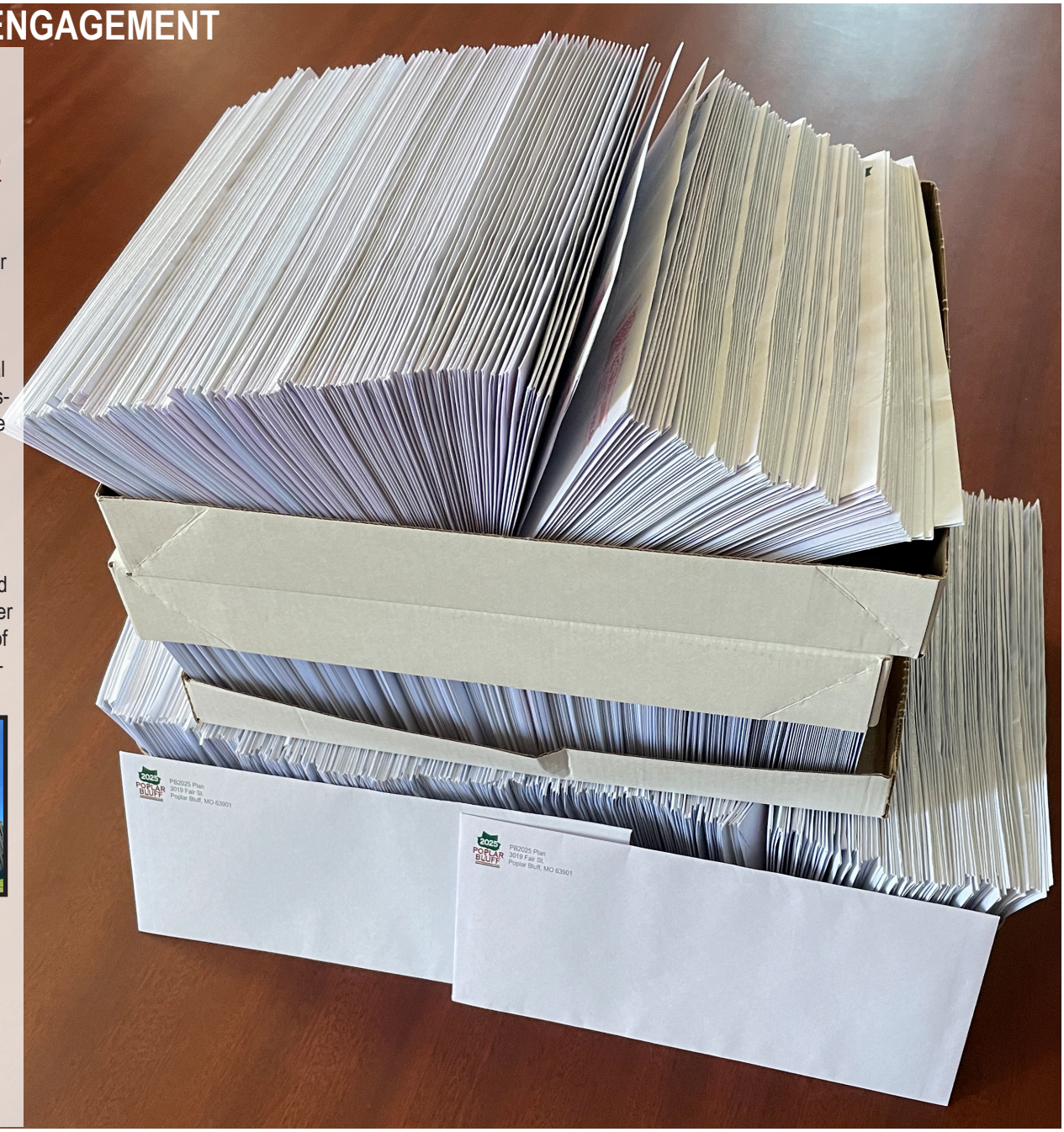


PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The City of Poplar Bluff entered into an agreement with the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission to update the Comprehensive Plan by applying for grant funding as partners. The Delta Regional Authority awarded a grant on October 1, 2023, as part of its Strategic Planning Program.



ON THE COVER
The Butler County Courthouse, which still serves the community, hosted the Nov. 1928 election and was dedicated the following May after a tornado damaged the previous building.



A survey mailed to 1,000 random city residents was part of the public outreach for the project.

The City of Poplar Bluff held six public meetings and sent out surveys to citizens to get feedback on the issues facing the community.

After feedback was provided with a survey in the summer of 2024, the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission, which is partnered with the City to update the Comprehensive Plan, hosted the public meetings. These were held in all five wards of the City at varying times and days. The public was invited through social media postings, media coverage and regular public meeting postings. The meetings were held on the following dates, times and locations in 2024:

- Monday, Oct. 21, noon at the Poplar Bluff Chamber;
- Thursday, Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. at O'Neal Elementary School;
- Tuesday, Oct. 29, Eugene Field Elementary School;
- Wednesday, Oct. 30, 10 a.m. at Twin Towers;
- Wednesday, Nov. 6, noon at Black River Coliseum;
- Thursday, Nov. 7, 6:30 p.m. at Wheatley School.

Each meeting opened with a rundown of what the Comprehensive Plan is and why the meetings were being held.

"Public input is crucial, with surveys and stakeholder meetings planned. Key elements include land use, infrastructure, transportation, public health, and economic growth," attendees were told.

The following review of the public meetings was partially created with artificial intelligence software through Otter.ai recordings.

PUBLIC MEETING 1 — Monday, Oct. 21 — Chamber

TOPICS DISCUSSED

• Annexation and Growth Management:

Annexation can occur voluntarily by property owners or through a city vote, which is more complex and costly.

The plan will consider both voluntary annexation and city expansion, balancing costs and benefits.

The city will manage growth in a responsible manner, considering both city and county areas.

The plan will also look at areas outside the city limits that are served by city utilities.

• Redevelopment and Infill Projects:

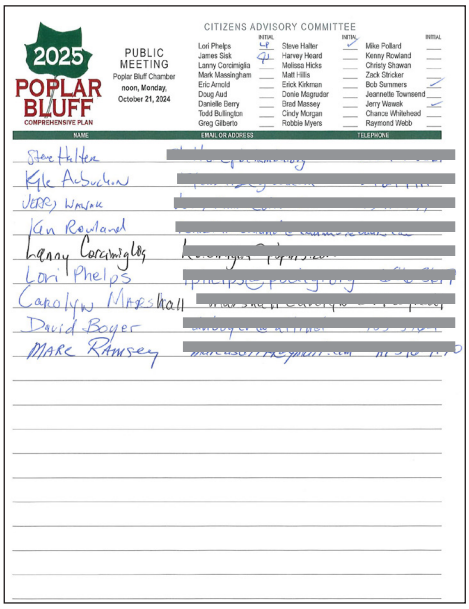
The plan will consider redevelopment areas and infill projects within the city limits.

The city will work with local partners like the Chamber and the County to manage growth.

The plan will include a to-do list of projects, prioritized based on community input and feasibility.

Grant opportunities will be explored to fund these projects, with a focus on good planning leading to good funding.

• Community Engagement:



The city encourages community members to provide input through surveys, emails, and in-person meetings.

Maps and sticky notes are available for community members to mark areas of concern or growth potential.

The city values community feedback and aims to incorporate it into the comprehensive plan.

QUESTIONS

Are there any areas outside the city limits that are served by city utilities?

Yes, and there are some areas inside city limits that are not served by city utilities.

Annexation, how does that work?

An individual with property along the city limits can apply to be annexed into the city. After completing the Voluntary Annexation Form, the City may have to buy out the property from a utility, depending on the location of the property.

QUOTE

"The city can grow, but it's going to be costly, and so how much is that? Is that cost beneficial to the city or any residents? That's the something that we're definitely looking at with the plan. ... What happens right outside the city (limits) affects the city itself. ... We definitely work with our local partners, like the Chamber and the County to help manage that growth in a responsible way."

PUBLIC MEETING 2 — Thursday, Oct. 24 — O'Neal School

TOPICS DISCUSSED

• The discussion touches on the challenges of planning, including the need for grant funding and the impact of inflation on project costs.

• The importance of community input and how surveys and public meetings help shape the plan.

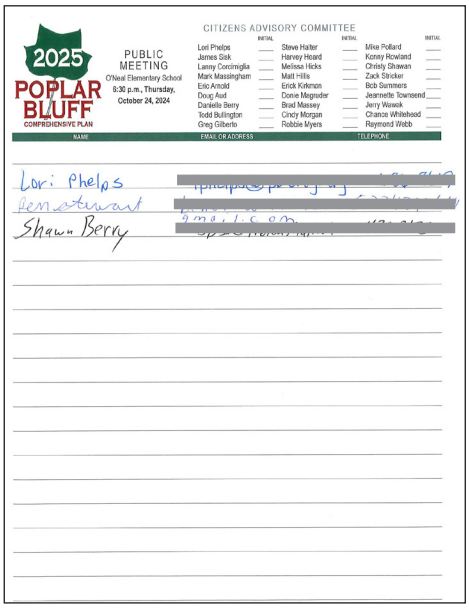
• The conversation includes ideas for improving transportation and infrastructure, such as creating more walking and biking paths.

• Participants discuss the potential for growth and development, including the importance of attracting new businesses and investments to the area.

• The conversation includes ideas for improving housing and retail options, as well as strategies for attracting more businesses and residents.

• Participants express interest in seeing more entertainment and retail options in the area, and Brian mentions the potential for attracting new businesses based on community feedback.

• The conversation includes ideas for improving traffic flow and reducing accidents, as well as strategies for attracting new businesses and residents. This includes a recent plan from MoDOT for a "road diet" on Pine Street/Business Highway 60.



• Participants express optimism about the future and the potential for growth and development in Poplar Bluff.

QUESTIONS

What can the City do about condemned houses?

The City Council just approved to use the last of the ARPA funds, which are connected to the COVID-19 recovery, to tear down and remove those targeted housing units in the City.

How would one help get a certain business to open in Poplar Bluff?

As a customer, when you use an establishment in another city that business will hopefully notice that they get a lot of business from people with our ZIP Code and that when they look to expand into another area that may help inform a decision. The City cannot just request a business to move here and it happens. It takes someone making an investment. The Comprehensive Plan is a way for the City to show investors Poplar Bluff's potential for growth.

QUOTE

"We've had a lot of comments in our survey that says we'd love to see more entertainment, like a bowling ally. And so (investors) are going to see that and (take notice)."

PUBLIC MEETING 3 — Tuesday, Oct. 29 — Eugene Field School

TOPICS DISCUSSED

• Challenges of annexation and the need to grow the city's physical boundaries:

The cost of utilities and infrastructure for new areas is a significant factor in annexation decisions. The goal is to create a plan that shows the benefits of joining the city, including cost savings and improved services.

• Transportation projects:

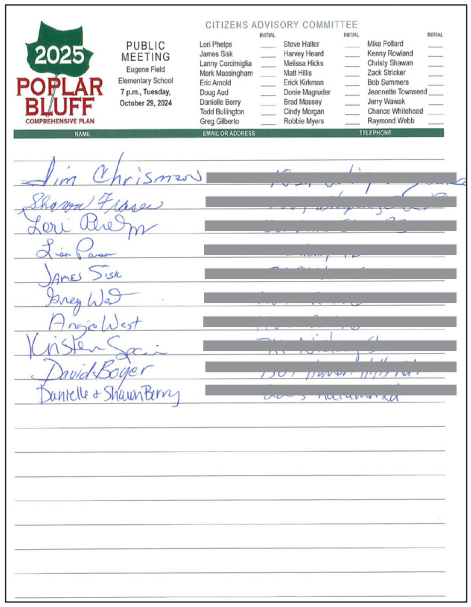
Challenges of projects, including the costs and execution of road improvements is discussed. The Plan aims to connect neighborhoods and commercial districts safely, whether by car, scooter, bicycle or by foot. The importance of good planning and funding for long-term infrastructure projects is emphasized.

• Community engagement and feedback:

Everyone is encouraged to take the online survey. The goal is to gather as much input as possible to create a comprehensive and effective plan. The City aims to address both immediate needs and long-term goals to improve the quality of life for residents.

• Homelessness and social issues:

A resident discusses the challenges of homelessness and the need for a plan to address it. The City Council has discussed strategies to help homeless individuals and address the root causes of homelessnesses.



• Education and workforce development

A resident highlights the need for better education and workforce development programs. The plan needs to address the skills gap and improve job opportunities for residents. The importance of education and training programs is emphasized.

QUESTIONS

What are you finding on your surveys?

People have a lot to say. We had over 1,000 people take the survey.

There's another street that often gets overlooked and that's Main Street... it's got to be replaced. It's not a matter of whether it's going to be replaced, it's when is it going to be replaced.

The bricks on Main Street are part of the historic designation for that area - being over 100 years old - so paving over them is one issue. They're also a speed deterrent, slowing drivers through a residential area. The hope is that Shelby Road might alleviate some of the traffic on Main, but it can be improved.

QUOTE

"In the 2008 Plan, everybody in town was like 'We want a mall' and now town's with malls can't get rid of them."

PUBLIC MEETING 4 — Wednesday, Oct. 30 — Twin Towers

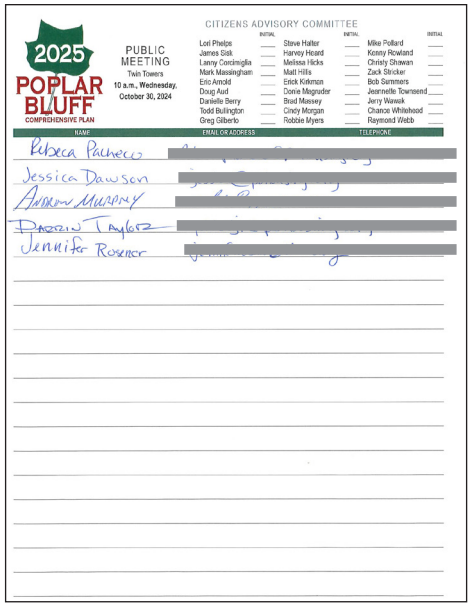
TOPICS DISCUSSED

• Housing and affordability issues:

A community member highlights the availability of affordable housing as the largest weakness identified in the survey. The City has seen a significant drop in housing units and new housing permits over the past decade. The city is looking at similar communities to see what strategies have worked to promote new housing. Demolishing derelict houses and infilling with affordable housing to revitalize neighborhoods and attract young families and workers is suggested. The City aims to demolish 20 to 25 more houses next year with additional funding.

• Transportation and public transit

The lack of public transit funding and the challenges faced by SMTS in providing bus service. The need for more reliable public transportation is great. A resident shares an example from Sedalia where a grassroots effort involving nonprofit organizations led to successful public transit implementation. The Health Department is working on an Active Transportation Plan for the city that could be included in the Comprehensive Plan. The plan aims to connect the city to be more walkable and bike-friendly, addressing the lack of sidewalks.



• Childcare and workforce development

The issue of inadequate childcare is addressed with the challenges of attracting and retaining childcare workers noted. The Plan should include goals for addressing childcare and workforce development with a focus on practical solutions.

• Broadband infrastructure

The challenges of getting providers of broadband to invest in rural areas is discussed.

QUESTIONS

Have you compared this community to similar communities with (public) transportation?

As part of the planning process, we will look at comparing communities in different topics and what works well for those other communities that we can learn from.

QUOTE

"We struggle for employees, right? That's what you hear at every meeting, we can't find anyone to work. The other side of that is you have to have some place affordable to live in order for us to draw in workers to our community. So I see that as workforce development - getting rid of the blight and affordable housing - as all the same parts of that same picture."

PUBLIC MEETING 5

Wednesday, Nov. 6

Coliseum

TOPICS DISCUSSED

• Transportation

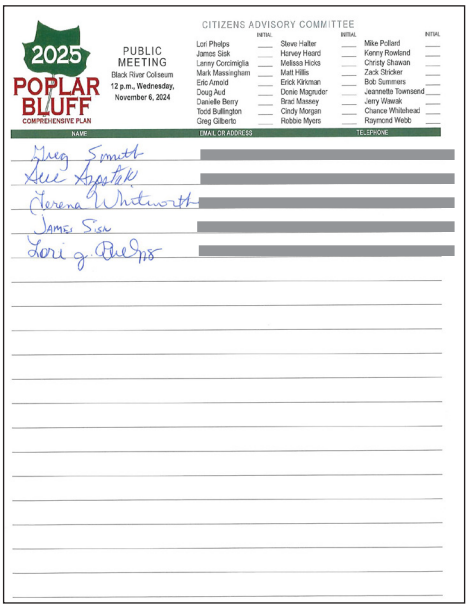
The north-south corridor traffic issues are discussed with the past plan targeting the creation of what would become Shelby Road. Historical plans all the way back to the 1960s show the long-term nature of these projects. The plan will look at specific projects, including sidewalks.

• Parks and recreation

The creation of a fishing pond and new park along Pike Creek and Leist Park are discussed with the challenges in securing funding. The focus for Parks and Recreation will be where to spend money. The City has received grants for other parks and the next big project is likely Leist Park. The importance of maintaining facilities like the Coliseum pool and Hillcrest is highlighted with discussions on partnerships with the school district.

• Community improvements

A resident shares concerns about the appearance and maintenance of certain areas, such as junkyards, and the need for regular mowing. The need for inclusive planning in downtown, including non-profit organizations like the Library and museums,



is emphasized. The growth on the west and north side of town is discussed. The balance between services and tax dollars, along with the Use Tax is brought up with a discussion on how to explain its benefits to citizens.

QUESTIONS

I'm interested in keeping the Hillcrest pool going, the Coliseum pool going, so anything that we can do to maintain these two pools?

There have been some conversations about what we can do to better those facilities and maybe how to partner with community stakeholders that use them. That's definitely something we're trying to keep open.

In front of the history museum and the art museum, it would be great if there were parking spaces marked so people can park better and more accurately.

We can check with the Street Department about adding striping there.

QUOTE

"A Comprehensive Plan is part wish list and part to-do list, balancing long-term goals with immediate needs. What would we like to see and what can we tackle and get accomplished."

PUBLIC MEETING 6

Thursday, Nov. 7

Wheatley School

TOPICS DISCUSSED

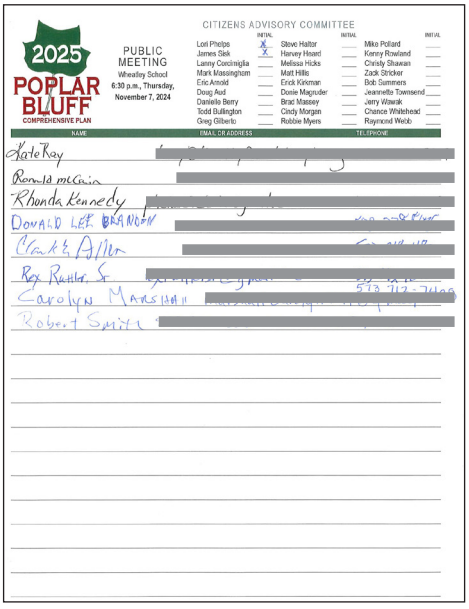
• Transportation and sidewalks

Resident raises concerns about the condition of sidewalks and the need for better public transportation options. There are challenges of maintaining sidewalks and the need for a program to help citizens do that. Many people believe that property owners should not be responsible for fixing sidewalks, as is the City's policy.

Resident discusses the need for expanded public transportation options. The current system has limited hours and coverage, which affect access to jobs and services. The services for specific needs, such as early morning or late-night rides, is discussed.

• Homelessness and housing issues

The growing homeless population and the need for solutions is discussed. A resident suggests looking at how other communities have addressed the issue, such as tiny homes or transitional shelters. People moving into the area for drug rehabilitation and becoming homeless after completing their program is an issue, a resident says.



Discussion includes the need for a balanced approach to address homelessness and the challenges of providing adequate housing.

• Planning and zoning challenges

Resident asks about the possibility of revisiting old zoning designations to better fit current needs. The discussion includes the importance of balancing residential and commercial areas and the need for flexible zoning. The goal is to create a plan that works for the community and addresses current and future needs.

• Animal control and public safety

A resident raises concern about loose dogs and the need for better animal control. The discussion includes the challenges of animal control and the need for more resources and enforcement.

• Stormwater and infrastructure issues

Stormwater management and flooding in certain areas is discussed. The need for better infrastructure to handle stormwater and prevent flooding is needed.

• Education and workforce development

The need for better adult education programs and the challenges of getting people to access existing resources is discussed. The importance of addressing the root causes of low education levels and providing accessible resources is emphasized.

2024 SURVEY

As part of the City of Poplar Bluff updating its Comprehensive Plan, which helps the community plan for the future, the City sent out surveys to citizens to get feedback on various related topics that will be discussed.

The Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission, which is partnering with the City on the project, collected the surveys and put together this report.

The Citizens Advisory Committee approved the survey questions and format (pictured at right).

Surveys were collected online using the website SurveyMonkey starting on June 14 while 1,000 surveys were directly mailed to residents, who were randomly selected, on June 26, 2024.

Surveys could be submitted by mail, email, dropped off at City Hall, or completed online by using the QR code. There were two surveys posted online, a shorter 15-question survey with the option of filling out a longer one that matches the mailed survey.

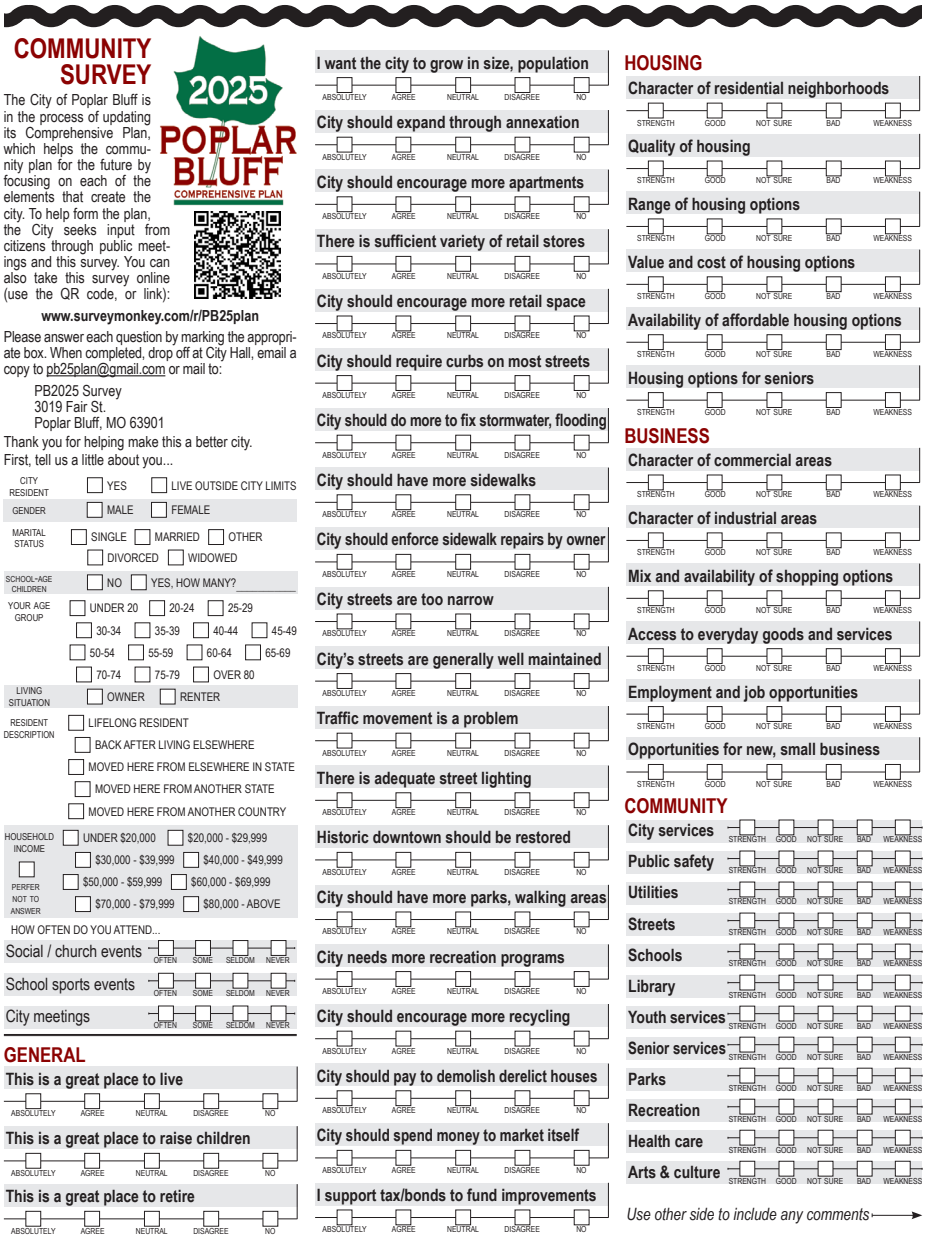
The surveys closed the first week of February 2025.

Residents had a lot to say, with over 2,000 comments total.

A number of questions were also featured from a survey conducted in 2007 and included again. Those responses are noted and compared with changes in percentages, if any.

The percentage of people who agreed that "This is a great place to live," "This is a great place to raise children," and, "This is a great place to retire" dropped about 16 to 20 percentage points from 2017. Also, fewer people agree that the city should grow (74% in 2007 to 63% now), or expand through annexation (51% then to 40% now).

More respondents agree that downtown should be restored (71% then to 79% now), and less agree that the city should pay to demolish derelict houses (79% then to 70% now). The percentage of those who agree the city should have more parks and trails jumped 17 percentage points (55% then to 72%) while fewer agree that traffic movements is a problem



COMMUNITY SURVEY

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Poplar Bluff is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan, which helps the community plan for the future by focusing on each of the elements that create the city. To help form the plan, the City seeks input from citizens through public meetings and this survey. You can also take this survey online (use the QR code, or link):

www.surveymonkey.com/r/PB25plan

Please answer each question by marking the appropriate box. When completed, drop off at City Hall, email a copy to pb25plan@gmail.com or mail to:

PB2025 Survey
3019 Fair St.
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901

Thank you for helping make this a better city.
First, tell us a little about you...

CITY RESIDENT: YES / LIVE OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS
GENDER: MALE / FEMALE
MARITAL STATUS: SINGLE / MARRIED / OTHER / DIVORCED / WIDOWED
SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN: NO / YES, HOW MANY?
YOUR AGE GROUP: UNDER 20 / 20-24 / 25-29 / 30-34 / 35-39 / 40-44 / 45-49 / 50-54 / 55-59 / 60-64 / 65-69 / 70-74 / 75-79 / OVER 80
LIVING SITUATION: OWNER / RENTER
RESIDENT DESCRIPTION: LIFELONG RESIDENT / BACK AFTER LIVING ELSEWHERE / MOVED HERE FROM ELSEWHERE IN STATE / MOVED HERE FROM ANOTHER STATE / MOVED HERE FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY
HOUSEHOLD INCOME: UNDER $20,000 / $20,000 - $29,999 / $30,000 - $39,999 / $40,000 - $49,999 / $50,000 - $59,999 / $60,000 - $69,999 / $70,000 - $79,999 / $80,000 - ABOVE / PERFER NOT TO ANSWER

HOW OFTEN DO YOU ATTEND... (OFTEN / SOME / SELDOM / NEVER)
Social / church events
School sports events
City meetings

GENERAL (ABSOLUTELY / AGREE / NEUTRAL / DISAGREE / NO)
This is a great place to live
This is a great place to raise children
This is a great place to retire
I want the city to grow in size, population
City should expand through annexation
City should encourage more apartments
There is sufficient variety of retail stores
City should encourage more retail space
City should require curbs on most streets
City should do more to fix stormwater, flooding
City should have more sidewalks
City should enforce sidewalk repairs by owner
City streets are too narrow
City's streets are generally well maintained
Traffic movement is a problem
There is adequate street lighting
Historic downtown should be restored
City should have more parks, walking areas
City needs more recreation programs
City should encourage more recycling
City should pay to demolish derelict houses
City should spend money to market itself
I support tax/bonds to fund improvements

HOUSING (STRENGTH / GOOD / NOT SURE / BAD / WEAKNESS)
Character of residential neighborhoods
Quality of housing
Range of housing options
Value and cost of housing options
Availability of affordable housing options
Housing options for seniors

BUSINESS
Character of commercial areas
Character of industrial areas
Mix and availability of shopping options
Access to everyday goods and services
Employment and job opportunities
Opportunities for new, small business

COMMUNITY
City services
Public safety
Utilities
Streets
Schools
Library
Youth services
Senior services
Parks
Recreation
Health care
Arts & culture

Use other side to include any comments

(61% then to 40% now). More agree there should be more sidewalks (69% then to 73% now).

Those were also among the most agreed upon topics in the surveys.

Respondents felt safe (23%) or very safe (41%) in their neighborhood but crime was the most mentioned topic of those responding to the question "What are Poplar Bluff's greatest weaknesses?"

Activities and entertainment were mentioned the most among answers to what things are needed the most. Entertainment was selected among 85% of respondents when asked "What types of businesses are lacking?" Many of the other businesses suggested featured family or kid-friendly activities while more recreation programs were strongly favored.

More parks, trails and sidewalks were also popular.

Housing was considered a weakness of the city along with the mix and availability of shopping options but access to everyday goods and services was overwhelmingly consider a strength.

The statement "I support tax/bonds to fund improvements" was evenly split with 49% agreeing, 29% neutral and 21% is agreeing.

2024 SURVEY

2,129 TOTAL Responses to all surveys

1,625 TOTAL Persons took survey

4% Percentage of county's population

ONLINE Long Surveys collected **504**

Completion rate: **85%**

Typical time spent: **7:00**

ONLINE Short surveys collected **1,594**

Completion rate: **68%**

Typical time spent: **2:25**

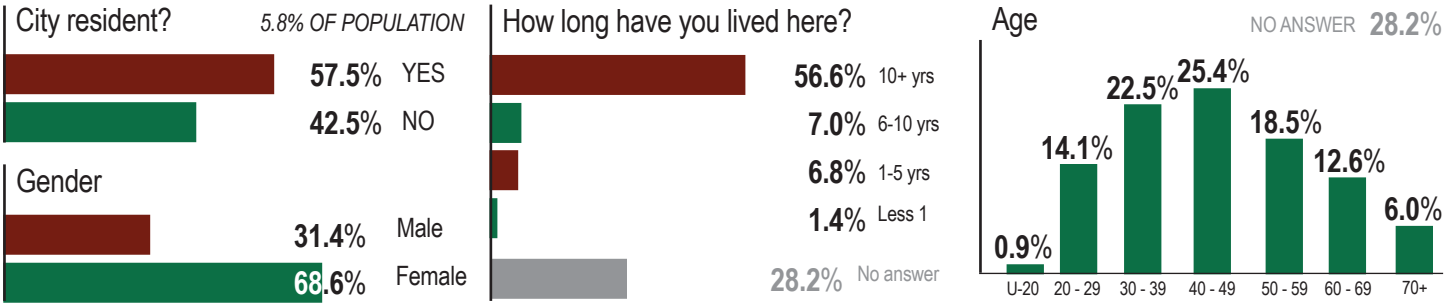
MAILED BACK Surveys collected* **31**

Returned, not completed: **66**

Return rate for 1,000 mailed: **3.1%**

**Respondents of mailed survey given option to fill out online*

DEMOGRAPHICS



Topics that generated the most agreement:

Percentage that absolutely agreed:

- Downtown should be restored..... **48.6%**
- More recreation programs needed.... **44.3%**
- Pay to demolish derelict houses..... **41.4%**
- More sidewalks needed..... **40.7%**
- Encourage more recycling..... **40.2%**
- More parks and walking trails..... **37.4%**

Percentage that agreed or absolutely agreed:

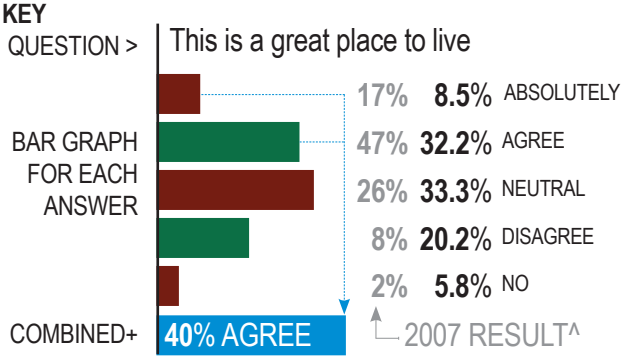
- More recreation programs needed.... **80.5%**
- Encourage more recycling..... **79.7%**
- Downtown should be restored..... **79.2%**
- Fix stormwater, flooding issues..... **78.2%**
- More sidewalks needed..... **73.0%**
- Encourage more retail stores..... **70.3%**

Comments:

In all, there were **2,220** comments provided among the three surveys.

Each comment was reviewed and given keywords to determine which topics were most popular. The full text of comments is included in this report starting on page 8.

RESULTS KEY



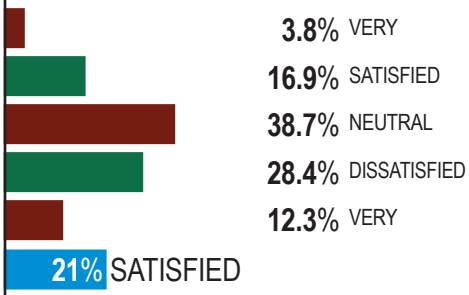
^ The **2007 survey** featured 44 questions answered by 1,577 residents - 76.4% of which lived in the city. Questions that were repeated during this survey will feature percentage from 2007 next to the results from this survey. One question that was not repeated, "**I support keeping the old brick streets**." In 2007, **32**% absolutely agreed to that statement with another **21**% agreeing while **20**% responded No, **12**% Disagreed and 14% were neutral.

COMBINED+ This number represents the percentages of "absolutely" and "agree" answers combined to determine a consensus on agreement to compare with other topics.

SHORT ONLINE SURVEY

The short survey featured 15 questions, including if the person lived within the city limits and, if not, state a reason why if they chose to do so. The number of city/non-city residents is included in the overall number along with questions about gender and age group. Nearly 57% of respondents said they have lived in Poplar Bluff for over 10 years with 7.0% having lived here for 6 to 10 years and 6.8% here for 1 to 5 years. Two questions - "What additional safety measures or initiatives would you like to see implemented?" and "Please share any additional thoughts, concerns or suggestions you have regarding the future of Poplar Bluff" - gave respondents a chance to give a short answer. Those responses are included in the final section.

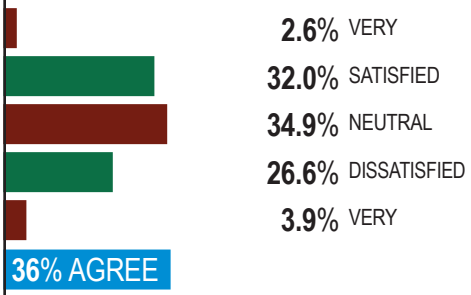
HOUSING



QUESTION

How satisfied are you with the current availability of housing options?

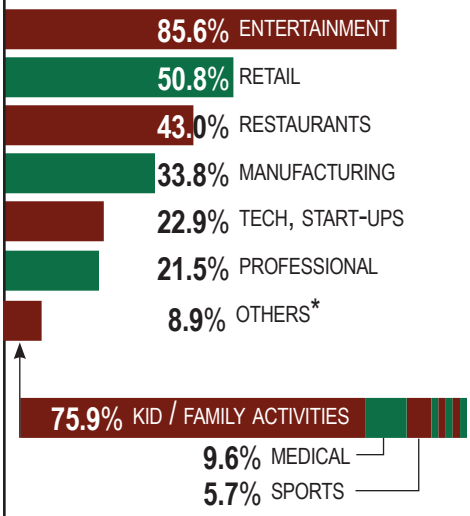
BUSINESS



QUESTION

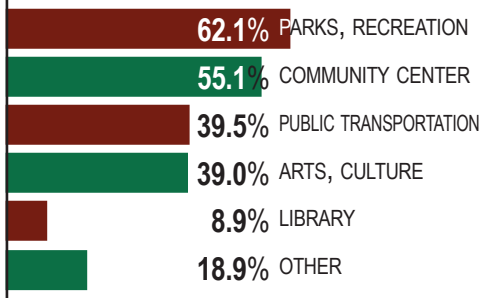
How would you rate the current state of businesses?

What types of businesses are lacking?



*See page XX for full list**

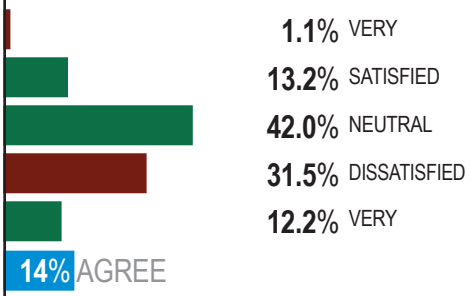
What amenities could be improved?



OTHERS

Bowling, activities, sidewalks, entertainment, community center, water park, activities for kids, splash pad, trade school, book store, events, big retail store, shopping, variety of restaurants, roads, sports, community theater, police...

