

# South Central MO Hotspot – Poplar Bluff

Discovering Employment Trends with Local Employment Dynamics (LED)

Poplar Bluff is an economic and employment center for the Southeast region of Missouri. This report details the workers and industries that make this place a hotspot of economic activity.



## South Central Employment

Poplar Bluff, West Plains, and Doniphan form the largest concentrations of employment in the South Central Workforce Investment Area. Many workers in the region also work in Springfield in the neighboring Ozark Workforce Investment Area. Workforce Investment Areas are the result of the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) which funds a number of employment and training programs across the nation.

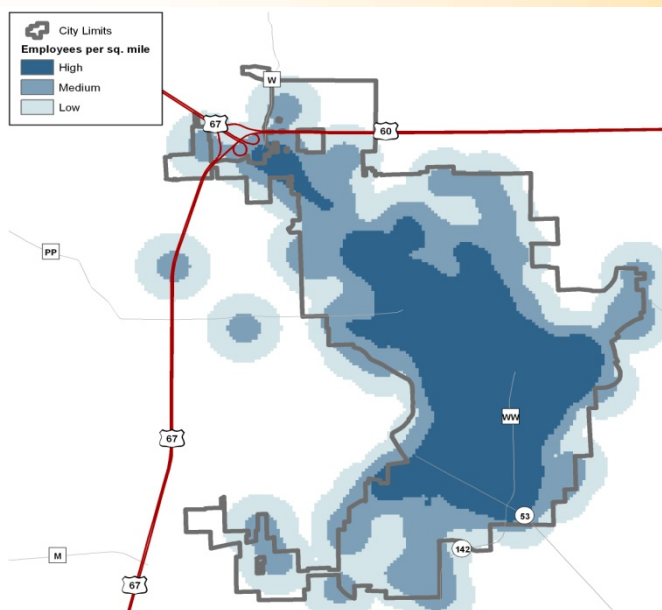
In 2009, 44.8% of all workers in the South Central region were employed in the cities Poplar Bluff (24.3%), West Plains (16.4%), and Doniphan (4.1%), which is down slightly from 2002 when the percentage was at 47.7%. Other cities in the South Central WIA with 1,200 or more jobs are Houston, Mountain Grove, Cabool, and Piedmont.

South Central WIA Region



## Poplar Bluff Census Overview

Poplar Bluff had a 2009 population estimate from the US Census American Community Survey was 16,936 with a median age of 34.8. This is down from the 2000 Census population of 16,521. Approximately 74.9 % of residents are high school graduates. Health & Social Services and Manufacturing are the top two employing sectors in Poplar Bluff, together employing approximately 35.1% of the city's jobs. This is down from 2002 when those sectors employed 37.7% of the city's jobs.



## Where do Poplar Bluff's Workers Live?

The Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program is a partnership between the U.S. Census Bureau and the agencies in each state that generate and analyze labor market information. The LED Origin-Destination mapping tool allows you to designate either an area where workers work and determine where they live, or designate where residents live and determine where those workers commute.

Top Counties Where Poplar Bluff Workers Resided in 2002		Top Counties Where Poplar Bluff Workers Resided in 2009	
Butler County	9,039	Butler County	7,659
Ripley County	738	Ripley County	667
Stoddard County	668	Stoddard County	553
Wayne County	426	Wayne County	457
Dunklin County	367	Dunklin County	386
<b>Total Poplar Bluff Jobs</b>	<b>13,329</b>	<b>Total Poplar Bluff Jobs</b>	<b>12,858</b>

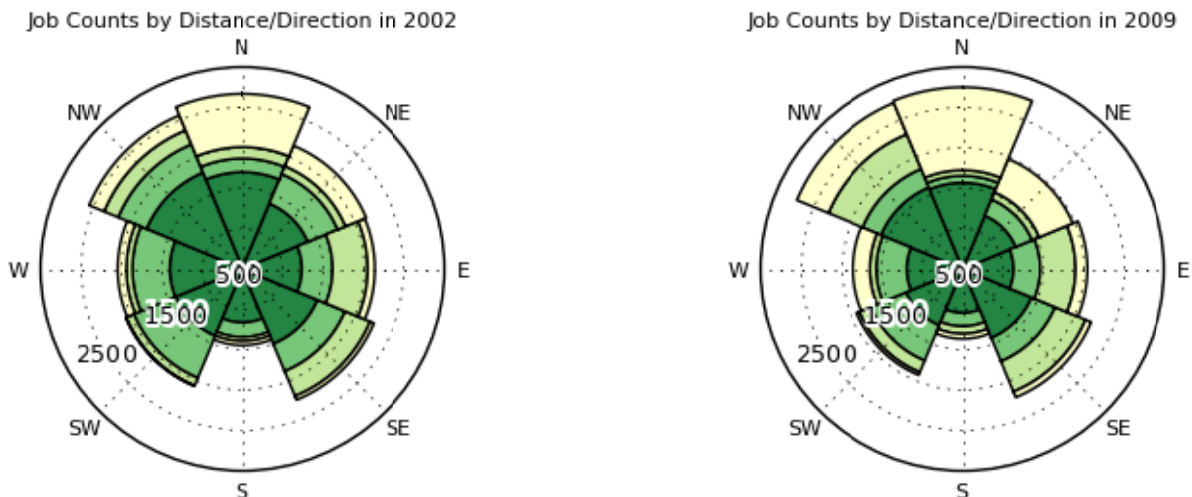
### “Gateway to the Ozarks”

Located towards the southeast portion of Missouri in Butler County, Poplar Bluff is often referred to as the “Gateway to the Ozarks.” It is also strategically located between St. Louis and Memphis, TN. It is also very near the beginning of the Missouri “Bootheel.” Home to the Black River Coliseum, the Black River Festival, the Butler County Fair, and many businesses, Poplar Bluff is both a tourist destination and economic hotspot.

