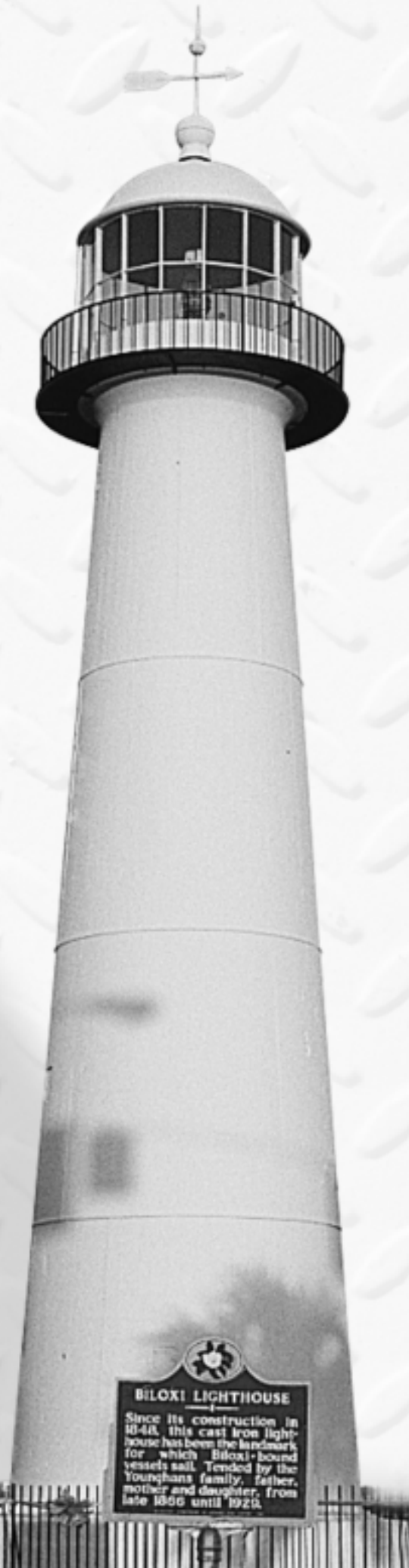


# 1999 General Market Analysis

Biloxi, Mississippi



**BILOXI LIGHTHOUSE**  
Since its construction in 1848, this cast iron lighthouse has been the landmark for which Biloxi-bound vessels sail. Tended by the Younghans family, father, mother and daughter, from late 1886 until 1929.



**Mayor**

A.J. Holloway

**City Council**

Ward 1: Tom Ferrill

Ward 2: Eric Dickey

Ward 3: Jim Compton

Ward 4: Charles T. Harrison Jr.

Ward 5: Mike Fitzpatrick

Ward 6: Tom Wall

Ward 7: Bill Fluty



P.O. Box 429  
Biloxi, MS 39533  
<http://biloxi.ms.us>

Dear Reader:

Thank you for your interest in our community. Our goal in compiling this General Market Analysis was two fold: to introduce you to our community and to inform you, a potential developer or new resident, of the many opportunities that our city has to offer.



I think you'll discover some amazing things as you peruse the pages of this publication. Although we are one of the oldest communities in the United States, having been first settled in 1699, we are also one of the youngest. We are currently enjoying a renaissance that began in August 1992, when casino gaming sparked a new spirit of pride and prosperity among our citizens.

We believe that our community has it all for residents and visitors alike: an outstanding quality of life, miles of white sand beaches, tasty seafood restaurants, great deep-sea fishing, championship golf courses, family attractions, a rich cultural history, stately historic sites, affordable prices and the excitement of unlimited casino gaming. Our business climate is just as inviting. You'll find an eager workforce, low labor costs in a right-to-work state, and a number of business-friendly incentives offered by state, county and city governments. In short, Biloxi is a nice place to visit, but a great place to live and work.

I'm confident that you'll find this publication useful in your endeavors. Meantime, my office and the entire city staff stand ready to assist you in anyway possible.

Sincerely,

A.J. Holloway  
Mayor

# Biloxi *Mississippi*

The City of Biloxi, centrally located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in Harrison County, is situated in the fastest growing region of America – the MidSouth. Approximately 55% of the U.S. population lies within one day's drive of Mississippi, so the state's businesses have easy access to important U.S. markets. From a business perspective, this strategic location offers time and cost savings in marketing or distributing products to over 136 U.S. metropolitan areas. Biloxi's location in the "Center of the Americas" also translates into one of the most direct routes to Mexican, Canadian and Central American markets.