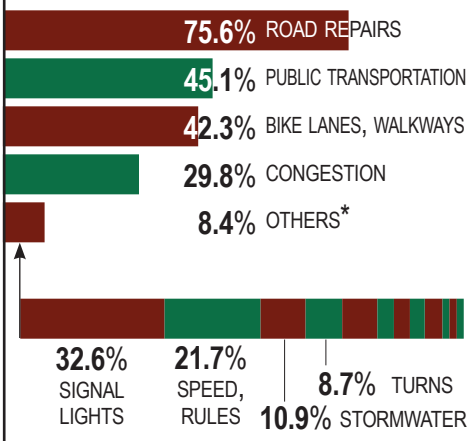
TRANSPORTATION



QUESTION

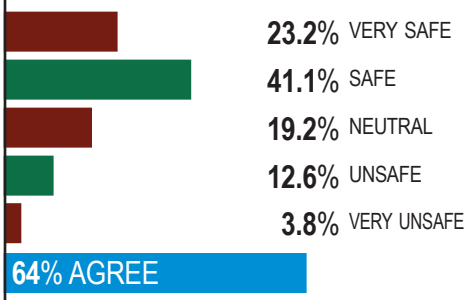
How satisfied are you with the current state of transportation infrastructure?

Transportation improvements needed?



*See page XX for full list**

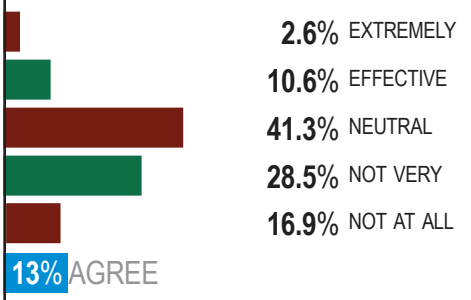
PUBLIC SAFETY



QUESTION

How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?

CODE ENFORCEMENT



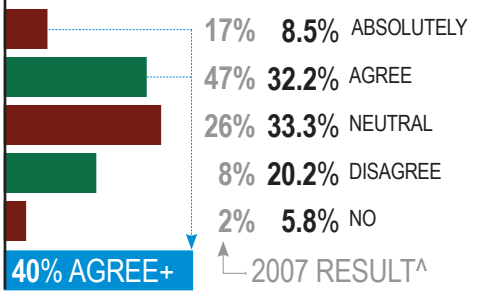
QUESTION

How would you rate the effectiveness of current code enforcement?

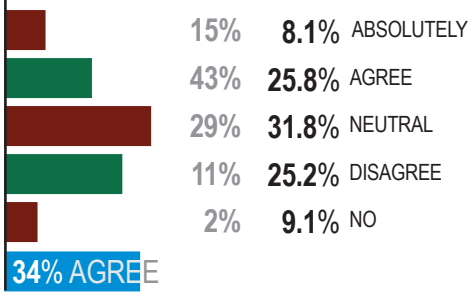
LONG ONLINE & MAILED SURVEYS

The long online featured 50 questions, including if the person lived within the city limits and, if not, state a reason why if they chose to do so. If they did not, it asked if they worked or shopped in Poplar Bluff before letting them continue. The mailed survey also featured 50 questions. The online survey gave respondents a chance to give short answers. Those responses are included in the final section.

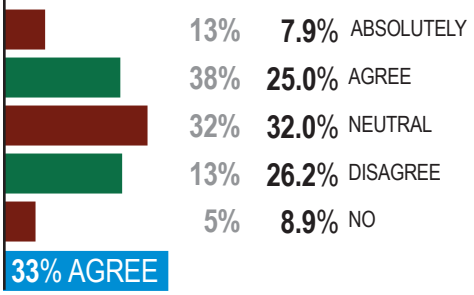
This is a great place to live



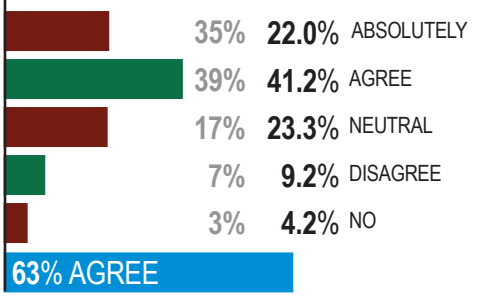
This is a great place to raise children



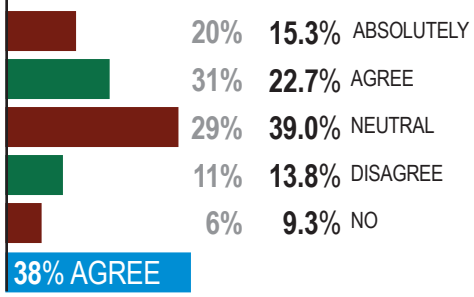
This is a great place to retire



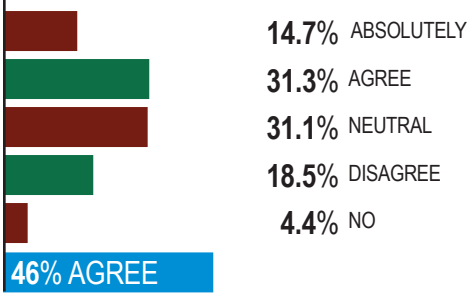
I want city to grow in size, population



City should expand through annexation

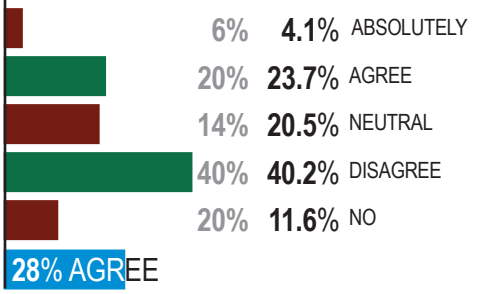


City should encourage more apartments

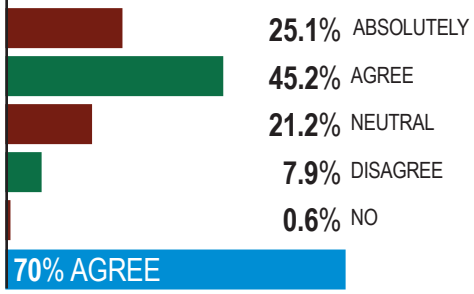


Residents still want to see the city grow, but they are more neutral as to how that should occur with less agreeing the city should expand through annexation from 2007. Encouraging more apartments as one possible way to increase the population size also has mixed feelings among residents.

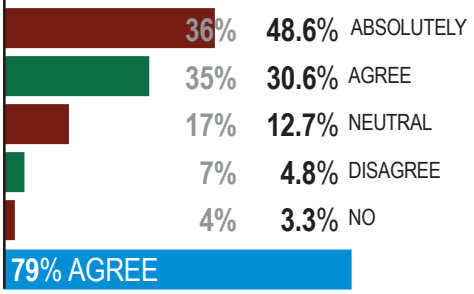
There is sufficient variety of retail stores



City should encourage more retail space



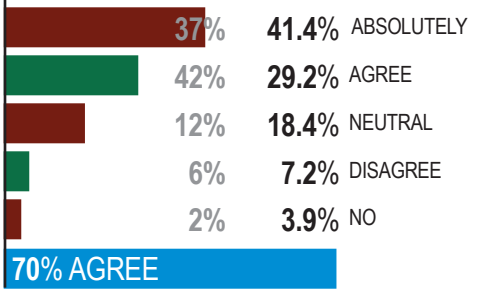
Historic downtown should be restored



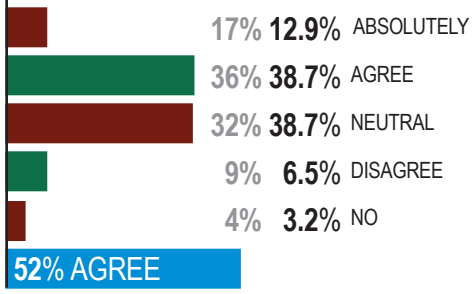
This question reflects a small movement since 2007 towards neutral and shows that residents still want more options for retail.

Still one of the most agreed upon questions, gained more support from 2007.

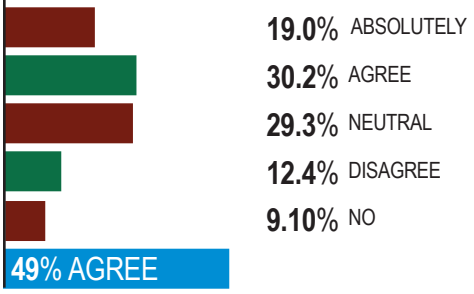
City should pay to demolish derelict houses



City should spend money to market itself



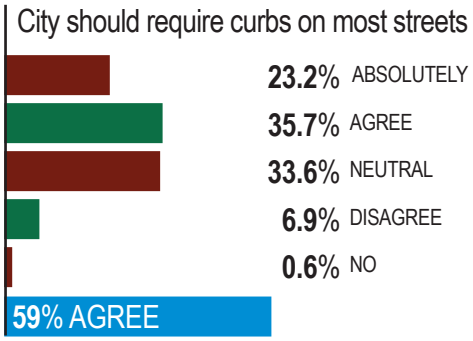
I support tax/bonds to fund improvements

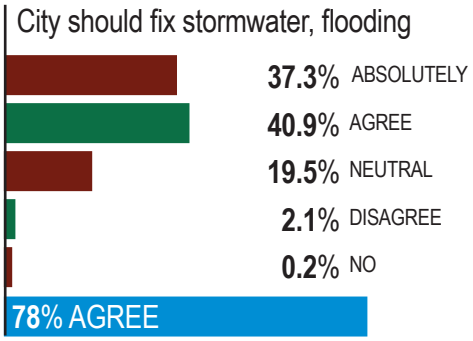


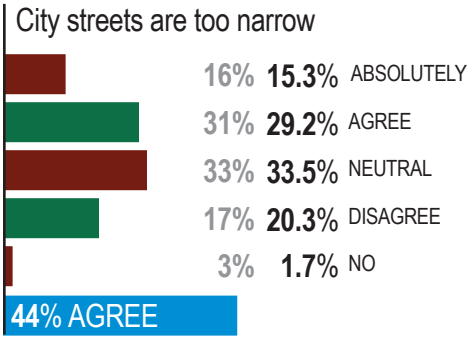
This question was only asked in the mailed survey.

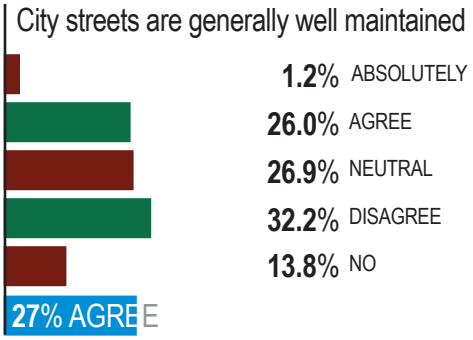
Pretty evenly split when looking at the percentage of those who agree.

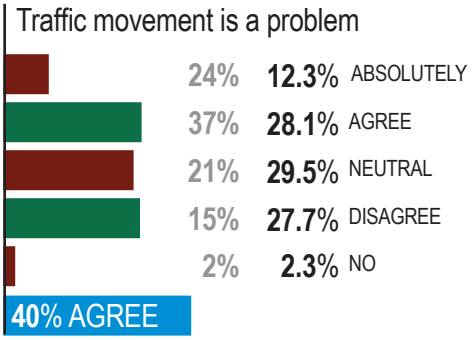
LONG ONLINE & MAILED SURVEYS

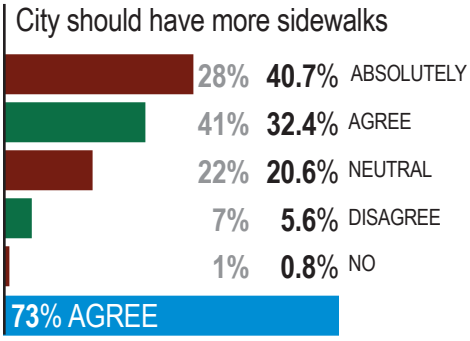


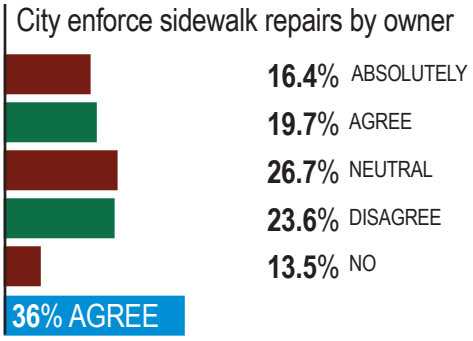


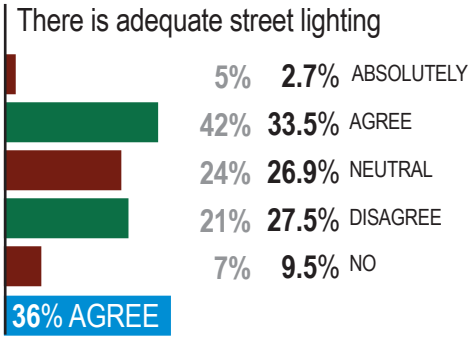


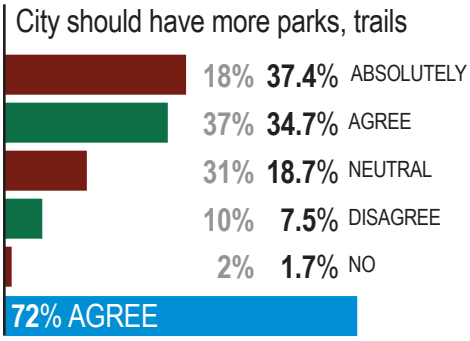


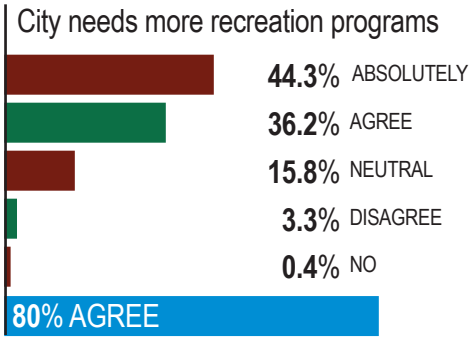


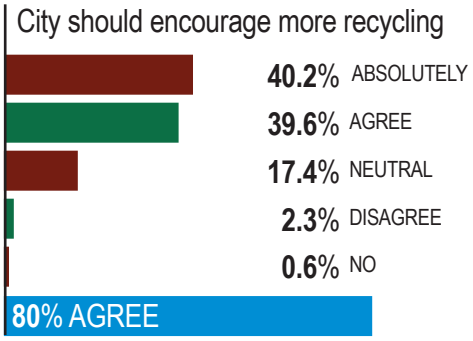


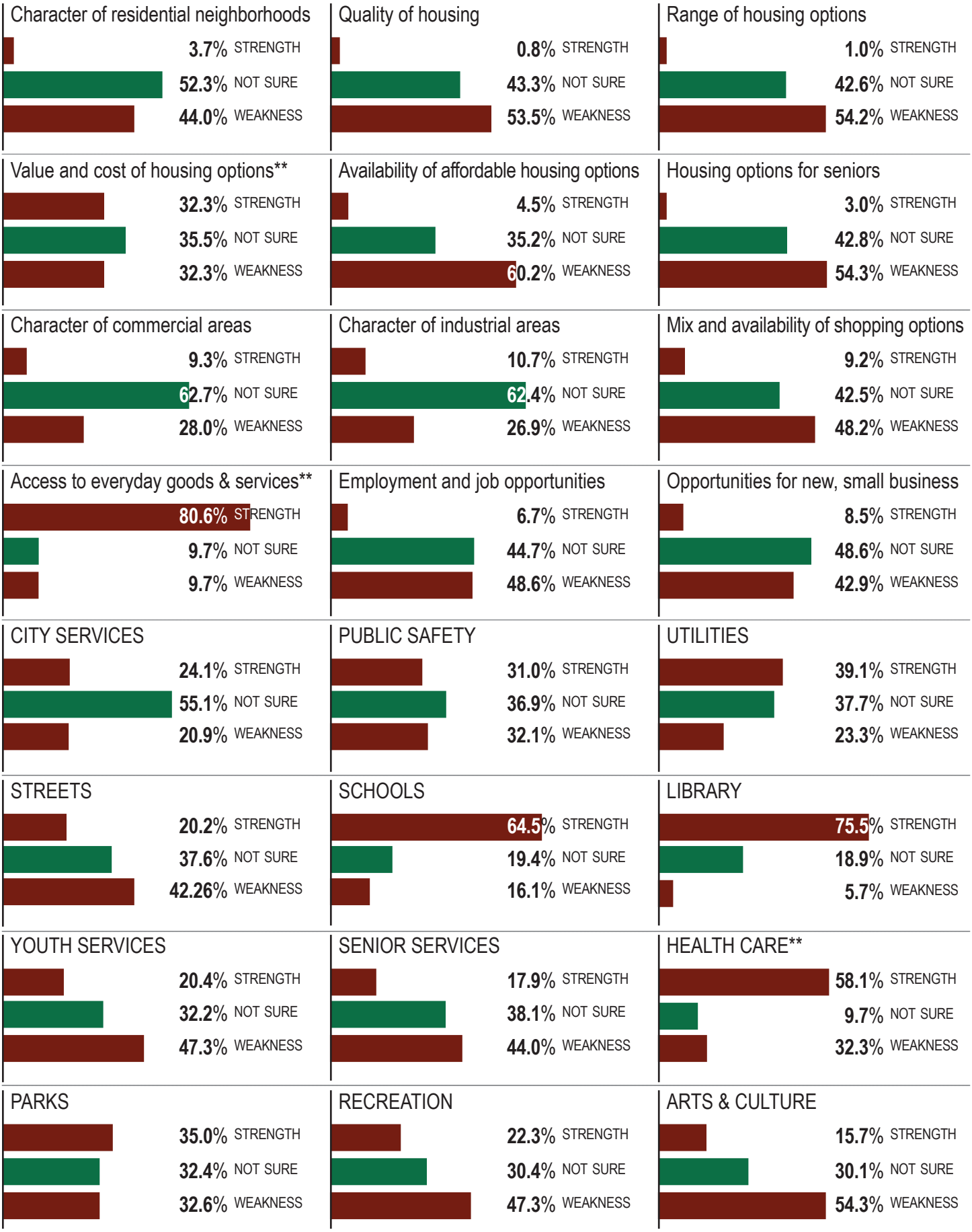












*** Question was only asked in the mailed survey.*

Short & Long Online Surveys:

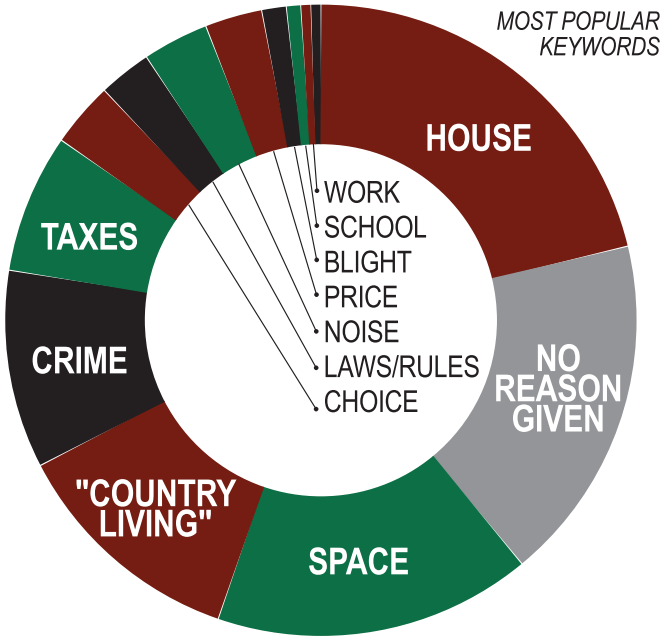
REASONS FOR LIVING OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS

Number of people who left comments:

609

Comments in order of submission

Because I like it in country, but still close enough to town when I need to go.
I live 1 mile outside of down as I inherited my parent's house.
We live in Butler County with Ozark Border and Pike Creek utilities. We like a less urban environment
Live in the county
My house is just outside of the city limits.
I live in the county.
Own land in county
I prefer county living. No city ordinances that do nothing for the resident.
To much tax / too much corruption
Love the country life
I live right outside city limits
I live right outside of the city limits.
I found a house I like outside city limits.
Crime, school district
Live one mile outside of limits off PP HWY
I like living just outside of city limits
I live in the county
Just outside city limits in county.
Moved 5 miles out of town 5 years ago lived in town for 25 years.
Never wanted to live in town
My subdivision is shortly outside limits
Prefer to live in county, cheaper taxes, space between neighbors
I live just outside of the city
We own property off of M Highway.
I live in the county, I hated living in town there was always gun shots.
"I live in Butler County"
Not enough acreage provided for horses
We live just outside in the county where we bought a home. I work in PB
County is cheaper
Just outside city limits
The city is notorious for crime. When we moved here we were told it's nickname is Little Chicago, and we wanted no part of that.
The taxes and ordinances
Don't like crowed houses, traffic & people
Moved
By choice
Husbands job has living restrictions
Taxes
Live Country life
Taxes are to high, city laws are to many, people are to many, I prefer the country.
Just outside of the line on Tower Road.
I will not pay city and county taxes
Subdivision in county out of limits
Built on property in county - more acreage
I cannot find a house
I prefer more space living in the county but close to city limits for amenities
Prefer to be more in the country
I prefer to live out of city limits
Too many laws and restrictions, smaller yard size, close neighbors, older homes that are not as efficient.
Because living within city limits 99 percent of the city is crime and gun violence. I lived within city limits prior and absolutely was disgusted in the law enforcement in my area.
We like living where houses are more spread out and we have more land.
I have property outside of the city limits and prefer to be more secluded.
Because I own property outside of town.
Prefer a country setting
Complex I live and rent from outside of city limits.
My house sits just outside the limits
I live in Butler County, but right outside of the city limits. I do however own several properties within city limits.
We wanted more space and property for our family. Taxes are also cheaper.
We prefer the country life.
I like living in the country.
Personal Choice
I don't want to live next to someone.
We live in the country because we prefer more space.
We enjoy being in the suburbs
I live just outside city limits
We like our country setting :)
Family farm in Broseley
No particular reason we are one block from being in city limits it was the house we liked
I live in another town.
Desire to have acreage with our home
Don't want to live in town.
Found my home and it was just outside city limits
Don't want extra taxes
More land in the county
More land
Live outside city limits in Rombauer.
I live in Oxly
My husband farms outside the city limits.
I enjoy living just outside of the city.
My house is just outside city limits, no particular reason.
I enjoy living in the country.
We don't like to live super close to neighbors.
Wanted more space so living on 40+ acres off Highway T.
I prefer to live outside of town.
Taxes too high, answers will be based on the 40+ years I did live in PB
"Our home is in the Poplar Bluff School District, but just barely out of the city limits."
Found a house to buy in Butler County
Wanted to own more acreage.
I live right outside of the city limits.
Because I don't like to live near other people
It was cheaper to find the house and land we wanted outside City Limits
I live in Qulin
Because it is where my husband had his home built. It is family property.
I found a house just outside the city.
Bought a house outside city limits close to where I was raised
My family home is in the county.
My family lives just outside the city limits. We chose this location for the ability to own enough property to not feel neighbors encroaching on privacy.
Just outside of city limits
I work here but own my home out of town
We found land in the county that we loved.



I am right on the outskirts.
I don't want to live in the city.
Our ideal neighborhood is located right outside city limits
I like living in the country.
Because your little map that shows the city limits does not include my house. Dumb question. You tell me why.
I was born and raised in PB and I work here, but I live in Greenville because my aging parents live in Greenville, MO, and I want to be close to them.
Country road, take me home!
own a house in the county
because my home is in the country
The property I wanted to live on was outside of the limits.
More land
I reside outside of city limits by choice. Mainly because my family was seeking acreage.
Country living
I bought a house in Batson Mini Farms so I am close to the city limits.
Batson Mini Farms is considered to be outside the city limits.
The taxes are cheaper to live outside the city limits.
I own land and a home outside the city limits. I do not want to ever live in the city and close to someone.
I enjoy having plenty of space away from neighbors and I don't feel safe living within the city.
I've always lived in the county.
Just outside the city limits.
Love country life
I live just outside the city
I live outside of the city limits
Have a house in butler county
Taxes and crime
I live on township line
My house is just outside of city limits
City is dangerous
Not a town person
I like having space and being away from people.
My choice is to live without close neighbors.
Live just outside city limits
I was raised in the country and that is what I prefer.
Looking for a house in or out side of city limits.
Like the privacy and freedom of the country.
God brought me to this house while looking for a new house &We wanted to live in the country.
I feel safer in the county than in city limits.
Live just outside city limits
A majority a neighborhoods within city limits are run down or have no HOA enforced restrictions to ensure the nice neighborhoods do not become rundown.
Why waste my hard earned money on taxes that don't do anything
I pastor in Wappapello; live in the parsonage
Live country with no neighbors close
Wanted enough acres for our dogs and family.
? No reason just live outside city limits
Moved
Would rather live just outside limits
I live right outside city limits but own property in city limits
I live in the county right outside of the city limits
Because I like the space of having a little bit of property. I like a little more privacy than you get in town. But, I like living close to town because errands aren't such a long drive, and I run my own business and I don't want to be far from the population.
Live right outside but work in city
I have always lived about 10 miles from city limits.
I live right outside the city in the county
We live a mile out right by heartland
We rent in the country outside of town. Address is technically Williamsville. But we work in Poplar Bluff and our kids attend school and daycare there.
We live in Dexter, but we come over often to eat. We were just there for my daughter's birthday.
We live about a mile outside city limits. Always have
I live in a family home that has been passed down generations.
I enjoy having space between me and my neighbors.
Moved to the county outside the city limits because we could not keep an unlicensed car in the city.
Just north of the city limits
Live on a farm.
Like the country

REASONS FOR LIVING OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS *Continued*

I moved a couple of miles out right outside of city limits 10 yrs ago due to decline in safe neighborhoods.
Nosy officials, crime, buying a home is outrageous , rent is not much better.
I live in the county
My house is technically just outside city limits
It's where my husband grew up
I have my own home elsewhere.
We want to live in the country. Also didn't want to pay city taxes.
I live on township line rd.
To crowded and very few decent neighborhoods.
The house I bought is outside the city limits, and I thought it would be best to utilize the house I bought instead of leaving it empty and living in Bacon Park.
Just outside of town
Family enjoys living in a country setting
prefer living in the country
My house is like 7 miles outside the city limits have less neighbors so close
Most places are unsafe to live.
College, I live in Jackson Mo currently but plan on moving back after.
I live in Butler county
Different school district
Own property outside city limits
not a city person
I grew up living out in the country and will continue to live in the county.
I live by airport in Butler County
Don't want to
It's quiet 2 miles outside the city limits.
bought right outside of limits
Work restrictions. Husband has to live within so many miles of his work office in Malden.
We moved here and we're not able to find a home with land. 8yrs ago
I did live in city limits but had to unexpectedly move in with family who resides in county.
I prefer a home with more land and rural environment.
"taxes and regulations for working on your own property"
Neighbors are too close in town
Because i perfer the country and its where i have lived all my life
no specific reason
Don't want to have neighbors that close to me.
Too many people. Expensive housing in safe neighborhoods.
Bought a house just out side city limits
Enjoy living in the country
I prefer to live just outside city limits to stay away from the drugs and crime as much as possible
I live in county, just outside of city limits
City taxes
I prefer no neighbors.
I live in the county
Not opposed to living in city limits, just where we found an affordable house.
Barely out of limits.
I prefer to live in the country
We live in county
Taxes
Like the country
Crime
Because we wanted land and privacy in a subdivision
Bought a home in 1991 out by the airport. Taxes are cheaper outside city limits.
Live right outside city limits
Close but not in it.
I like country living
Live in county
I live just outside the limits in the county. The area is nicer and there is more land.
We currently live in the county.
County
I prefer country life with fewer neighbors and more land.
Don't like having close neighbors
I live in the county
Family home
School district choice
I prefer the country setting.
No
The city limits such. The crime is high. There's too many abandoned houses and buildings.
You couldn't pay me to give up my privacy to live so close to other people.
Live in the country part of PB
I don't know I've lived in Rombauer the pass 13 years plus I don't want my kids going to the school in poplar bluff
Prefer the country, and higher taxes.
I live just outside off PP. There is more privacy outside the limits.
People
Taxes, people being on top of one another. Rather have land but even moving out of butler county due to taxes.
Drugs. Crime
Cheaper taxes
Prefer the country
to high of taxes, schools are not good
Just outside the limits.
We built outside of Poplar Bluff in area with new development.
I live in the county
I live just outside city limits on property that's been in my family for generations.
I live in the area that i grew up
County resident
Found a house outside City limits we liked. We share a property line with the City.
We live in Ellsinore
Home Business South of town
Just 3 minutes outside of city limits
Because.....I love the country.
I do not like living near thieves, druggies, and or high crime areas.
There is not a home we have found that we like for our family. We want a larger home with more bedrooms and bathrooms.
I have a business in the city but the city limits haven't been expanded to even include where I live which is off PP in a poplar neighborhood.
Didn't buy a house in town
No particular reason just prefer to live in the county
Land
My residence is located just outside of city limits because that's the only house we could buy when trying to move back to Missouri
Live outside city limits
I'm just outside the limit line.
I live on the edge of town.
In the county
When we moved here we found a gorgeous home in a wonderful subdivision that is outside of the city limits.
Prefer living in the county.
No particular reason just not in it.
Subdivision not in city limits
Because I live right outside of them?
Taxes
We live on our farm 9 miles outside of PB
I live right on the edge of County and City in between Township & Oak Grove
Wanted property not just a lot
I once lived in the city limits. We moved to the county due to drug dealing and violence in the neighborhood. (Foley Street)
Housing not available on area were looking at buying.
Wanted more acreage
Want to live with no neighbors close to my house
Just enjoy county
Area of town that I lived in had started to experience more crime.
In Butler County, outside city limits.
Crime and expense and taxes. I have PB address but live outside of town
Care for ill loved one.
Because I enjoy country life and county taxes are enough.
New construction homes are being built in county
Newer housing
Wanted a mostly wooded property by Nat Forest.
I live right on the edge of city limits. I would annex in if I could
Own a farm out in the country
No real reason- We bought/found a house outside the city limits that we fell in love with.
Live on farm.
I like the country life
I prefer the country
Location of home is county.
Enjoy having land
Have horses, need room for them.
Butler County
I was raised in the country and prefer more space and privacy
Prefer county vs city
Live where I grew up on land that has been in our family for generations.
I live 10 miles north of PB but worked in town before I retired. We attend church in PB and do most of our shopping there. We like living in the country.
Wanted to live outside of city ordinances and regulations.
We want acreage.
When moving I assumed the City had enforced ordinance regarding yards and vehicles as my spouse has a love of mechanics. I found out later that this was not necessarily true and we could have bought in city limits.
County resident
Because I prefer the county. Between taxes and being able to do what I would like to my property
I live within a mile of city limits.
I'm just a few minutes outside of town.
I love just outside of city limits within butler county
poor housing options with land
Like living in the country
Retired moved
i like to live in the country and the crime is terrible in city limits
Don't like being close to my neighbors
live just outside city limits
We like living in the country on the farm
Country people
We are only 1/4 mile outside the city.
Most newer housing is located outside of city limits
Lower taxes
Country living
Want to live in the country
Like country life
I needed to live closer to work
Transients
I like country setting. Live 4 miles outside city limits
We live outside of city limits because we like more space and fewer taxes.
Butler county
Built house just outside limits
We wanted to have some land and quiet
Just out of city limits
Lack of land to build on
I work in the City Limits but live in Van Buren. I like living in more rural less populated area.
We like the county side. Bigger yards for the kids to play, don't have to worry about main roads and kids getting in them, or the crazy people in this town
Prefer to live without close neighbors.
Prefer to live in the country
I live right outside city limits off 53 highway.
County residence
Most neighborhoods are run down and just prefer to live outside of city limits.
Safer, affordable housing just outside city limits
Taxes
My home has always been just out of the city.
Neighborhood is just beyond city limits.
It's where we found our house.
Live in county
Nothing caught my fancy when I bought my house.
My house is located one mile past the round-a-bout on Township Line Road
Don't care for neighbors. Deal with the public all day so I don't want to deal with them at my home.
Live right outside
For country living
There are very little nice neighborhoods. The city limits should be extended
We live outside of city limits with acreage.
"We live at edge of city
Just like the area "
Urban decay within the city limits. Too many derelict houses.
I live just outside of the city limits
We have property in the country, just big enough for our children and their families to live on and to have a small farm to enjoy.
Don't want to
Live in county
Higher taxe rates within City Limits and lack of accountable house.
All available housing under 200k is either in a non-family-friendly area of town or needs serious renovation to even move in.
I live right outside city limits in the county
"We prefer living in the country
It's quieter and safer"
Because I prefer the country
Family land
Prefer the county setting. Nothing against the city.
I live very close and work in Poplar Bluff.
Crime. Drug problems. Desire to have land
City Taxes and age of homes
City taxes, homes too close together, too many restrictions
Crime and drugs
I live right outside the city limits- that's where the house I liked was built.
1/4 mile from City Limits. More peaceful, no drug addicts close, reduced crime.
I live in butler county.
Moved out of Poplar Bluff to be closer to family
Like no noise
Not enough good neighborhoods and not much service from the city

REASONS FOR LIVING OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS *Continued*

I live in the country with 30 acres. And we have animals.
Liked the location
I prefer the county and county taxes
Live in county just out side city limits
Home and property options we prefer are not available in city limits.
Because tax
We wanted acreage, privacy, and scenery.
Live right outside city limits. Just like the property attached to it.
I prefer the country
Own land in county
Taxes
Prefer space. Family land.
Didn't want to
Property purchased wasn't in city limits
Taxes, ordinances
The house we liked was a mile outside the city
I prefer living in the country
I live 5 miles out. I lived in the city limits for 28 years and wanted out in the countryside
Just live on the outskirts.
Prefer the country.
Live just south of city limits, south of Briggs & Stratton.
Home is located near M Hwy and Township.
Due to City voting (use tax) and other issues with the city we decided to move out of city limits.
Like the outdoors and nature.
The city limits are very small. I live 1 mile outside city limits .
Live in the country
Why not?
I live just outside of city limits in the county. I prefer to live in the more rural area.
Don't like city living
Land
We prefer a less unbar setting
I am currently in the city but I am looking to move into a rural area if I can sell my house. This is because of all the drugs and homeless people.
My next home will be in the county because of crime.
Just the safer it is out here
Less congestion, no city ordinance or interference with what works for us.
Can have more peace.
Family has always lived in the area I live in
Crime, school district
Like my neighborhood
I live just outside the city
I don't like having neighbors.
Taxes
Tax rates, crime,
If i could i would. Homes are too expensive.
Crime taxes
Safer, less taxes,
Living restrictions of job
The county is nicer than within the limits, feels safer, and can get a bit more land.
I owned pit bulls when I bought my house. After 2010
Never been annexed
Safety and Security, residential options
Prefer the country
I like the benefits of living in the county, though it does have its disadvantages in the area of more help with pets and dumped pets. So many leave city limits, dump their pets, and there is no help for those poor helpless animals. I would love for our pound/animal control to be able to hold people who harm, hurt, and dump animals accountable and help more animals. I'd also love for our pound to obtain a no kill shelter status.
Family lives outside city limits, plus Poplar Bluff sucks
More land and better housing
The house we found was outside the city limits.
Due to violence and crime in city limits
More land, spread out houses
It's just outside the city limits, and that's the house I found that was affordable.
I do not want to live next to someone.
The property taxes and just the state of chaos that is Poplar Bluff leadership.
City regulations
That is just where I found a house I liked
I live in a different town.
Don't want to move
Where we have land
I live in Oxly
Prefer to live outside of town.
Because??
I want larger property and not be close to my neighbors.
"It is not a good place to live"
Family
My family home is in the county.
Space
Own a home outside of city
Neighborhood is just outside city limits
own property in county
Home was located outside of the city limits.
I am trying to move outside of the city limits where I can burn my trash and not be bothered by unneighborly neighbors. Unfortunately, most of the families land was sold. The land the remains families is not authorized to my personal use.
Love country life
Poplar Bluff is in Butler County. But I live outside the city limits because I don't want to worry about Code Enforcement
the best and most affordable house was on township line
People and drugs and break ins
My home is just outside city limits.
Wanted to not have as many restrictions on my home and animals
Crime. Drugs. Homeless.
I live in town but would prefer county. Have children getting close to teenage years and getting to jobs will be easier living in town. Thing about living in town constantly have things stolen from property and vehicles.
We did a voluntary annexation Some number of years back. We had to pay to have sewer brought to our property and still do not have water. But there was no problem in getting water and sewer to the new trailer park across the hill from us.
Currently living in. Want to move out so I don't have druggies walking through my front yard in what is supposed to be the good side of town.
I do not.
More space quietness, safety away from the bad activities that go on behind scenes
Location
No close neighbors
More property for our pets and outside activities
More freedom, to be able to have chickens.
Privacy and freedom
Familiarity, I've always lived in the same neighborhood/area.
I feel safer in the county.
More space and neighborhoods within city limits tend to be rundown/unsafe.
Better neighborhood
No close neighbors
Dogs and acres
Cheap house
Job
Live on a farm
Not as busy
Housing cost
Always have. I'm not a "town" person.
I live in a family home that has been passed down.
To live close to family
Peace and quiet. Can let my animals run for a bit with no one complaining or calling the cops. Can enjoy having my family over with no concerns of people saying they're to many vehicles.
It's a lot more peaceful and less crime.
Family home passed down is in the county
I have home elsewhere.
City taxes and wanted to live in the country
Would love to. Less peoplely
Don't feel safe
No specific reason, the house we chose just happens to be outside the limits
County life
I grew up in the county and prefer county living then city.
Less taxes and more peaceful.
No land
I had to move in unexpectedly with family who resides in the county.
I prefer a rural environment
No neighbors
It's safer and peaceful to raise my kid in
City limits has too much crime. Too many homeless people especially women laying on the ground. A women shelter is needed. One where you don't have to have kids to get into shelter.
To much theft and people wandering around early morning hours
No specific reason
It's quit and safe
When my husband retired we decided to move back here. But crime keep us from buying in city limits
Less neighbors
I prefer quite, no neighbors, and lower taxes.
I like to have space and property to be outside and I feel like it's safer
It's where we found an affordable house
There was no housing in city in our price range when we moved here.
Cheaper taxes and feel safer
Space, acreage
We wanted land and privacy in a subdivision setting
Lack of options, city restrictions
Quieter. More privacy. More land than a city lot
More land, better area.
Own farm
More land. Fewer neighbors
Rural choice
I prefer the safety of the country.
Quiet n safer neighborhoods
Would rather my kids go to a county school
Prefer country
Privacy
There was nothing available to rent within city limits
Crime
Taxes
Less crime and noise
Living in new development. Availability.
That is the first home we bought.
Family property in Carter County
We can not find a home large enough in the city limits of poplar bluff that fits our needs as a family.
This was the only house we could buy when trying to move back here from Jonesboro.
I wanted better for my kids.
Prefer living in the county.
No specific reason
Taxes
We prefer to live out in the county
Drugs, violence
Appropriate housing not available
This is a stupid question.
Visually nicer living areas, noisy in city limits
More land, lower taxes
Cheaper. Less crime. Less congestion. Better school district
Safer, quieter, more land, area to have livestock.
I prefer living in the country
Land
Taxes are too high in the city limits
I like the country
Family land
Freedom and cheaper. Also prefer to own more land.
Enjoy the country lifestyle
Lived here for 50 years
We want to move into the county where lots are bigger, houses are nicer, and there are fewer druggies roaming the streets. We are seeking a luxury home and availability is lacking in the entire area, but especially in the city.
I like living in the country
Prefer the quiet and being able to do whatever I want n my yard without city orders saying I can't
Country girl
More land private
Bigger yard, street isn't busy, no close neighbors
Prefer living in the country
I live right outside of city limits off 53 highway
Safer, more affordable housing
Places for animals and space to garden and away from all the hustle and bustle
I live on township which is barely outside the city. I feel safer living on the northern side of business 67.
It's where we found our house.
Neighborhood location
Live in county
Because it is quieter in the country
Liked the area
Better housing
We live on our farm
Nicer housing
Taxes
Always lived outside the city
None
Safer & more quiet
Crime and drug use.
Family
To have more space.
Safer for my child less noise more trees
Peaceful, no worries about drug addicts, reduced crime
Better neighborhoods.
Home and property options I prefer are not available within city limits.
Inherited land
Safer, more peaceful
I like it
Own land
Space. Family land.
Lower property taxes
My home is about a mile outside the city
I prefer living in the country
Just live on the outskirts.
Prefer the country.
Parent purchased house on 142, fixed it up. Lived there since 2011.
Small city limits. Also crime within the city limits.
I prefer the rural area.

