

PROFILE OF THE COMMUNITY

Missouri’s third largest city, Springfield, is located in Greene County in Southwest Missouri. Together, they represent a culture that is both urban and rural: Loft apartments and rolling farmland. A first class symphony and the Ozark Empire Fair. Jobs in nanotechnology and in shoe repair. Springfield is a vibrant city in a growing county.

GROWING POPULATION. The Springfield Metropolitan Statistical Area is defined by Greene, Christian, Webster, Polk and Dallas counties. The population in the five-county area is growing at a rate of 1.7% annually. The workforce within the metropolitan area is 219,306 and has grown 9.3% since 2000, despite the national recession.

QUICK POPULATION FACTS	
Area	Population
Springfield City Limits	150,298
Greene County	254,779
Five-County MSA	407,092
Economic Area (27 counties)	962,824

OZARKS BEAUTY. Greene County is situated in the heart of the Missouri Ozarks, with the natural beauty of its lakes, rivers and mountains. More than 7,500 miles of shoreline are within a 100-mile radius of Springfield.

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT. There’s no shortage of amusements here. Springfield and Greene County are home to one of the finest performing arts centers around, a Double A baseball team with a stadium just three years old and a Civil War battlefield. The arts community presents First Friday Art Walks, Broadway productions, cultural festivals and operas.

BUSINESS AND EDUCATION. Some of the region’s largest employers are St. John’s Health System, CoxHealth, Wal-Mart, Springfield Public Schools, Missouri State University and Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World. The region is headquarters for Bass Pro Shops, O’Reilly Auto Parts, Jack Henry & Associates and BKD, LLP.

Springfield serves as a regional hub for health care, higher education and retail. The city boasts over 42,000 college and university students and Springfield Public School District is one of the largest in the state.

Springfield’s two largest employers, CoxHealth and St. John’s Health System, have been recognized nationally as top integrated health care networks.

Large-scale shopping destinations such as Bass Pro Shops and Battlefield Mall contribute over \$3 billion in annual retail sales.

The economic impact of the manufacturing sector is substantial, due to job creation by companies like SRC and Kraft Foods.

HONORS. Residents aren’t the only ones singing the praises of Springfield and Greene County.

- Top 50 Adventure Towns (National Geographic, 2007)
- Safe Community (World Health Organization, 2007)
- 100 Best Communities for Young People (America’s Promise, 2005 and 2007)
- Best Cities for Relocating Families (Worldwide ERC, 2007)
- Top City for Business Expansion and Attraction (Expansion Management, 2007)
- Top 25 Mid-Sized City for Entrepreneurs (Inc., 2007)
- 5-Star Quality of Life Metro (Expansion Management, 2007)

WHAT’S NEW? The community’s economic wellness has been impacted by changes in the business sector since the 2005 Community Focus Report.

T-Mobile opened in 2006 and has grown to more than 700 employees. Its presence in northwest Springfield has spurred new retail and residential development. Recently ranked as a “best place to work” by the Springfield News-Leader, Springfield Business Journal, and 417 Magazine, T-Mobile has already made a significant contribution to our community.

Roy Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center opened in 2007 for cutting-edge research and development. The center houses Missouri State University researchers collaborating with corporate partners, all dedicated to the mission of product development through intensive research and pilot manufacturing. A multi-phase project, JVIC offers the promise of a high-technology environment, bringing with it quality jobs. These efforts likely will lead to additional jobs as products move from research to commercialization, an opportunity unmatched in Springfield’s history.

Edward Jones Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation is housed at Drury University. Established in 2007, its purpose is to help students and executives develop entrepreneurial skills necessary for success in a global business environment. These lessons are learned through the hands-on experience of starting a business and supported by mentoring opportunities. “I truly believe the Center and Drury can inspire entrepreneurial dreams and energy in any student,” said Todd Parnell, the center’s first executive director.