In addition, Biloxi is located in a right-to-work state, meaning that employees of plants locating here cannot be required to join labor unions as a condition of their employment. The State of Mississippi also has passed meaningful tort reform in recent years, minimizing the number of frivolous lawsuits faced by the state's businesses. (Source: Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development)

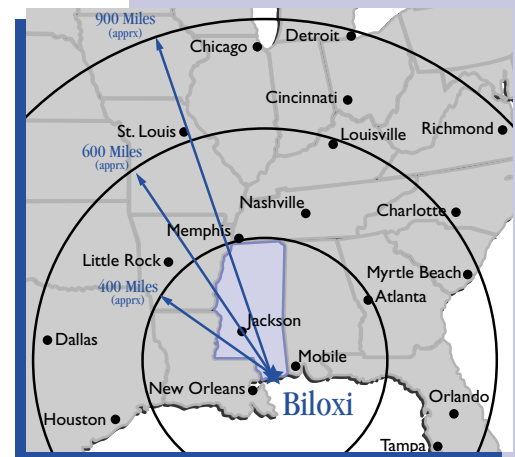
The City's mild year-round climate means that business is rarely hampered by delays often associated with harsher winter climates, and it allows outdoor activities to take place virtually 52 weeks a year. Biloxi is recognized as one of the top five housing markets in the U.S. as well as one of the top places in the nation to retire for the same reasons that it has become a leader in Mississippi's economic recovery – it enjoys a successful mix of economic vitality, diversified employment opportunities, a semi-tropical resort climate, a skilled labor force, a strategic location, good transportation, a rich cultural heritage, and an exceptionally high quality of life for its residents.

As Biloxi enjoys its 300th birthday, the world is becoming more aware of the tremendous business potential the region offers. Named "Top Mid-Sized Market in the South" by Southern Business & Development magazine for its record growth and sizable public and private investment over the past five years, the Mississippi Gulf Coast is now home to more businesses than any other region in the state.

This general market analysis, based on available 1998-99 data, summarizes information about the City of Biloxi – its colorful history, superior quality of life, business climate, demographics, employment and development statistics, city and county government, housing, transportation/infrastructure, and key employers. It also details incentives and resources that are available to assist businesses interested in starting up, expanding in, or relocating to the Biloxi area.



**For more information, please contact:**  
**Community Development Department**  
**676 Washington Loop, Biloxi, MS 39530**  
**Phone: (228) 435-6280 Fax: (228) 435-6188**  
**Internet: <http://biloxi.ms.us>**



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# History, Heritage & Culture

*“The stars  
shine on  
Biloxi...”*

– Jimmy Buffet,  
“Biloxi”

The recorded history of Biloxi (pronounced "Ba-Luck-See") dates back 300 years to February 1699, when Pierre LeMoyne Sieur d'Iberville landed on the peninsula to strengthen France's claim to the Mississippi Valley. D'Iberville named the city Biloxi (an Indian word meaning "First People") in honor of the Indians who greeted him. Biloxi's legendary hospitality and melding of cultures began that day.

While a lot has changed over the past 300 years, one thing remains constant - Biloxi's strong cultural and historical roots, which are evident throughout the City, can be attributed to the melting pot of its settlers - the French, Irish, Slavic, German, Greek, Italian, Danish, Scottish, Celts, Spanish, African-American, Asian and Pacific Islanders.

As a rural outpost between the growing cities of New Orleans and Mobile, Biloxi served as the capital of Louisiana until 1722. Despite both English and Spanish rule, Biloxi remained essentially French, not changing until joining the American territory in 1811. Six years later, Mississippi became the 20th state in the Union. Biloxi officially incorporated as a city in 1838.

With its natural scenic beauty, the coastal town of Biloxi became a popular summer resort for wealthy New Orleans families as well as for well-to-do families from all along the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Many of these vacation "cottages" - including Beauvoir, the seaside retirement home of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy - line Beach Boulevard. In the 1870s, residents tapped the plentiful Gulf waters for seafood and by the turn of the century Biloxi became known as the "Seafood Capital of the World" for the volume of succulent fish, shrimp, and oysters it caught, processed, and sold. The good times continued to roll during Prohibition when residents and visitors alike enjoyed games of chance at the city's first "casino" - the Isle of Caprice resort, which was built offshore on Dog Key Island.

The prosperity was short-lived. With the onslaught of the Depression, both the tourism and seafood industries languished. However, the establishment of Keesler Air Force Base in 1941 and the creation of the world's largest man-made beach in the 1950s helped to revive the local economy. Biloxi's temperate climate attracted thousands of "snowbirds" from the Midwest and Northeastern United States and Canada. The region continued to grow until 1969, when a devastating "lady" named Camille nearly destroyed the city in one of the worst hurricanes to hit the United States. By pulling together, the community gradually recovered from the tremendous damage and has successfully weathered many subsequent storms.

History, Heritage  
& Culture



The introduction of dockside-based casino gaming in 1992 has led to unprecedented economic growth and physical change in Biloxi. Waterfront property once occupied almost exclusively by the seafood industry is now dominated by luxurious casino resorts. Having resisted economic redevelopment efforts during the 1980s, East Biloxi now is home to new hotels, restaurants, and casinos as well as the surviving seafood-related businesses. All of these commercial enterprises serve as visual evidence of the tremendous potential Biloxi has for additional growth as it ushers in the 21st Century.

NOTE: A complete timeline of Biloxi's history can be found in the Appendix.

## Interesting Biloxi Facts

Did you know...