Short Online Survey:

WHAT TYPES OF BUSINESSES ARE LACKING?

Comments in order of submission

We need a new senior/disabled housing built in another part of town. the waiting list is up to a year and the people who reside in the East side housing don't feel safe and have no access to a grocery store over here and there are no sidewalks

Downtown better managed with new businesses encouraged

Family friendly activity places

Bowling alley, museums, ghost tours, tourist attractions, photography studios, arcades.. on a different note, too many bars and smoke lounges and places for liquor and drugs

Hobby, leisure, kid activities

Children focused

Not corporations

Walmart

Daycares that can handle kids with disabilities

Family entertainment

Activities for kids/teens

A homeless shelter for non battered women

Things for kids to do

Family and children activities

Jobs for 15 year olds with work permit

Family attractions and centers

Some things for kids to enjoy and stay out the streets

Need lot more factory's and wages that are competitive

Medical

Need more things for kids and young adults that are safe to keep people out of the streets!

Places for kids, teens, and adults to go to other than bars. A lot of adults don't drink, but there's no fun places to hang out, better restaurants, less crime, better housing options that aren't so expensive

Need another post office branch. People who work on the northwest side are limited.

Activities for children

Small locally owned business

Decent paying jobs

Everything

Chick-fil-A

We need jobs that pay people to be able to improve the city with a healthy tax base and community.

Things for Families and Teens to do. Even couples. All ages venues/entertainment. More grocery, clothing, party supplies, costume supplies

wholesale store such as Sam's or Cosco

Chick-fil-A

More jobs for unemployed.

Additional grocery stores

It would be nice to have more options for high speed internet in the more rural areas of town. You only have a few options and they are extremely expensive!

ENTERTAINMENT FOR TEENS THAT IS SAFE

larger library, bookstores, pickle ball courts

Things for children and teenagers.

Wholesale place like Sam's or Costco

Sport facility

Sam's

Bookstore

Community support systems, child care, early child development, tutoring outside of Boys and Girls Club (like actual tutors), things for kids to do that are not so expensive

Chick-fil-A, Target, Book Store, Something Similar to a Dave & Busters. (Family Friendly Activities)

Activities for toddlers

Entertainment is a huge laps in our community. Not everyone enjoys hunting/river going.

Culver's; Gordon Food Service; Costco

Home maintenance and repair services

More specifically something for our youth to do, skate city and the jump park are the only options currently available for older youth to go to and hang out, drugs are a very prominent problem in our community and with that comes the children of the residents on the drugs and we need a safe space for children to go to and hang out and provide a positive impact on them so they don't follow in a cycle like their parents, our youth are bored

Specifically non-chain restaurants and larger stores

It would be nice to have an arcade and a bowling alley. Also, none of our locally owned coffee shops are open late or on Sundays.

Would love a SAM'S or COSTCO.... We need a Dry cleaner as well. More hotels to host larger regional events.

Fun attractions for children, teens and adults to do

Things for kids!!!!!!!!

Places for kids to do activities (splash pad, community center, etc...)

Water park

Government managed- Roads, litter, stray animals, homelessness, equality, addiction, crisis, environmental crisis, disaster planning and recovery, judgments, inappropriate personal conversations by staff of government offices in front of civilians.

More locally owned businesses

Which we had less fast food and actual restaurant

Things for kids that are reasonable

Locally owned businesses

We need more

Arts, crafts, imports, food variety, live music, cultural experiences

Kids community center

Not enough for youth education/entertainment

Children or family entertainment

Youth programs

Medical services

Need a Family Fun Center for Families to be able to do things together than have to travel to other towns to do things !!

Hospital

Grocery

Need more help

Child friendly activities

White Castle

Kids entertainment

Youth activity/entertainment

Housing options with cheaper cost. Need more restaurants like Chick-fil-A and others

Kid friendly/ family stuff to do

Adults-only spots like breweries or bars that don't suck

None. I feel this area has an excellent selection for restaurants, shopping and entertainment

Kid activities

Factories

Options for kids/teens/families like a bowling alley, community center that has activities like mini golf, inflatables, ski ball, ping pong and arcade games

Kid stuff

Would love even more toddler and children entertainment and safer parks

Family places

Kid places

Education

Any kind of entertainment for families and children, entertainment for teenagers

Healthcare specialists

Grocery store options

Need more for teenager to go.

Athletic, racquetball, rock climbing

Places for kids to be kids and not have to worry about drugs been displaced for them to easily pick up

Family oriented entertainment venues

Places geared toward children.

Amusement

Kid activities

Bowling, better skating ring

Things for families to do that are not expensive. No

Bluff has a RR

Activities for teens

Kids venues

Something for families

Too much restaurant in town we need a place we're we can bring our kids to play specially the teenagers so they won't get into drugs

Not sure

Chic-fil-A, Olive Garden

Attractions for kids/family. Every business opens, offers very little for a high price and closes a few months to a year later. Becoming another empty building in bluff.

e g., bowling alley, kid/teen friendly venues

Things for children to do

Things for kids and families to do in a safe and low cost environment

Family fun centers that are affordable and are properly maintained.

Need higher paying jobs

Grocery stores

Youth entertainment

Cost efficient family activities

Children's entertainment

Family center

More hospital/medical options

Something other than a bar

Indoor entertainment such as bowling, mini golf, etc.

Anything kid related

Book stores, places for teens to gather.

Trade schools

Too many restaurants and not enough family friendly options or date night option unless you go to a bar, movie, or dinner.

Education. Trade schools, small businesses, food besides pizza and Chinese

Positions that meet the needs of the education levels of the current workforce AND positions that would attract back talented community members who would ordinarily have to leave to find jobs

Entertainment for children

Family Practice MDs, Pediatricians, OB/GYNs

Grocery store with healthier options for prepared meals

Grocery store, and hobbies (bowling alley, tennis)

Child/family friendly entertainment spaces.

Things for kids

Mental health care

Apprenticeship and trade schools!! Community center for 13+ after school. Affordable things for families. More small business and less chain restaurants. How many pizza & aisan foods do we need?

Industrial/ Steel Mill types

Jobs that pay a significant living wage to help reduce the level of poverty in this town

Grocery store

Target

Kid friendly/family options of things to do

Larger variety of restaurants

Specifically entertainment for kids

Child and youth engagement

We need more places for kids mainly teens to keep them off the street

Need a Golden Corral and something other than Mexican/Chinese

Service industry stores such as restaurant equipment

Literally everything

Bowling! Miniature golf,

Medical specialties

Areas for children and teenager to play

We need a more variety of restaurants and retail.

We need a bowling alley

Skating ring is run down, no bowling alley, no slides at public pool like Dexter, no splash pad, no mini golf.. Town is boring movies or bar is all there is. Farmington & West Plains has more than PB. Also or college offers nursing & teaching same stuff for last 20 years they need to add radiology, dental, respiratory. Black River Tech & Mineral Area offers way more than TRC.

Good breakfast and sit down steak houses

Climbing Gym

Medical

Sam's club, Cracker Barrel

Child appropriate

Cooperate work opportunities

Higher end manufacturers

Things for teens

Family Practice Physicians and OB/GYNs

Nice restaurants

Things for families.

reliable repairman or handyman

Jack In The Box

Good paying jobs

Book Stores, and Whole Foods for those who can't eat meat for medical reasons

Family attractions. We lost a bowling alley and water park. The theater and skate rink are horribly dated

Family friendly venues

Family style restaurants

Because we would like new things to do for kids and have thing to do all time because if you don't know we usally have yo drive about 30 mins just to do anything

Family Fun/Activities for Children

Healthy dining options

Grocery store

More places for kids/teens to hang out

Things for youth and young people which falls under entertainment as well, but things specifically geared toward youth.

Lodging

Short Online Survey:

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS MOST NEEDED?

Number of people who left comments:

99

Comments in order of submission

Affordability

Airport transportation

fix the stop lights in town. They go from green to yellow in like 5 seconds causing wrecks. Some of the turn signal lights takes forever to turn green. The stop light between Sterling Bank and Super 8 Motel going straight towards American Superstore only lets like 4 or 5 cars go thru at a time causing back up traffic. Neither one of the stop lights by Huck's are in sync with each other when going straight. I have read many complaints on the stop light situation on Poplar Bluff Facebook websites.

sidewalks on the East side t there are seniors stranded without sidewalks and no grocery store, we are living over here in a food desert

enforcement of traffic laws

Sidewalks

Public education on proper walking where there are no sidewalks and proper bike riding

Walkways are very lacking!! It is so dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists in our city

Sheby Road is terrible

sidewalks

Greenways similar to the one along Shelby road.

The stop lights by Hucks. left turn lanes need their own signals because people don't know how to yield

The traffic light on Crestwood/Westwood needs improved. The light takes way too long during the mornings

City streets are falling apart!!

Were red

Sunset Blvd is the worst road In town

Enforcement of traffic laws!

The traffic lights suck. Half of them stay green for 5 seconds

Everything

More turn lanes in congested areas on 67, also more rt hand turn lanes on side streets where turning left onto 67 is difficult

Bury the sewers

More public transportation options and ease of access.

Draining throughout the community. Ditches cleaned.

Stoplight timing

The roads here are TERRIBLE. I've lived in 5 different towns in MO and this one has the worst roads I've ever driven on.

Beatification

Extra traffic light by 10-Box

Bus stops are needed.

our stoplights are not green long enough, only 3-4 cars get through at a time leading to congestion and people are running red lights more

Barron Road has NO walkway or drainage. Help the people who drive in the rain and those who need to walk!

Sidewalks

WALKABLE SIDEWALKS and more crosswalks

There needs to be side walks down 67

Sidewalk improvement

Public works litter management and recycling.

Damn stop lights! They got changed before the eclipse and it's horrible

I-57 completed - industrial park bypass to 60 east of town

I had to pay to have my sewer line fixed all the way to the main. The main runs under the middle of the street which is sinking. I shouldn't have had to pay for a problem under yours street. Luckily the plumber lined the pipe under the street so it didn't need to be dug up. I still cost a fortune. I should have only had to pay for what's was on my property!!!!!!

Speed reduction on Barron road

airline or scheduled charter flights from the airport to a hub.

Lyft or Uber

The sidewalks haven't been maintained in years. While, the few that have been redone are fantastic, that is such a miniscule number compared to the rest of the city. There aren't proper walkways at the majority of the intersections, leaving many individuals and families no choice but to walk in the roadways. As busy as this town is, not to mention the amount of people hit by cars, it is a MUST that this is addressed more swiftly (within a reasonable time frame).

Better areas for folks who uss asstive devices (wheelchairs , scooters and walkers) to navigate city areas safely.

Fix our city streets instead of funding a road for bricks off-road park that's gonna be ruined in a year because of all the overweight trucks and trailers!!

Our town have very few large roads to go through town north to south and east to west. So many of the smaller roads are over used and not marked or wide enough.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are a much needed improvement as well as traffic control

Pave the damn brick roads!!!

East and south side need walkways/ bike paths

Shelby road is awful. And I wish we had sidewalks on Barron.

I'm not sure about public transportation because I don't use it but we definitely have tons of pedestrians so we need more sidewalks and bike lanes!!!

Sidewalks!!!!!

Have roads here and fix roads

We need more stoplights on Shelby Rd. People drive way too fast. It is difficult to make a left turn onto Shelby from the college. Lights would slow down the traffic.

PLEASE FIX THE NECESSARY ROADS, THE ROADS YOU THINK TO YOURSELF "THIS IS ROUGH".

Sidewalks should be available on at least on side of Harper Street. Several young middle schoolers walk to school on the street due to lack of usable sidewalk.

Handicap accessible crosswalks, improved sidewalks

Lanes on highway need repainted (paint glow in dark paint so you can see them in dark) people walking in streets and not paying attention to traffic. Especially by liquor stores. Need some thing done about people begging for money by Walmart, Huck's, Steak 'n Shake and other places.

A metered taxi service

Patrolled more

Roads are horrible

Reset the traffic lights to how they were before the eclipse

Main Street is the worst road in poplar bluff.

Drivers education

Right hand turn lanes, drivers ed

Sidewalks on Westwood & Barron

I believe roadways have been the biggest improvement in PB over the last 10 years.

PB has a good infrastructure as far as getting around unlike other cities. There are several different routes when getting to and from location.

Speed enforcement

Right hand turn lanes! Pine st is too narrow. Stop adding to Westwood it's overcrowded.

Better roads

Our street dept is excellent -Moose Lawson does a great job

Shelby road needs a turn lane there where the businesses and restaurants are located.

traffic lights put back like they were before eclipse

As many people as walk up and down Westwood Boulevard we NEED Yeah sidewalks

Flashing yellow left turn signals instead of so many red lights, especially on Westwood into neighborhoods

Lanes need added between Sunset/N. Westwood and PP/N Westwood, super congested

Traffic cameras. Crosswalks

Shelby road

N/a

A town should not have gravel streets in this day and time.

Maybe more public transportation for elderly

Enforcement of traffic laws—running stop signs

Speed reduction on Barron rd

More money spent on roads

North 67 and Shelby

Storm drainage systems. certain roads flood easily

Safer roads

The roads in this town are abysmal and it's ridiculous we have to have our cars up to code to drive but the roads don't have to be drivable.

No soliciting signs at major city stop lights

Looking forward to I-57

Paving roads within the city limits.

Lights on side streets take too long to change to green and don't stay green long enough. Started a week or so before eclipse.

Stoplights. Especially at 53/Shelby intersection. Light only allows 1 semi through before changing (heading towards Shelby Rd from 53)

Pave Main Street

Short Online Survey:

ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES OR INITIATIVES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IMPLEMENTED?

Number of people who left comments:

445

Comments in order of submission

Cops need to stick to serving the community. And mind their own business until needed.

Take care of all these abandoned houses where druggies and criminals flop. Trim the trees regularly in neighborhoods. Create a better animal control for all the stray animals.

Stop signs installed at every road cross at every direction, ai four way stops. Better side walks and roads. Transportation available for all. Street lights properly maintenanced.

More lights in parking lots such as groceries stores, hospital, restaurants etc

Sidewalks

We need a place for the homeless women to go. The only ones that can go to Haven House is battered women. What about the women who are not battered but are homeless.

we need a warming and cooling center set up for the homeless. the bank the school owns downtown would work we already own it

Slow down traffic on Barron road

1) encouragement of the renovation of downtown, businesses and nice apartments. 2) enforcement of traffic laws. 3) better maintenance of streets in older part of town 4) getting rid of nuisance businesses (and you know which ones)

More sidewalks, better lighting. Homeless shelters,

Code enforcement and more rental property

A park with a gated area for toddlers to play freely

More police officers

We need more sidewalks and greenways

Tax incentives for downtown improvements

My neighborhood (behind Coliseum) has homeless people and drug addicts walking the streets. My house and property has been robbed several times since I bought the house. There are abandoned houses not far from my house. There are houses being rented out that are not fit for dogs. The other sides of town (not far from me) have houses that look as if they are falling down. I can't drive anywhere south of sunset without seeing homeless people or rundown houses.

ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES OR INITIATIVES THAT ARE NEEDED *Continued*

"Sidewalk repair program; Additional sidewalks; Additional recreational paths"

Public education and more police patrolling

Stronger Code Enforcement, sidewalk repairs in neighborhoods and pedestrian / bikeways on Westwood Blvd.

Maybe a different place to shop and some where for kids to play in stead of doing drugs at skate city

A better control of who is in control of and holding positions of power in this town.

Stop being afraid to prosecute the obvious and repeat offender.

Boarded up houses make squatters a good home. I've lived here 26 years and some houses were boarded up when I moved here and remain boarded up to this day. Need to be demolished.

Actually holding people accountable for their actions.

Code enforcement to ACTUALLY enforce their tickets and fines on someone's house instead of dilly dallying and acting like it doesn't matter. Take 25## Shady Lane for example, the house is hoarded to the ceiling, and falling apart at the seems in a relatively nice neighborhood. Someone needs to do something about it. I would also like to see animal control do their job on cleaning up the streets of stray animals and opening up two additional NO KILL shelters to house them.

More street lighting

Well lit sidewalks

More sidewalks from residential areas to parks. We have a good start.

Sidewalks along the entirety of Westwood Blvd

Sidewalks!!!

More public intoxicated people taken to jail. The people high on meth are everywhere, it's ridiculous.

Lighted bike paths and places to walk

Pay the police and other first responders more.

we need a city bus that runs until 6 pm and we need to add one more city bus so there are 3 running at a time instead of only 2

Gravel roads fixed and potholes fixed

Prosecute crime. Can't improve the safety or appearance of neighborhoods if the population of the area cares more about drugs/crime than their place of living

Would like to see something done to eliminate all the stealing allowed to run rampant in this city. There is no penalty/accountability when they are caught. It's like a catch and release game to them. Make them work like the rest of us. There are too many that have made homelessness and thievery a career choice.

Street lights in the neighborhood all need to be working

Neighborhood watches

The lack of public transportation causes safety issues for many people.

Sidewalk network repaired and expanded so people aren't forced to walk in the street. North side has almost no sidewalks.

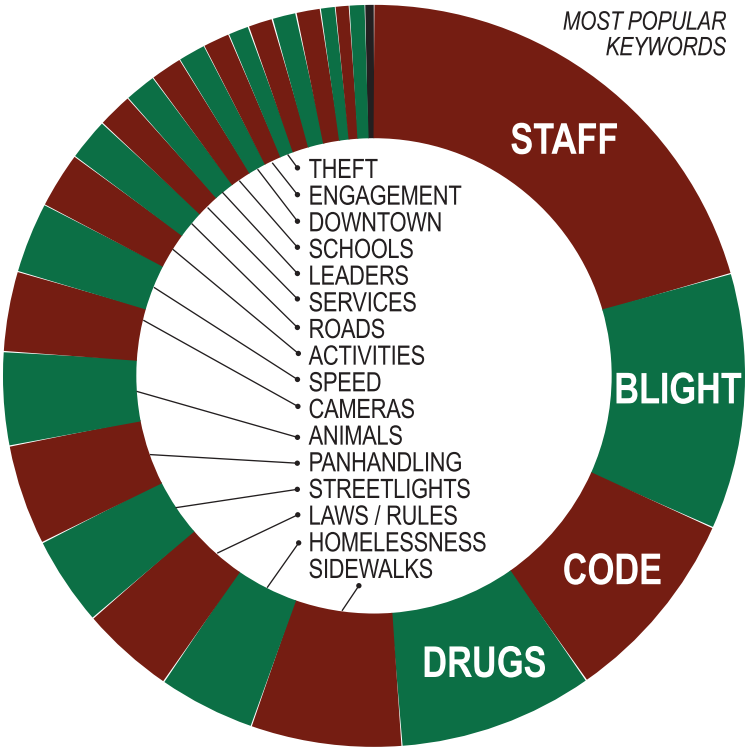
Bike lane or sidewalk to get pedestrians off Westwood Blvd north to south of town. Also on hwy 53 & Township line road

Cluttered sites need to be cleaned

Widen Highway W.

I think the city would highly benefit from red light cameras, car running red lights is a huge issue in this town

Stray animals being picked up and kept off the streets, get rid of dilapidated houses ,make pan handling illegal and get trash off the streets,-yards,businesses and ditches.



More Police training

"Sidewalks on Barron Road Code enforcement office not sending out notices because a neighbor calls in on everyone in our neighborhood. "

Making PB more fun!!

"A show of visible force would help a ton And enforcement of laws already on the books"

The speeding on Shelby Road is out of control, the minors that drive UTVs on the roadways is going to end up in tragedy.

More patrol in high crime areas, more community service served to clean up the town

Drainage ditches on north Main Street maintained.

Parks need to be monitored.

More people being ticketed for driving dangerous, more patrol,

Community watch groups

Speed control on side streets like south 11th street

"Banning panhandling!"

Remove beggers from intersections. Traffic and individual safety hazard

Gun safety, drug usage safety, more walkable sidewalks on Westwood Blvd, patrolling more.

More patrol on Barron Road. It's NASCAR 500 after 9pm every single night

They are afraid to be pro active in their job! Need to be backed by city council and police chief!

I'd like to see the police crack down on expired temp tags. That is lost revenue

Cleaning up the homes that are beyond repair and stray animals that are causing damage and destruction in neighborhoods

I would like to see the police force actually enforce the laws. It is dangerous to drive in this town, and the police do nothing. Cars speeding down Westwood and side streets, having to sit at a green light while vehicles run the red lights, all while an officer in a police vehicle sits beside you in traffic and does nothing.

More police officers

Sidewalks to keep people out of the middle of the road. Designated school bus stops that are a SAFE area for our kids to load and unload from buses. Our students are sitting on the corners of the roads with no shoulder or sidewalks. They are at risk of being hit by drivers, buses, and harassed/intimidated by roaming drug users and stray animals. Animal control could patrol neighborhoods and address the stray cat/dog problem. Dogs constantly chase, bark, and get into peoples trash. The stray cats constantly are reproducing and carry fleas along with other diseases just like the dogs do. When the police are called to check out anything on the south side it takes so long for them to arrive and address the situation that most of the time the disruption has moved locations. The noise ordinance is absolutely not enforced, neither is the leash law for animals. The drug users, stray animals, and loiterers have been given the opportunity to take control of the entire town making local parks and even front yards unsafe for our kids. Parents are left with little to no option other than to keep their kids indoors in order to protect them resulting in electronic addiction, vitamin deficiencies, behavioral issues and mental health disorders.

"Reduction of panhandlers/homeless; Some form of activity for kids to keep them off the streets "

More patrol units out and about not waiting for traffic stops patrol the areas make your presence known

Schools be more safer

More police patrol in every neighborhood especially the East side and south side, but every neighborhood is important

More officers, neighborhood patrol, stronger punishments

Too many squatters that are allowed to remain in homes that don't have electricity or water and they are not removed even though that's supposedly 'illegal.' They deal drugs and attract that element to hang around the homes, making it unsafe for children and others.

Everyone have guns

Additional lighting downtown. Crackdown on people walking in the streets at night, rather than on the sidewalk.

Code enforcement should be proactive vs complaint based. They should have a receptionist to take calls. A panel of officers, citizens, council members, and judges should be appointed to review how complaints are/ are not being handled. The city looks horrible this year. Nothing is being mowed. PB needs to follow its own code in maintaining common grounds. Abandoned houses, overgrown lots, and other eyesores need to be take care of. Street beggars should be cited for littering whenever possible. We should have a law that they have to be on a sidewalk, not in street medians (as they are doing in Manchester). The city needs to pressure PBRMC from releasing mental health patients without local family onto our streets. If they don't have local family, then we need to find some grant money to ship them to a shelter where their closest family resides. This system is just blowing up our homeless population, drug and crime issues.

More lights, more patrol's, and more public options for transportation that are not nasty. Get people out of every intersection. Put up signs don't feed the bears!

Deter crime

Proactive Policing and investment in advanced law enforcement capabilities. Current Law enforcement leadership, has reduced department capabilities, reduced body armor protection level, reduced training budget availability to non administrative officers, and miss managed funding for proper employee investment/retention, and has created a dismal environment that continues to run off officers.

Less admin and more police officers. Police officers walking neighborhoods. Police officers conducting traffic stops. Better street lights. Roads need paved. More code enforcement officers. More animal control officers. More street employees. More firemen. More city employees in literally every department EXCEPT the Admin/ Detective division of the police department.

PBPD gets issues more funding for more officers.

codes being enforced on abandoned properties, safe walkways & sidewalks & bikelanes, & more public transport and safe stops

Fix the stoplights so there is better flow of traffic through town.

Landlords are responsible for mowing and maintenance of property they own. If vacate for a period of time they are fined.

A boost in budget for more emergency services such as police and fire

It's well known that PB has a drug issue and it seems we are starting to develop more of a homeless and poverty issue. More school options, better programs to help those struggling with addiction, better paying jobs and affordable housing options. Cleaning up neighborhoods and having more community help, things for families, children, teens, and young adults to do for entertainment to keep them from seeking entertainment in less desirable ways. We're seeing more burglaries and shootings in our area. More issues with groups coming in and making women, girls, mom, and daughters uncomfortable and fearing for their safety. Maybe more neighborhood cameras cctv

Harsher punishment for theft, breaking in, and drug use.

Remove druggies …

Address drugs, crime, homeless, family services, issues affecting children in our community: abuse, neglect, truancy, etc.

ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES OR INITIATIVES THAT ARE NEEDED *Continued*

Getting rid of run down abandon buildings and set up either parks or new businesses

An initiative to get city funding for projects that would improve PB, for example, a group trying to create a cultural attraction.

More police staff and presence in the community

Our officers and emergency responders need more help. They are all short-staffed. If more staff were available, the officers could be more visible and available.

More city officers on Barron Road

Holding people accountable for their crimes. They get a slap on wrist and are walking free in the next breath. Also you should probably start from the top down to see who in your law enforcement organizations are receiving any sort of kick back from someone they are giving leniency to. Having "good ol' boys" at the top is a city and moral killer.

More sidewalks

Traffic light timing needs to be adjusted.

No panhandling, no loitering

The roadways are dangerous. You always have to drive defensively. There is too much of a concentration of commercial on Westwood. God forbid you are walking or riding a bike. Pedestrians are getting killed more frequently in the past year.

Stiffer penalties for drug-related offenses.

I would like to see some kind of recreational activities for the kids to have.

Additional police presence everywhere

Cameras on stoplights to not only record those who run them, but also accidents.

The licensing for trades men is too strict and makes it difficult for new businesses to start up.

More police patrolling neighborhoods, tighter on homelessness, stop panhandling, more police officers, more cameras in neighborhoods due to theft and burglary, get druggies off streets, harsher penalties for offenders

There is a very distinct difference between the east/south sides and north side of town in basically every way. Our schools, roads, amenities, safeties, emergency services, health food/medical options are not equitable. It is quite disgusting actually. The pitiful excuses for assistance ae not enough and we are trending the cycle worse and worse. More options for healthcare and produce o the poorer sides of town, a 5th elementary school or some sort of annexation to assist our school district (since everything being built now is out of city limits), early child interventions, parenting classes, the list could go on for days.

The amount of people standing at random corners and hanging around entrances of public stores and businesses does not make me feel safe as a mom of two young girls walking into these places with them.

"Get the drug users off the street; Pass a city ordinance to regulate panhandling "

"There are so many loose dogs and stray cats running through all neighborhoods in town. Animal control is not available and does not help. Areas that are to be mowed by the city are only mowed 3-4 times in the summer and should be mowed on a bi-weekly basis to help keep down on ticks/mosquitoes. There are too many people begging for money on the street corners. Homeless problem is getting out of control. So many people on drugs here. Repeat offenders are rampant. "

Resource officers at EVERY campus.

Gated communities

Roadsides are so trashy; too many animals are dumped and killed by cars or starvation county should have free drop off for unwanted pets, it is a more human option.

I would love to see our town move towards a left yield on the less busy traffic signals. Waiting for the left turn light inhibits the flow of traffic when a yield sign could help with the fluidity. This would not be possible at more active intersections (Bus 60 & Westwood Blvd) but perhaps the lesser busy intersections.

Pedestrians walking on major roads at all hours of day and night. The drug and addiction issues need to be further addressed. Feel they just keep getting worse.

Curbs, sidewalks

More patrol of roadways. So many distracted/poor drivers, and way to many without up to date plates (which makes you wonder if the have ANY insurance.

I would like to see more community center options. I don't think there are "safe" areas or many options available at times of crisis.

Better lighting on streets and corners

More resources for the Police Department that will enable them to be more proactive in protecting our citizens, investigating crimes and enforcing the law.

Plans for more activities for teens to do in order to keep them out of illegal activities

"For the police department to take potential threats more seriously. My son was an MP in the Army and I also had a son in Military Intelligence, both served during war time. I have family in law enforcement and I respect the police. I have had the PB police department treat me as though they are much superior than me, that is not a good feeling. I am not the criminal I am the concerned citizen seeking good advice and protection. Twice I have called in 10 years. To do something about the crime rate. Poplar Bluff has the nickname Little Chicago. It could be a lovely small town but there is so much crime, drug use, litter, and animals that wonder around the town. You can never contact Animal Control and when you do they act as though you are bothering them. "

Drainage ditches have filled with sediment and not cleaned out for years and years adding to a vastly growing flooding problem.

More help in the juvenile justice system

More police force patrolling neighborhoods and residential areas.

Dogs off leash is a HUGE problem in residential areas and parks and is not properly enforced. also pets in stores that distract service animals is unacceptable yet local businesses do not do anything about it.

More sidewalks for walkers, especially since our schools are now at a mile or so for walkers and in some areas there are NO sidewalks so they are having to walk on the side of the road, more stoplights in areas that have accidents

Patrols and action taken in known drug areas

Townhall meetings. I know I can attend Council meetings, but I think less formal community meetings would be beneficial.

Beggar ordinance, reduction of gaming (illegal gambling units in businesses), and business owners not being issued business permits if they have derelict properties around town. Use tax on county events ($5-$20 a head cost for Bricks or other events) to support City infrastructure.

My neighborhood feels safe but my inlaws live near the middle school and their neighborhood does not feel as safe. There is a lot of speeding past their house and several drug houses close to where they live.

Blind corners are a huge problem. Main Steet especially feels like a demolition derby because of all the blind turns

More presence of law enforcements around town

More street lights

More officers, city & county

Please be mindful not to over regulate your residents, we are allowed to move to town, county, or state in the country. If there we always an eye for eye; everyone would be blind.

More community engagement, police transparency

More lighting on side roads. Barron road for example

South end of town is getting a name due to the opening of the gambling at many convenience stores. There needs to be some sort of oversight in this area.

Too much petty theft. Not sure what the solution is though.

Less police presence when it comes to mental illness. better gun control.

"The law is the law, police are to nice when it comes to pulling people over I have seen so many things happen without any consequences; Also called multiple times and I never get a officer or ems"

More effort to remove drugs from our streets as well as assistance for the homeless so they are off of the street

None

Higher presence of police officers

"Burn bans in city limits; Enforced laws on dog owners regarding barking dogs from 9pm-7am"

Cops patrolling neighborhoods

More street lights, Better 911 systems

"Less panhandling

Cleanup of houses in towns. Code enforcement needs people to remove the junk sitting around and tear down abandoned houses."

Crosswalks for safer access to the stores on the main roads

More police presence. Actual involved and concerned policemen

Ddditional police officers

General cleaning up of dilapidated and trashy homes Clean up burned out shed on Park Ave. Get something done with old hospital.

The city needs to be more walkable and bikeable.

Enforcement of traffic rules. Everyday at least 20 car run the stop sign right in front of my house. Some flying over the hill. Mark Dobbs lives right around the corner. Kids live all over my neighborhood. Someone is going to get hurt. Enforce people having to have have a drivers license and car insurance.

Better code enforcement and occupancy inspections

Hire more police officers and invest more money into law enforcement. Invest in parking enforcement. Invest in security services for the parks.

If we had more neighborhood watches and knocking down or fixing up some of these abandoned homes

Trashy people moved out of of good neighborhoods

Police walking along streets and neighborhoods and interacting with citizens.

More patrolling of police in troubled areas

More housing for the homeless so people don't live in bandos or in the streets something that doesn't cost the homeless a penny

More family friendly things, more retail stores, water things.

Better variety of community activities during festivals

Guard railing side walk

None

More police control/patrol. Clean up neighborhoods and downtown. Enforce gun laws and lock up criminal and drug addicts

People that are blatantly using controlled substances publicly be dealt with more accordingly

Actually prosecuting criminals would reduce crime and make PB safer. Need more law enforcement officers patrolling.

Children bus stops, some kids being left in the weather I see it alot.

I see a lot of traffic infractions while driving in town. Maybe more officers to patrol the streets.

Cut down on loud music when they drive by music is booming

Cops doing their damn jobs. People do illegal stuff right in front of them and cops don't do anything.

"Maintain ordinances even on the north side of town. So many homes that should be condemned, so much violence and drugs. Poplar bluff is a small town and it could be a nice welcoming community. It hasn't little Church for years and only getting worse. A police presence needs to be seen in the rough side of town. A police substation or a patrol car driving through. Drugs are the main cause of the violence. Trash all over the street"

can the 911 system be improved any?

Help to get the homeless housed

This town and it's citizens used to be proud of this place, we need better leaders with actual heart and care for the community.

More clean up of trashy areas/ Dumping

Higher drug control

Animal control on South side. Too many lose dogs, scary to walk the neighborhood. Hampton ct.

would like some code enforcement in subdivisions outside city limits

Something like neighborhood watch programs utilizing computers and two way radios

None

Just longer jail time. Our home was broke into and very little done to the 3 that broke in

Better lighting for all streets. Reflectors on all streets

I would like to see more animal control, property code enforcement in regards to vacant houses and holding their owners responsible for adequate maintenance, upkeep or demolition, if needed.

Would like to see more "Safe Place" signs around at businesses, family style restrooms at public facilities and monthly cleaning maintenance at ALL parks and recreational areas along with safe boxes for needles to encourage people to not drop them on the ground.

In town is too much crime and no police paroling. And no investigations

Litter! My daughter and I, and sometimes my nieces or other neighboring children take initiative to plan a day to walk our neighborhood cleaning trash from the sidewalks, (that 'are' there) as well as roadways, and ditch-lines. We have done this for the past three years, and plan to continue doing. I've also learned that this is something that the children enjoy doing, while also learning about the benefits of keeping our environment and ecosystems free of litter. Perhaps there could be some incentivized program that allowed community volunteers, as well as children, to be involved in. I feel this is a great way to allow citizens to feel a sense of community. Incentivizing could be an easy task in itself by allowing local businesses to sponsor the incentives of litter pick up days. On the other hand, you could incentivize this by swim passes for the city pool or other city ran attractions, also attracting future business by citizens that otherwise do not, or would not attend.

Street lights

ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES OR INITIATIVES THAT ARE NEEDED *Continued*

More police officers on duty at a time. So call response will be faster

Not letting "the good ole boys" get away with literal crimes. I do not care about your money or your families name, but I do care when people are given privilege that have not been earned.

Get rid of run down buildings and gambling areas

Home safety security measures

City police to utilize their own holding cells at the police department.

We need sidewalks throughout town. Numerous pedestrians have been hit this year. People have to walk in the street in our neighborhood in the middle of town, sometimes with a baby stroller, and cars go speeding down the road over blind spots, sometimes looking at their phone, using it as a pass through road. We would literally give up a portion of our yard for a sidewalk. Not to mention the lack of crosswalks on Westwood/folks jaywalking.