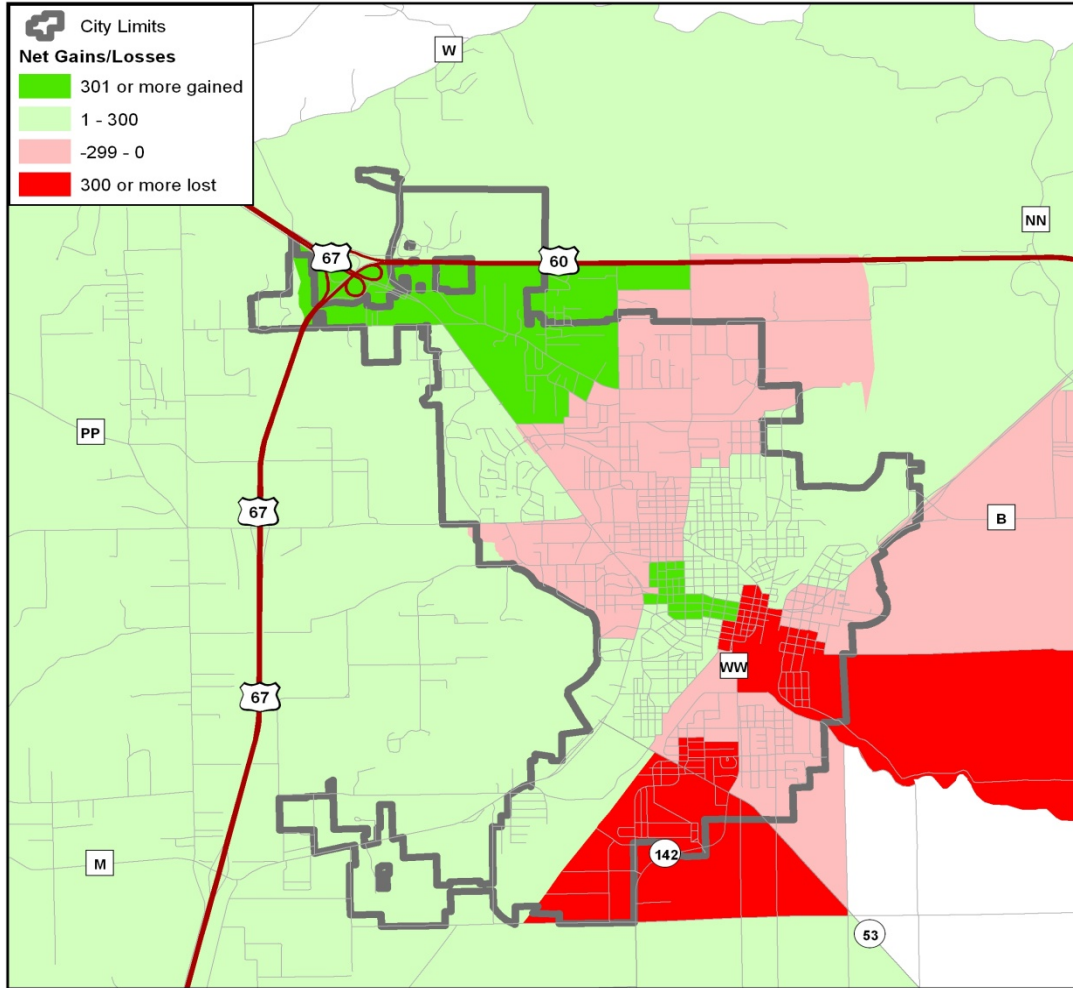
## LED On-the-Map: Where Poplar Bluff Workers Live

Poplar Bluff’s overall jobs declined 3.5% from 2002 through 2009. Butler County residents working in Poplar Bluff declined by 15%. Many of the surrounding counties increased their workforces to Poplar Bluff helping make up for the loss of jobs from Butler County residents. Some of these counties include Wayne and St. Francois Counties to the north, Dunklin County to the south, and Cape Girardeau County to the northeast.

**Distance & Direction Poplar Bluff Workers to Residence** (dark green=10 miles or less, yellow=50+ miles)



# LED On-the-Map: Poplar Bluff Area Job Trends 2002-2009



## Growing & Shrinking Industries

Healthcare & Social Assistance is the top employing sector in Poplar Bluff making up 21.2% of the workforce. Manufacturing is next with 13.9%. Poplar Bluff experienced overall job declines of 3.5% from 2002 through 2009. The *Goods Producing* sector declined 23% during this span while the *Trade, Transport, & Utilities* sector lost 6% of its jobs. The number of Butler County residents working in these two sectors declined overall during this span while most other counties had an increase of residents working in Poplar Bluff.