- Biloxi is the birthplace of Barq's Root Beer, the number one selling root beer in the world.
- Apollo 13 astronaut, Fred Haise, was born and raised in Biloxi.
- Robin Roberts, ESPN Sportscaster, worked at WLOX-TV in Biloxi.
- Biloxi is home to Keesler Air Force Base, the largest electronic training center in the United States.
- Mullet, known as "Biloxi Bacon," saved residents from starvation during the Civil War blockades.
- Biloxi-based Marinovich Trawl Company makes fishing nets which are sold and distributed all over the world.
- Biloxi Tent & Awning Company makes sails for boats around the globe.
- One piece of Biloxi native George Ohr's pottery can now sell at auction for more than Ohr earned in his entire life.

# Quality of Life

## A. The “Playground of the South”

Sunshine. White sandy beaches. Picturesque Southern mansions shaded by majestic live oak and flowering magnolia trees. Warm ocean breezes. Championship golf courses. Deep sea fishing. Unique museums featuring cultural wonders from pottery to Civil War memorabilia and maritime history. 24-hour casino gaming. Festivals celebrating everything from Mardi Gras to the art of George E. Ohr, the “Mad Potter of Biloxi.” Succulent seafood. And world-famous Southern hospitality.

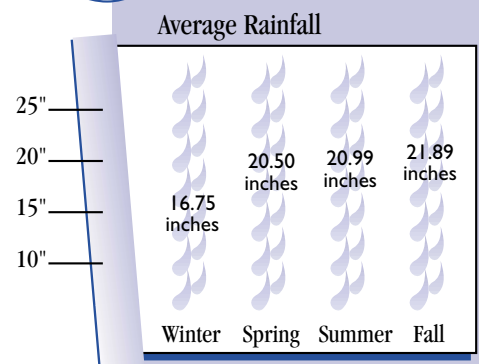
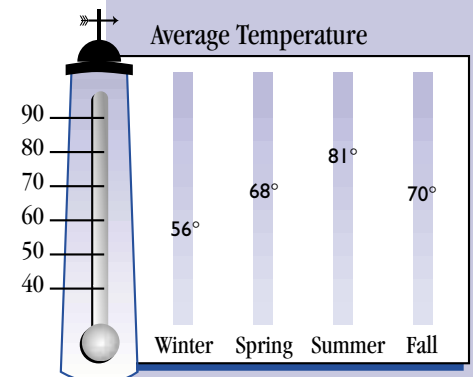


This is the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the “Playground of the South,” and Biloxi is right in the heart of the action having been identified by Fodor’s Travel Publications as a “hot new emerging destination for ’99.” Also selected as one of Money Magazine’s “Best Places to Live” and one of the nation’s top 15 retirement markets, it’s no surprise that the region boasts an enviable list of amenities:

- 26 miles of sugar white sand beach (one of the top 10 beaches in the U.S. according to ByWays Magazine).
- 56 attractions including historic homes, art museums, maritime history and education facilities, NASA Space Center, a children’s museum, an oceanarium, and a winery.
- 12 casinos featuring 24-hour action and live entertainment.
- 6 performing arts theaters.
- 17 shopping facilities, including factory outlets and specialty shops.
- 22 golf courses.
- A fleet of 44 charter boats offering deep-sea fishing excursions.
- 2 historic Biloxi Schooners offering daily sailboat charters.
- 11,500 seat Coliseum featuring professional hockey, indoor soccer, boxing, and numerous headliner acts.
- 46 annual festivals and events celebrating 300 years of history.
- One hour from Mobile; one and a half hours from New Orleans; and three hours from the Florida Panhandle via Interstate-10.

Average temperatures range from 56 degrees in the winter to 81 degrees in the summer, making it possible to enjoy outdoor activities year round. Humidity and rainfall are highest in the late summer, due to the proximity to the warm Gulf waters; most rainfall is intermittent and is followed by traditional Gulf Coast sunshine.

# Quality of Life



## POPULAR ATTRACTIONS

Biloxi's rich culture and heritage are masterfully preserved in the following sites and attractions - many through the leadership of the City of Biloxi and community volunteers.

### **Beauvoir**

Visit a bygone era of Southern charm and elegance at the final home of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy. Explore the scenic grounds and museum that chronicles the Confederacy and the life of the South's "First Family." A new Presidential Library, a \$4.5 million facility with numerous historical archives, opened in May 1998.

### **Biloxi Lighthouse\***

One of the most photographed sites in the South. Erected in 1848 at the foot of Porter Avenue and Beach Boulevard, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and celebrated its 150th birthday in 1998.

### **George E. Ohr Arts & Cultural Center\***



Home to the "Mad Potter of Biloxi" in historic downtown Biloxi. The museum, currently housed in the Main Biloxi Library, features over 175 pieces of Ohr's world-renowned pottery. Works by local, regional and national artists are also featured. Fundraising to build a world-class museum began in 1998.

### **J.L. Scott Marine Education Center and Aquarium**

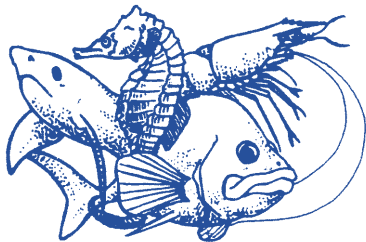
Mississippi's largest public aquarium, the 42,000-gallon Gulf of Mexico tank housed at the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center is home to sharks, sea turtles, eels and fish. Enjoy enclosed and hands-on exhibits as well as a collection of over 900 seashells from around the world. Relax in the 313-seat auditorium and watch continuously running videos featuring sharks, dolphins and captivating sea experiences. The award-winning Project Marine Discovery series offers programs for all ages throughout the year, including the ever-popular Sea Camp programs for 5 to 14 year olds.