Some of the people in town who have mental health and/or substance abuse issues should not be allowed to walk around doing crazy things. Like sweeping the parking lot of a convenience store with their shirt. A person in that state should be evaluated for drugs and mental health concerns. But, we see them around town all of the time. We should have more respect for our community and more concern for the people in that condition.

More drugs off the street and out of the neighborhood

I see many people driving with expired plates and wonder if they are lacking insurance too. Very concerned with the lack of turn signals and turning into the middle lanes.

More revival of downtown, offering more options for shopping that aren't just boutiques, more convenience/grocery options. We need to clean up old buildings by reviving or removing and rebuilding.

All the stray dogs

Road repairs in Missouri are much needed. I hit bumps and my car swerved toward the curb there are alot of unresponsive drivers also.

Every city department needs more employees. Animal Control to take care of stray dogs, Code Enforcement to enforce code, police to actually patrol and get out of their office and out of their cars. More firemen. And the street department needs twice as many as what they have to make our streets and sidewalks better.

More patrols? I don't know. But the vandalism, arson, and thievery needs a proper, long term solution. We can't find a solution if we don't know who's doing it. Is it kids? Invest in kid friendly recreation that they can expel energy on. Adults? Addicts? Invest in recovery resources , make arrests and require rehab.

I think finding ways to control traffic and making walking areas are at the top of the list.

Curfew for the homeless

Less abandoned buildings that aren't only an eye sore but also dangerous as they could fall in or someone could get hurt in them.

Street lights

I can't even leave anything outside without it getting stolen. I live on main st. If you don't have a gated community nothing is safe.

I barely see any cops around southside. Mainly around Henry street and midland. There is always a group of kids running around trying to break into cars or houses.

Neighborhood watches. Places for young people to go to stay out of trouble.

Implementing a citywide imitative that promote common safety practices in the form of open forums and publication to inform citizens. Also, an established bike lane and completed sidewalk system for pedestrian travel would be excellent.

There are a lot of empty houses that landlords are not renovating. They put new siding on but never finish the inside to rent. There are several in our neighborhood that have been empty for over 5 years, one has been empty 10 years. Greg West and Ron Black are 2 of the landlords that have homes in our neighborhood but the homes have been vacant for years

More arrests and convictions for thief and addicts

A place for all the displaced people to go.

Police stop sitting around in their cars.

Drivers stopped and ticketed for speeding and running red lights.

Better rental/lease property management with much more rigorous and strict enforcement.

Demolish run down empty buildings. Repeat offenders taken off streets for longer periods. Judges quit giving them a slap on the wrist.

Doing something about abandoned houses, not just keep warning them. Fine them.

More police presence in town.

"Landlords should be held more accountable for the condition of the properties they own. Trash service should be mandatory for the property owner, not the resident because they more than likely won't get it. Safety inspections on rental property should also be in effect. Patients/individuals brought by other cities/counties for behavioral/mental health concerns should be returned to the communities they came from."

"More street lights; Better police patrol Neighborhood watch "

More police or a community policing effort that is clearly articulated.

No off road vehicle laws enforced. Too many young kids driving 4 wheelers in town. Speed limits enforced. Especially Oak Grove Rd., and Barron Rd.

More patrols

Enforce no panhandling at spotlights and stop signs.

Maybe don't let them go out drinking with their gun at glory days.

Side walks a little further from the roads. They're like right on top of each other if we do have them. Safer roads. Side rails on curvy roads

Tear down buildings downtown that are not up to code, or sell cheap with contingency for new owners

More patrol on the streets.

More police presence would be nice.

We are saving to move away because we seriously regret moving here. I feel embarrassed to have family visit us here. The city looks trashy with transients, panhandlers, & strung out drug addicts at every turn. Homes are dilapidated. The downtown area could be revitalized like Ste. Genevieve or St. Charles. I pay more taxes here than I did in IL, what do you do with your money?! The parks aren't nice, the public areas aren't nice. You build this "state of the art" police station & have your force driving around in big trucks (why?), but what are they actually doing?

Higher standards of living, building, and general overall improved SMELL! Too many smokers and poopy butts

One of my biggest safety concerns right now are loose dogs roaming the neighborhoods. I like to take my child for walks, but I am concerned about random dogs joining us that might not be nice. I know this is hard to manage, but holding people more accountable for their pets would be nice.

I would like to see patrols of Bluff Estates(and other neighborhoods.) Homes are being broken into, dogs are being allowed to run loose and I have even been bitten, not to mention reports of prowlers. This neighborhood operates like its own entity. I have neighbors who think the laws don't apply to them.

We need to address the homeless population in the city. Our Fire, Police and Street departments need to grow as the city grows. The owners of all the vacant and trashy houses need to be forced to clean them up.

Stricter inspections on rental property

One police officer stationed at each school everyday to prevent any shooter threats.

Better drug inforcement

More police officers and less drug activity

More walking space down business 67 for people who need a safe space to walk or bike.

Curfew, noise

More law enforcement for breaking traffic laws. It's really becoming the wild west out here on the roads. Also the pan handling is getting out of hand too. I'm not versed in the law area all, but that has to be trespassing at some point with where they are all the time.

I know this is a bigger issue than we can tackle alone, but shoplifters laugh as they steal armloads of stuff from local businesses. No one can stop them, and even IF they manage to get caught, they're rarely prosecuted, and even when they ARE, the "punishment" is no deterrent. Drugs are rampant and when drugs lead to crime, we feel sorry for the addict so we don't punish the crime. Panhandling needs to be stopped IMMEDIATELY! The homelessness in town is ridiculous. I know y'all can't fix that, but it is making our town really unsafe!

To many homeless and drugs are rampit here it's sad to many ods

More officers at each school, people being held accountable for their actions in this town. Crime rate dropping.

I see multiple cars blowing through traffic lights on a daily basis. I have 2 teen drivers and I worry about them. I would like to see a crackdown on running lights.

Street cameras would be a great start maybe?

City cameras in the high crime rate areas

More patrols of neighborhood to many people stirring around early morning hours

That no matter if you have a "meth addiction" our hospital won't see u or help u but any other addiction they will

For city officers to help everybody not just the people they want to

More cell towers

More patrol on South side

None

Tearing more abandoned houses down so less crack heads in them

BETTER COPS they're suppose to protect us and they don't give a damn about nobody.

More street lights in neighborhoods and timely response to calls about loose agressive pets.

Worrying about actual crime & dangers rather than quota.

Sidewalks! Especially on Harper Street-the street where middle schoolers walk to school daily during the school year!

Satellite police station downtown

None.

Neighborhood watch groups

More police patrolling areas near old police station. We don't see them much anymore around here since they moved.

More fire fighters and police officers

Regular patrols, better security measures.

Better lighting on Barron Road and no passing zone signs or something put up along Barron it's not a race track. There are more families moving in. Not just Barron but other busy streets as well.

"Need more safety of people roaming the streets and not being afraid to steal stuff off people's property. Cars playing their music so loud, that you can't even hear TV in your house (PB has a loud noise ordinance, but it's not enforced. Need to be enforced, I should not have to hear there music inside my house!!!) Need to do something about people hanging around liquor stores and being in street. Need some where for homeless people to go."

To make landlord and owners of property fix their houses. Also more sidewalks

"Clean up the streets; Neighborhood watch; More patrol within areas where crime is higher"

More patrolling, SROs at every school - not shared

Increased security for events, increased police with high drug areas with actual arrests

SRO at every school. Safer parks.

Get the homeless and drugged up people off the streets so they aren't stealing from people's homes while they sleep

Need a city park with a lake and venue. City needs a large grocery store suck as schnucks or a sams. The congestion and layout of westwood Blvd is maddening.

A 10 PM curfew unless working

Let's get the tweekers off the streets downtown. No businesses will thrive there while they're everywhere. Satop is a part of the problem.

More patrol officers

None.

Sufficient patrol in higher crime areas.

"Town needs code enforcement and a good coat of paint; Too many derelict and abandoned buildings"

Evaluate intersection on north 67 by Ross fuel center. Busy and not safe.

More police officers, cameras around town

There needs to be better public support to improve the public education in this town. Most kids that grow up here are doomed to repeat the same steps as their parents. It seems the percentage of people that are uneducated, poor and drug addled is higher than the national average.

Law enforcement patrolling neighborhoods instead of hanging out to catch speed violations.

More patrols in high risk areas. Enforcement for obvious infractions equally.

LEO'S need more training in communication with the public

Some type of cross walk on the east side on old 60.

Police just making their presence known by just driving through the neighborhood.

Enforce drivers driving while suspended and no insurance. I myself was hit by someone without a license and insurance and he was allowed to leave the scene before the cops even talked to me. I have seen several people say the same thing since then.

"Codes being enforced.; Panhandling not being aloud.; Abandoned and dilapidated buildings being torn down or fixed. Strict laws for squatting. "

More police. Assist business with shoplifters

Better traffic conditions by the court house and that area by pine street.

ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES OR INITIATIVES THAT ARE NEEDED *Continued*

More cops in town, they are stretched too thin. Business need to prosecute shoplifters. More community events and things to do that people can afford

More police patrol

Add another officer at night.

Hate how people walk at night from the tiny houses on township line to the gas stations

Something done about the homeless situation in our community. When you have homeless people that are allowed to camp in our city parks, you don't feel safe in taking your family there. Homeless are being allowed to sleep/camp in vacant lots/homes and nothing is being done to curb this. They walk the streets just looking for items to steal, enter peoples yards to plunder.

Sidewalk repairs, replacing aging concrete streets, removal of condemned houses, the enforcement of illegal parking of vehicles face against traffic.

run off the homeless and thugs to another town

Maybe some more interaction between officers and the public.

For the cops to care when more than just Walmart and Academy Sports are robbed

homeless people and stealing needs to be improved

Do you use the Property Maintenance Code? Does the community have code enforcement/basic health/safety/welfare measures to make sure that there is a difference in living inside city limits v. the county for what they can/can't do with their property.

Resources for the homeless

Police near the crime

Our police force needs to double in size to combat violent crime, property crime, and rampant drug abuse and dealing. Code enforcement is virtually non-existent, so dilapidated housing gives shelter to people who do no lend anything to the community and proliferates bad landlords.

Abandoned property and poor housing and streets

For the amount of hard drugs in this town would like to see more arrests being made. Get pan handlers off of the intersections.

There are hardly any sidewalks around the city, yet people walking everywhere. The sidewalks that are available are in such poor condition in most areas people choose to walk in the street. Bike lanes are nonexistent. If there isn't going to be public transportation in the city, walking/riding an electric scooter should be accomplished safely.

The pan handling at most major intersections.

More police patrols in my neighborhood. Animal Control to do their jobs. Codes enforcement to do their jobs. More homeless shelters that take women or families

The arrest and prosecution of criminals!

Tear down vacant housing & business. More community events, affordable activities for families, constructive things to do for teens. Community classes at trcc. Strong communities have less crime. Love thy neighbor is a great program. Look for grants to help business improve. Pb is so lacking and overrun with drugs that I drive my kids an hour away for extracurricular activities.

Harsher punishment for crime offenders.

Crack down on drugs and a general lack of parenting

I think we need clean the streets of all the drugs being pushed around this town .I know as a citizen if I see it so does law enforcement but it just continues to be ignored plus all the people on the streets who go from place to place .maybe if we focus on the bad parts of poplar bluff and made a change we would get more business in town even are parks are not safe or kept from vandalism

More officer involvement in the community. I feel that if the laws in place were actually enforced it would deter traffic violations. Also, this town needs a drug rehab program, or a program to get the drugs off the street. In all fairness, it is not as bad as it was 4.5 years ago when we moved here, so it does seem like there has been progress.

I'd like to see building codes in the county and both enforced in county and city

more police patrols in neighborhoods

Crack down on the drug problem, inforce city rules about property cleanliness/ neatness. Add more sidewalks for people to walk around town safer. Apartment buildings/low income areas need watched more by law inforcement to get rid of drugs and crime

Close all the illegal gambling places here

Get the meth and crack heads off the streets

Putting stop signs at the intersections on Big Bend Road.

"Clean up the abandoned houses More patrol in the northeast side of town"

With the passage of recreational marijuana our community will continue to see a decline in our quality of property and safe neighborhoods.

Traffic control on major side streets and better lighting on city streets

Appropriate animal control regardless of breed.

cracking down on speeding on westwood and running of red lights.

More stern punishment for children involved in assaults at school.

Removal of abandoned housing and buikdings

None

More then 2 police on duty at a time

Community policing

No business licenses granted to "head shops" or stores that sell items attracting criminals.

I don't feel safe/comfortable being downtown in evening, or attending events at Bricks

Rid the town of illegal gambling places. Crack down on the amount of people brought in for treatment that are currently homeless and drugged out wondering the streets

More than 1 code enforcement person, better dog pound regulations(no kill)

More patrolling in residential neighborhood.

More school safety plans. Each school needs a security officer there at all times. Lake Road needs updated doors and security systems. The doors barely close/lock and someone could easily access the building from all of the side doors. As a city, it should be top priority making sure the schools are safe and Lake Road lacks all safety measures. With it being so far from the city, it would take police 10-15 minutes to get there. In case of an emergency, that is too long. It needs its own security officer as well as Eugene Field.

Cross walks at all stop lights and signs that indicate people stop for people crossing the road in a wheel chair.

Clearing of homes that are condemned. Maintaining of city owned property and enforcing rules on properties that bring the community down - trash on property, uncut grass etc

Destruction of vacant buildings. Sidewalks on all city streets.

More drug busts and keeping homeless off the streets.

Ditches cleaned out to reduce flooding in downtown neighborhoods

Street lights with working bulbs. Homeless shelter expansion bc this is getting out of hand. Peddlers need to be dealt with bc u cannot even go to the store without being hassled by someone on the corner and it makes this town look horrible

Sidewalk/walking improvement

Additional sidewalks to allow people to not walk on the roadway, particularly Baron Road.

More police and fire protection.

Better lighting of our streets and highways

"1. Code Enforcement doing their job 2. Some sort of entertainment, we have an extreme lack of anything to do. If kids/teenagers don't have anything to do, that is when they get into drugs and trouble. Then, if we ever get it, don't make it something so expensive no one can afford it. We have a huge area we service. Take advantage of it. Even if it's something cheap for everyone to afford it."

More police officers with higher visibility. Management of homeless. They do not respect other property. Code enforcement must be stricter with burned out properties and rundown houses! They are more worried about leaves on side of road than these dangerous properties!

General clean-up, signage ordinances and enforcement to cut down on "in your face" signage when driving around town, especially liquor and dispensaries, lime green buildings. These all tend to send a message of a lower class of town.

More presence during "rush hours" because of the amount of vehicles running either the stop signs or lights.

So many drug addicts walking the streets and hanging out in our parks. I like to exercise outside but as a woman I'm Leary to go some places because of the tweekers hanging around. I would like to see the drug treatment center investigated for the out of town addicts that are brought here and just turned out on our streets to steal, beg and cause trouble.

"Get people off the streets.; East side and downtown are dirty, needs cleaned up.; Make a ordinance prohibiting begging at intersections and stop lights.; Make ordinance requiring businesses particularly gas stations keep their parking lots and businesses clean. "

The noise ordinance. Picking up stray/loose animals

Strict enforcement of loud house rattling car stereos and control of fireworks, also banning the sale of fireworks within city limits.

Police presence on bicycles in downtown. Police meeting with residents regularly. Rental codes that are enforced.

Increased police presence

More sidewalks and lit roadways.

Larger police force

More police officers. Social workers in the police force.

More police patrol officers and a bit more parking in downtown poplar bluff

Close down known drug houses . Actually arrest people do something.

Level abandoned or derelict buildings.

streets cleaned up, drug problem improved

We need to get a handle on all of the crime and drug users in our city. Our town is going downhill. I live on Main Street and the foot traffic at night is scary

Slum lords, they should be regulated to provide safe rental houses. Prices they charge for run down houses is ridiculous. Should have to pass inspections. The poor & struggling families deserve safe housing.

Code enforcement is selective on who they issue tickets to.

The number one thing I want to see stepped up is code enforcement. I am sick of the trash, indoor furniture, and debris on peoples yards, carports, and porches. I want to see occupancy inspections so slum lords will have to improve the dilapidated properties that are killing property values in the city. I own a home on the north side in what used to be a desirable neighborhood. Now houses in this area that had always been owner occupied are being turned into rentals and I want to see that the landlords are held accountable. If they can't rent substandard housing maybe the druggies will move onto another town.

More police enforcement. Push to clean up town. Less rental properties more home owners. Drug and alcohol abuse is at alarming level not safe to walk the streets like it use to be.

More officers in cars watching neighborhoods instead of making traffic stops

Stop beggars from standing at stoplights & taking money. Groups are OK, but not the drug addicts.

Crackdown on drugs and weapons in our youth population

More policing of neighborhoods and with their eyes open

More street lights added on 67 s and other areas of town that are very dark at night

More self defense and self awareness programs

Reduction in homeless and begging

New restaurants pile employees into single family homes creating an unsafe environment in neighborhoods. Human trafficking is a real worry that increases with this arrangement. When the city is made aware of this, nothing is done.

None that I know of

"Additional animal control officers available more hours.; Animal leash laws enforced."

I wish the majority of time had safe living options that are more affordable and also we need more children's parks in the better areas of town such as Mclane, Township, Oak Grove, etc.

More drug patrols/ busts.

More police to patrol unsafe areas

Get rid of blighted houses and old hospital downtown. Start housing development in the poor parts of town.

Speed bumps on neighborhood road

Enforcement of speed limits on small city streets.

Roads fixed, more public transportation, more third spaces.

Crosswalks on the east side of town. More police presence

More animal control in city

Follow up with crime

Gun buy back programs.

Better lighting at night

More traffic control/management.

More police presence and more work on the evident drug problem as well as the growing homeless issue

The use of Side by Side ATV use on the roadways should be stopped. I know people who lost their drivers license because of failure to pay child support who travel all over the county.

SUBSTANTIALLY increased police force and increased patrols, more extensive investigations into property crimes, and massively increased efforts to reduce drug use/distribution. Code enforcement is almost non-existent. Derelict properties should be demolished if owners will not care for or maintain.

ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES OR INITIATIVES THAT ARE NEEDED *Continued*

Restaurants not being able to spray their own places. This is a very bad thing.

An ordinance to cut down on the amount of panhandlers and homeless in the streets. We can take care of these people without having them begging on every street corner

"School resource officers in every school "

Clean up some of the old buildings and houses that squatters are using

Clean it up. It looks trashy.

Biking trails and routes established.

Clean up or possession of the run down houses and yards, affordable starter housing for new families that's in a safe area of town (100k-175k) or affordable rent in a safe area of town (under 1,000/month).

abandoned homes and buildings guarded so they don't get destroyed

Neighborhood surveillance

"Some areas of town seem very unsafe after dark More patrolling of those areas would be great"

More patrol officers in the county

I think the city could use more sidewalks. There is a lot of foot traffic in our area and many people use the road ways to walk on.

increased patrolling in areas of issue

Patrols in parks

Moving the police station outside of where police presence is most needed seemed like an odd decision.

Replace entire police force with those who aren't corrupted. Replace entire political office personnel.

Enforcing the laws we do have in place regarding unsafe infrastructures and overgrowth of properties

More aggressive policing of drug and alcohol use.

No corrupt police, prosecutors

More patrolling

Do something g about all the panhandlers and people walking the streets

More police patrol. When I first moved here it was 6 months before I saw a police car.

More clean up measures taken. Ways to reduce people holding signs in front of buildings asking for money

Make the town clean up. It is embarrassing for prospects to come to the town. We can do better with cleanliness and pride in our community. I have grown up in this town and the lack of respect that our elected officials (not all) is overwhelming.

Let's clean up the drug use in our area. It's always great to have to explain to kids to avoid the "crackheads" when around town.

Increased police patrols

Resource officers at every school.

More police officers

More police patrolling the areas of town that are less desirable. Patrolling the East side south side, maybe some foot or bike patrol down town and in the malls. Wherever there are crowds It'd be nice to see more security all throughout our town. Enforce littering. Having our officers take more part in our community for fun things too. Maybe they could have more fun fund raisers that the officers do. I know we all need to back the blue.

We have a huge drug issue in this town.

Surveillance in parks and public recreational areas.

Enforcement of no pan handling at intersections.

Old buildings and homes that are not safe need to be demolished .

Tear down or rehab the old hospital on Pine.

I am unsure of how to fix the homeless issue, which I feel contributes to the crime in the area. The drug treatment and mental health facilities seem to release patients without housing or support to the streets and that is a growing problem from my perspective.

More playground options at City Parks, different styles and features such as a splash pad, larger equipment, or themed designs. Additional trails in the community are a must. Not enough options. What is available is good, but more options are needed.

Residential Rental Inspections

Short Online Survey:

THOUGHTS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE OF CITY

Number of people who left comments:

406

Comments in order of submission

Family therapy options

This little town is great! It needs focus on improving the housing and transportation options. There is no Uber or Lyft and no real rental car options to transport to airport. The abandoned houses in neighborhoods are an eye sore and need to be torn down or repaired. Also the homeless animal population is out of control and the animal control and awa are always full for strays. The animal control needs a better budget and facility.

More facilities for the homeless and low income to receive assistance. Resources for the drug addicts to get help. Entertainment places for the younger to keep them from causing problems.

Address the increasing homeless/panhandling population

more housing - people cannot move here if they cannot find a place to live

"more businesses on the east side or build more senior/disabled housing in another part of town"

"Give the police department the staff and equipment they need."

Incentives for compact vehicles and motorcycles such as special parking. Enforce noise ordinance for very loud vehicles. Model poplar bluff after other successful small towns with attractions like Eureka Springs and others. Correct the reasons the "bad" parts of town are bad. Listen and respond to citizen comments via social media. Modernize citizen interaction by using a special app that easily reports pot holes, Street lights, stop lights, signage, and other things that need attention and respond to reports. People believe the town is run by people that don't care what they think, need, or want. Be a model for other small cities to follow.

If people want to do better for the "future" they should listen to the younger generation and do what they need to do. Most kids have bad influence because they're nothing to do here. They more kids using drugs, vaps and illegal stuff. I do feel like the community has potential but not using it wisely for example. The coliseum should be for everybody. The gym should be used for basketball which people could buy to get in and will also give them money in return and not just to rent for parties and etc. The only things kids have here is skate city mostly for underage kids. The skate park and parks that people assume that are "unsafe". The kids and young adults in high school want to feel free and happy and not just hangout at a random parking lot. I'm hoping there's more better decisions making with putting different types of businesses in the downtown area. When I first moved down here I was excited because I wanted to do better and new opportunities but there's absolutely none. There's no backbone here but a "meth bubble" which doesn't sound good if this is called poplar bluff. Houses could be rebuilt. There's beautiful homes and should be wisely about who's more fit and more responsible to take care of it. I really hope y'all guys read this cause I know It'll get better but only god knows.

Need to provide more funding to the park department, and have more events at the coliseum.

Please add more sidewalks that separate pedestrians from motorists.

The expansion of Highway 57 will continue to shift business and population westward, furthering the decline and economic disparity on the east and south sides of Poplar Bluff. Some funds should be used for affordable housing and public transportation in these areas.

I think that the roads on main need to be repaired. Landlords and homeowners need to be held at a higher standard. The police and jail need to hold people on their crimes instead of releasing them on OR. I think there should be a curfew of 10 PM or the police should have the right to check subjects. I think there should be a crackdown on drugs.

Landlords should be required to include lawn maintenance and trash service in the rent. If properties become unsanitary, the landlord should be responsible. They would choose tenants more carefully and thereby improve the crime situation.

"Police should enforce stop signs; Code enforcement should aggressively ticket offenders Enforce leash ordinance and remove pit bull dogs that are also out of compliance."

I've had property being stolen while I was waiting for police to respond, it took them 16 minutes to get to my house which is a 5 minute drive from the police station. The officer did nothing, was at my house for less than 5 minutes and left.

Houses in PB are generally unkept, poorly maintained and junked up making the town look like a dump!

We need a place for our homeless so that there is room for better development in the rundown areas. The old hospital is already a homeless hotspot. They need to get rid of all these condemned buildings and allow others to build on the land.

Stay away from the county.

"Minority owned businesses supported. More for the youth to do (indoor and outdoor activities) More sidewalks- so many people forced to walk in the street due to lack of sidewalks. Splash pad More investment in soccer fields"

"We need things to do as a family. Entertainment other than eating out. Better healthcare options. "

Moved here from Jackson, MO. This town is so very different. If u didn't mow your lawn or had trash around your house you would receive a ticket. I don't believe there is even one boarded up house within the city limits of Jackson, MO. None. I want to be proud of my town like it was in Jackson.

Poplar Bluff is going downhill & FAST. I have no happy for south or east side. Our kids finding drugs everywhere, people being hit by cars almost weekly, violence, dirty, drug riddled city. I wish I didn't live here.

Poplar Bluff is not investing in the children. 5/6 dollar general but nothing for low income children to do after school and weekends. People are too worried about the cash flow to think about your children

Yes, I like that we are growing but can we utilize already existing vacant buildings? Renovating them would be better than cutting down more trees and forests. Our beautiful trees everywhere is what makes our town unique. Stop developing on Shelby. Stop building until existing strip mall vacancies are filled. Please renovate don't develop.

Our city needs sidewalks and bike lanes. People walking 67 is so dangerous. Many of the side streets have no sidewalks, or the ones they do have are so torn up wheelchairs and strollers can't utilize them.

Clean up the drug problem, have more employment opportunities and affordable options for the youth and young adults to do to stay out of trouble .

We love it here but more places to walk

replace the cobblestone section on Main St. Potholes have been filled with chat instead of fixed immediately.

We need things for our young kids to do that don't cost an arm and leg!

Desperate need for family friendly establishments. Would love to see a city water park again like in Farmington

All street repairs need to be completed and not half of the job done. If you do a street repair make sure that it's not worse then it was when you started the repair.

Need to invest in families and kids. Family fun center, also pursue land donation for large sports complex with all sports available including central indoor facilities

THOUGHTS, CONCERNS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF CITY *Continued*

Keep expanding the trails system to attract more and more people to it. Repair and expand sidewalks and public transportation to move closer to becoming a 15-minute city.

I don't know what happens to businesses when they get to Poplar Bluff, but somehow, we have the worst stores all around. I have to go to Cape or Jonesboro, despite having many of the same stores here, because our stores either have no stock or are so trashed inside that it's not worth going in. Restaurants, aside from Big Whiskey and Fuji, fail to deliver a consistent quality of food. There are no affordable fun activities to in this town, ASIDE form the public library who is doing a magnificent job. The trampoline park is too expensive, the playgrounds are dangerous, and while my kids and I love going to McLane, there's nothing for them to do. Poplar Bluff feels unsafe and trashy, and then doesn't even have the retail, entertainment, or restaurant quality to redeem it. Please invest in your city.

I'd like to see some of these old buildings either demolished or revamped they seem to hold a lot of vagrants and drug people.

We need better police who enforce laws like noise ordinances, dog leash laws, littering, getting rid of drugs and Crack heads, stop letting people pan handle, and GET A WOMENS SHELTER BUILT!

I feel like we're on the cusp of becoming a great city, bringing in more businesses but less restaurants and liquor stores.

We need basketball courts in safer areas. And a bypass from industrial park road to hwy 60 would relieve so much congestion

"Get rid of all the abandoned /burned out houses Get rid of all the broke down non operational vehicles on the north side of main street Enforce the car stereo laws. Tired of my windows rattling all hrs of the night"

The city is going to die if we have to keep going out of town for family outings. We should not have to drive to Doniphan, Piedmont, or Dexter to go bowling as a family.

You still need cop shop near the jail and courthouse. Craziest thing moving cops away from crime areas?

more community festivals and gatherings to get people together. more resources for young adults. water park. parks. more trails. things to do on the trails. things for babies not just kids that are outside instead of them at a daycare.

This use to be a safe town and it's quickly turning into a very dangerous city to live in and I fear for my children and Grandchildren.

Would love to see our community cleaned up and more welcoming. More safety as far as criminal activity

Better job at keeping our streets clean and forcing businesses to keep their property clean.

School district needs new administration to attract better teachers and coaches. The past administrations have destroyed the current one financially. Same with the city. We have facilities that we can't afford to repair. They saddled us with a shopping district that doesn't provide revenue and were bamboozled by a real estate crook.

Town/local businesses activities better announced and advertised, condemned houses need to be taken down, so something can be done with the land it's taking up, houses on South side are nasty, police people to take better care of their property, clean up the roads and make them better to drive on for example Sylvan dr. And sunset dr., the cobblestone road. There's so work to clean up PB, but it would help a lot.

Roads are horrible everywhere, people drive in parking lots like they're on the highway, and it's too congested here. Rarely have housing available and when there is it's too strict. Jobs don't want to hire anybody either.

We took so much pride in cleaning up the bluff for the eclipse but some intersections are embarrassing. Overgrown grass, cigarette buttes and panhandlers. The old hospital is an eyesore.

In the 5 years I have lived here I have seen the work that Steve H, the Chamber, and the Downtown alliance has done, and it is so very appreciated and awesome! PB is growing and being cleaned up, but we have to do better by giving our people purpose and pride. Helping to upgrade TRCC into a 4 year accredited school will be huge for the town. We need an upgraded updated technical school that works with our businesses and factories to provide a career pathway for young people. The most important factor will be getting rid of the "This is the way it's always been done" attitude and striving to be better.

If our community can come together to clean up the town before Rock The Country/The Eclipse then it IS possible to do regularly. I think having 1 weekend every 3-4 months where members are rallied together to clean up areas of the town will help deter animals and loiterers. It will also provide more eyes out watching what is going on and help keep areas safer. When people see others doing good and caring about the town it is contagious. We set an example for our kids and our neighbors. Local businesses could donate food/drinks/ supplies to those volunteering to gain advertising as well as build trust within the community. Volunteers could be entered into a raffle and drawn for prizes as an incentive to get people to help. A cleaner town with more engagement from the community members would be very beneficial to anyone living, working, or traveling through Poplar Bluff.

We need a target, sams club, steak houses. Bring the city up with the population

Our roads are terrible. The complete infrastructure of Popper Bluff is dwindling. We are city on of decline.

Drugs and crime rate are growing faster than anything

Poplar Bluff would be a more attractive city if code enforcement had stricter policies regarding homes that are overflowing with trash, falling apart, abandoned etc… The unsavory element tends to move on when there are few to no places for them to congregate and/or squat in for months. Right now it's a free for all bc homes are allowed to just rot until one of the methheads accidentally burns it down.

PB needs to beautify the city, and work to improve opportunities and recreation/entertainment options to help keep young people from fleeing the city.

Downtown revitalization super important!

Animal control should be on call 24/7, 7 days a week. They should also start proactively picking strays up vs waiting for complaints. People don't feel safe to walk in their neighborhoods due to stray dog attacks which they've called about numerous times, but nothing is ever done. Stray cats ruin property and threaten household pets, but there supposedly aren't enough traps to catch them. Crime in PB prevents many families from considering a move here. Possibly a crime reduction task force would be helpful.

"The establishment of basketball courts in city parks, as well as the consideration of adding connecting paths along the southern and eastern parts of town, including the construction of bridges over the river and railroad tracks. I also think that a shoulder or bike/walking path would be nice."

We need JOBS quality jobs. We need to address the vagrants at intersections, we need to clean sidewalks and streets. The city just seems dirty.

Dan does a super job talking to the people for code enforcement- he should be over code! Ways to MAKE people clean up properties! Better enforcement strategies and open eyes!!

The core of the city is decaying while growth is being experienced west and north (as anticipated by the previous city comprehensive plan). Over investment with the current police building should call into question proper stewardship of community funds by police leadership. The City of Poplar Bluff would greatly benefit from investment with the core of the city; Downtown, North Main St., Bus. 67 Corridor.

Spend less on the police department and more on the infrastructure of the town. Build better roads. There should be no gravel roads in city limits. Fix Main Street, it's terrible. Upgrade the things that need upgrading, whether that's utilities, roads, sidewalks, etc. Pay your general revenue people more and hire more of them. There aren't nearly enough people working for the city (except the Admin of the police department). No new police cars for several years. Let other departments have that money. Tear down the derelict buildings. Turn the FEMA lots into community gardens or playgrounds. And lastly, do something to help the homeless. Build a shelter for women and children that aren't in domestic violence or drug situations, just down on their luck.

we need to make it safe!

Better sidewalks, repave Shelby Rd. Add sidewalks to opposite side of Shelby.

Need restaurants and activities for families

We need more businesses like bath and body works, other clothing stores, and etc. we shouldn't have to drive over an hour to shop at these stores in another town. More entertainment for the kids would be great. Upgrading the movie theatre would be wonderful. I would be willing to pay a higher ticket price if that means the movie theatre was renovated.

Bigger chain restaurants and shopping.

Our town struggles with having more community investment, help, and involvement. We need more events, things to do, entertainment, more acts that come to the coliseum that people want to see. Events, entertainment, and acts that families, couples, adults, and teens want to see and be part of. We're the largest town in a few miles direction for so many smaller towns. Yet, we offer very little, if anything in the way of entertainment. We travel an hour and half or more to find something to do. People travel 20-30 minutes just to find somewhere to go bowling. People travel much further to find an arcade, water park, and other entertainment options. All of that money could stay here, in PB if we had more events and entertainment that brought in revenue. We travel further for other retail venues with clothes, groceries, and party/costume supplies. With the amount of poverty in our area, I'd love to see more affordable housing options and better paying jobs. More schooling options for those who fall in that age group between public school and the ability to attend the adult high school. More trade school options in the area. More mental health services, parenting services/classes, and drug addiction services. We're seeing an increase in crimes and people feel less and less safe in our community. With our poverty level, I also feel we should be able to provide free breakfast and lunch for ALL students just like Cape Girardeau does. I also thing we could use a bigger preschool to get more parents and students in the doors at an earlier age like Cape Girardeau does. I'd also like to see a more developed, functioning, and beautiful downtown like Cape Girardeau does. Maybe making our community college even better and offering more options. I think we definitely need more public transportation services and availability. We're a good size town and I think affordable public transportation could help many with their needs. A way to consistently get to work, get to doctor appointments, community events, the grocery store, college or trade school classes. Lack of transportation holds so many people back from so many things they need to better their lives.

Downtown desperately needs restored. It makes our town look trashy that our historical buildings are just going to rubble.

I am still not 100% familiar with Poplar Bluff so I really do not know what is needed or lacking. I love my area of town and feel safe most places I have been but I do not want my answers to skew the data due to not knowing what could be a needed action/addition.

The city should help the schools implement safety features such as weapons detectors.

Road improvements.

You need to crack down on the pan-handlers, and the drug addicts that are roaming the streets at all hours of the night. People don't feel safe, their yards are a free for all with people stealing their stuff and breaking in their cars. The drugs, and theft in this town for it's size is substantial.

People asking for money on street corners needs to be addressed.

Poplar Bluff needs more things for families to do.

We have become a service hub, particularly in the downtown area. We need better zoning of marijuana businesses, etc. Burning leaves is city limits is out of control - it should be banned. Houses are too close together, and it's simply gross to breathe in, particularly if you have children playing outside. Dogs are left to bark outside all day. These things make it frustrating living in town.

I would have expected a question on taxes and how do you feel your money is being used properly.

the survey covered all

People need to slow down on Shelby road. They drive entirely too fast; lots of accidents there.

I love to see our town grow and thrive, but the need for jobs that can support a family are needed.

We need more manufacturers to bring more working families

We have too many cars and homes being broken into, too large of a drug population with meth and fentanyl, and too much homelessness causing squatter issues and crime.

THOUGHTS, CONCERNS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF CITY *Continued*

Our community cannot be better until those in charge do better. Our bankers live in 6 figure houses off of the acks of late fees for our struggling citizens. Our medical services are pathetic, and costs are higher than half of the country. Our town serves probably 60-100k people yet calls the population 16k so builders don't have to build according to city codes and tight-wads don't have to pay city taxes, where they all send their children. It isn't rocket science. Follow the all-mighty dollar.

I do not feel as if there is a place that does not have several people walking around with bad intentions which makes me feel is unsafe for my kids and myself. I have to sit at too many stoplights hoping and praying a person does not just come up to my window asking me for some money. There have been a few groups who stand at the intersection by CVS and Walgreens that walk up and down the driving lanes while the stoplight is red asking for donations.

Some of the homes and yards need to be maintained. Get RID of the old Doctor's hospital.

AMC needs to be updated. So many people drive out of town to see a movie with better seating. It is one of the very few family friendly things that we are able to do in all seasons.

Crime is a huge concern. Our police department is overwhelmed and short staffed. We do not have enough law enforcement for the crime rate we have.

"The massive amount of homeless people on East side on a regular basis and becoming scary."

I have told my wife a thousand times, we need better roadways, sidewalks, and desperately need drainage so when the rain comes (as if someone wouldn't know it rains) the roads can handle commuters.

