

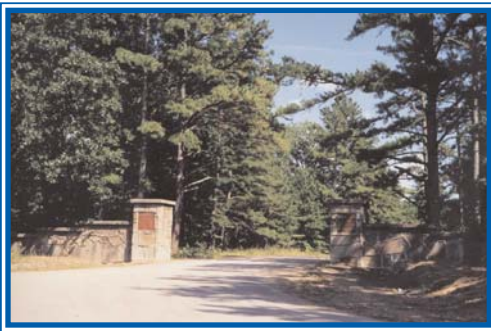
Salem, Missouri

Located in the heart of the Ozarks in south central Missouri, Salem has a population of 4,854. Once dependent on agriculture and land but now dominated by jobs in the service area, this rural community is focused on its long-range planning efforts. Community leaders involve local citizens in the strategic planning process and seek to achieve a balance in economic and community development. These planning efforts are making a remarkable difference in the development of the community in and around Salem.



Tourists visit Salem to float the rivers and enjoy the beautiful scenery.

The community of Salem recognized the opportunity to expand its tourism industry and increase visitors to the area. Local leaders volunteered their time and talents to enhance marketing efforts, creating brochures to welcome people to Salem, providing information on self-guided driving tours, supplying visitor maps and producing flyers to attract businesses to the area. Salem also has a new up-to-date and highly visible visitor center as well as a community website that lists area attractions and available accommodations.



Recreational activities are unlimited in Salem and often include fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching.

With the number of individuals receiving a high school education well below the state and national average and the number of college graduates minimal, continuing education has become a top priority for the community. In 2000, Southwest Baptist University opened a satellite campus in Salem which has greatly enhanced educational opportunities. More individuals are now completing high school and participating in higher education programs. Also in 2000, the Telecommunications Community Resources Center (TCRC) was organized. The TCRC is a distance learning center that provides training and professional development for residents in the community. Approximately 3,600 people took advantage of educational programs offered at the TCRC in 2005.

The community banks located in Salem, Bank of Salem, Progressive Ozark Bank, Town and Country Bank and US Bank, have been extremely active in the town's development. Not only have they provided financial support through loans, they have supported community projects and programs through annual donations and volunteer activities. With this support and the vision of local leaders, Salem has accomplished many of the objectives outlined in its strategic plan. The community continues to move forward and deems itself an aggressive, growing and pro-business town that is "a great place to vacation, a greater place to live."

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RURAL AMERICA**