### **Mardi Gras Museum\***

Housed in the historic Magnolia Hotel, the museum features colorful exhibits that tell the story of Mardi Gras in Biloxi and features costumes, including those of the current King d'Iberville and Queen Ixolib (Biloxi spelled backwards).

### **Maritime & Seafood Industry Museum**

Located on the tip of historic Point Cadet, the museum traces Biloxi's rise to becoming the "Seafood Capitol of the World." Special exhibits give visitors a visual timeline of Biloxi's history and describe boatbuilding, netmaking, blacksmithing, and sailmaking. The Hurricane Exhibit features a film on Hurricane Camille. The museum's Sea-n-Sail Adventure Camp is a popular summer program for area youth and two authentic Biloxi



### **For more information:**

Check out our website at <http://biloxi.ms.us>

## Old Brick House



schooners provide year-round opportunity to experience sailing in the Mississippi Sound.

### **Old Brick House\***

Located on Back Bay, this historic structure features a mingling of French and American architectural traditions of the mid 19th century. Originally adopted and saved from neglect by the Biloxi Garden Club in the 1950s, the Old Brick House is being restored by the City as an historic home and is open to the public.

### **Saenger Theater\***

Located in historic downtown Biloxi, the Saenger was renowned as the most modern theater in the South when it was built in 1929. The theater, home to vaudeville and early motion pictures, was devastated by fire in 1974. Today, Biloxians continue to enjoy professional and amateur productions presented in the restored performing arts theater. The highlights of the 1998 season were performances by the Vienna Boys Choir and the National Symphony. The twentieth anniversary production of the play "Biloxi," written by Biloxian David Sheffield, was the hit of the 1999 program of events at the Saenger. Specifications for Phase One of a multiphase renovation project were completed in 1998 and work on the \$500,000 project to stabilize the theater was initiated in 1999.

### **Tullis-Toledano Manor\***

Located on Biloxi's East Beach, this home is one of the Coast's most unique examples of antebellum architecture. It was built in 1856 for a wealthy New Orleans businessman and his family. The interior restoration of the Manor was officially presented to the public in October 1998; fundraising efforts will continue through the Tricentennial year to purchase furniture and accessories.

\*Overseen by the City's Community Development Department.

## Tullis-Toledano Manor



## **B. Parks & Recreation**

The City of Biloxi also operates 62 facilities providing a wide range of recreational opportunities – 16 parks, 13 baseball and softball fields, 11 tennis courts, three community/recreation centers, nine football and soccer fields, four outdoor basketball courts, three walking tracks, one volleyball court, one festival/concert site, and the only municipal, Olympic-size, all-weather natatorium in the State. One of the city's most popular retreats is Hiller Park. This 100-acre facility, located in West Biloxi along Back Bay, features eight tennis courts, two softball fields, a three-acre pond, a boat launch ramp and picnic areas.

The City also offers leagues for soccer, basketball, football, baseball, softball, swimming, tennis, and other popular sports. In 1998, over 3,000 children

# Parks & Recreation



participated in these activities – 750 in soccer alone. Another very popular activity is the City's Summer Playground Program. In 1998, more than 430 children participated in field trips, swimming, art and crafts activities, and organized games.

Due to the popularity of soccer and the increased population in West Biloxi, the City is investing more than \$600,000 to expand the Popp's Ferry Recreation Area. When complete, the facility will have improved soccer fields, new tennis and basketball courts, and additional parking. Phase I was completed in 1998 and Phase II of the improvement plan is expected to be complete by Fall 2000.

To address the recreational needs of families in West Biloxi, the City began construction of a \$4.2 million community center in 1999. When completed, the state-of-the-art facility will feature ample room for recreational programming, a four-lane lap pool and therapeutic pool, a basketball court, stage and dance floor for carnival balls and other civic events, and an upstairs spectator viewing area that will double as a jogging track. The project is expected to be completed by December, 2000.

Engineering design is underway for new sports fields to be located adjacent to the Biloxi Public School property along Popp's Ferry Road in North Biloxi. Phase I will include four new softball fields, a new concession and scorekeepers' building, and parking. Subsequent phases will include construction of four soccer fields, tennis courts, and a walking/jogging track.



Rendering of New West Biloxi Community Center

## C. Public Safety

Since 1992, the City has purchased an average of 15 police and fire vehicles each year to support crime and fire prevention efforts. Priority has been given to upgrading the public safety computer system which has greatly improved response times and has helped to streamline the municipal court system. Biloxi's public safety expenditures have almost tripled from \$5.5 million in 1992 to \$15.2 million in 1999, demonstrating the City's commitment to safeguarding its citizens and their property.

### Police Department

Increased gaming revenues have allowed the Biloxi Police Department to increase staffing as well as to acquire state-of-the-art public safety equipment, including additional radar units, identification kits for beat officers, in-car video systems, and motorcycles to improve the mobility of patrol officers.