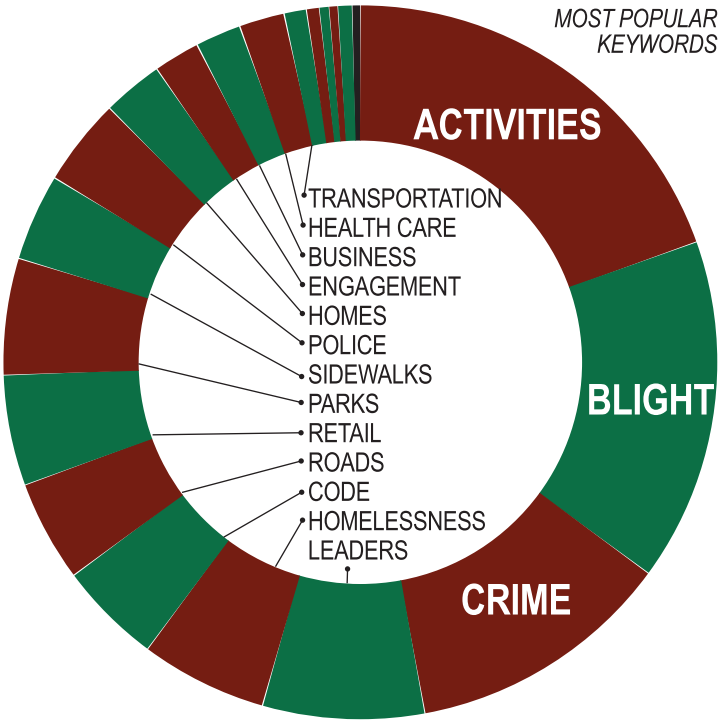
I would like to see more festivals and events in our downtown areas. The Iron Horse Festival was a great attraction. I think we have gotten away from those things. The Butler County Fair use to be a big attraction and now it's over before we know it's happening.

We need a splash pad in our community.

The poverty level in our community needs to be addressed. This creates a lack of funds to contribute to growth in retail and industry in PB.

"This town could be a tourist attraction surrounded by so much natural beauty. But take a look down town, how many tourist walk around downtown Poplar Bluff? Take a look around 5th street. Why doesn't some of the City official live down on 5th street...because of the drugs and crime. Who isn't doing their job correctly when a small town is full of crime, drugs, and covered with litter? It is just a shame. I lived in a small town before and it was so clean and peaceful. City Codes were enforced for all parts of the town rather you were rich, middle class, or poor. Clean this town up, make the citizens feel proud to call Poplar Bluff their home. All the Cities' employees should be ashamed to let such a small town go down hill and they do nothing about it, they just build homes and businesses farther away from the parts of they city they have allowed to fall apart. Look at all the abandon old businesses and homes, this supplies a place for vagrants who want to stay under the radar to live. It is just not acceptable, more than one department is not doing a good job. When I tell people where I live they reply with ""Why???""

The quality of medical care has suffered as the big corporations have our major facilities understaffed and overworked. I don't know how much influence the city has over this, but nearly everyone who can afford it goes elsewhere.



"*More programs offered through the Parks & Rec department. *More code enforcement in neighborhoods--we have a restaurant that has purchased a house in Bluff Estates and people are coming and going at all hours and there's roughly 15 people living in the house. This is a huge problem! *We need more industry here to encourage people to move here. Our retail shops are not great and our town is just run down and dirty looking. "

More entertainment and activity options, especially for children and youth.

Like I've stated we do need more things for our youth to do and be apart of, the library can only do so much and then the 2 places we have to take them, residents are having to travel outside sometimes as far as 2 hours or more to go do things with children here which takes tax dollars from our county to another and most of our county is in poverty so they can't even do that, which leads to them being bored and coming up with their own version of fun. I truly love this community and everything is stands for but we need to put a better focus on bringing more things into our community to help our youth and residents together instead of just a new restaurant or church or dollar general, we have enough of those and we need things and support from the community to address the issues at hand.

I'd really like to see more things to do around here. When my out of town family comes to visit there's minimal things to go and do.

"We NEED more factories, overall more job opportunities that are restaurants. What can we do to get businesses interested in coming to and staying in PB? We need better medical options. So many specialist come and quickly leave, not giving our community the means for continuity of care. We have already outgrown our schools. The last bond issue did not give us all that was promised and our classrooms are too full to meet student needs, regardless of what the state may say is appropriate class size. Why do we have businesses able to not pay their school taxes?"

I would love to see more larger shopping options, i.e. Target. I'd love to see larger chain restaurant options such as Cracker Barrel, Olive Garden, etc. My biggest thing though is not having much to do with my family. I would love to see a family center to be able to do like bumper cars, put put golf, batting cages, would LOVE a bowling ally or Top Golf. I hate that we have to go to Jonesboro or Cape to find family adventure things.

Indoor sports complex to host sporting events year-round and become a regional hub for tournament revenue... The expansion of the Internet out of the city limits into rural areas and sidewalk projects.

I like where everything is going. If we could make the downtown area safer I think more people would be interested in shopping and eating in that area.

I am happy to see the development, but the lack of sidewalks-pedestrian cross safety is concerning

When you know better, do better.

I wish we had less McDonald's and fast food! We need like an actual restaurant that is unique or something that is not just like the others. Please no more Mexican

I feel we need more community involvement, neighborhood connection programs. Give kids things to do. Have neighborhood days where people can come together and fellowship with one another. Encourage neighbors to meet neighbors. Invest in the the areas of town that are not like north side and Poplar Bluff as a whole can be a great place to live for everyone!!

the fact that kid rock came here is extremely embarrassing for this town. please don't do that again.

Get the drugs out of poplar bluff, give us more to do, nicer updating housing that didn't get drugs all over it

Better sport options for kids/young adults like a legion baseball team

Take advantage of the I-57 expansion to develop and rehabilitate this dilapidated downtown and residential areas. Crack down on slim lords who don't maintain their properties. Put limiting measures on real estate so that housing and business fronts don't rot abandoned.

Major emphasis in tech-related infrastructure is needed when planning ahead for the future.

Revitalization of downtown is a total waste until you are able to get control of the crime there.

There needs to be some laws enforced regarding people burning leaves in city limits. This city stinks with everyone burning every day. Gross

We need more entertainment options for the younger generation (bowling, putt-putt, go carts, etc)

There is little for kids to do. Take a look at other cities park and recreation activities, dance, martial arts, art classes etc. The only activities teens and older elementary have to do is drugs.

"Need a women's/family shelter. Too many homeless families with kids. Not just haven house for DV "

Homeless shelters

Need alternative traffic patterns

There is some progress being made downtown. Would be great if we could get the counseling center out of the old bank building down there with all the folks hanging around on the streets.

"We need more activities that appeal to a wide range of ages. We fail to recruit physicians to this area due to a lack family activities and shopping/ leisure activities. Our roads need improvement throughout the city. Also, I drove through the east side of town recently and the number of abandoned and falling down homes was staggering. Those homes need demolished and new homes built."

Poplar Bluff looks like a dumpy town. Abandoned houses and crap everywhere. Code enforcement seems to not even exist.

Road maintenance needs serious improvement

We need to improve our housing stock. Properties are becoming dilapidated even in the north and west sides of town. Some are still rented out by slum lords. Make it harder to slum lots and the less productive occupants will move to another town.

You need to expand the city limits, sewer and water into undeveloped areas like N. Main. This would encourage more development in city limits. Development in the county is going crazy because of the water and sewer districts expanding. Build it and they will come.

I think we need better youth services for the youth like different things for them to do. We need better family place so families can go and do things together. We need more entertainment places. There's quite a few different ones out there in the world. We just gotta bring some of them.

I think a focus on making the town more walkable would be a tremendous help. Beyond that, focusing on safety and residential options for lower-income people would be important.

Code Enforcement needs to get off their bottoms and get 721 moved out and kids outta there or clean up. Mice and roaches are going everywhere. Also the judge needs to quit fining these trashy people and move them out as well.

THOUGHTS, CONCERNS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF CITY *Continued*

Stop only focusing on the Police and Fire Department.

Provide more cooling and warming shelters for the homeless and the veterans

And it's even a crying shame that our veterans are neglected that's crap cause they deserve that fought for our country for us to have our freedom

That kids have more fun things to do, and to fix the roads. More housing and apartments affordable for the wage that the town gets.

more retail stores (Target, Sam's Club) and steakhouses (Logan's & Texas Roadhouse).

Poplar Bluff is growing, yes. But it's becoming a ghetto town. We have gambling machines and run down homes and businesses all over down town. Drugs and homeless are rampant. Teens in school are dangerous and the streets have become violent. There's nothing fun to do here for kids or families other than eat out at a chain. Poplar Bluff needs manufacturing to bring in good families, we need better police control and patrol and better leadership. Look at the Dexter chamber and use them as an example.

The drug problem in bluff needs to be dealt with

Poplar Bluff is starting to earn its name of "Little Chicago". Shootings and theft have drastically increased. We need crimes to be prosecuted. We need more law enforcement presence to deter crimes.

I'm very happy we moved to PB 26 years ago. Living outside the city for 13 years, I don't see need for improvement that much.

Need to do something with all the loose animals running around town. Need to create someplace for the mentally challenged ppl and all the druggies running the streets

No plan for growth, adding jobs, cleaning up the town. Disgusting

I moved out of the city 4 years ago because there was no benefit to living inside of city limits. I do however work and shop in the city and want to see Poplar Bluff improve.

Need more teen activities

Let's fix whats here instead of bringing more in and building more places that just get left empty or disrepair

Less homeless or panhandling in public

We need more variety of restaurants.

Clean up Main St area and South side of town

no activities, full of deugs

I think there should be a CivTaK for people in specific areas of town that first responders can communicate with.

None

This is a very controversial thing but I personally believe we should look into safe needle disposal sights at highly populated public areas. I've seen multiple post on my Facebook regarding needles being left places. As our city grows so will drug related activities unfortunately and as a drug capital of the US I personally think it may be beneficial to our community. People may not use them but also this allows opportunity for people to do the right things and have consequences for their actions if they don't. I would also like to see a facility similar to a YMCA for our boys and girls club here in poplar Bluff for the community and children to enjoy. I would like to see more fun interesting classes at the facility.

"Many, many, citizens don't feel heard. Nearly every time I log onto social media, I see it stated by a resident, and in the comment sections, there are dozens more. Maybe there's a way to allow citizens to have an ""in-person"" vote on some of the simpler decisions at some of the City Hall meetings. I'd also like to say that the social media presence of City Hall, or other city organizations, is quite low. There has to be a standard maintained when it comes to engaging with the community. In today's world, social media is everywhere, and the first place most look for answers regarding just about everything. Without utilizing social media as a tool, or having a strong presence online, it ensures the gap between residents and city officials, departments, etc is here to stay. Without a sense of community, Poplar Bluff will always be ""just a place to live""."

There is a big drug and homeless issue in town. I think there needs to be more law enforcement to help with drug issues

Get Leist Park started/finished. It's an inclusive planned park and those kids deserve to have a safe place to play! Also, there's public fishing, among other fun and interesting things planned!

We need bowling allys, center with food and games, bingo, stuff to do. A mall

I'm glad the goal is to better the town, but remember to include EVERYONE and not just your friends and families that you grew up with. The cliques and attitude problems have got to go away if you actually want to make a difference. Everyone, including the mentally ill, the poor, the addict should be considered.

Would like to see more safe children's activities.

A peaceful place

Get the communities opinion on stuff before spending all our tax dollars on stuff most people don't want/need (see my statement about bricks off road parks new paved driveway).

"I think a 1st (or last) Friday event in the downtown area with maybe music, food trucks, pop up vendors would be great. I think the trend of downtown revitalization is great but would love to see more vigor in this area. Code enforcement in some of the derelict areas. Using the Rogers Theater to maybe show old movies (check out the Tampa Theater) Enticing more boutique (not specifically clothing) type retailers in the downtown area. Just a few thoughts. We are new again to PB but not new in knowing the area."

We need a burn ban that is enforced in city limits. We have so many neighbors burning leaves, when there are children trying to play outside (this even happened to us while we trying to have an Easter egg hunt). Houses are too close together for this in town - in the county may be another story. Also so many people leave their dogs outside to bark all day and night (it should be an owner's responsibility to quiet their dogs). Lastly, we need to do more about mosquito abatement. I'm not even a complainer - but these simple issues are obvious.

Clean up the panhandlers, mental health patients and drug addicts walking around all over town and encourage new entertainment and shopping businesses to open. Especially downtown. There's a lot of potential down there.

Need more places for homeless

"More family friendly places are needed. There are LOTS of families and bored kids in this town and having to travel for some entertainment isn't practical. Even making the parks more accessible would be a little better. Parks in pb need better restrooms as well as better equipment. MORE PARKING DOWNTOWN!!! and possibly limiting cars on the roads near main st. (Specifically around Fairmount st.) it's like playing Tetris and is overall unsafe for drivers not being able to see, as well as residents and their property. "

Would love to see downtown brought back to life.

Shelby road has been a great improvement it is in rough shape already. Barron, 14 th street and main need tremendous improvements for as much traffic as they get.

We need more diversity in everything! Diversity enriches communities. I think we can of course show that in businesses but mindsets also. Thanks for creating this survey and your time!

Dedicating more resources to restoring the run down neighborhoods filled with condemned houses and empty lots instead of expanding outwards.

We need more things to do, especially for the teenagers/young adults. Another Water park would be awesome!!

The city isn't growing if businesses are closing at the same rate they are opening. There are tons of empty store fronts but land keeps being cleared to build new.

I live right next to the worse school, I didn't get the choice in it, I lived here before they changed what is the school. I have had my French broke to let my dog out several times and stuff stolen in my yard, shed and house since they changed who goes to the school now. My son had a gun pulled on him from a kid that goes to that school and I couldn't even get anyone in the school to open the doors to make a complaint about it. The kid had the gun in his car that sat in the parking lot all day.

The growth is going to come to a stand still if we don't take care of what we have. There aren't enough people to do what's needed.

The city needs to provide resources to the owners of declining properties to liquidate the property or fix it. I know a couple and they're tired of the city trying to fine them over a property they can't get out from underneath because they don't have the resources/contacts to do so.

It would be nice to have more options for kids and teens. Improvements to parks. Places catered towards family like a bowling alley or community center with activities. It would be great to have more safe places to walk. Having a sculpture park (that would hopefully not be vandalized) would be cool. I'm not originally from here but it's sad to see how many people in this community talk badly about this town. Changes need to be made to make this a place to truly be proud of.

Stop spending money on unnecessary things, like a new sign. Spend our tax dollars cleaning up neighborhoods and maybe using buildings that are abandoned that can be fixed up to house homeless.

City clean up/ordinances are much needed. Overgrown, run down Properties. No community centers such as water parks, no indoor centers with activities for children and teens. Cape is an hour away and offers so much more

Why has the population not grown in years and why will industry not come to Poplar Bluff?

Need more places for homeless people. To many drug addicts on the streets. I don't know what the solution for that is because if they don't want help you can't help them.

We need some more street lights on side roads. The lines need to be repainted on several roads. Sidewalks need to be put in or replaced. Cops need to start pulling people over if they are tailgating someone. They need to stop and talk to people walking in the road at night that is wearing all black!!

Poplar Bluff is a wonderful town. Houses and businesses are in major disrepair and falling down. Put some love and money back into the towns peoples pockets so they can fix up and maintain the outside of their homes.

"A reevaluation of the allocation of municipal funds and annual budget should be preformed. It appears as though the City only focuses on Police and Fire protection services instead of other lacking areas within the municipality. Proposed taxes should not always be related to increasing our police force numbers or salary for protective services. Citizens are burned out on that being the only selling point of proposed taxes when other services remain underfunded. "

Don't allow Illegal Immigrants in this state,stop all panhandlers give out more tickets for yard sale signs on city poles, Illegal parking, Stop giving out Narcan these addicts chose this lifestyle and they must pay the consequences for their actions this town is turning into a drug infested town

"1. We need a place for cats, we have hearts for rescue for dogs. 2. We need a place for teens to go to feel safe without the government stepping in. A place for them to wash their clothes, eat, sleep, learn skills to better themselves in the future. Maybe have animals for them to tend to. There are too many out there that have no parental structure. 3. Instead of building new buildings, how about remodeling the old ones instead of letting them run down and look like crap. "

More attention to road repairs. Putting out money to pave Bricks is ridiculous when there are many roads that need fixed. My road is so bad you can't hardly drive on it but we have to get get home.

"I see businesses open then close after a couple of years. Not sure if this is due to the overhead, lack of support, or lack of knowledge on operating a brick and mortar. It would be great to see a focus on business retention and expansion through programs, incentives, and/or workforce development. Parks and Recreation have done a great job improving local parks the past couple of years and bringing more events to the community. Continue efforts to host large events like the Eclipse of the Bluff and Rock the Country. "

Refocusing development and better review on budgets more geared toward the current community aspects and needs, versus growth opportunities that create further sacrifices on the existing infrastructure. Like it or not, we sacrificed budgetary spends on impressing guests on development/pavement of a county road for a venue that was already secured and booked instead of spending on city roads that desperately need maintenance and repair. Snap decisions like these on city taxpayers revenue create animosity towards city government and make people look to move outside city limits.

Need to focus on better medical care and facilities.

The ordinances put in place do not seem to be enforced. There should be consequences for those who do not follow them.

Poplar bluff could use a public fishing pond

THOUGHTS, CONCERNS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF CITY *Continued*

Either hire more code enforcement or fire the one we have. Implementation of a code or law to limit slum lords from jacking up rent on substandard properties. Getting away from the city manager position and making it a mayor ran town.

Need to improve hospital . Get better doctors by improving shopping and places for people to go to besides going out to eat. Drs. With families don't want to live where their wives and children are not going to be happy because there is nothing for them to do. Try to get a trampoline place, go carts, water park, bowling alley, etc.

I would really like to see more stores other than just a Wal-Mart super center

Poplar Bluff needs a community center.

Need things for kids in this town.

I really want to see pb grow. I think it's going up but we also should find safer and more effective ways to help people get to work and live safer! Thanks so much for the option of this survey!

Too many shootings, assaults, thefts. Change laws at state level to lock them up and keep them locked up until trial-3 strikes you are out!

i want to raise my kids here but besides the public library and the occasional event for children there is not much to do to provide and enriching life for kids to have activities especially in the summer months!

Poplar Bluff could use a free splash pad at a park. South side roads are too narrow.

I honestly think the town itself, the citizens themselves have an uneducated, uncultured mindset. Any changes you do make would be unappreciated and not cared for anyway. Everyone seems at least 30 years behind the times, and not in a good way.

"I have high hopes for Poplar Bluff improving! I hope to serve the community more in ways of yard clean up services I hope to provide for abandoned lots. I hope jobs will be created for those seeking. I hope those trapped in addictions will escape through Christ and then find a new life of joining the community in healthy ways; honest work, good service, and loving neighbors. I hope the government officials of our city do not over spend. I hope our people here ""learn to fish"" rather than are ""given fish"" as the parable goes. The federal government does now service to our impoverished community by keeping our poor poor with government handout programs, such as SNAP, TANF, and healthcare coverage. Stop taxing the rich to keep the poor poor. Government needs to step back and let the poor suffer enough to get themselves into community based programs of help to become self-reliant and self- sufficient. Without that important step, our needy remain needy because of their mentality they are taught to remain in. Community based programs that are centered on teaching and encouraging self-reliant behaviors are what is truly needed. No one is willing to work if they don't have to (because things are handed to them). They will remain motionless. These are parts of the laws of physics. Keep them in motion by encouraging them to get into motion. Allow the community to knock down ugly, old and unsafe buildings, so new, attractive businesses can be constructed. The main library is doing an awesome job at supplying some self-reliant skills. Put pedophiles behind bars. Encourage youth and young adults to obtain higher education, and even higher education. Build skills and knowledge! Encourage citizens to attend church and to be married to their ""partners"", to create healthy families. Encourage abstinence before marriage. Encourage the elimination of smoking, vaping, drugs, and alcohol of ALL ages! Let's be our best as individuals and families, because that is how community improves. It can only be as best as it's people. It's a one on one, case by case, slow but sure process that works. I have seen The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints helping people change and improve their lives in big ways! See what they are doing and then try to follow suit or join their causes! They have made huge changes that endure, and don't fall back to old ways, in people's lives. "

"I want this place to thrive and to be a great place to raise a family. Right now, there are not very many affordable things to do with your kids, so people often spend their money out of town. We need some more family friendly (and affordable for those with multiple kids in this type of economy) options in this town. I also think we need a morale change in a majority of this town. Changing the language used and getting more people on board to talk good about this town is important. There will always be negative people, but let's work toward a positive language that can spread across demographics to help people take pride in where they live. "

I think the city is spending $70,000 outside the city limits investing in improvements for a one time event that is nothing more than an opportunity for Steve Halter to have his photo taken with Kid Rock. Bricks Off Road is a menace to this area. Privately owned businesses are closing, no new industry is coming, our school system is not adequately preparing our students for university level work, but thank god we are getting $30,000 worth of new benches. A realignment of priorities and new chamber and city leadership is needed. The good of the citizens/communiy no longer the focus and our leaders so t have the spine to tell Mr. Halter that PB is no longer interested in funding his parties and self promotion. $100,000 just wasted.. when we have real community improvements and needs.

I am proud to live in Poplar Bluff, we are a hub to the surrounding area. We need to continue to grow and improve the industrial industry to bring jobs and tax revenue to our community.

less fast food and more sit down places

There aren't many options for families, teens and children to participate in.

I own businesses in the city limits. People that wish to work or do work have difficulty with transportation

More shopping and entertainment options in the old downtown area.

We desperately need some good paying manufacturing jobs and something fun for kids to do and have birthday parties at.

It's horrible, I see people walking around our neighborhood high and under the influence. Why don't we have more resources to help people? Why do I see adults and children walking on the road because the sidewalks are so bad or no longer there? Why is rent higher than ones income? What is Poplar Bluff going to do about this, because in the 10 years that I have lived here you haven't done anything at all.

so many druggies EVERYWHERE this town turns into the walking dead at night!

It may be a good idea for Pb to focus on college aged amenities. TRC brings a lot of business and we need to explore ways to keep students in the location for business opportunities as well as involvement.

It's time to clean this town up even if you have to start firing people to make it happen

It's growing more restaurants, more of everything

I'm grateful you all are making plans for improvements to our town. More communications like this and maybe posting streams from city council meetings on Facebook so people interested can watch them would be great. On a side note, I'm hoping that someone starts doing something about the abandoned property around town too. It makes me so sad to see properties that have fallen into disrepair being used by people to produce drugs.

I appreciate the Chamber and those trying to make our area better. We need better and more affordable internet connectivity in all of Butler County too!!!!

Need a larger male and female shelter so we can get these folks off the street

Maybe more/different options for the homeless.....and it seems like a lot of people under the influence of something wandering the streets a lot

I think the amount of condemned and abandon houses through the city invites unpleasant things it would be nice to see the south and east side cleaned up

Just glad to see it grow not die like other small towns

A splash pad would be great for the city!

There needs to be a family home style restaurant here. As well as a fun center like bowling or dogwood.

Maybe have an after hours urgent care one that is more than a bandaid station

We need better and cheaper internet

Would've been nice if the Rock the Country was held at Ray Clinton Park instead of Bricks!! Bring more outdoor concerts at the park and NOT in the county!

None

Too much restaurants in town small local restaurant businesses are struggling already there's nothing else to see in poplar bluff but restaurants. We need a nice water park or children entertainment place so the teenager can hung out we have skate city but it's already outdated. We need a place for kids and teenagers

Less crack heads on the streets

Stop catering to politicians/officials personal agendas and do what your hired to do. Police treat everyone as criminals which makes people hesitant to try to talk to police about problems or concerns.

Please fix the roads, even the side ones that are used daily. Upgrade the movie theater. Add things for teens-young adults (18-27) so there are things to do for younger people. Please put a Chick-fil-A in town, everyone loves chicfila & they would thrive here. Add things to the south/east end of city limits, not just the nice north end/entering the city limits.

Providing resources and education for addicts and homeless to help them be successful would be a great start. We need adequate housing, more jobs, and a reason to tour the town so small business owners can make money! More entertainment options. More sidewalks.

Spend our tax money, state/federal grants, etc better. Half your citizens couldn't give a ... less about stuff like an $11 million police station. Fix our roads & sidewalks, clean up our town more than when tourists are expected, actually use money for things that matter & will help our community. Our city government is useless as of right now.

Junky yards need cleaned up, better taxis for the people that need transportation, the stop lights in front of Key Rexall and Hucks gas station be in sync with each other

Invest more into poverty reduction and addiction rehabilitation centers. Harm reduction is the first step to a healthy town, but as of now it seems that those with the money to save PB are more interested in increasing harm to the poor.

Police to crack down on crime. And actually do something about these crimes

Old condemned and abandoned homes should be removed. The streets and sewage need fixed on this side of town. Northside is growing yet Southside is thriving.

More places for the homeless to go to get out of the heat and nasty weather.

"Keep up with technology. (Out with old in with the new.) Tare down old buildings and parking lots not in use and put up for sale or rent. Clean up drugs and people on drugs that are roaming the streets."

Need more entertainment for youth

Too many slum properties; needing paint jobs, broken windows/ boarded up. Residential areas that doesn't appeal, to an outsider.

Increase in law enforcement to crack down on the drug problem of our area

We need more family entertainment (bowling alley, fun center, etc). More options for shopping for clothing, especially kids and sporting goods, would be helpful. Too many people are having to travel outside of PB to get basic things that cannot be acquired locally.

We have to clean up this town from the drugs and have more cost efficient activities for families to do things with their children, young or teenagers. Parks with walking trail activities and challenges for people to compete against one another. Making things fun doesn't have to be expensive.

I would love to see a community center open to programs such as 4H and Boy scouts. Available to host children's activities for our community.

Have a deadline for any building /house that is boarded up to be repaired or torn down. Pitiful site from old Dr Hospital to burnt houses on Spring street and Mills or 10th.

I would like to see red lobster and t j maxx

I don't live in the south east side of town, but the amount of drug use people walking down the streets screaming into the air is scary.

We have a huge Drug problem along with homeless, we have homes that have been abandoned burned out and no one has taken responsibility for cleaning them up homeless people and people using drugs stay in these homes squatting especially in the winter months around Mill Street north 10th street area. I no longer feel safe in my home where I have raised my family and lived for the past 24 years. My husband and I have discussed moving out of the city. Manufacturing jobs have left and we haven't seen anything else come in to replace those jobs. If you want decent people to stay in this town we are going to have to have decent paying jobs for them. At the moment I'm not seeing us staying here in the future and we're telling our children they need to make plans to settle somewhere else and start their lives.

THOUGHTS, CONCERNS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF CITY *Continued*

We desperately need a place for kids, families to have bday parties like a fun plex with multiple things available to do.

More restaurants that are not fast food or Mexican

This is the "large town" of the region. If you don't do large town things folks will go elsewhere. Large retail shopping stores, better roads, and no more sales tax. You have to embrace the growth. It will happen around you if you do not.

More family/ kid oriented places.

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Would like to see more of the traffic laws in forces such as speeding , turn signals. Vehicles that look as though they are going to fall to pieces at anytime.

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"Something needs to be done about these abandoned homes/ properties that are in total disrepair. Something needs to be done about the owners or occupants that refuse to do anything with / about the property. The stray/ roaming dog problem is out of control. My child could not attend summer school this year, due to having to walk a minimum of 5 blocks, which would not be safe with the amount of stray/ roaming free dogs in our neighborhood. Years ago they moved our mailboxes to a cluster box at the end of the road due to a dog biting the mailman. Some of us, living in town, are a one parent home and have to work for a living so our children are latchkey and can not be driven to school or the bus stop. I also feel that code enforcement needs to enforce the codes. Reports have been made about houses and cars sitting in the street (unlicensed, undriveable)in the neighborhood and nothing has been done. There is a noise ordinance in town, it is totally disregarded as the cars drive by my house, every day, with the base bumping so loud that it rattles my windows. Be it daytime or 2am in the morning. "

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Stop cramming everything on Westwood. Nothing affordable to do in town. Too many of the same restaurants. More jobs

Nothing to do in this town. What little there is, is expensive. Everything is cheaper in Dexter or Farmington. That's why the water park went out of business.

Would like to see all business take better care of their landscaping, trash and general appearance.

Hire more code enforcement officers and hold these slum lords accountable for the deplorable conditions of their properties. Bring more industries in and make these backpackers work instead of letting them run around stealing everything that isn't chained down. Close down the convenience stores that are openly selling drug paraphernalia.

Try to influence and truly educate the voters on how internet shopping is truly robbing revenue from the city that is VITAL for the city's infrastructure maintenance and growth.

the future of PB is looking up. new business, some work on downtown rebuilding, but we need more industry for jobs and we need litter pickup on right of ways and more responsible landlords

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For this community to survive we need things for kids to do other than get into trouble. We also need more entertainment options available, and quality restaurants not just fast food.

Implement the above and then annex islands where you can so there is consistency for the community. And create a sign/banner ordinance that lessens visual clutter.

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Add a par 3 golf course to Ozark Ridge

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Hold the landlords accountable for their dilapidated properties.

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More activities for young adults other than just bars

Poplar Bluff desperately needs jobs that pay significantly more of a living wage. All the new retail and restaurants are nice, but they pay crap wages and that leaves many many people unable to afford them. Better new housing for seniors. The parks are great now and many youth sports, but we still lack a huge community center open late for kids or adults who don't participate in team sports but want to shoot hoops or play racquetball etc. Crime, including petty theft, should be taken more serious and actually prosecuted. Code enforcement or new laws enacted to actually clean up or tear down derelict properties, and maybe stop concentrating on grass height as the #1 thing code enforcement does.

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THOUGHTS, CONCERNS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF CITY *Continued*

We desperately need a place for kids, families to have bday parties like a fun plex with multiple things available to do.

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THOUGHTS, CONCERNS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF CITY *Continued*

We need to have more entertainment, something for children to do, breakfast type restaurant other than fast food, another grocery store, and old run down buildings on the main strip need to be updated or cleaned up to make more appealing.

"Poplar Bluff is at a crossroads where it can grow and flourish or remain stagnant. We need higher paying job opportunities to encourage our best and brightest to stay in Poplar Bluff and attract skilled people to move Here "

"Continued work in downtown area. More code enforcement in areas with houses falling down"

Would love to see a bowling alley come back!

These people who are not compliant with cleaning up why don't the city clean it up then add it to personal property taxes

No one makes their property look nice anymore. The green wholesale dispensary looks awful in the middle of town. Businesses with flying flags advertising their goods for sale is so tacky. Need more city codes enforced to make it look nice and not so red neck. So many nice people in Poplar Bluff, but the town looks so run down and cheap.

More variety of adult sport leagues and activities available from the Park Department.

I love to see the town grow. The downtown area has huge potential to be an iconic and beautiful part of our town. But it's hard to feel safe walking or even driving as a lone female with children. Im grateful for the measures taken against the peddling and loitering at the stoplights in town!

maybe a larger, more present police force. yes, you see the police responding to calls, but not out on patrol. figure out what to do about the drugs and the folks taking and selling them.

Spend more effort making Poplar Bluff a city people not just want to visit - live in as well. Make TRC into a 4 year institution and make Poplar Bluff a college town with interesting night life and shopping opportunities. Young adults and teens need places to hang out that isn't Walmart or parking lots. Invest in entertainment, food options that isn't just Mexican or Japanese food. Fund local entertainment like waterparks, arcades, bowling alleys, mini golf or other activities. More community events and clubs. Look at other nearby successful cities like Cape Girardeau and apply what you can learn from them. Tourism brings money and a single eclipse can only do so much.

"Love to see more shopping options in town A Sam's Club would be the ncredible Would love to see a safer PB, especially after dark The panhandlers are definitely not a good look for PB"

If poplar bluff doesn't get competitive wages for manufacturing jobs know one will be able to afford to eat at all the restaurants and buy cars with this economy

Poplar bluff really needs an entertainment venue. There is t much to do for entertainment. No bowling ally or anything. If you're not into outdoors not much for you. I work for the VA and it's very difficult to recruit to our are because of this.

Poplar bluff does not partner well with the largest employer in the community, VA, and specifically does not partner with them to increase their operational effectiveness by hindering growth and construction. Poplar bluff should better support this employer.

Infrastructure with bike lanes and side walks are so important. We need variety in what stores and restaurants we add because everything "new" feels more of the same. (Whole Foods, world market, Barnes and Noble, etc. would be amazing)

I think the chamber does a good job supporting local businesses. They seem to be too fond of bricks however. We desperately need entertainment options, and jobs other than entry level. Blight needs addressed. Roads are poor. Panhandling should not be allowed.

The roads need redone

There isn't and probably never will be a bough housing for low income and the elderly. Housing should also have central heat and a/c as well as washer and dryer hookups. If housing was built upwards like the towers than more of those who need it could benefit with less land being taken.

The people standing in the middle of our highways with their signs are a risk. It may be public property but the public wotn be the ones responsible if something happens to one of them or to somebody going down the highway.

Keep up with revitalizing downtown. Knock down some abandoned buildings and make a multi use area where food trucks and musicians can be on the same area and where food trucks aren't set up on a major road.

Raising young children and being a teacher it's sad to me to see the state of our parks and the options. We drive out of town and spend our $ All summer due to other towns even smaller than ours having better parks and water areas, community centers etc

City needs more activities, concerts and events. What happen to the Wizard of oz event? Christmas decoration drive through?

"I think the abandonment If cats and dogs are a serious problem here. I have had 3 ddifferent situations with cats since living here. Dealing with a momma cat and 4 kittens. They are strays and all organizations are full and can't help. Bad problem!!"

Code enforcement needs to get out of their trucks and do something. The lack of responsibility of their jobs is horrendous. The abandoned properties, grown up yards and just plain trash. You should be ashamed of the way you have let the town develop. Why would you want to bring your family, business or friends to this town? Come on bring back the pride and make something out of our area. I am tired of part of the city council voting for everything without doing homework to make sure it is a benefit. Any really helping to pave a county road with city funds? Who thought that was a great idea as we could use that money to make improvements. Clean up and make the city officials do their jobs. If that means someone needs to get up and mow then add that on the property owners taxes. Give out tickets and make them pay. We have to do something to take our city back!

PB could be a great small town and regional stop along what hopes to be I-57, but we have to focus on growth and stop wasting money on things like police station relocation.

More removal of derelict building and paving of gravel roads

I really think we need more stuff to do for kids I mean we don't even have a bowling ally for exp but we also need a competitor for Walmart to because there's better stuff than that store

"Definitely need more activities to counter all the food options in this town. The parks are okay but my niece deemed them "boring". Maybe more/different equipment. Also seems a lot of homeless have come about. Maybe a place they could go to get out of the weather and help them find a job? A lot of them say they would work but finding a job is hard without a clean place to rest/shower or an address"

Would love to see downtown continue to revamp and bring in more business and tourism.

Our leaders with the city and Chamber are doing a wonderful job overall!

Our drug problem is out of control. More police can deter criminal and drug activity.

"Find out who's behind the blight of Poplar Bluff and shut them down. Keep trying to get rid of the negativity. We also need a bowling alley in our town."

"We need a safe park for kids to play, we need to clean up the town. It is full Of trash everywhere you look. We need to create pride in our community for our town. "

For safety & reduce wrecks, enforce speed limit through town on N. Westwood. Traveling 35-40 mph & you will get passed like you are sitting still

I believe we need more sidewalks as more people are walking these days. I also think our small businesses should be showcased in other ways than the chamber of commerce. If the city continues to grow maybe a welcome center of sorts should be added especially with people continuously to move into the area.

Good to see growth through the city.

Poplar Bluff needs more healthy options. A health food store such as Natural Grocers is very needed. Also more restaurants that are not fast food. Poplar Bluff residents go out of town to go out to eat and shop and our community is losing money.

I have loved moving to Poplar Bluff. Overall the people have been friendly and inviting. I have found more opportunities for employment and community involvement. I think Poplar Bluff is a nice town, with the potential to be great!

Sidewalks and pedestrian traffic are a major problem in Poplar Bluff. Many areas of the community are unwalkable or cannot be accessed safely in a non-motorized manner. Many existing sidewalks, especially in South Poplar Bluff, are unusable to someone in a wheelchair or with mobility concerns. South and East Poplar Bluff are being left behind. Gravel roads in these two parts of town are not being maintained, pavement is allowed to fall apart. While there have been many developments in North and West Poplar Bluff, and in increase in Downtown Poplar Bluff, it is quite clear that East and South Poplar Bluff is being left behind. Businesses are closing, new business is not being opened, houses are left vacant. Look to incentivize investment along Business Highway 60 and Highways 53 and WW (Ditch Road).

We need to stop giving people that are not productive/ responsible citizens a place to land.

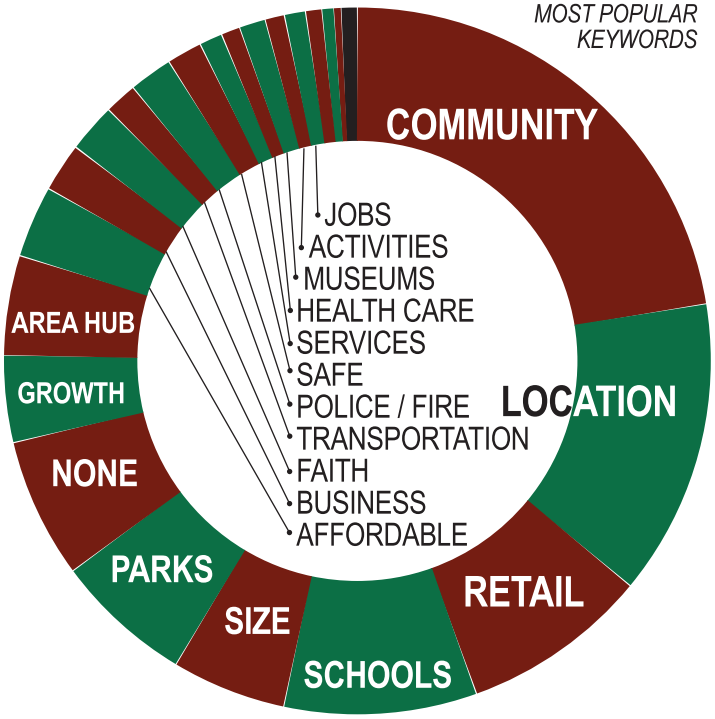
Long Online Survey:

WHAT ARE POPLAR BLUFF'S GREATEST STRENGTHS?

Number of people who left comments:

233

Comments in order of submission



Community

Small town vibe, generally nice people. This place is very reasonable to afford to live for a retired person. Your churches are a great strength here. Many great small businesses here.

Being the only major settlement for a very long distance

good schools and plenty of jobs

the collage

Volunteer programs.

Place to live

Helping the homeless and salvation

Location

The library is wonderful, the parks are OK, downtown has potential to be amazing. Roger's theater could be amazing.

"The friendly and cooperative people. We are a community of strong faith and our public servants are overall professional, dedicated and respectful."

There are lots of good people. They need educated in some areas, they protected from bad elements

Affordable, excellent highway access, police & fire departments, beautiful golf course and parks.

The area

It's a cheaper place to live but only because no one is putting any care into it and it needs to be brought back to it's former light or it's going to become down-south Chicago.

Development

"Variety of retail Growth. Veteran friendly"

The residents

I've yet to see any.

The beauty of the forests. When renovation is good quality it looks great!

Healthcare, physical and behavioral health

Area to grow/build

People

Plenty of places to get fat. Buy a vehicle or a bank

the room to improve and make this town even better.

None!

PB seems to be trying to make this a place that people will want to live, and slow but sure more things come to this area that make it an enjoyable place to live. So the effort to try and elevate PB from just a small country city to a place people wish to visit or live is a strength.

People willing to invest and renew downtown.

Many nice people with a desire to improve the community.

The outstanding service provided by the Poplar Bluff Fire Department, community involvement.

Location

Above average school district

It is close to rivers and lakes. And it's close to St. Louis, Memphis and Nashville.

We're the biggest area in a few miles range to many smaller towns and the desire for community strength is present.

There are several roads leading out

There are a lot of great people here and I like the small town for raising children.

The people are great. I think we have people who really want to see this town grow and prosper

Small town

Mostly friendly people, and the school district is good. The schools are at a disadvantage with the number of low income house situations that have poor parenting situations for it's children.

It still has a small-town vibe. People are charitable. Schools are solid.

The strengths of Poplar Bluff is the people and location. We do not promote our location as a central hub for commerce.

Its a good place for families to be safe and raise kids.

The support for the school system

Our public library , parks and public golf course.

Historic homes, downtown, Iron Horse Festival, Swimming lessons in summer, little league programs, elementary schools, police officers are hard-working (we need more, though), trees and healthy green space.

The library is about the only good thing that was mentioned.

Community

The multiple opportunities for tourism with all the lakes and rivers so close.

Small town vibe where people still know each other.

The area has a variety of goods and services.

Beautiful location, good school

It's heart. This community will survive anything. We have an amazing group of people in this community who come together and make things happen. Our community is the true Difference Maker.

The people who really care about this city.

Proximity to shopping and restaurants

Stakeholders will work together for improvement and always roll out the red carpet when something big brings people to our town.

"Margaret Harwell Art Museum Library"

Arrogance and God's grace.

It's people

Variety of retail and grocery shopping. Variety of gyms, plenty auto sales, restaurants. Westwood Blvd. as well as main roads on North end of town maintained.

Small town values

the younger generation trying to improve things

The outside of town is pretty when you get away from the meth cloud

Scenery

Proximity to Natural resources , national forest and national parks. Hunting.

The level of teamwork between agencies and organizations and the progressive mindset for the future.

Tinnin Center shows, rogers theater, our chamber, food trucks

Park Dept

The ability to improve what is here.

Parks and Rec always have affordable activities to sign up our kids for throughout the year.

The parks look OK, the businesses are conveniently close

The many parks and city facilities.

Our library is amazing. Trying to sponsor activities for all interests and get people involved

Overall, low cost-of-living geographically next to some great areas, employment is available for anyone that wants a job.

None

The above average number of nice/ friendly people.

Small enough to get to know people. We are only hear because of friends and family. Crime, lack of healthcare access, and lack of housing options for high income earners would have driven us out by now.

People are willing to invest in the community, like the Hwy 67 project

The location of Poplar Bluff gives it the opportunity to become a great place of business.

I have a lot of places to live

Friendly and helpful people

It pulls in people from quite far away for multiple reasons, ie. shopping, events, etc.

Nothing too many bars banks and carlots

The location of the town as a central hub for surrounding areas.

small town with good retail options

Plenty of retail stores

The parks

The citizens have a good sense of home

Variety of shopping, sport programs

Community, cost of living, access to outdoor recreation, lakes, rivers, golf, & trails. Comfort in the quiet, but enough entertainment opportunities to fill your calendar! There is so much good that we have to offer,

The people in Butler county that support PB

there are a lot of beautiful areas within the city as well as surrounding the city.

Poplar Bluff's greatest strengths are sense of community.

Location

The uniqueness about our history and our name, is something to be proud of. Love Shelby rd and the new police debt and new ambulance building.

none

Community partnerships that work together to accomplish the goals of making Poplar Bluff more family oriented while offering resources to those in need.

The ecosystems that thrive, locations of most parks and their level of maintenance. The library is fantastic, however I feel it is severely lacking in the ability to drive families and individuals to attend events or utilize their services.

I can live a few miles from town and be away from the mess nonsense but still be able to get to town quickly to do what I need to do and leave.

I find very few strengths. The questions above were poorly labeled. What if I thought the item was very bad but very important? Do I put 1 star or 5 stars???

POPLAR BLUFF'S GREATEST STRENGTHS *Continued*

Area of the state we are in provides a great number of opportunities to do things in the outdoors.

The people. The school system. The scenic areas around. The small town values.

Hospital

Small town feel

Still has a small town feel . While growing

The community seems to be very positively geared toward wanting to change poplar bluff so I think it encourages change

Food pantries

Location

The people are over all good.

The maneuverability of travel around the city is great.

Rural community, school system

The library! It is about the only place to do free things with your children. It also provides free services for adults. True treasure!

Collaborating with other partners to find funding, bring in new events, and improve infrastructure.

Weakness overshadows all the strengths

Community comes together

Sense of community. Active chamber of commerce

The library, and Parks and Recreation.

Excellent community with motivation for improvements

Church services

generally safe

I think retail is a strength of Poplar Bluff.

poplar bluff is the largest city in the immediate area.

There's a lot of religious and banking facilities

Community

Small town

Job opportunity

The community is amazing. There is plenty of help if anyone needs it.

Making money but not putting it back into the community.

Great local businesses, public library

Small town feel

We have decent schools, including a community college. We are surrounded by remarkable fixtures like our rivers/lakes. We have access to rail transport.

People here are great for the most part. I feel like we blend in with the nature around us pretty well. For the most part there's a sense of community.

I think the city has done well at expanding roads, shops, and restaurants with population

Nothing

Restaurants

honestly nothing anymore Poplar bluff is terrible now.

The natural beauty, of uncut woods/trees.

We have a lot of through traffic and locals willing to support businesses here.

Many options for children at schools here.

People.

The people

Community leaders want to make the changes that are necessary for growth.

Retail stores. The Margaret Harwell Art Museum and PB Museum. TRC.

Recreational dept

It has things the small towns dont.

Accessibility

I can't genuinely think of any.

Teachers

It gets consumers from surrounding towns

We have some good potential, it used to be manufacturing jobs and decent pay, but that is long gone as the surrounding towns manufacturing pay far exceeds any in Poplar Bluff.

I only stay here to be near my older family

It's a wonderful community and everyone seems to like to get involved

Better towns are about an hour away.

Community, the people within.

Cheaper taxes than cape

People

Our school system. Shop local support.

Friendly people, no traffic. Outdoor opportunities.

"PB's been established as THE "big city" for a rural area spanning 60 miles in all directions (at least). Its biggest strength is simply that. There are motivated individuals who want to invest and build."

I believe our school district is pretty good and secondary education opportunities are abundant. Our streets and roadways have improved tremendously. We have a good service business sector (insurance, accounting, legal, etc.).

Poplar Bluff has wonder history and has grown a lot through the years, they just need to keep growing and getting better in my opinion.

An abundance of eateries.

Park Dept

None. It's slightly cheaper to live in butter county compared to places like cape. But pb has nothing to offer. People come here and stay for the drugs and public housing.

Community as a whole is proud of our city,very giving and supportive.

Lots of people around here who want to work and do better and who want better for this town

The way our community bonds together—our people

Small town atmosphere

Public parks and library

It is a safer small city with many convenient shopping and needs.

Good people

Proximity to the Ozarks

There is a good amount of variety retail stores and service stations. Some of the parks are well maintained.

I'm not really sure honestly.

Church

Location. We are between St. Louis, Memphis, Springfield etc. PB should be a hub for traveling and better serve all this area between those cities.

Parks are awesome. Many citizens have great pride and take steps to try to help clean up and keep the city progressing.

Community

Located central to many rural towns

Trying to make changes and there is some progress

"Schools (minus cell phones in class!) Police force(too small)"

It's a beautiful area with a lot of potential

Location in the state and over all a pretty good place to live .

Its' proximity to beautiful outdoor recreation!

Great restaurants and shopping with an affordable cost of living.

Real "hometown" feel

Our strengths are the closeness of our people, our budding retail environment, strong parks system, short commutes and affordable housing.

Small community feel

Chamber works hard for community

I feel as if we have the opportunity to have an amazing little town but I believe our priorities aren't straight. I would love for downtown to be completely restored but it will never be great until we can get everywhere else cleaned up. We have lots of rough people constantly out and about so we should try to help them as much and get more affordable housing.

Small town

Mexican restaurants

It's geographical location and it's history.

There are plenty of places to eat and go to church.

Library

The diversity of the area with farming and tech. Also being a hub for several small surrounding communities.

Potential to generate money with bringing shows to BRC more frequently

The people, churches, Emergency Response Team, and the way the community works together.

Small town. Safe. Less expensive to live here

Quiet, friendly

Park Dept. and Fire Dept. both have great management, and are involved in the community.

I believe our school district and secondary education opportunities are really good for a community our size.

Banks and car lots

Citizens, Parks and Rec, Schools, History and art museum, Downtown development

Lots of fast food and Mexican restaurants, a lot of history here you just have to dig for it.

People. Cultural opportunities and museums.

Friendly people. Good cost of living.

the VA hospital

"Mostly good people. Mostly good values & people willing to help & support others. Library is great Several good areas that feel safe & good for kids. Most of the schools are good… particularly ECH & K Center Beautiful part of the state"

Having lots of access to wireless phone companies, main strip has decent traffic management. Lots of retail jobs.

Lots of potential and and a downtown that's begging for revitalizing.

Diversity

There are great many small businesses

Geographic location. People that care about the town.

You're guaranteed to see anything anywhere, good or bad.

Highway 67/I57

None

Lower cost of living. Not great, but lower than nearby larger cities.

Non

Being a decent place to live and raise a family. Being a center of transportation with the highway 67 improvement to draw new business, But people's expectations for certain businesses are above expectations

Lots of shopping

Leadership, location, affordability, proximity to amazing outdoor recreation.

The people, the churches, being centrally located, the schools,

Downtown revitalization

Hometown feel

PB really is trying to be a positive environment.

It's people.

There are plenty of grocery stores and retail stores. There are a lot of restaurants as well.

Small town feel with room for growth

Greatest strengths are the community members. Most people truly care about Poplar Bluff and want to see the city grow.

Poplar Bluff has a great downtown area, complemented by a pretty diverse selection of dining options, both for dining in and takeout. Additionally, the larger school setting provides my children with more opportunities than the smaller school they previously attended.

Library and Parks are great.

The People.

Healthcare, education, low cost of living, nearby outdoor recreation opportunities, 4-lane highways

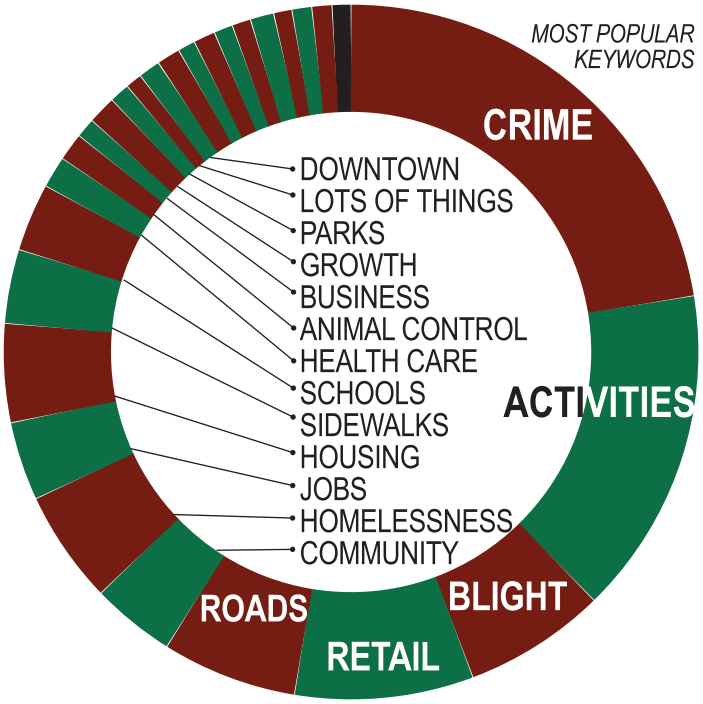
Long Online Survey:

WHAT ARE POPLAR BLUFF'S GREATEST WEAKNESSES?

Number of people who left comments:

287

Comments in order of submission



Not inclusive with low income citizens.

Roads need repair. Lack of animal services and airport transportation. The major weakness is abandoned home and derelict homes in need of repairs decreases the quaint look of this town.

Everything else

the crime, homelessness, traffic

Crime, drugs, streets in bad shape

need another senior housing location, street lamps, sidewalks, more grocery stores, women's homeless shelter that you don't have to be on drugs to get into

The pushing of development out to the west of town and with this, the abandonment of the older part of town.

Poor decision

Traffic. Lack of re entry programs for offenders

A small vocal group has a disproportionate influence

Older infrastructure planning was lacking

The weed store, the strip club, all of the liquor stores and bars, all of the trashy businesses

"Drug addiction, crime, low wages,, underperforming schools and less than substandard medical care. Our library is political and does not serve our strongly conservative community well. And, of course, the undrinkable water with toxic fluoride."

Lack of care from police. Every neighborhood has a house or 3 that needs to be torn down, for safety. Nice houses sitting right next to a house that should be condemned

Very poor quality housing, lack of effective code enforcement, generally poor health of residents.

Things to do!!!

It's overrun with homelessness, poverty, degraded buildings and infrastructures, drugs, and gang activity.

"Development without restrictions. The latest flooding in town and near the river is due to poor engineering. It's like they get the idea to built and don't think about how the trees they are removing are helping with the rain flow. Drugs at horrible. Police don't get to police accordingly for fear of backlash and a few think they are above the law. Enough with the repeated fast food establishment. Don't promise something then pull the plug. Don't wait for complaints to fix issues."

"Nothing for youth to do weekend/winter No good process to recycle. "

Infrastructure. Lack of responsibility for real estate and personal property

Drugs, judgmental people with money who think they own everything in this town because of their social status and last name and look down on people who have less than them.

"Lack of: activities for youth, nice restaurants that aren't Mexican or Asian, nightlife, variety of shopping (most specifically grocery stores), sidewalks in residential areas, poor street maintenance, downtown revitalization "

Instead of renovating and maintenance, new and expensive buildings are constructed and we are losing forest areas. Our town is named after a tree but we are leveling it to build places that ultimately will be to expensive for business owners to lease. They will go unused and then fall into disrepair. Fix what we have, make it easier to access for foot traffic, cherish our wooded areas. Maybe put paths in without cutting down trees.

Abandon buildings, no REAL resources for unhoused individuals especially women and families, nothing for young to seek out positive role models/supports and entertainment to keep them uplifted and off the streets looking for entertainment

There are no food stores where your senior housing is and no businesses around them to spend their money on. We need to build senior housing in an area where residents can walk to businesses. There are not even sidewalks on this side of town on Pine Street. the senior citizens are living in a food oasis

Nothing for families to do. Families have to travel 2-3 minimum to find anything fun for their children

Crime

Meth heads,trash everywhere, pan handlers, abandoned dogs running around,no family entertainment, not enough nice updated affordable 3 bedroom houses and apartments, too many vacant shopping buildings

Spending money on things that aren't important, like a new sign. Not enforcing home owners to demolish houses unlivable and are a danger to others. The crime and drugs are through the roof along with homelessness. We have all these abandoned buildings but yet not one is used for the homeless people. We do not need anymore Dollar Generals. Taxes are outrageous.

Crime

"Un leashed pets. Pan handlers Abandoned houses/vehicles Lack of police visibility On north side of Main St"

gang and gun violence. Robberies on every corner. DRUGS.

Not enforcing of laws on the books, corruption in the city, and county government and courts.

The drug issues and theft are out of control, and the places that these people can hunker down allow it to grow bc nothing is done. Lower income families doing their best to just live have to deal with way too much bs from these problems.

An abundance of public services that attract people from other areas that can not support themselves, even with the additional help.

Years of inept leadership, poverty, crime, lack of amenities available in larger areas

The issues include homelessness, drug problems, and the failure to pass the Use tax or Public Safety tax.

Stagnant growth

We are viewed as rural and impoverished by outside businesses. For example, the city had Harps Grocery. They decided that was not a good investment for Poplar Bluff and replaced it with a bulk whole store - Ten Box.

There's absolutely nothing to do here. Not a great area to shop. The downtown could be amazing yet it's too hard to get grants.

More crime becoming present, high poverty, high drug use area, lack of more schooling, college, trade school, options. Lack of public transportation. Lack of more pet/animal services. Our Animal Control/Pound is doing the best they can but more animal shelters, affordable vet options, and holding pet owners accountable inside and outside city limits for cruelty and dumping. Recycling options, affordable housing, help for those who are homeless. More mental health options. We lack entertainment options and events for families, teens, youth, and couples. We're lacking in the area of culture and arts. We have a coliseum that needs updates and is barely used. We could bring in more acts, shows, concerts that would generate local revenue. More help for those struggling with food insecurity. More help for those with children with autism. More inclusive options at parks and recreational sports. People are feeling less and less safe in PB. More shootings, more drug use, more burglaries, more theft, more animals cruelty/dumping, more incidents of moms, daughters, women, and girls being watched and fearful to go out on their own.

Drugs

Druggies, blacks, low paying jobs

drugs

Traffic is a little dysfunctional for a small town. It would be great to see a few turning lanes added into intersections that get highly backed up where people have to sit through more than one round of stop lights.

Drugs, homeless, theft, poverty, children not being protected, cared for, or parented.

Too many of the same business for such a small town. Need more variety.

So many beggers on the streets makes our town look bad.

Drugs, homelessness, parents who don't care what their kids are doing or how they are hurting others, crime/theft, and the streets are atrocious.

Not enough to do.

We have become a service hub. WTF Poplar Bluff on Facebook is the new Topix (what a disservice to the community). We are not a healthy city - we need sidewalks, recycling, Trader Joes, etc. Young people want to leave/brain drain. We need stronger mosquito abatement. We need simple code enforcement - like a ban on burning in city limits, pet owners are responsible for their dogs barking all day. Keep the marijuana businesses and drug rehab places, etc on the outskirts/in the county.

The city's leadership seems to cater to the few rather than the many. This is obvious when looking at just the land purchases they have made in the last decade. When combined with improvements made to some parts of the city and not others, people start to notice and understand what this city is all about.

How difficult it is to bring new businesses and lack of family actives. There are plenty of bars but few family entertainment venues.

There is little to do for the youth, no shopping

Lack of public transportation, affordable housing, making all neighborhood safe and attractive for buyers and renters. Also the need for full-time jobs that pay enough to support a family without working 2-3 jobs. Wholesale retail store like Sam's or Costco.

Crime, cost of living, nothing for teens and young adults to do, drug element, stray cats and dogs everywhere, targeting some people for code enforcement and not others, not maintaining roads and easements, lack of sidewalks in neighborhoods, lack of neighborhood schools (centers are awful), traffic near middle school on highway, merging from Shelby to 53.

POPLAR BLUFF'S GREATEST WEAKNESSES *Continued*

Literally everything else. We polish turds and pat ourselves on the back.

Politics

Lack of inclusion of diverse people groups - we try, I know. But this is still a very homogeneous area

Not enough industry for people to have good jobs. It's homelessness and drug addictions. Not enough programs nor law enforcement to curb the crime associated with the area.

"Roadways/lack of sidewalks/ lack of drainage Places to entertain families."

Poplar Bluff needs to improve current parks and work on helping our large homeless population. We add things to parks but most of the city parks are not safe.

Affordable housing, jobs not at restaurants

High rate of poverty, lack of affordable housing, increase in feeling unsafe due to gun violence.

The disconnect between the school system and the city.

nothing for children and families to do, very few parks, over crowding, rent is atrociously high compared to higher cities with more things to do, we have very few sidewalks, our city is unsafe to where I would never allow my children to walk to and from school, we are focusing too much on brining in retail when the majority of our population is in poverty,

"Things for teens to do besides walk the streets. Foot traffic"

Not enough to do, flooding is horrible, not safe for pedestrians to walk without being hit by cars, traffic management is poor

Crime, and lack of thorough plans with follow through to improve city infrastructure.

It is Poplar Bluff.

Need trash included in utility bills.

People that complain but do nothing to help

East side and South end of town is being neglected. Flooding issues are becoming a serious issue as well as the safety of the citizens and children in the area due to the gambling businesses drawing irresponsible adults. The area around Eugene Field school needs better oversight due to safety issues and people speeding and racing these roads as a cut through from 53 to Ditch rd.

Economic growth with high paying jobs

Mark dobbs.

"Everything, the schools are terrible, the streets ruin your tires but I have seen worse, theirs nothing to do here, the jobs are not available and the best pay is McDonalds. The drugs and begging for money is terrible and in every corner, the housing inside and outside is unsafe mostly in south side. South side has to go Walmart to the old water park is trouble all the way back to double A The homeless people that go to the er and stay their day and night they need. A home preferably by double AA. Or past Westwood. "

Drugs, panhandlers/homeless, lack of police response to calls,

Abandoned housing and business fronts. Rampant drug abuse and homelessness. Housing insecurity by population. Slums and slum lords. Practically no art and limited live music.

"Lack of pedestrian friendliness. Sidewalk infrastructure along Westwood Blvd., for example, would both look better and alleviate some safety risks for the number of people that walk down it daily. The very limited focus on building a talented/educated workforce. People are often required to leave if they wish to further their education or obtain current relevant training. An (admittedly over-simplified) example: There's a missed opportunity in not focusing on recruiting tech-related industries (and training opportunities) into Poplar Bluff. Bringing higher paying job opportunities will keep younger generations interested in staying, will recruit workers from other communities in, and will increase dollars spent within the community (higher income; greater disposable income; more tax dollars collected)."

There's no draw- it's a pass through town that enables potheads (2 dope dispensaries on Westwood) and welfare people with all the services. It's poor taste to have a liquor store right next to the middle school too. There's nothing here that coordinated as far as a destination (like Cape's river walk). Nothing for kids like a recreation center. This town needs more stable things. More effort needs to be put towards improving our community with things that are going to stay around, not pass over things like an eclipse or a concert.

homeless, things for kids to do

Police Department, Street and sidewalk conditions

Lack of services for anyone in need.

"Cleanup, there is so much trash out on our streets. Need trash cans on the curbs. Especially near the old Kinyon school, vine and poplar streets. Homeless walking from shelter to munch & pump and Walmart just throwing trash out everywhere. Really need to do something to help the homeless with mental, drug, home, job training services, ect. Maybe get a group together that goes out weekly encouraging them to improve their situation and offer solutions. "

That the gaming Halls the police the homeless no place for the homeless to go or shutting down places for the homeless to go

Lack of retail shopping options.

Police, city streets, public safety, horrible and dangerous neighborhoods with very little (if any) police presence

Traffic infrastructure

The council made a big mistake when they located the police station on Shelby. We have way too many dilapidated and trashy houses and businesses in this town. We need More higher end Employment opportunities.

It looks like a dump.

The roads and all the the the dilapidated abandoned homes.

Poverty, drugs, lack of code enforcement. The only way out is to make it too expensive for the SSI depended, drug users, and chronically unemployed/unemployable to live here.

Unwilling to expand services to undeveloped areas

Crime and poverty.

Not have much family or youth things to do

Drug abuse

It doesn't cater to young adults living in a modern 21st century world. The only thing to do in town for younger is pretty much bars, or doing drugs. I think things like indoor putt-putt, laser tag. I also think a maker-space similar to Cape Crucible would be amazing for the town as somebody who is interested in technology.

Nothing to do for families except swimming. Need a splash pad area with food there and shade and need the AMC theater upgraded with food like Cape Girardeau. Too many trashy people being allowed to trash up their carports and have grass up to their knees and old cars in backyard been there for years letting roaches and mice run all over their home plus the neighbors having to spend hundreds of dollars to keep them away. Code Enforcement not doing enough. Should hire more people if needed.

Lack of competent representation by our council members or officials.

healthcare and higher paying job opportunities for young people to stay, rather than move away.

Need more affordable grocery stores, more public and city working together peacefully to work on improving the looks and safety of our city and county everywhere, not just certain areas

Roads, less housing, roads need to be fixed, more fun things to do, water things, trash out, transportation, no side walks, too many vapor shops,

To much crime ie breaking and entering due to drugs on the streets

Not enough people think change needs to happen

Crime, lack of recreation for youth, not enough law enforcement officers

Poplar Bluff's greatest weaknesses from my perspective are creating more opportunities for our youth. As PB's median age rises, I would like to see more opportunities for young people to have more opportunities to chase their dreams without thinking they have to move off to a bigger community. Hopefully we can have continued success in our investment in our industrial park, I know the Chamber is working hard to seek additional employment opportunities! And I know PB R-1 is working hard to provide a great education experience for our students, but if we could do a slightly better job of preparing our youth for adulthood that's what I would like to see our focus as a community be on!

Not enough industry and entertainment to retain younger generations

The Politicians and the drugs

Crackheads

No place for homeless . Dislike seeing beggars

Poplar Bluff's greatest weaknesses are lack of opportunities that do not include outdoor recreation and the opioid epidemic.

Crime, drugs, lack of restaurants and shopping

no enforcement if rules by police

Pertaining to this survey, while the city requires more sidewalks and curbs, they need to be painted with a colored, reflective paint. Also, the sidewalks installed need to be handicap accessible for those in wheelchairs to be able to easily maneuver without having to get in the road. Regarding housing, while additional housing is definitely needed, it also needs to be affordable for low-income households.

The good boy mentality. We are no longer a small town we are growing and to grow you must allow others to step up and to be heard within the community. I do understand that they have to be self driven to step up in these positions; however, I think it would be nice to push the gateway to leadership program to the younger generation in hopes to allow fresh ideas and perspectives into the community.

Communication and engagement with residents as a whole leave the majority of citizens to feel that they are unheard, and that "there's nothing here", etc. Social media presence is near non-existent. Festivals and events held by and for the city are outdated in fashion and execution. Sidewalks are in disrepair, placing many in danger that utilize those sidewalks. The variety and types of youth programs or amenities are far and few in between, while the events held for the youth, whether it be held by parks and recreation, or the library, are poorly executed and leave many to not return for the next, or have low attraction rates, and even lower rates of attendance. Crime is publicized more widely than the positives of the city, which will only feed into that trend if nothing is done to improve the quality of communication, programs and events.

The drug and crime issues. The police need more manpower on duty at a time.

Drugs, they are everywhere. It's plain to see. The illegal gambling places are everywhere. It makes me think the city officials are on the take. Every gas station has them. There are dedicated gambling business. Some police reports even report them as gambling establishments. The Mayor is part owner in one!

Trash everywhere, codes not enforced in city limits, the town is only cleaned up when something big happens (ie. eclipse event, bricks off-road event) small town politics

"Poor medical options Lack of quality grocery stores. Roads Variety of small businesses. Monopoly on furniture options. Lack of activities (businesses) for teen/pre-teen entertainment on weekends. Lack of entertainment/dining options for adults of any age. What is it that we have as a community to make people want live here vs moving away after college/military? "

That a lot of people don't care about how their property is maintained. Petty crime.

The lack of sidewalks. How unhealthy of a place it is - with the burning of leaves, no recycling. Unbearable mosquitos. That we have become a service hub. Children want to leave (brain drain). We need a Trader Joe's - more healthy living options.

Drugs, homeless people, crime

That code is not enforced so houses and neighborhood look terrible and become unsafe with squatters. Criminals are not prosecuted so people know they get away with it and continue to steal

The people standing on the corners, begging for money the same in every town need to be Under control

There is nothing to gravitate people towards poplar bluff. We are missing larger grocery/club stores, missing professional and corporate level jobs, and we don't have much options in extra-curricular/entertainment for youth or adults.

This community caters too much to welfare recipients. While it's nice to help people, sloppy folks with their hands out seem to dominate this town. They can't survive without the services this community offers yet are the first to trash this town. A change not likely to ever change unfortunately.

Improper inadequate spending.

Downtown should never have got in the condition it's in currently. Other cities have thriving downtown areas. Shopping, bars, restaurants. No one has kept this town up. We have not "grown" at the rate of other cities such as Cape, Springfield. Nothing for families to do on the weekends.

POPLAR BLUFF'S GREATEST WEAKNESSES *Continued*

Politics

No industry.

Lack of competent representation by our current council.

Neighborhoods are not kept up, neglected. Need a recycling program and also a way to dispose of limbs , leaf debris

Resturant and grocery shopping options.

Too many of the "good ole boys" running things. We need different type of change

Lack of community feel for the area. I'm not aware of many options for seniors or really those other than children. There are some great entertainment options for adults to attend at bars and restaurants but not many other options I've heard about. If there options it would be wonderful to receive monthly or weekly updates on those. I know chamber members can get a weekly email, is that available for non-chamber members?

Criminals getting a slap on wrist/judges passing out weak verdicts, not being strict enough on failure to appear and repeat offenders.

Not doing enough to keep done the drug issues

Complainers

Safety, lack of resources, and not enforcing laws.

No sidewalks anywhere

Many improvements take place only when the town is needed for a special event such as the eclipse or rock the country. It would be nice to see that motivation for improvement on a regular basis. The restoration of downtown is vital in preserving the history of PB, but the funding would be nice to see used in other areas of improvement such as roads, town clean ups, parks and rec, etc

"The smoking and other addictions of the citizens. Along with the poor man mentality the keeps our citizens impoverished, living as hoarders and low standard of living. Also, the public school, specifically the middle school/ jr high has terribly low standards of the students health. No more drugs, vaping or sex! Stop it. Stop premarital sex!"

"needs more community needs more enrichment for children don't need any more bars please (emoji) "

not enough actual home owners and too much ran down rental properties

Health care, family and children fun facilities, public transportation, theft, drug use, panhandling

Rental Property

Schools

More police visibility a lot of drugs

Lack of diversity in many of the small businesses

We don't have any good paying manufacturing jobs to offset all the retail and restaurants we have. Most people who live here can't afford to shop or eat at these places.

Giving the rich more money and not working on the town.

The roads!

Not safely walkable

Poverty, few areas to walk or ride bikes, activities for teens

Drugs, crime, homelessness, lack of interstate highway, lack of affordable connectivity, lack of LOCALLY owned restaurants and businesses.

Road repair takes a while, but I don't know how that works so I can't really speak to it. A LOT of derelict houses and the homeless problem is getting pretty bad.

The school is not good. I moved here 4 years ago from Dexter. Poplar Bluff school has never had a good reputation in surrounding towns. The school curriculum focuses on the wrong things, children aren't learning valuable skills.

Decline of downtown and safety in older neighborhoods.

The crime, lack of housing, and lack of things to take kids to do

All the drugs use

Public school

Cops are corrupt, building things we don't need instead of stuff we want,

Not enough shelters , for impending winter/ summer extreme temperatures.

Lack of shopping and entertainment opportunities. Lack of variety of existing shopping and restaurants. We are missing hood employment opportunities that make people want to stay.

Problem with drugs and druggies running around our town out in front of our children. I don't want my kids seeing people acting like they do when they are on drugs

Lack of children's activities.

Abandoned building and houses

Drugs

Poverty, Drugs, Crime

Drugs, Homeless, run down neighborhoods, less manufacturing jobs available.

Crime, drugs, lack of discipline and expectations for students in the school district, lack of good jobs, lack of primary care doctors, poor institutional leadership in schools and law enforcement and government.

Nothing for youth and families to do safely.

It's doesn't have enough things.

Poor residential pride in home ownership and maintenence

"A joke of a public school system; Lack of encouragement of higher education; Lack of social programs; Drugs; Slumlords; Lack of code enforcement; Corrupt police department; Food deserts; Predatory retail -ie dollar general and similar stores; Racism; I am ashamed to live here. I moved here for a work opportunity for a company that is not based here. I make 3 times the median income of a family of 4 for this town and am a single male. The amount of suffering I see in this town on a daily basis is baffling. We are supposed to be the ""greatest"" country in the world and we are far from it. Letting people barely survive in squalor with no opportunity is an absolute shame. This place needs a huge invest made in its population. Nothing is going to be fixed overnight."

Drug population, lack of police officers, fiscally corrupt

The lack of activities for families.

The lack of code enforcement, homeless people sleeping in the parks or abandoned houses and the drugged up people walking the streets and trying to steal from peoples properties. The cops driving right by these drugged up zombie people and the cops look right past and keep driving.

People on drugs and people stealing

Crime

Lack of things for families with young children and special needs to do.

Lack of safety in a lot of neighborhoods. Lack of public door to door transportation. I am disabled and SMTS does a wonderful job just wish they were door to door instead of having to call in advance. Taxi services here are abhorrent and unaffordable. I think such services need to be required to have newer vehicles and discounts for seniors and disabled. We can't afford the rates and being left out in the heat or cold for hours before pickup or even stranded with no way home. It's happened to us before.

Too many run down houses nothing really for children to do to many homeless and drugs addicts

Lack of repair to the roads, nothing for families to go and do like a splash pad or water park that's affordable nothing for teens to do

High crime and drugs. Bad drivers. Lack of restaurant variety. Everyone looks like the people of Walmart. High poverty and low education. A city worker almost hit me. Lack of jobs and affordable housing. Nothing for teens. No summer programs. Not enough jobs for teens. We need trade schools and fun things to do. BRC rarely has events but sucks tax money, so does art museum. Art museum is very clicky and you can't take classes unless you have connections or pay a membership. Why does tax money fund that? Poor city planning: Shelby is a joke. We need better city admins

Crime, parks being in not so great locations, no youth things in the community to do without spending a fortune.

Terrible schools, bad drivers, nothing to do, high crime and drugs, poor housing nothing affordable in a safe area, 90% of the town is the "bad side of town". Nothing for kids to do besides sports. Drugs. Pot and vape shops. High poverty level. Nothing fun to do here. Not enough cops. Poor city planning and administration.

Derelict houses, lots and overgrown yards. Some businesses need better landscaping and more Industries

The Arts, walkability.

Social media keyboard warriors that have no idea what they're talking about.

Lack of support to local businesses.

The lack of creativity by leaders in the past. The suspicion given to city leaders by the public when new ideas are broached. The focus given to building out the northern portion of town and abandonment of portions of downtown (old hospital in downtown), and while we're at it, the lack of focus on incentivizing the old hospital by Hefner's to be anything active. Highway 67 is a weakness because of traffic patterns. The tax base is also an issue.

Code enforcement is non-existent and public safety has taken a nose dive. We have done little in 50 years to decrease poverty in our town, which lends to a high rate of drug abuse, crime, low median income levels, etc. Affordable, modern, well maintained housing options are below average. Our taxation is insufficient to support many of these improvements and the likelihood of passing initiatives to increase taxes for such efforts is very low.

We need to change to grow. We need to expand the city limits to reflect 2024. We need to work on making TRC a 4 year school. We want to give opportunities to our fellow community residents and not hold back.

Lack of care about youth programs, but then complaining about youth running amok and misbehaving. There isn't anything for kids to do that is both affordable and safe in PB. Commuter infrastructure is also severely lacking. Sidewalks, if any, are terrible and there is no safe space to bike.

Drug activity, theft at retail stores, pan handling at most intersections. You don't want to go shopping, to be hit up for money at the stoplights. It would be an easy fix. The run down abandoned buildings, houses, and trashy yards

High amt of public housing, low education, poor school dist. Lack of educational opportunities including internships, apprenticeships and trade schools. Truck offers very little. Lack of community involvement. Lack of affordable things for families to do. So much drugs and crime. Inflation without income increases.

They only focus on big events that will bring revenue to the city and rest of time they are silent and don't keep city informed on what they are doing for this town there to bust trying feel there pockets if it don't make them money what's point of doing it just like these surveys will be ignored

The lack of activities for kids and adults. There is not much for entertainment other than a run-down movie theater, small trampoline park, a few parks that I wouldn't want to go to alone, and bars.

"Loaded firearm dumped in my yard Random gun shots right outside my house Two people selling drugs at the opposite corner derelict abandoned home "

would like to see more code enforcement concerning development and abandoned structures.

We need stuff for kids and families to do!!!!

How run down and dilapidated it looks once you get off the main road(s). We should care about all of it, not just what visitors see.