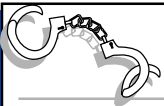
Two new computers were added to the identification section in 1998; one digitally photographs and stores mug shots and the other electronically submits fingerprints taken at the Biloxi Police Department to the Mississippi Criminal History System in the capital city of Jackson.

# Public Safety




# Public Safety

Since 1992, the police force has almost doubled in size, hiring 25 patrol officers in 1998 alone. As of September 1999, the department employed 130 sworn officers and had a total of 171 vehicles. During 1998-99, Biloxi police officers attended more than 280 training classes in advanced level courses, 16 of which were instructor-level courses, to maintain and improve their skills. One officer attended the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy in Quantico, Virginia.



	Police Officers	Police Vehicles
Bay St. Louis	48	22
Biloxi	130	171
Gulfport	159	190
Long Beach	42	19
Ocean Springs	56	27
Pass Christian	37	19



	Fire-Fighters	Fire Vehicles
Bay St. Louis	21	7
Biloxi	119	26
Gulfport	165	28
Long Beach	30	9
Ocean Springs	9	5
Pass Christian	46	11

## Fire Department

The Biloxi Fire Department staffs six stations throughout Biloxi. Increased revenues have supported the hiring of additional firemen and the purchase or refurbishment of numerous fire protection vehicles, including a 50-foot ladder pumper and 95-foot platform aerial pumper.

In 1998, a new fire station was built on Back Bay and improvements were made to the Lee Chinn and Bay Vista stations in West Biloxi.

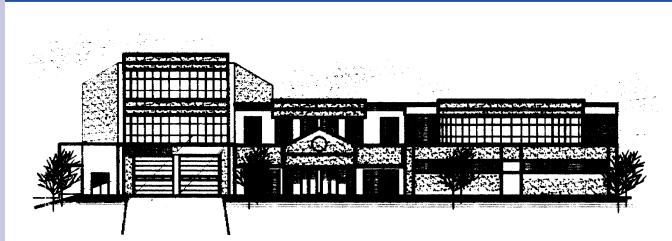
Approximately 1,500 emergency calls for service were answered by the Biloxi Fire Department, saving property estimated to be valued at more than \$283 million.

As of September 1999, the Biloxi Fire Department employed 119 firefighters and had a total of 26 vehicles in its inventory to provide fire protection services throughout the City. Emphasis is placed on maintaining a high level of proficiency training of Fire Department personnel to constantly improve fire protection services and to save lives.

## Future Plans

To meet the needs of Biloxi's growing population, two major public safety facilities currently are being constructed. In 1998, work began on a \$8.2 million, 66,000 square foot Public Safety Complex, adjacent to the current facility on Howard Avenue in East Biloxi. This modern facility will feature a unique two-floor lobby, a skylight to offer natural light and three bays for fire protection vehicles. Constructed of pre-cast concrete and steel, the new Public Safety Complex will be durable as well as space efficient. In addition to housing public safety personnel, the complex will accommodate the municipal courtroom and court staff.

## Rendering of New Public Safety Center



Construction also is underway on a new 5,000 square foot, \$646,664 Communications Center located on Popp's Ferry Road which will house the City's fire and police dispatchers. This new Center will serve as the communication system's backbone linking the police and fire departments by featuring state-of-the-art facilities to enhance the performance of dispatchers who handle Biloxi's 911 emergency calls. A new fire station, training facility and a police substation also are planned for construction on the same site and are anticipated to be complete within the next 24 months.

The City also plans to identify property on Point Cadet for a new fire station to replace the aging building that currently houses the East End firefighters. Construction of this new station will allow the City to

move one of its aerial platform trucks to Point Cadet to better serve the growing number of businesses, visitors, and residents in this section of Biloxi.

## D. Education

Biloxi public schools rank among the Top 10 school districts in the state and they hold the highest accreditation levels that can be achieved. The Biloxi Public School District has been ranked as a Blue Ribbon school district – the only one in the state to be judged above the national average – by Expansion Management Magazine and was featured in the Mississippi Professional Educators Journal in March 1998. Biloxi students consistently score in the top 10% on standardized achievement tests and high school seniors are annually awarded prestigious academic scholarships.

School	Grade	1998 Enrollment
• Biloxi Senior High	10-12	1,087
• Fernwood Junior High	7-9	850
• Nichols Junior High	7-9	450
• Michel Junior High	7-9	450
• Beauvoir Elementary	K-6	695
• Dukate Elementary	K-6	612
• Gorenflo Elementary	K-6	550
• Howard II Elementary	K-6	351
• Jeff Davis Elementary	K-6	568
• Lopez Elementary	K-6	358
• Popp's Ferry Elementary	K-6	952

The Biloxi Public Schools offer comprehensive curriculum featuring a wide range of special programs, including expanded emphasis on technology-driven courses. The Biloxi High School curriculum is among the most comprehensive in the State – offering regular, college-prep, advanced placement, and vo-tech programs.