Poverty, crime, drugs. Not enough money to go around

Need of safer parks. More activities for young adults

"The town is only as good in the eyes of a visitor. As the worse property they see Dogs running loose every day; Homeless people The disrepair of the bricks on north main(rebed them or pave over it"

Our lack of willing to progress

"Lack of quality health care; To many abandoned properties; Retail poor options; Does not support the arts"

Crime, lack of affordable housing, lack of affordable transportation

Drug users everywhere

"No regular family activity or businesses, many community events are geared to helping and those in need, no indoor events, attractions or hang out areas. Some annual events but are expensive and no regular low cost events or places for a family and kids."

Shelby road condition

The amount of drugs and strung out people wondering the streets 24/7. City council spending tax money on county issues outside city limits

There is lack of parks and recreational activities, especially for differently abled persons. There is also a lack of grocery stores and entertainment venues for families. I do understand that this is a low income area and these places will generally cost more than people are willing or able to pay. It would be great if there were grants available to find these types of places.

POPLAR BLUFF'S GREATEST WEAKNESSES *Continued*

"Crime; Besides that is that this town is based off the good ol boys and they don't want anything new in the area. Why are we a "big" city there is no mall no chicfila no chipotle but we got 3 McDonald's and Taco Bell's and 15 Hispanic restaurants"

"Nasty community streets; Literally just mow and plant some flowers somewhere. I would totally apply for a job designing flower areas and gardens featuring native flowers and plants. The community could benefit from this sentiment of taking pride in the community"

We need to get a Sam's Club or a Costco.

Reliance on the good old boys system and the amount of drugs and increasing homelessness

Kids activities

Lack of community. Racism.

Limited choice of retail shopping, same fast food restaurant everywhere, not much for young kids or families to do

Our city politicians.

Drugs and homeless/loiterers are everywhere. Every street corner and intersection has a begger. I carry mace when I exercise on the street or in the parks because of druggies just wondering around

Authorities

Poor sense of community and belonging

Lack of variety in housing and entertainment

"Streets; Lack of code enforcement"

We have a huge issue with drugs and crime. We don't seem to have any control of it either.

Its' inability to bounce back from poor past leaders. Too many residents hung up on "how it was done" and unwillingly to help with change.

Drug, streets, run down houses , the city wasting our tax money.

Not very walking friendly. Needs sidewalks maintained and added. A dream would be a greenway like the Shelby road trail to connect most of the town to where people could get places by bike, e-bike, or walking/running.

Losing our local newspaper. Shows lack of community interest and quality of current paper.

Our weaknesses are our overdevelopment of mental health services and services for the poor such as low income housing. We are attracting the bottom of the barrel from across the state. We have more druggies walking the streets than other communities in the region. We also have a shortage of medical services. My family is going out of town for almost everything now including delivering our next child. I am a medical professional and we rarely get time off and have to work overtime because we can't attract the staff. We are currently looking for a 500k+ home and there are no options. We are over incentivizing poorly constructed starter homes and low income housing. No wonder medical professionals can't see themselves living here.

Welfare & drugs

Druggie, homeless, beggers

We have more rough areas than we do good areas. We've got to clean the town up (places and people) and make more areas safe and affordable.

Schools and things for teens

High tax rate for not much returns to the community benefits. New police station and high school buildings could have waited after other issues.

Lack of entertainment for youth.

Town leaders who only care about the money in their pockets. The roads really are horrible, and need more public spaces which are free to go.

There are not many entertainment things to do.

Senior services, healthcare, animal control, recreation for all ages

Lack of high end jobs.

Not enough family recreation

The Coliseum should be more community friendly.

Not enough entertainment in town anymore, for example the bowling alley and water park both shut down. We need fun things to go do.

Rent is too expensive

City Manager is a push over and the current council minus Depew, Smith and Horton.

Crime, drug use, lack of quality Healthcare, and our law enforcement agencies are lacking enough officers.

Entertainment for families

"More retail shopping; Restaurants"

Not enough events in this town to support businesses. Need year around events that bring more tourism

There is nothing to do here. Nothing with your family but the movies or skating, not really our thing. Nothing for couples.

People. Drugs and poverty. We have too many social programs that attract low functioning people.

Drugs city streets. Lack of family affordable activities unkept housing

Everything looks ugly and unkept.

the drugs and lack of pride in hometown

Entertainment, restaurants, shopping and cleanliness.

"Crime & drugs; Buildings abandoned or in bad repair; Not enough entertainment facilities Homeless, panhandlers, transient population Drugs"

Panhandling, drugs, The community needs to be more involved in being a neighborhood, looking out for each other and being kinder.

Entertainment

Drugs and homeless people on the streets. Violence and theft on the rise.

The Charming Old Town area is not safe for the average woman in day or night.

Majority min wage and factory jobs. ZERO entertainment options. Horrible sidewalks. No true cab or public transit. Drug problem. Poverty. Hospital has a bad reputation. Factories are struggling.

Not improving what needs fixed before starting/building a new project

There is nowhere for teens to hang out or things for high school students to do in their free time.

Drugs

No affordable housing for anyone! Need affordable housing options for Seniors, safety, drug addiction.

Location. We're just close and small enough to the larger nearby cities to really grow.

Filth, abandoned properties and lack of respect

Having a negative reputation as being drug and crime ridden

Housing is expensive and job options are lacking. Definitely could use more parks/activity areas

Drugs, lack of good grocery options, under-staffed police, panhandling.

Public not taking big enough positive interest in our town.

Lack of law enforcement

Crime rate, poor code enforcement, retail shopping options for children and plus size individuals is poor.

Lack of pride in ownership, people don't care about their surroundings, drugs, not much to do for children and families. Businesses fail because people here think everything is overpriced.

Homeless, school board and administration, lack of fun, safe activities for our teenagers and drugs.

The Main Street bricks. There's no excuse as to why this city should still have brick streets. They're impassible during icy conditions. They destroy motorists vehicles. And they're not fiscally-efficient enough to continue to maintain.

Entertainment is very lacking. If you want to do something fun you usually have to go out of town. The only thing we have is a movie theater.

Weaknesses are the parks and rec programs for kids, lack of recreational places for kids and parents to go, variety of places to shop and eat

Lack of restaurants and retail . Lack of recreational opportunities. We have a very old theater and no other interesting recreational opportunities .

Poplar Bluff faces a significant shortage of recreational and engagement opportunities for its youth, leaving many with few options for constructive activities. This lack of resources is especially concerning given the substantial young population in the area. Additionally, Poplar Bluff is economically disadvantaged, with many homes requiring extensive repairs. Compounding these issues is the increasing prevalence of homelessness, which underscores the urgent need for community development and support initiatives.

Sidewalks, outdoor activities, public transportation, things for both Children and teens to do. A lot of people leave Poplar Bluff every weekend to do something with their families. PB is really missing out on keeping that money here, because people don't come here unless it's to shop or for healthcare.

People that do not want to be a productive member of society and making them comfortable here.

lack of housing options, percent of rental properties compared to owner-occupied,

Long Online Survey: Is there anything that was not covered that you wish to add?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Number of people who left comments:

123

Comments in order of submission

More help for native poplar bluff and to find good jobs like at the post office, railroad, Ozark boarder, etc.

We need shopping strips with retails stores

knock down all the old buildings in downtown

The prevalence of drug use.

Nope

"I would love to see PB return to its roots of a strong community and history. As we have chased the fads of modern culture, trying to embrace big city trends and be the, ' cool guys' we have lost the character I fell in love with 30 years ago. Maybe this is why we are losing population. We should embrace our mid south, small city strengths- not abandon them."

Education on proper parking, walking where there's no sidewalks, and drivers should be educated on sharing the roads with bikes. Bike riders need educated on riding with traffic and shouldn't be scared off roads by drivers. Crazy people drive up on the back of bike riders, don't slow down, even cuss these people who are fortunate enough to own a vehicle. The police don't even seem to know Mo laws say to ride with traffic. Little kids walking the wring way almost get hit by cars that won't even slow down for them. And no parents around... cars parked blocking streets everywhere and parked facing the wrong direction.

PB needs more interested citizens to engage with the City government throughout the year, not just during this plan. Public input drives changes wanted by the citizens!

Our government officials all need to be looked into, legally. Our money and taxes are not being used correctly. The state of our town is proof.

Stop catering to a select few and forget this town is kept alive by the citizens you ignore.

Public gardens! Encourage walking and farmers market areas

Unhoused population is growing. Ignoring it does not make it go away. Please look at some real solutions to help our fellow citizens. Things such as ID drives, availability of public drinking water, more daytime warming centers that aren't the library.

a cab service that is reliable

The brick section of main street is hands down the worse street in poplar bluff. Either rebed it or pave it

Stop panhandling.

Crime rates

Even making minor improvements in PB's problems can lead to excitement of other's to contribute and take the first steps toward investing time and money into the city. The city should consider allowing similar benefits to small local businesses that it gives to large corporations that extract money from the town.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS *Continued*

City services not offered by the city such as leaf and limb pickup and recycling pickup are considered basic expectations by residents of most communities. Allowing residents to burn leaves and yard debris makes our town smoke central especially in the fall. With homes so close together, it makes enjoying the outdoors very difficult. This is also a danger as you can always read about fires that have gotten out of control. The city should absolutely institute a No Burning within the City Limits policy.

I am hopeful that with the turnover of city management growth, leadership, transparency, and accountability will be seen. And I would encourage a review of Police Department leadership and their budget to be examined. The city's next black eye will come from the eventual exposure of the activities and financial mismanagement within that department not to mention the treatment of employees which is resulting in an increased amount of turnover.

We really need better sidewalks!!

School entry/exit is in great need of a study/plan to optimize traffic flow. People who live in areas next to school are often trapped in their homes or out of their homes because of traffic flow. Especially at Middle School and Oneal school.

Develop the riverfront downtown.

It's always interesting to see how people word questions and ask certain questions to get the answers they want to tax the many to serve the few.

Not at this time

I love to see PB grow, but not to the point we do not take care of what PB already has to take care of.

I love community activities like tree lightings, egg hunts, parades etc. Those are great and it would be nice if we had more.

We do need more things for our youth/teenagers to do on the weekends. Somewhere they can safely gather.

With the opportunity of an interstate coming, please make the best of it and prepare for the extra congestion, need for demolition of old buildings, and encourage companies to come.

Ensure whatever plan is put in place follow-up and revisions are set in the calendar to ensure progress is made...

The sumlords. I forgot to mention the slumlords.

If the city of PB really wants to invest in the people of the community, they need to get out of their offices and talk to people. Show them they care and that they truly want to make a difference. People on south-end feel as if they are their own community due to the neglect they have felt for years.

lighting on township line road would be so nice because when it's deer season everyone driving is in danger.

We need more family things like places to eat that's not fast food and more retail stores plus things kids can do

"There needs to be more paid training programs for police, fire and EMT. To incentivize people following those career paths in our town. There needs to be a stronger focus on getting drugs off of our streets. "

I used to live in a town in Kentucky with 1/3 the population and far better overall amenities. Your taxpaying base is more than large enough to be doing better. Poplar Bluff Realty's monopoly must end.

Improvements to parks, more sidewalks, walking trails, bans on burning, stronger laws on dog owners and barking dogs in the middle of the night in the middle of town.

More things for kids to do. More family-friendly and affordable options

We need a community/youth center for kids. A family fun center with gym, walking track, swimming with lazy river, Bowling, arcade, ect. STE GENEVIEVE has a great community center to use as an example with a water park next door.

Poplar Bluff is just a piss poor neighborhood to live in I wouldn't even f****** think about raising my grandchildren in it let alone have a college here

The east and south sides of town are in absolute shambles. Needs attention. Perhaps the wealthier folks do not live there, but they still need to live with dignity

The north east side of Main Street is deteriorating quickly. The area is unsafe. The area along Spring Street, Main-Westwood is also having a lot of problems. Many burned out houses. Homeless walking the street all hours. We really have a homeless problem. They often are the cause of the fires in the empty - run down homes.

I think we should have a focus on maintaining our facilities before looking to add new facilities.

The city needs more employment opportunities. Currently most available jobs are part time, minimum wage positions. In order to attract and keep new residents we need higher income jobs.

"Why should home owners have to pay completely out of pocket to replace their broken sewer main where it's broken under the street where the road has broken apart and sunk in. The bypass needs help badly. "

We need more new residential development for middle to high income earners. The prices are going up due to lack of development. I want to sell my house for something nicer than a Jonas Duckett house.

No I already said it

I think the City is constantly selling a bag of goods to its citizens under the guise of it benefiting our local tax revenue. I.E. spending tourism tax to pay for a road in the county. That idea = stupid, and the amount of tourism tax money spent could have been used for something that would actually be a benefit within City limits. I.E. restoration or improvement of local parks or the addition of a public splash pad for kids.

Discounted services to have a pet spade or neutered, need more vetanarian services at affordable prices for low or no income people , may help with the unwanted pet population plus really inforce the laws of animal abuse

More family fun- plex, a mall, bowling alley more fun things to do

More on city beautification like street sweepers to clean the streets

I love this community, it has been my home initially in life, I moved away for educational opportunities, and made a choice to return for many different reasons. It was the greatest choice I ever made, I know our town isn't perfect, but the grass isn't always greener! When we look in the mirror we should focus on all the good we have to offer, safe, affordable, quiet, convenient, and in a few hours time you can be anywhere in the world! As new opportunities arise for investment in our community, I hope our citizens can step up and ring the bell to help make our town just a little bit better for everyone to enjoy!

Impeach the entire board and mayor!

"meant to add we need another place that does shakes, something like bringing the bowling alleys back or something similar or everybody to be able to enjoyed by everyone the gangs and all the shootings that are going on close to Main Street"

Provide safety in school, neighborhoods, more visibility of law enforcement, safety enforcement

We need to focus on building the city we have instead of trying to build a new one outside current city limits.

Recycling and recycling options aren't advertised enough for residents to know that they have options. Textile recycling would also be a great addition, as the nearest one is 3 or more miles away.

Get rid of the gambling establishments!

I just can't iterate enough that our children need safe places in town to walk/ride bikes. People should be able to cross the highway - safely by foot. And there are simple things to clean up the city - like banning burning in city limits.

Sidewalks, walking trails and more safe places for kids please.

The speeding in this town is bad..and paint on the roads & intersection needs to be done.

The Chamber is doing a great job to try to bring more funds to the area. I'd like to continue to see things for families and those with smaller children. We have traveled to St. Louis and Cape to attend events for families several times this past year, taking our money out of the area.

Law enforcement treat the whites the same as blacks.If your black it seems that don't do any thing

Free services need to end of taxes are supplying the funds. Free services need to end because they keep the poor poor and strain the middle and upper classes. It makes the middle class feel poor. Make them low cost if they are necessary for the scaffolding-type of city infrastructure. The infrastructure needs to improve if it is supporting the poor to NOT become self-reliant. Government handouts do NOT support citizens in becoming self-reliant. Knowledge is power. Teach or learn about true economics and government. Read "Whatever Happened to Penny Candy?" as a start.

More school opportunities needed and preschool daycare

Grants and financial assistance to help start more small businesses in historic downtown.

We need things for kids to do like an indoor playplace. Somewhere they can run and play and find friends. After the pandemic they need it more than ever and McDonald's took theirs down for some reason. The burger king one is ok but too small for all the kids here.

I'd like a little more transparency in how things are done with funds and to watch city council meetings somewhere

It might be nice to use services such as city wood chippers to create mulch the community could purchase for a low price or bring in branches for mulch at a low price.

The homeless situation and the amount of people wandering the streets that seem to be strung out

Community should include all in poplar bluff. Our city only helps the people they know or are known. There are other people in the community to. Help the little guy more than the big guys. Put more into the actually community and the citizens that make this community.

When, could there be, for mosquito's spray? Couldn't there be recycling , say 2 times a month (like in the St. Louis area), at a person's resident; without paying a charge for city pick-up?

There is a need for better medical options in our town.

The use of indoor Pickleball courts bc very limited availability.

"Lack of specialist MD Hospital that is way too $$$$"

Our youth has absolutely no chance to thrive in this town. Any young adult with any amount of sense gets out of this town as soon as they are able.

I would love it if you would create safe walking paths like you have out by ten box all over the city so that pedestrians can safely walk through town and stop lights without fearing being ran over by inadequate drivers.

Right hand turn lanes! We need better schools and more things for families to do. Cheap ones

More jobs. Better education. Places that hire teens. Trade schools. Get rid of Jim Bailey. Tear down empty houses and buildings. Build a better community.

Poplar Bluff is a great place to live. I wish more pride was taken by everybody in the beautification of our area.

Getting rid of the behavioral health in our area would help our community as a whole. They are trucking in all the problems from other areas and we are dealing with them.

I said I disagree with the city demolishing houses — the city SHOULD demolish structures but should NOT let the taxpayers bear the cost. Put a lien on the property for demolition and the owner bears that burden. Also sidewalks are public infrastructure — repairs should be done at the city's expense unless damage was done by the adjacent owner and can be proven. Curb and gutter is appropriate where infrastructure allows it, but can also exacerbate flooding issues if not done correctly — installing curb without proper stormwater systems will only cause gullywash issues.

I believe there are many of us who want to be part of the solution and not just gripe about the problems of our community, but so much of what needs to improve requires a much larger investment of time, energy and MONEY that doesn't appear out of thin air. We also suffer from some leadership that spends too much time defending the status quo rather than giving serious consideration to the need for change and how to achieve it. Again, studying successes of other communities of similar demographics may provide helpful insight and motivation. Thank you for soliciting input from citizens. That is a good starting point.

Stop pouring tax dollars into the art museum and Coliseum. Those places should generate enough revenue to support themselves. They don't because they offer very little to the community, cut them off and make them change. Look at the fantastic parks in st louis and unique activities for families, bring that to pb. We don't need to be bigger, we just need to be better. And affordable.

There is available retail/activity space empty all over town but nothing in them and rundown areas families don't want to go.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS *Continued*

The school system needs to be changed. We need to get the parents involved and I feel having an open door policy so they can volunteer while on social services or just to help out. We need more teachers and why not include the parents to be involved. Of course get a back ground check fingerprints. And get them equipped to have parent parent conferences when fights break out. Maybe this shit wouldn't leak out I. To the streets. It would be a safer neighborhood.

The community we strive for has lost sight of everything. A community garden in place of some of the down buildings in down town, even flowers to make arrangements. The Poplar Bluff community has shown time and time again that we can come together in times of hardship. We can make it easier. The pride in our town starts with looks. That may be as shallow as you think but it's true. When we look around and see concrete, weeds, and dilapidated houses and buildings, it does not evoke a sense of community membership and pride. Everything starts there. Bringing in new businesses, better school system, everything.

All of our city leaders should be elected by the people and more city decisions should be voted on by the people not decided by people appointed to pad their pockets.

I can't think of anything right now

"Isn't it nice to live in poplar bluff?"

No, this was a fairly comprehensive survey.

Demo the derelict homes.

Shelby road is horrible! Whoever built it owes the citizens to money back & someone else needs to be hired to pour it properly.

More ways to let community members know how to become more involved

I would love to see apartment complexes with full amenities. I recently visited a college town and their average rent is the same as ours but they have options. The specific place I visited was $1,000 a month for 2 bed 2 bath apartment but included utilities and had a pool, gym, etc.

Better schools. More jobs, pay teachers more

PB needs events or program where people can experience other cultures, food, learning language (Spanish, etc). Many people here don't know other cultures and they are closed minded.

Need more community events and locations, need apartments with pools and services

Thank you for caring for our community.

City and county dump availability.

City needs to annex outward

I love my home town. I was born here & I am so sad to see the levels of gun violence, drugs, & theft in our city. I'm proud of the growth the city has made with new businesses & hope it continues. Will admit that there are areas in the city proper that I will not travel to after dark for fear of dangerous people / situations. This town is full of good people with good hearts. I wish the bad element / criminal element didn't hurt the city's reputation as much as it does. I think Steve Halter is a great guy & is doing everything in his power to bring good things to our city. Shout out to Robbie Myers for doing the same. Love our local businesses & wish more would support them. The local library is fantastic, great programs & staff. Park Department also doing good things & working hard to provide kids fun, healthy activities.

People are running red lights on a routine basis. Consider red light cameras at 60 and PP as well as Shelby and PP.

More Parks and Recreation please with more safety like patrols and emergency call boxes.

The county roads that need fixed like the (M) highway that they keep patching and making worse needs fixed

Increased emphases on our healthcare community and it reputation

We need to pave our unpaved city streets, and change our zoning. If the gravel streets are in the boundary of the City of Poplar Bluff, then residences on those streets should be served by city authorities, police and fire… Not county.

Seniors should not have to pay for personal property taxes nor taxes on school and college. Give seniors a break.

COMMENTS FROM MAILED IN SURVEYS *(16)*

I support tax bonds to fund improvements. PB currently is the home of large corporate businesses (ie Walmart Menards cetera). These businesses in my opinion do not pay their fair share of city tech business taxes. As we know they, in recent years have record profits but do not give back to the communities. Consequently, I do not support local and county tax increases or bonds until corporate businesses increase their part. Public transportation and youth programs and services I think these items are of utmost importance. safe and affordable public transportation would allow a large population of our city to access work health care needed services and shopping which will only benefit the whole community and city services ie ambulance services, programs and facilities that serve our youth will with needs based outcomes will also return tenfold to our community investing in these two high needs areas. Is research based to growing a healthy city and will in return decrease city services that are expended in city in crime crisis based expenditures.

Two things, either refurb or demolish the old hospital on Pine Street. It is a huge eyesore to anyone on their first visit. To park bluff to there needs to be fences high enough to hide salvage yards and town. PS, one more thing we desperately need sidewalks on Westwood and ditch road for pedestrian safety. Many citizens cannot afford cars and walking for basic needs is unsafe.

The opportunity for small businesses is more of a citizen issue not a city issue. Citizens don't tend to go small businesses because they're expensive. The alleys around town need to be checked / graded and fixed more often are the various spots on the roads that are mostly fixed going to be finished?

Need greater variety of things like bookstores quality of shoe stores, decent bakery, open area for pets, greater separation of church and state in schools, greater support for getting grants. More teaching in schools and churches of ethics! ...

City streets are in terrible shape!!!

the city really needs to focus on appealing to younger generations who are becoming adults and move this city seem like a place to stay not leave. Also... - homeless population near Walmart; - health care; - invest in South Side redevelopment - streets - demolish old building; Attracting modern businesses with interstate development. More communication with elected leaders, art and music venues entertainment district focus on green utilities. I am leaving the city after this summer but these are the things being improved would help me consider it an option if I ever move back.

1) speed limit signs on thoroughfare streets 2) better policing sunset drive, Silvia street speeders 3) better flood control 4) better taxi service and more SMTs buses 5) Chucky Cheese or Showbiz 6) Denny's or IHOP or Cracker Barrel 7) Golden Corral 8) better animal control with laws on the books 9) Community Center 10) Community gardens 11) storm shelters for people 12) gunfire detector.

I work in healthcare and I see more homeless and drug addicts and murder on the streets. It's not safe in any neighborhood. The senior housing are poor, poorly kept, someone needs to step up and clean up the streets. These drug addicts and thieves approaching people getting out of their vehicles stores or a home is terrible. I have had them approached me when I have been at stoplight or at the towers and cottages in Walmart parking lot and coming out of the Hillcrest apartment.

We have a lot of buildings and houses literally abandoned the city should take responsibility in this area, especially at downtown area and neighborhood around too many commercial buildings empty and neglected hospital and school buildings abandoned. These buildings are not good image for our city. Please pay attention to this matter. I highly appreciate this survey opportunity. Thanks.

1). Too much crime and area drug violence find ways to keep them in jail. More police patrolling 2) many reports of domestic violence and newspaper education need on this repeated repeatedly and arrests not a slap on the hand 3) need established cooling and heating centers established before the need arises. Churches need to be involved and have police support 4) Give away buildings downtown that are in disrepair condemned with a short time to rehab or destroy by a new owner 5) move SEMO behavioral helps out of downtown, drug deals go on daily. I do not feel safe there establish a "satellite" police office there are plenty of buildings to choose from.

1) City needs to continue to pave the gravel streets. 2) Encourage more industries and business into the area with the completion of I-57. 3) If a house has become derlic and the owner refuses to do anything, then the fire department needs training to remove the building. 4) Add an exit and entrance to N. Main at the Tomorrow Oaks Bridge over 60. 5) Bring in more entertainment to the BR Coliseum 6) report the income from major events in the city. Does the city get any income from events like the eclipse or rock concert, other than tax revenue within the city limits or does it all go to the promoters and venue owners. If not, don't spend tax money paving county roads outside the city.

There are a lot of streets that are in need of repair. Streets need better lighting. Too many side-by-sides and four-wheelers on city streets. City needs to enforce yard cleanup.

Annex out to B Highway, up to KK Highway, and south to the County line.

I work in health care, and I see more homeless, drug addicts and murders on the streets. It's not safe in any neighborhood. The senior housing are poorly kept. Someone needs to step up and clean up the streets. These drug addicts and thieves approaching people getting out of their vehicles, stores or home is horrible. I have had them approach me when I have been at a stoplight, at the Towers and Cottages, in Walmart parking lot and coming out of Hillcrest apartment.

Housing - Stronger code enforcement on "junky" looking places. Clean up PB. ... I understand to get in senior housing there is quite a waiting list, which I'm sure fluctuates at any given time. ... Business - Coud definitely grow as our town grows! ... Community - I think it's probably this way all across the country right now unfortunately. ... As the town grows I think (arts) should grow. Thankful for the new Musterseed Artisan Market where people can display their craft and people can purchase if they so choose. Nice addition to PB!

Need more man hours spent overlooking derelict housing.

I would like to submit suggestions for ways to improve Poplar Bluff. Having recently moved here from Joplin, MO, I've noticed things that need attention, in my opinion. 1) Many shopping areas and parking lots are very poorly marked / laid out. People drive too fast, cutting across unmarked areas. The striping is nonexistent at the south end of Big Lots and horrible a the Goodwill/Starbucks area - it's complicated and dangerous. The lane between Huck's and Hobby Lobby has no yield or stop sign / striping, I've narrowly escaped an accident driving straight in front of Hobby Lobby. Nobody can tell me who handles this. 2) Pickleball courts would be nice. 3) Lots of new subdivisions are southwest of town; there are no parks in that area. Another Aldi's would be awesome around M Highway and 67. 4) Township Line Road is a narrow road with no shoulder. Lots of new subdivisions here - a sidewalk would be nice. Also M Highway west of 67 - lots of new subdivisions with no sidewalks or shoulder. (Emailed comment)

2026 SURVEY

An additional survey was presented to the public in 2026 as public comment on the Poplar Bluff Housing Study and to determine how city residents feel about funding options.

The online survey collected 93 responses after the same type of social media push that produced much more responses during the 2024 survey.

DEMOGRAPHICS

More women (62.9%) than men (37.1%) took the survey while the age of respondents were 8.1% in their 20s, 21.0% in their 30s, 29.0% in their 40s, 17.7% in their 50s, 11.3% in their 60s and 12.9% were 70 or older. The majority of respondents owned their own home (93.4%).

CITY FUNDING OPTIONS

This survey featured a separate section for city residents, of which there were 65, that were asked an additional five questions:

- **Did you vote in the last election, or plan to vote April 7?**

Yes, 84.6%; No, 15.4%

- **Which statement best reflects your opinion of the Use Tax?**

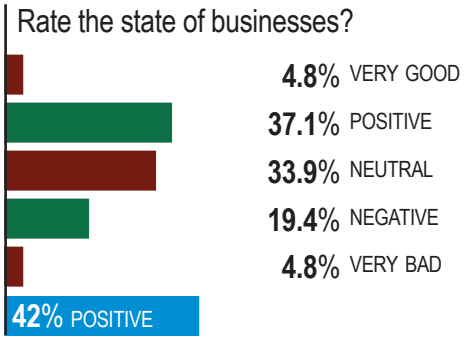
27.7% - Would support if funds were dedicated to specific improvements;
24.6% - I might support it depending on the project;
21.4% - I do not support new taxes;
13.8% - I need more information about it;
12.3% - I support a Use Tax;

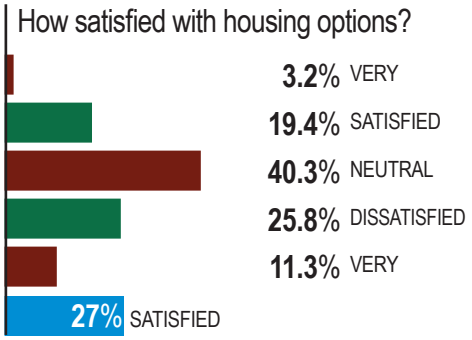
- **If the City adopted a Use Tax, which of the following would you most want the funding used for?**

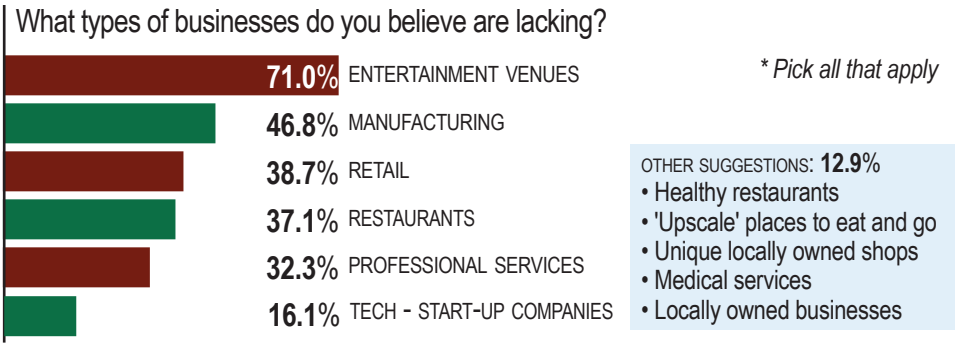
57.1% - Street repair, including Shelby Road;
46% - Blight removal / property cleanup;
41.3% - Downtown revitalization;
36.5% - Economic development;
22.2% - Parks & Recreation improvements;
17.5% - Community sportsplex;
17.5% - Sidewalk improvements / additions;
12.7% - Storm water and drainage;
9.5% - Mosquito abatement / reduction;
9.5% - Other, not listed. (responses included - Competitive pay for employees, splash pad, anything downtown, housing, mental health, street repair but not Shelby Road.

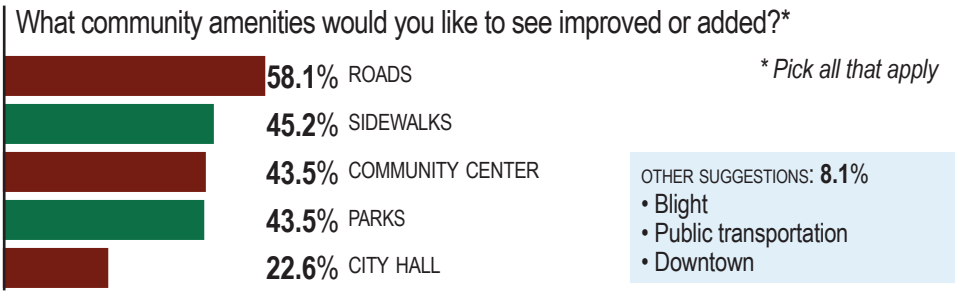
- **To offset the loss of tax revenue for the City, what is the best option?**

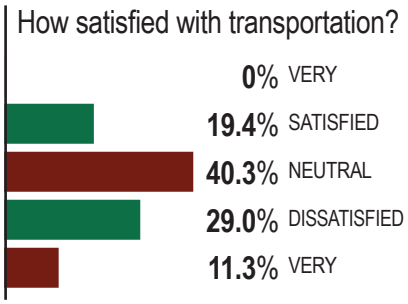
52.3% - Expand the city limits;
27.7% - Use Tax approval;
18.5% - Cuts to services, staff;
1.5% - Raise current taxes.

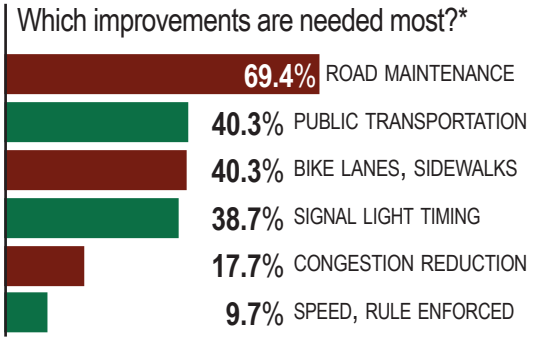


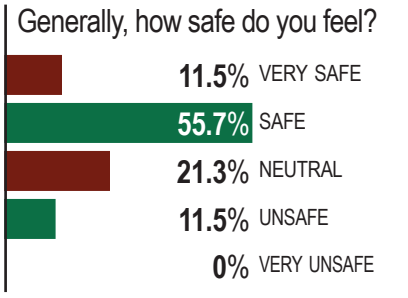


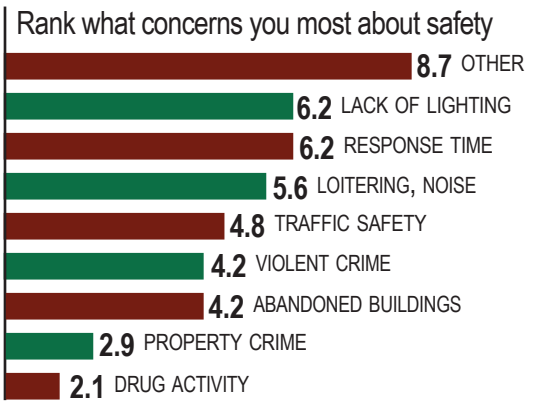












Please share any additional thoughts, concerns or suggestions you have regarding the future of Poplar Bluff

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

I do believe that we HAVE TO have a city that is responsible take charge of their employees and have checks and balances. The lack of care and pride in this city is horrible. We need to provide EXCEPTIONAL care for our community.

Finding a competent and experienced city manager.

Stop importing drug abusers and homeless into PB!

Stop trying to force a use tax and incorporate more of the county. Housing developments need to be brought into the city limits. They enjoy our library etc. Other cities grow that way. Our population is stagnant while the county grows. Look at Springfield, MO and how it has grown over the last 100 years. Every housing development is incorporated into the City.

Homelessness, panhandlers, gambling

Our city council has become a joke

It's nothing to be proud of anymore. run down, boring, over priced homes. Take note from Dexter Alisha Trammel has that town looking good, business coming, jobs. Parks is much nicer, no druggies walking the streets.... She is what a Chamber should be striving to do. Out with the old and in with the new. It's time.

Enforce daily fines on the owners of the run down properties (especially Doctors hospital) This would generate revenue and clean our city up without using tax payer money. New restaurants are great but we need job opportunities that pay enough to support families. We have to stop the drug problem in order to better our workforce. Implement drug free programs in elementary schools and or the workplace would be a start.

Historically the city has been terrible with properly handling tax payer dollars. I expect in the future that this issue be resolved. There is a time and place for additional taxes and higher taxes, however, we also must take pride and fix and repair what's already in place. When installing anything new or making repairs, let's spend ensure that it's of higher quality materials so we aren't constantly repairing and everyone isn't constantly complaining about the infrastructure (Shelby Rd as an example). It's financially responsible to fix what's already there. We need to spend time revitalizing downtown, let's come up with tax incentives, help find grant money, etc to assist building owners. Repairing downtown buildings is extremely expensive but necessary. Perhaps not just for downtown, perhaps for all of town. It's expensive to make building repairs and updates. We have a lot of mental health resources in the area but laws or ordinances are needed to require plan of action to return to their homes upon discharge from these resources. This lack of requirement/assistance to return home has created a huge homeless issue in town which has created a domino affect in increasing crime, property damage, violence, pedestrian traffic, drugs, prostitution, etc. we must take pride in our town and clean it up and make it look welcoming and inviting so tourism dollars increase. Many smaller towns throughout the state have very nice curb appeal. Poplar Bluff definitely does not. We need to utilize the Coliseum better. The city is paying the bills for the coliseum and most of the year it sits unused. This is a huge waste of money. There is so much that can be improved and it's possible to do if the right people are involved, the right hearts are in it, tough decisions are made and transparency with the community is present to get community buy in. Can we do fundraising instead of increased taxes? I'm not educated enough on if this to know if it is possible but what I do know is if there's a will, there's a way and sometimes we have to think outside the box.

Why spend our tax dollars to build bike lanes? They don't pay taxes or buy fuel. They don't have to have a license and they certainly don't follow basic traffic laws.

Need strong honest people on city counsel. Should not be able to table issues more than twice, otherwise it is a waste of time

Before we go adding anything new, we need to fix and maintain what we have. Let's fix up downtown. When we hire someone to build a road, hold them accountable to a standard so you don't have a road everybody hates driving (Yes, I'm referring to Shelby). For that matter when spending tax payer dollars, please ensure everything is held to a high standard. Then things such as a Use Tax might be easier to get passed.

The homelessness problem and panhandling is out of control. If law enforcement can't do something about it because of state or federal laws, we need to be meeting with state legislators and congress to discuss options to get it under control.

The city of Poplar Bluff continues to put Bandaids on wounds that could be fixed by taking Bluff off the blood thinner. Forget about the issues at face value and focus on making Poplar Bluff an attractive place for business to invest. Its is the only way a society or neighborhood can be raised out of poverty.