# Education

# Education

High school freshmen and sophomores who have at least a 90 grade point average are eligible to enroll in advanced placement courses during their junior and senior years at Biloxi High. Teachers are specially trained to conduct these college-level classes. Students may receive actual college credit for these classes, depending on their final exam score, placing them ahead of the curve of most college freshmen. A total of nine advanced placement courses are offered at Biloxi High including two advanced placement English classes; art; calculus; statistics; biology; chemistry; U.S. government; and U.S. history.

Biloxi High School is the only public high school in the state of Mississippi which boasts a Foreign Language Lab, a state-of-the-art facility which provides students preparing for college a distinct advantage in strengthening their foreign language skills. Biloxi High was featured in the July 1998 issue of Seventeen magazine and in the August 1999 issue of Teen People magazine. The junior high system (grades 7 - 9) provides a program of studies and activities designed to prepare students for future employment, further education, and active citizenship. In addition, the school district offers 26 sports for student participation in grades 7-12, along with numerous leadership opportunities in clubs and organizations. The District's Air Force Junior ROTC Honor Unit was named among the top 10% of all Junior ROTCs worldwide for the past three years and the ROTC Drill Team has been named the top Junior ROTC unit in Mississippi for five years.

There currently are seven elementary schools (grades K - 6) and the instructional program consists of language arts, reading, mathematics, social studies and science. Students have the opportunity to participate in special programs such as physical education, art, music and library services.

## THE BILOXI PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT...

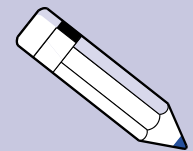
- Holds accreditation from the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges
- Had two teachers selected as Mississippi Teacher of the Year
- Participates in nationwide "Operation Galileo" sponsored by NASA and KAFB
- Received HOSTS (Help One Student to Succeed) National Exemplary Award
- Partners in Biloxi-First, a school/community partnership generating financial support through a non-profit corporation

## Expansion/Improvement Plans

To properly handle future growth, the District has announced plans to build a comprehensive high school north of Biloxi's Back Bay, a new vocational technology facility, and new athletic and recreational facilities to be funded through a \$31 million capital lease program.

## Biloxi Public Schools

Total # of students	=	6,923
Student/teacher ratio	=	1:23
Average teacher salary	=	\$32,675
Expenditure per student	=	\$6,933
Mean ACT score	=	21.2
% going on to college	=	42%



# Education

Two new elementary schools will be built on current Gorenflo Elementary and Nichols Junior High School sites, and other improvements will be made throughout the district, funded by a \$29.5 million bond issue passed by the citizens of Biloxi in September 1999. In anticipation of the 5 mill school tax increase in 1999, which was necessary to retire the bonds, the City of Biloxi lowered city taxes 7 mills in 1998 to decrease the tax burden on its citizens while supporting improvements to public education in Biloxi.

Parents may also choose parochial education at two elementary schools (K-6) and Mercy Cross High School for grades 7-12.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

### Four-Year Universities (on the Gulf Coast)

- The University of Southern Mississippi - Gulf Coast (USMGC) - Long Beach

Located just 15 minutes from Biloxi, USM Gulf Coast offers a broad range of courses for juniors, seniors, and graduate students. The School has expanded its Hospitality Management program, as well as its Culinary Arts Academy, to adapt to the increasing role tourism plays in the Gulf Coast economy. In addition, the Gulf South Economic Research Center was recently formed to give businesses accurate statistics and forecasts. In 1998, lawmakers took the first steps toward making USMGC a four-year campus by awarding an extra \$750,000 to the campus and authorizing \$6 million to build a library. Construction of a \$5.65 million Advanced Education Center will begin in 2000.

- University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Institute of Marine Sciences  
In 1996, the University of Southern Mississippi created the Institute of Marine Sciences, bringing together the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center and Aquarium in Biloxi, the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory in Ocean Springs, and the USM marine sciences programs at Stennis Space Center.

As development continues along the Gulf Coast, the University of Southern Mississippi's Institute of Marine Sciences educational programs and college degree curriculum are anticipated to expand as job opportunities in marine-related fields grow. Geology, physics, biology and computer curriculums, among others, are anticipated to adjust to the market trend as employment potential in the fields of marine conservation, aquaculture, computer modelings of ocean and coastal bottoms, off-shore natural gas and oil exploration/production, and marine-related medicine research expands.

Along with the Coast's tremendous population growth during the past six years, concern has grown about the impact of so much development on the



## Higher Education



*“We are excited about the opportunities for growth on the Gulf Coast.”*

– Dr. James Williams,  
Vice President,  
USM Gulf Coast

fragile coastal and marine environments. The credit and noncredit programs offered through the Institute of Marine Services serve a vital role in increasing awareness of and support for management systems which will help to create and maintain a healthy balance between the natural and manmade environments.

More than 90 agencies, industries and organizations work as partners with the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center, the Institute’s public outreach agency which is housed in East Biloxi in a 33,000 square foot facility inclusive of a 42,000 gallon aquarium, in creating and sponsoring educational programs which include the award-winning Project Marine Discovery (PMD) Program. A comprehensive educational program for preschoolers to adults, PMD includes: a unique three-hour “hands-on” experience for kindergarten through high school students; a summer day camp for elementary and middle school students; WaterWorld Camp-In programs involving an overnight adventure for Boy and Girl Scouts; and a monthly family-oriented presentation on a variety of marine and environmental topics.