Improve public transportation, improve the housing issue for the homeless, funding for DEI programs

The citizens of Poplar Bluff should not foot additional taxes, such as Use. For many, this could, or would, be additional reasons to move out of city limits into the county, or further. We have leveraged city citizens to breaking point with taxes. I, too, have weighed the benefits of at least relocating to the county to avoid future hikes and added taxation. I want to stay in the city, and I'm still optimistic, but the burdens are beginning to creep up and could outweigh the benefits very soon. This needs to be a very meticulously planned process and should only move forward with the advice and guidance of citizens who represent and are invested in growth and the community. Far too many people, especially people who don't live in the city or experience life in the city limits, influence the community direction. We've become complacent about historical rule and regulations about ensuring city positions and careers are filled with people that live in the city limits. This creates a tense atmosphere, and greatly reduces the the ownership and benefits of the original intention of those regulations.

Abandoned properties which are overgrown. Occupied homes with junk everywhere.

The sidewalks and roads in this town are abysmal and truthfully embarrassing. We need to put money into these things and not lining the pockets of the already well off. This town could be a beautiful spot in Missouri and instead we are a literal laughing stock of the state with the crime rates and roads.

If Poplar Bluff expanded city limits to include West Bluff, we would be able to improve several parts of the community that are lacking and we could make lives more affordable.

Housing is a huge problem and must be addressed. There is not enough housing at any price level, but especially true for starter style homes.

Harsher penalties for theft, breaking and entering and robbery.

COMMENTS ON HOUSING STUDY

Please share any thoughts, concerns or suggestions you have regarding housing in the Poplar Bluff area.

Most of the houses in city limits are old and ghetto. That is why most people prefer to live inthe county.

Improve Code Enforcement to force both owners and landlords to maintain their properties.

Please tear down abandoned houses and buildings. It is blight. The area around Main could bebeautiful with the beautiful park. Those nice homes should be worth much much more buthaving falling down houses on the same street and drug addicts loitering won't transform itback to its former beauty

Ordinances should be enforced!!!

We need AFFORDABLE single family housing in safe areas.

There is not enough reasonable rental property, not necessarily low income housing. Youngpeople can't afford to leave home with the rental rates.

I'm not certain that I can say that there's a housing crisis in Poplar Bluff. I know rent hasincreased, I know the value of homes has increased. I know there's a huge gap between"wealthy" and "poverty". I'd love to see the gap between those closed a bit more but I think wehave to do everything different to close the gap. Education must improve. We must marketand advertise and entice lower income to want to be more educated, want to better themselvesand we must change welfare and disability requirements. Again, there's so much to be saidhere, however, there's nothing wrong with renting or owning but taking pride in the spaces inwhich we dwell is important. Again, the owners must be responsible and maintain the buildingsand upkeep the properties. Taxes must be reasonable, pricing must also be reasonable andinsurance must be reasonable. Pride is a must.

Homelessness housing

Access to affordable housing is terrible, PB housing is great but not enough supply to meet thedemand

I concern is there is not a lot of options due to businesses & slum lords buying propertywithout any regard for the people in this town

Great report. It clearly shows that we are doing this to ourselves. Poverty continues to tocreate ongoing need for below grade housing, and there are plenty of rental owners willing toown and fill that need. And then the offset, when decent real estate does hit the market intown, the realtors don't let it see the market and snatch it up for more rentals. That homeownermap was so sad for the entire community. I really appreciated the dot map, or heat map, thatdisplayed how much easier it is in our town to own just outside of town, rather than in it. Iwould love to see it expanded, as I believe that would further exemplify the very real issue. When the market is as lopsided as it is now, you clearly see the poverty class growth. And thisis not to say it is their choice, but rather the economic circumstances that push them towardsan almost certain outcome. What options are presented? That median income is a slap in theface. The cost of living shouldn't be considered a bolster either, but rather a prediction factorwarning of the eventual decline of the town property spiral that is continuing to this day. Hasanyone ever researched the idea of a tax break for city citizens as an incentive forinvestment? Could you imagine a tax proposal for use tax, but then reversed for city citizens,so that they got a break others didn't? I think it's this kind of thinking that we need to actuallyaddress the real concerns and attempt to reverse our current trajectory.

More affordable housing is needed. Not for me personally, but in the community.

Cost of insurance is outrageous. We need to look at the flood plans for southside and eastside. If we could change some of them we could lower insurance. Flood insure alone is over$100 a month. Makes landlords raise prices. 50k house @7.5% interest before taxes cost you almost $500

2025 PARK DEPARTMENT SURVEY

Results of online survey from July 2025:

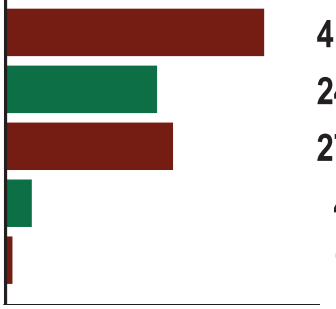
415
RESPONSES



Most visited parks among respondents:

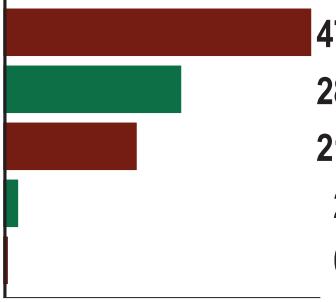
McLane (86%)
Henderickson (59%)
Whiteley (56%)
Coliseum Center (52%)
Kiwanis Bacon (48%)
Huntington Pool (29%)
Ozark Ridge (19%)
Hillcrest (18%)
Ray Clinton (14%)
Black River (13%)
Shelby Taril (12%)
Downtown (10%)
Dog Park (10%)
Wheatley (7%)
Ferguson (6%)
Skate (6%)
Sportsman's (5%)
Linc (4%)
Wiseman (2%)
Leist (1%)

City should add more parks



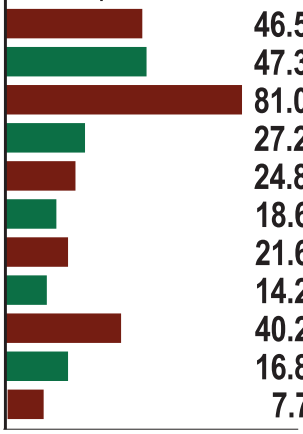
41.5% ABSOLUTELY
24.6% AGREE
27.5% NEUTRAL
4.9% DISAGREE
1.5% NO

City needs more recreation programs



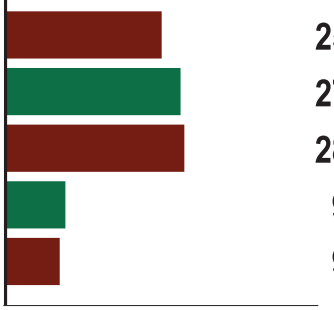
47.7% ABSOLUTELY
28.6% AGREE
21.4% NEUTRAL
2.3% DISAGREE
0.0% NO

Which park amenities should be added



46.5% PLAYGROUND
47.3% REC CENTER
81.0% SPLASH PAD
27.2% WALK-BIKE TRAIL
24.8% NATURE TRAIL
18.6% SPORTS FIELD
21.6% BASKETBALL COURT
14.2% TENNIS-PICKLEBALL
40.2% FISHING ACCESS
16.8% ARCHERY RANGE
7.7% OTHER

Should Park Dept. ask voters to fund an additional quarter-cent sales tax to expand parks and recreation in Poplar Bluff?



25.1% ABSOLUTELY
27.5% AGREE
28.1% NEUTRAL
9.8% DISAGREE
9.5% NO

DEMOGRAPHICS

City resident?



49.9% YES
50.1% NO

Gender



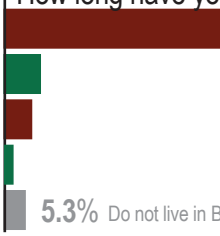
21.0% Male
79.0% Female

Have children under 16?



71.1% YES
28.9% NO

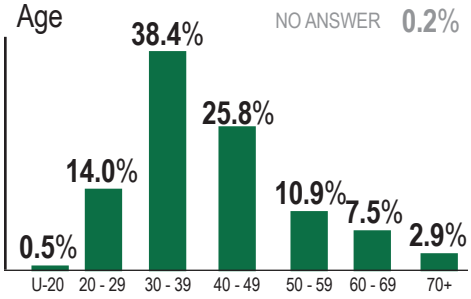
How long have you lived here?



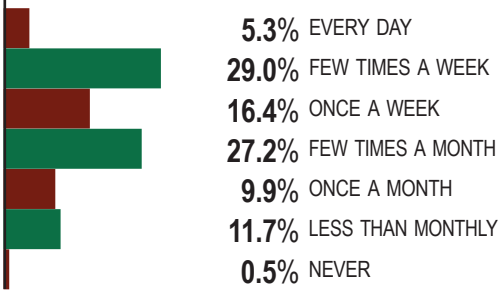
78.0% 10+ yrs
8.2% 6-10 yrs
7.7% 1-5 yrs.
0.7% Less 1
5.3% Do not live in Butler County

Age

NO ANSWER 0.2%

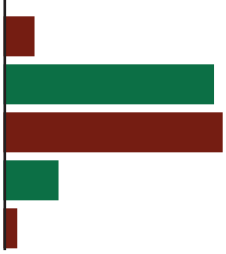


How often do you visit a City park



5.3% EVERY DAY
29.0% FEW TIMES A WEEK
16.4% ONCE A WEEK
27.2% FEW TIMES A MONTH
9.9% ONCE A MONTH
11.7% LESS THAN MONTHLY
0.5% NEVER

How well-maintained are park facilities



6.2% GREAT
38.4% GOOD
42.5% SOMEWHAT
10.6% NOT GOOD
2.3% BAD

Online Park Department Survey:

What kind of recreation programs would you like to see?

Number of people who left comments:

160

Comments in order of submission

Life skills, hobbies

Children & young adults programs

We enjoy the pickle ball courts and walking tracks at mclane park

Improve the football program to what it use to be. Elderly recreational programs.

"Open enrollment for fall ball. Not everyone knows a coach.
Some type of water recreation. "

Splash pad, walking trail around a pound you can fish in like Cape has and St. Louis has.

Pickleball leagues

More outdoor activities other than sports . More to do with nature and the animals

Sand volleyball

More Disc Golf courses.

"1- More recreational and less competitive leagues. As an example we should have some short season kid/athlete coached or "coach less" leagues for basketball/soccer/softball/etc.
2- coaches/referee clinics for all sports. Should be required to coach/referee.
"But not enough people will be available to coach". See #1."

Splash Pads, Music and Arts Festivals, Programs for youth and teens.

Something like an indoor YMCA open to youth throughout the days so to have available activities in the heat of the summer days.

Splash pad and toddler programs

Laser tag area, bowling, jungle gym, etc area for adults like a Dave and Busters.

Splash pad, water park, new skating rink, stuff adults can do

The parks and recreation department does an excellent job providing a wide variety of programs, athletic activities, and educational programs. We loved the summer kickoff partnership with the public library and would love to attend even more events like that!

We need sidewalks. It would be nice to have sidewalks to walk and exercise on all throughout the city. I live off Baron and it's impossible and dangerous to try and walk to the park from my house with my kids. Sidewalks make for a healthier population overall. They would be such an asset to the community. Safe sidewalks everywhere in City limits is something I would love to see.

Yoga in the park. Shuffle board for seniors. More activities for pets at the dog park. Dog swim day to return at the pool.

Activities for seniors!

I'd prefer to see a splash pad in a safe neighborhood park. Maybe even two since our town is good sized.

Disk golf in a safe environment. Playground equipment in a safe environment. Indoor family activities, bowling, etc

"Running club for adults and kids
Family night at The park with games
Movie night at The park
"

I would like to see a shooting sports program. And facilities that are city owned

Animal parks

More programs for children

Bike path for regular bikes

Baseball tournaments Bringing in traveling teams from out of area.

Baseball for boys over age 15

Swimming classes

Art classes, a fishing lake as promised, a food truck park, a better indoor pool and rec center (see the one at Rolla for example)

I think the park program has come a long way from days of just soccer and baseball now has a huge variety it is growing in leaps and bounds

Larger car shows, hot air balloons, up to date movie theater, nice skating rink, bowling, like incredible pizza

fishing pond

I would like to see more sidewalks. More bike-friendly roads. More safety crosswalks.

Indoor soccer

Walks, dog activities, water activities

Basketball and pickleball! So many people would play.

Splash pad and linking all of our trails.

Youth football

Water park would be so nice! Me and my family use to love going when we had one here in Poplar Bluff now we have to go to Cape.

mud volleyball

Anything that the kids and teenager can do to keep them off the streets

Anything

Archery!!! Childrens tennis, community track and field, community basketball and football.

Walking park near the police station that would be safe. Even McClain is not safe

Anything that is a decent price.

Neighborhood programs since kids usually dont drive. Sports, woodworking, simple cooking, day camping.

Volleyball basketball

A splash pad

Better play ground equipment and more of that black stuff so the kids don't get hurt underneath the equipment

Aquatics center with water park and outdoor public pool

Expansion of soccer fields, additional community sports fields with ability to host tournaments.

You could add some adult education "fun" classes taught by community members.

Indoor soccer complex

Horseback riding lessons

More youth sports and community events at parks

More adult programs based around physical health rather than competition. Sometimes it's hard to join programs for social reasons due to the veteran players.

Group activities for seniors.

Splash pad for kids a kids museum

Programs for seniors would benefical.

A water park

A better pool with more swimming activities

"More adult leagues.

Wiffleball, Kickball"

Splash pad waterpark

More soccer, basketball, baseball, anything really

Bowling, Waterpark for kids, wildlife classes - like are done at the Lake

Water park or splash pad

Water outdoor park like a splash pad

Water parks

Dance programs & stuff all year round

More swimming, water parks/splash pads, camps for children.

More nature things for kids such as 4H.

Splash pad or waterpark similar to pokey

Arts and Crafts, Splash Park, Trap Field other than at the gun club, archery.

All sports. Camps, leagues, weekly sports nights etc..

More youth programs for kids 4-5 years

Splash pads, more activities for children, a park with a fence around it

Shorter swim lessons schedules, not all summer long. Many travel and want to do it in a condensed manner.

City league sports, archery programs, water parks

"Lacrosse
Hockey"

Would love to see a community center with a smaller waterpark, recreational area.

More group events at the parks. Themed runs, holiday runs, live music in the park, craft days, festivals in the parks, obstacle courses, rope courses.

Pickle ball tournaments, cornhole, bike days, skate days.

"Classes on health & fitness
Ultimate frisbee league!!
Variety of Kids camps during summer!
Sports clinics
Dodgeball!
Sand volleyball"

Preschool age, things for adults with childcare provided (like a YMCA)

A splash pad similar to Pocahontas

Things for kids of all ages. A waterpark etc

Something for the younger kids, toddlers specifically.

Outdoor playplex/aquatic center. Something similar to Pocahontas, AR aquatic center. I knew there's an outdoor pool and the coliseum but this would be more toddler/kid friendly.

Bowling, mini golf, knife/axe throwing, escape room. Music bingo not on a Wednesday night. Anything for teens to stay out of trouble.

Water activities

Things children can do that is a safe & fun environment. This would help keep them out of trouble & running the streets. Bored children typically find themselves in trouble.

Youth tennis, pickleball.

Biking program for kids , volleyball

Things geared more toward families with little children.

Water park

older age football, pickleball, wiffle ball

More family activities, hands on projects

More basketball for younger ages would be nice.

Pickleball, more organized leagues for children's sports also

Waterpark. Guided nature walks. Town square park with full day time and evening food vendors

Take over control of black river coliseum aquatics and fitness

Some water activities. Saw in Bentonville a very nice water play place. Just had the shots of water coming out of the ground. Nice concrete surround where parents could sit

Anything to keep our community engaged and moving in the right direction.

We have enough

Please take over the Coliseum indoor pool. Please keep it in operation and in good repair. Clean it up with new paint and replace warped doors. Our community needs it and it needs help.

Splash pads, youth athletic complex

Splash pad, waterpark, place for free fishing.

Baseball

14/13u baseball program in the fall

More for adults. More for 17-21 yr olds.

Splash pad	20.6%
Water park	11.9%
Young / toddler	6.9%
Pickleball	6.3%
More of current	5.0%
Bowling	4.4%
Anything	3.8%
Fishing	3.8%
Hobbies	3.8%
Colisuem improve	3.1%
Life skills	3.1%
Archery	2.5%
Camps for kids	2.5%
Outdoor / nature	2.5%
Senior rec	2.5%
Sidewalks	2.5%
Open fall ball	1.9%
Basketball	1.9%
Football	1.9%
Indoor pool	1.9%
Kids golf	1.9%
Playgounds	1.9%
Soccer - indoor	1.9%
Sports complex	1.9%
Volleyball	1.9%
Walking trails	1.9%
Baseball - Travel	1.3%
Clinics sports	1.3%
Community center	1.3%
Disc golf courses	1.3%
Events	1.3%
Flag football	1.3%
Kickball	1.3%
Kids tennis	1.3%
Lacrosse	1.3%
Music events	1.3%
Pets events	1.3%
Sand volleyball	1.3%
Shooting sports	1.3%
Soccer fields	1.3%
Swimming lessons	1.3%
Wiffleball	1.3%
YMCA programs	1.3%
Adult rec leagues	0.6%
Adult basketball	0.6%
Animal park	0.6%
Baseball	0.6%
Better coaches	0.6%
Better pool	0.6%
Bike track	0.6%
Biking program	0.6%
Boxing	0.6%
Car shows	0.6%
Change rules	0.6%
Cornhole	0.6%
Dance	0.6%
Dodgeball	0.6%
Escape room	0.6%
Family fun center	0.6%
Fencing	0.6%
Fitness classes	0.6%
Food trucks	0.6%
Health & fitness	0.6%
Hockey	0.6%
Horseback riding	0.6%
Hot air balloon	0.6%
Indoor activities	0.6%
Indoor rec	0.6%
Knife/ax throwing	0.6%
Movie night	0.6%
Museum	0.6%
Music / Art lesson	0.6%
Obstacle course	0.6%
Putt-putt	0.6%
Rec leagues	0.6%
Rock wall	0.6%
Rope course	0.6%
Running club	0.6%
Shuffle board	0.6%
Skating rink	0.6%
Tennis - youth	0.6%
Track & field	0.6%
Ultimate league	0.6%
Volleyball - Mud	0.6%
Water activities	0.6%
Yoga	0.6%

CONTINUED: What kind of recreation programs would you like to see?

Kids golf

More aquatics, splash pad, complete update of the BRC pool, water park that is small/manageable but offers something (like Farmington or Cape). In the middle of the walking track at McLane Park maybe be an ideal location.

More programs for kids in the summer

Bigger soccer park with parking and an outdoor water park!

Splash pad for younger kids, AAU & Club sports events - soccer, basketball, etc… we spend A LOT of time and $$ in other cities and states traveling for ball when we could have events (and revenue) right here in PB.

For kids

Sport clinics

Swimming upgrades (in doors). Parks with playground equipment for younger kids, tennis courts.

Swim Pad

More sports camps

Splash pad for kids

More things for kids to do, splash pads, better equipment

Fishing pond, pickle ball courts, a place where families can go for music entertainment with out alcohol.

Lacrosse

Water features such as splash pads, fishing pond, nature trails, craft festivals,

Splash pad or a sports complex

I would LOVE to see a better indoor pool for our local summer and winter swim team! And not only for our little kids but for our high schoolers as well. The Coliseum is NOT a fit place for any age child also an embarrassment when we host swim meets. The facility is lacking in cleanliness and the staff that is there is always hiding out in the office and not watching kids. I have sat there watching my kid practice and had seen mice running around as well as roaches crawling around on the tables. I wish these kiddos had a cleaner and safer environment to go to.

Youth baseball without team picks. Meaning without being able to enroll your entire team. It has deterred my child from playing because he does not play travel ball and his team list every game. Not fun for anyone.

Like Big Dreams back in the day, I do wish we still had a water park, bowling alley

An outdoor splash pad to take my grandkids to!

Fishing!

Summer daycamps for pre-teens/teens. Crafting, cooking, sewing, STEM, etc

More teenage/ young adult programs

Group activities for kids and adults

Splash pad, archery, tennis and pickleball completions

My daughter participates in buddy ball. We do not live in PB. We do visit Easterseals a lot too. If you had a splash pad we would visit. We loved visiting the water park you use to have in town.

YMCA type programs

Splash pad, bowling, family fun center, updates to coliseum

Pickleball, kickball

I enjoy the programs currently provided and feel they're sufficient

Cooking classes, more outdoor fitness classes (yoga/Zumba/couch to 5k walking club), Art in the Park event.

Youth Volleyball

Splash pads, play grounds in SAFE areas of town, Colliseum updated and improved.

Water park

A recreation center is desperately needed.

Splash pad, better indoor pool a gym like Dexter does

Things for kids to do

You do an incredible job! Keep up the good work!

Rec league basketball!

We need less monstrous and unattractive builds like the pickle ball thing at Mclane and more sensory inclusive parks like the one that needs to get built in Mclane. All that money for that ugly pickleball park could have went into something that more people enjoy. Only a select amount of people enjoy pickleball and there are more families than single young people in this town. Plus, it's just ugly. An eyesore to that beautiful park.

"Indoor soccer
Flag football extend age /grade level and sign up for the FREE NFL Flag Football League "

Ones that coaches actually give there team they want to coach a decent effect. If not than be banned from coaching.

Basketball and flag football

Fencing, boxing, non-competitive sports. A rock wall. Internships for teens. Classes that teach skills. A bike track for kids with bmx/mountain bikes with small jumps and banks. Like a big circle where parents can see them to supervise but big enough to have fun. Splash pad. Archery & shooting sports. A open space for crafting with a kiln to borrow.

Fall baseball going back to all kids. It's crap you have to know somebody or be somebody to be included in fall baseball/softball.

Pickleball league, kid golf camp,

Splash pad

I would love to see a golf camp for youth kids!

Indoor activities, bowling, etc.

Online Survey:

What other park amenities not listed would you like to see?

Number of people who left comments:

92

Comments in order of submission

Indoor pool

Community pool in a different area

More picnic tables.

Sand Volleyball

"Water recreation, Pool, Water park, lazy river, Toddler pool"

A splash pad for dogs

More grills for family days

Disc Golf

"Security Cameras.
Police presence.
A textable phone number to timely alert parks and rec about issues. Nobody calls any more. "

A civic center with a small affordable Waterpark world be amazing. A Waterpark similar to Farmingtons world be such a drawn to smaller communities.

Indoor basketball area, baseball, soccer, etc

Love the idea of community building. I would gladly volunteer my time.

Bigger pavilion at McClain park.

Shuffle Board

Add a water slide at pool like Dexter, West Plains, Farmington even little ol Pocahontas Ar has

More for children with disabilities

Stuff for kids

More disc golf

Outdoor shooting range

Shade over playgrounds so the equipment isn't blazing hot.

Community center/YMCA type facility

Bowling center

Water park!

Well maintained restrooms at all parks. Water fountains. Outdoor seating like picnic tables.

Water park

volleyball courts outside

Sand volleyball, more baseball fields, improved sidewalks for walking in town

Safe walking patk

Parking is a huge issue at mclane. Nicer bathrooms,

Movie nights

Pools

Water park

A children's museum!!

Indoor sports facility

Waterpark, bowling alley, putt putt golf course, nice playgrounds in the western part of poplar bluff

A water park

I know that a bowling alley is not a city item probably but I think a bowling alley would be used a lot.

Indoor walking facility for extreme cold and extreme heat.

Batting cages

More equipment for younger toddlers.

Volleyball courts, batting cages, public pool in a good area.

Trap Field

Mini golf, Park that's more toddler friendly, something for young adults.

Sporting facilities better maintained, city backed sports tournaments

"More parking! Please fix the congestion at sporting events. A one way with separate exit would help with the terrible congestion at McClain for baseball. Then adding pickle ball and letting them play while games go on and not have enough parking to begin with only adds to the frustration. Please make more parking and a better infrastructure of roads in and out. Second, at Whitely people park wildly in the gravel lot sometimes triple parking or blocking entire rows from existing. Another way out and more parking is needed."

Spotsplex

I could only pick 4 but all of the above.

More shaded picnic areas-higher quality picnic tables at existing parks!

Water park, something for toddlers and or babies.

Any outdoor water that would be appropriate for small kids

Waterpark/pool in a better area of town

Indoor pickleball courts available year round

Waterpark

Par 3 golf course

Batting cages

Volleyball nets indoor & outdoor.

Additional swimming areas.

Water park/slide

city water park like cape girardeau has

Whitely Park needs updated

Community water park

Food vendor courts

YMCA

Maintain the coliseum pool. Fix and clean it up before adding new stuff. It is used by so many people and it needs a good cleaning and painting.

Large indoor athletic complex- like cape & Springfield

Splash pad

Covered playgrounds and or fences around playgrounds to help contain children who elope.

Grass infield baseball field

Better and cleaner indoor pool

Waterpark

Better public tennis courts would be nice

I would like to see updated playground equipment/parks in better areas of town.

Indoor volleyball court, or something similar to the new pickle ball court.

Water Park	18%
Indoor sports	10%
Pool	7%
Picnic tables	3%
Community building	3%
Accessible playground	3%
Bowling	3%
Restrooms	3%
Outdoor volleyball	3%
Parking	3%
Batting cages	3%
Parks in better location	3%
Sand volleyball	2%
Drinking fountains	2%
Disc golf	2%
Shooting range	2%
Shade playground	2%
Sidewalks	2%
Putt-putt	2%
Upgrade parks	2%
Dog splash pad	1%
Grills	1%
Security	1%
Pavilion at McLane	1%
Shuffleboard	1%
Kids	1%
Movie nights	1%
Museum	1%
Indoor walking	1%
Par-3 golf	1%
Food vendors	1%
Grass infield baseball	1%
Tennis courts	1%
Off-road trail	1%
Lessons at skate park	1%
Family fun center	1%
Rock wall	1%
Bike park	1%
Fencing	1%
Boxing	1%

CONTINUED: What other park amenities not listed would you like to see?

Again, I would LOVE to see a better indoor pool facility for the kids that swim year round. As I previously stated BRC has several issues with cleanliness, rodents, bugs, and staffing that doesn't seem interested in the job that they are getting paid to do. My daughter has been swimming competitively in the community for the last 4 years; we have been a part of the swim community for 4 years and we absolutely love both of our swim programs in the winter (year round) and summer! This sport has been an amazing experience for my daughter as well as my family and others in the community. Whether it be changes in BRC or just starting over and building a newer/ nicer more appropriate facility for all these kids and their families that are involved in swim team would be so beneficial.

It would also be beneficial to the community to have a place for anyone that just wants to take their kids to play, lap swim, water arobecis and a lot of physical therapist will recommend water therapy but hate to go to BRC due to the state that the facility is in. It is truly an embarrassment when the high schoolers and the little kids have meets in that facility because of the lack of attention it gets.

Another off-road trail!

Maybe some lessons/group outings for teenagers at the skate park.

A park in a cleaner and safer area

Hydration stations and different types of seating for groups.

Aquatic Center (slides, diving boards, lazy river, etc)

Updated equipment at the current parks. Bacon Park has rusty and broken equipment which is unsafe.

Family fun center

It's already checked, but a splash pad would be absolutely amazing!

Indoor basketball court

I want to really stress the importance of a free splash pad. There are other cities like Cape that have a free splash pad in the summer months. That's what we need.

Indoor or partial indoor park

City water park, sport plex- one location for all activities. ie. Baseball/softball, soccer, pickle ball, tennis, etc.

Fencing, boxing, non-competitive sports. A rock wall. Internships for teens. Classes that teach skills. A bike track for kids with bmx/mountain bikes with small jumps and banks. Like a big circle where parents can see them to supervise but big enough to have fun. Splash pad. Archery & shooting sports. A open space for crafting with a kiln to borrow.

Splash pad is must! Public pool hard to take a little one. People drive to cape, Paragould, and Farmington to use their water parks.

Online Survey:

Any other thoughts or suggestions to consider?

Number of people who left comments:

88

Comments in order of submission

Contact the police to keep the transients off the benches and picnic tables

I have heard people complain that the Black River Coliseum doesn't make money. I don't think that is the proper mindset. It's a public facility like a park. It's for the community enjoyment. Parks don't make money. Why should the coliseum? The park department should subsidize any shortfall to bring more live music.

Leverage a volunteer team that would could help with trash/weeds/monitoring of all parks.

Plant some trees in the downtown dog park for some shade for the dogs and dog owners.

Some restrooms need better maintained. The City could harness training programs at various schools to repair, build, and improve parks so to keep costs down.

The disc golf course should be on the easiest course for the general public. The disc golf league can move the baskets for their league but they need to return to the easy setting afterward.

We participate in many parks and recreation programs and activities as a family. Our community is extremely lucky that our parks department is run effectively, efficiently, and proactively. The department is extremely community-minded and youth-oriented, and pur family sincerely appreciates all the parks department does for our community, families, and kids!

I have cleaned up a lot of drug and alcohol paraphernalia from the parks since moving here. If we could have more police patrol or ways to deter that behavior to help keep the kids safe.

I would like to have more rock painting classes for kids and adults.

Put the activity in a safe environment. Our parks do not feel safe. As for question 15. They already have enough funding but it is spent on activities in unsafe environments.

More activities at McLane Park

Your referees for soccer and basketball are terrible, they don't know the rules, and their cell phones should not be in their pocket. Basketball refs will call a walking and not call it the next time. They have no clue.

Splash pad is a major need

I would highly recommend a splash pad or two in the city.

Our park offerings and maintenance have improved tremendously under Lanny's leadership!

I think we all have to get on board with a more pedestrian-friendly community. I think most would give up a portion of our property for a sidewalk. It's downright dangerous, unhealthy - and not kid-friendly.

I was extremely disappointed that the swim lesson program spanned over 6 weeks. It was better with 2 week options in June and July. I couldn't put my kids in the program.

Train basketball coaches and referees!!!!! Make coaches follow rules!

None. Thank you for your hard work!

Police presence at certain times we could spend on

More use of the coliseum for community activities and sports. Not much for senior citizens to do here.

Do serious maintenance and remodel on pool areas, invest in additional lighting and scoreboards for soccer fields.

Better advertisement and more available access to the parks dept can never get ahold of anybody and never know about events or anything till after it's been done very unsatisfactory with the way it is ran

A water park

Stop over lapping the sport season. In the past the would only lap maybe a week or two, thank fine. Then also stop allowing coaches have 5 pick to stack their team.

Improve the conditions at the BRC Pool

The outdoor parks are great. The coliseum needs some cleaning and updates. I also wish more parks and activities were on the north side of town in safer neighborhoods.

Keep homeless people out of the parks

"Upgrade and create additional baseball & softball fields. Teams struggle to obtain quality locations to practice on.

You have establish or built and clearly overspent on Soccer. Put money in baseball, softball, football and wrestling. Those are the successful highschool and college sports. "

Shaded equipment. Often in the summer, it is too hot for younger children to use the equipment.

The Brian guy that runs thr baseball does not do a good job what so ever we had so many problems trying to get ahold of him & very rude if we did get in touch with him.

More fishing access

If Poplar Bluff wants their school sports to thrive in future years we are way behind in youth sports. We need better leagues, camps and tournaments with actual city support. My son plays traveling baseball and soccer. Poplar bluff is by far the worst tournaments we play in all year. Soccer this spring had around 15-20 teams total. Perryville has 100 teams. The lack of city support is rather pathetic.

A park with a fence around it

Make it more handicap accessible!!!

We have noticed a lot of investments of great playground equipment at Bacon, but so many are afraid to visit because of the clientele that run wild there.

Invite people to the parks with events. Different location for the dog park

"I love our parks & rec department and all the staff! Everyone is so kind and helpful! My family enjoys spending time at our parks!
Ideas:
- couch to 5k! Walking or running program
- engage community fitness leaders to hold a "class" at local parks during pretty weather!
- water park!!!
- community garden? With select Saturday's for kids to come learn how to tender a garden
- engage local carpenters & host a "building day" for kids to learn how to build a small project - get donations from local hardware stores for materials?
- park scavenger hunt!!
- earth day celebrations! - get buy in from local businesses to adopt a park & send employees to help "buff up the bluff" (Larry hillis dodge will participate if you ask!)
-corporate games - businesses get teams together to compete against one another! - utilize each of the parks over a week period! So much fun and builds community!!"

Childcare is a limitation for adult activities, like weightlifting or classes. We need more shaded parks for kids.

I've often found needles and other paraphernalia just lying around on the ground at Hendrickson. Not sure how to address that but wanted to include it.

The annual golf pass for Ozark Ridge is TOO high for a city run course. Plus why did you all stop giving a Sr Discount?

More movies in the parks. Bring back the water park or dry rides.

Fun sportsplex for our younger teens.

More pavilions in nice areas for large gatherings.

correct size tarps for mclane ball fields to help prevent rain outs, shade nets or shade roof or trees at mclane ball fields, more parking at mclane park, lake or bigger pond for fishing and kayaking

"Whiteley park is overly used during soccer season and could use updates like bathrooms and more bleachers at every field.
The wooded areas need fenced off better than the netting that's in place. "

The elementary age kids sports are unorganized, fundamental skills are not taught to children early enough and enforced by referees

Take over control of black river coliseum, parks and rec has demonstrated the ability to care for and maintain their given facilities, thr coliseum staff can't figure out how to run a broom

"Quit making things for the rich like pickleball courts because we all pay taxes!!! Make Something that everyone can enjoy and also allow food trucks to come to Mclane park bc the concession sucks!"

More playgrounds on the north end of town

A splash pad at McLane park would be nice. Clean and paint coliseum pool and walls around the deck area.

Making the pickle ball courts at McLane family friendly. Not allowing strollers to sit on the edge of the court inhibits families from utilizing the courts.

Completing the playground at Mclane Park. Taking the lock off the pickleball court. Better maintance at the parks and replacing broken items at the parks in a timely manner. Specifically the playground areas not at Mclane Park.

Make the parks in safer areas of town!

The "flowers"/weeds at McLane Park might be pretty when they bloom, but are great snake havens.

CONTINUED: Any other thoughts or suggestions to consider?

The pool needs infant changing tables in the changing room.

Minute golf park

Turf baseball fields.

Find lifeguard that do their jobs and watch the swimmer and clean at the coliseum.

The website sucks.

There is a lot of trash and homeless people at the parks so lately I would much rather drive to wappapello or old Greenville for my kids to enjoy a park day.

Access for all kid types and adults as well we like to swing!!

We either need parks in areas with less crime, or there needs to be parks/playground security. The coliseum is in terrible need of a remodel. It is in bad shape…just dirty and had rats the last time I went.

Turf the McClain fields

Driving range independent of the golf course

BRC pool needs updates

I'm sure it will be but a fenced in play area at McLane or if added at any park fenced in area.

Playgrounds for small children

No, I think you all do a wonderful job!

That you're doing a great job. Dont consider, understand that.

Finding a way to regularly clean the equipment and grounds along with bathrooms

The park department should be in charge of the indoor pool. The city does a terrible job managing it and employs management who have inappropriate relationships with lifeguards (Taylor).

The coliseum is terrible. It's dirty, falling apart and needs major updates as it is falling apart.

Do something about the homeless that are living on the tables and under the trees at the parks.

A splash pad and better cooling in the collesium

Would love to see regular outdoor classes offered for a fee. This allows us to sign up ahead of time and let's you know how many to expect. For example, yoga every Saturday morning in summer for $3-5/class.

Na

I'm seeing improvement in playgrounds recently (Bacon Park and soon to be McLane Park), but I'd love to see even nicer parks like in St. Louis area. We often go to Central Park in Chesterfield because it's so nice, but they just updated it because it was ready for a refresh to keep up with other area parks.

With a family that is very active in swim team year round, it is very important to me to have improved pool facilities….especially the coliseum. My children use that pool year round, along with a meet that is held in May, and our facilities truly need so much work. After having been to multiple towns and seeing their facilities, many with a way smaller population than Poplar Bluff, I feel like we could do something better than what we have. The bathrooms at the coliseum are in terrible shape, the doors throughout the pool are rotted and rusting, the pool itself needs a lot of attention, and there are often mice and roaches. The swim team at the high school is growing and I feel like our town should have more support for those kids that work so hard for their sport.

Yeah, if you want to be inclusive of federal holidays and recognize them, do your research. Juneteenth is not red, yellow and black. Juneteenth is to celebrate the freedom of Black Americans in.....America. Those colors are red, blue and white. Like the flag that was made to celebrate those that stole American land from indigenous and Natives? Well, for Juneteenth, we use those colors to represent true freedom. Not to celebrate the African diaspora. That's what Black History Month is for. Period. For all of Black History as a whole. You shouldn't take offense because someone is trying to learn you something. Maybe, take less offense and do your research instead of silencing people on a post. That is not very American or democratic of you at all. Have a good day!

Connecting more trails. The connector between the graveyard, Hendrickson, and Bacon has been fantastic. Would be nice to connect these trails to Shelby as currently getting to Shelby from most of the trails outside of McClane requires a lot of road running/riding in places with little to no shoulder and broken sidewalks if any that also don't connect.

"Splash pad
Indoor soccer
NFL Flag Football League "

Yes, the parents of the kids who play. A lot of parents are upset over the way some of the sports are being handled. IE the coaches, the helpers and no practices. Coaches should be vetted as the people helping call the games. A lot of bad calls this year. And loss of players because of it! Even the head guy over the park has a chip on his shoulder. I seen him send a lady out of the park just for being the only one to speak loud enough for the guy to hear! He should not always go by what a kid says that's working for him on the field and think and listen to the families of the kids!!

We can't afford any more taxes. Tell them to give you the million they are dumping into the barely used BRC

2025 POPLAR BLUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN


2025
POPLAR BLUFF
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
POPLAR BLUFF
Gateway to the Ozarks