The Center also offers summer institute programs in oceanography, marine biology and related marine science topics to inservice and preservice teachers, offering college credit through the University of Southern Mississippi. Teachers also may earn continuing education units by attending two- to five-day summer mini camps offered to prepare teachers to share the excitement of marine and aquatic topics and hands-on activities with their students.

The Center’s 10-week, two-term summer program enables college students to earn up to 12 semester hours of credit each summer through USM’s Coastal Sciences, Marine Science and Biological Science programs. Students from the more than 60 universities and colleges which are affiliated with this program benefit from the emphasis placed upon hands-on learning of plants and animals in their natural habitats in the marine and coastal environments.

- William Carey College - Gulfport

A private, Baptist college with its main campus in Hattiesburg, William Carey College opened its Coast campus in 1976 on 20 acres overlooking the Gulf of Mexico. Students at the Coast campus can obtain bachelor’s degrees in business, education, nursing, art, or psychology, and master’s degrees in education, business and psychology. Emphasizing small classes and a quality education in the context of a Christian community, the college launched a five-year “Campaign for Excellence” in 1998 to raise \$6.2 million to enhance its academic programs as well as to support various campus improvements.

### **Community Colleges / Trade Schools**

- Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (3 campuses) -



# Higher Education

- Gulfport/Gautier/Perkinston
- Mississippi Gulf Coast Applied Technology & Development Center - Gulfport
  - West Harrison County Occupational Training Center - Long Beach
  - American Career College - Gulfport/Ocean Springs
  - Chris' Beauty College - Gulfport

## **Four-Year Universities (within close proximity)**

- Tulane University - New Orleans, Louisiana
- Loyola University - New Orleans, Louisiana
- University of New Orleans - New Orleans, Louisiana
- Southern University - New Orleans, Louisiana
- Dillard University - New Orleans, Louisiana
- Xavier University - New Orleans, Louisiana
- Our Lady of Holy Cross College - New Orleans, Louisiana
- Louisiana State University - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Jackson State University - Jackson, Mississippi
- Millsaps College - Jackson, Mississippi
- Belhaven College - Jackson, Mississippi
- University of South Alabama - Mobile, Alabama
- Springhill College - Mobile, Alabama

# Medical Facilities

## **E. Medical Facilities**

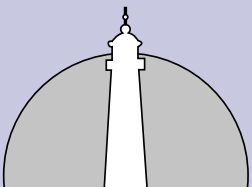
For a community of 53,000 residents, Biloxi is fortunate to offer its residents a wide range of quality health care facilities. From comprehensive acute care facilities at each end of the city to the world-renowned Keesler Medical Center, all family members are assured of state-of-the art medical care.

Several outpatient centers are conveniently located throughout the area, offering Biloxi residents everything from plastic surgery to podiatry. To address the needs of senior citizens and their families, the Gulf Coast offers over 20 home health care agencies and more than 15 retirement and life care communities.

Biloxi residents also have access to a wide variety of home health care services offered by a number of licensed local entities. Qualified professionals are available to provide skilled services 24 hours a day, seven days a week in the familiarity of patients' homes while maintaining a high quality environment. With the availability of home health care services in Biloxi, support from family and friends can easily be given in surroundings that are comfortable for all caregivers.

## **Biloxi Regional Medical Center**

This 153-bed acute care facility, built in 1986, is located in the Central Business District. The six-story hospital, operated by Health Management Associates, Inc. of Naples, Florida, features all private rooms with baths,



**BILOXI REGIONAL  
MEDICAL CENTER**

# Medical Facilities

hassle-free admissions through its MedKey registration process and specialized patient programs with an emphasis on senior citizens, women's and children's healthcare.

Through its network of 180+ physicians and 500+ staff members, Biloxi Regional Medical Center offers 24-hour emergency services, cardiac rehabilitation, comprehensive pulmonary rehabilitation, oncology, birthing suites and same day surgery facilities. Its comprehensive cancer treatment program includes radiation therapy, tumor registry, and an accredited mammography unit.

Installation of a new, state-of-the-art Magnetic Resonance Imager (MRI) system began in August 1999. In addition to increased diagnostic capability, the new system will offer a spacious, well-lit opening to minimize patients' feelings of claustrophobia. The new MRI system will enable performance of high-resolution studies on both orthopedic and neurology patients.

## **Enhancement/Expansion Plans**

Biloxi Regional Medical Center had a groundbreaking ceremony in October 1999 for a new medical office building and parking garage to be constructed in close proximity to the existing medical center. The four-story office building will contain 73,920 square feet. Services will include a Neurosurgical Center of Excellence, Cancer Center, Pain Management Center, Women's Center, educational classrooms and physician office space. The five-story parking garage will be built adjacent to the medical office building. The \$10 million dollar project is anticipated to be completed in the year 2000.

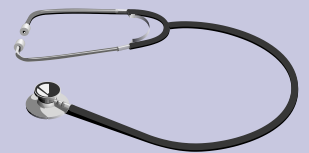
## **Cedar Lake Medical Park**

In 1998, construction began on a multi-phased medical complex located on Cedar Lake Road in North Biloxi. With completion of the \$10 million Phase One project in early 1999, a wide range of outpatient services, including cardiology, orthopedics, ophthalmology, MRI and ultrasound services, oncology, physical therapy and plastic surgery, are now available in the North Biloxi area in a 72,000 square foot facility which is easily accessible from Interstate 10 as well as from Popp's Ferry Road. By selecting a site along one of Biloxi's major growth corridors, the developers of the new medical park have provided Biloxi area residents a conveniently-located alternative for meeting their comprehensive health care needs.

More than 50 board-certified physicians provide medical services in the new facility, with every medical discipline represented in a modern environment which offers some of the most advanced technology available.

## **Expansion Plans**

The centerpiece of the 38-acre, \$100 million development will be the \$5 million Biloxi Outpatient Surgery and Endoscopy Center which will be one of the finest ambulatory surgery centers in the U.S. Several medical office buildings will be constructed in future phases to support increased patient



loads and to allow growth opportunities so that the medical park's physicians will be able to accommodate the long-term healthcare needs of Biloxi residents. Dr. S.H. Dees, President of the Biloxi Outpatient Surgery and Endoscopy Center, serves in a key leadership role in providing Biloxi a state-of-the-art medical park which will combine the most advanced technology with the best medical services in the nation.

### **Gulf Coast Medical Center**

Gulf Coast Medical Center, a 144-bed acute care medical and surgical facility, is located one block north of the Gulf of Mexico in Biloxi. The campus includes Gulf Coast Medical Plaza, which houses physicians offices and is connected to Gulf Coast Medical Center by an elevated walkway. With more than 650 employees, Gulf Coast Medical Center offers 24-hour emergency services, Bright Beginnings Exceptional Birthing Unit, The Center for Wellness and Weight Management, MRI, Hyperbaric Medicine and the Wound Management Center, bloodless medicine and surgery, skilled nursing unit, Star Van Patient Transportation, Physician Finder Service, OccuMed Occupational Medicine Program, and physical therapy services. The Orange Grove Family Medical Center, the D'Iberville Family Medical Center, the Hip and Knee Program, the Center for Sleep Disorders, the Center for Breast Care, the Professional Home Health Agency and Gulf Oaks Hospital also are part of the Gulf Coast Medical Center.

Gulf Oaks Hospital, located on the Gulf Coast Medical Center campus, is a 45-bed inpatient facility specializing in the treatment of behavioral disorders and addictions as well as specialized programs for seniors, alcohol and drug abuse, gambling addiction, interventions for adolescents, depression, suicide, stress, marital problems, and aftercare. Gulf Oaks Hospital also offers two outpatient clinics - Recovery Resources in Biloxi and the Bay Area Clinic in Bay St. Louis.

The Professional Home Health Agency offers residents of Mississippi's six most southern counties a wide range of services provided by nurses, therapists and home health aides, including skilled nursing, maternal/child services, personal care services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, home IV therapy, social services, volunteer services and psychiatric nursing.

### **Gulf Oaks Hospital**

Located in West Biloxi, this 45-bed acute care hospital offers psychiatric and addictive disease treatment for adolescents, adults, and seniors in a multidisciplinary treatment team environment. Outpatient treatment is also available through Gulf Oaks' Recovery Resources Program. It is guided by a clinical team offering individual, group and family therapy for those suffering with problems with sexual trauma, chemical dependency, problem gambling, and life issues such as stress, grief or loss.

### **Keesler Medical Center**

Keesler Air Force Base boasts the second largest medical treatment facility

in the Air Force, serving over 600,000 patients annually. Equipped with 100 hospital beds and a staff of more than 2,000, the Center provides comprehensive health and dental care in more than 60 specialties. In peacetime natural disasters or wartime, Keesler Medical Center can dramatically increase the size of its bed capacity and Aeromedical Staging Facility to optimize its maximum life-saving capabilities.

Keesler Medical Center has the only genetics clinic and laboratory in the Department of Defense and one of its most advanced radiation therapy facilities. In addition, the Center has the second-largest dental clinic in the Air Force and one of the most advanced neonatal intensive care units on the Gulf Coast. A tribute to its superior care, Keesler Medical Center was recently recognized as the Air Force's top medical center for customer satisfaction. The Center is fully accredited through the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations.

#### **Veterans Administration**

The Department of Veterans Affairs has hospital facilities in Biloxi and Gulfport and outpatient clinics in Mobile, Alabama and Pensacola and Panama City, Florida. These facilities serve approximately 200,000 veterans in Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. Full-time personnel numbers more than 1,500 with an operating budget of over \$15 million. Capacity is 715 hospital beds - 206 in the domiciliary; 74 for on-site skilled nursing; and the balance for medical/surgical and psychiatric needs. The Biloxi facility is located in a picturesque setting on Biloxi's Back Bay.

#### **Saad's Healthcare Services**

Home nursing services provided by qualified professionals are available through Saad's Healthcare of Biloxi. Saad's is accredited with commendation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and is licensed by the State of Mississippi.

A teamwork approach by Saad's professional staff maximizes the effectiveness of home healthcare services. Skilled nurses and therapists work closely with home health aides in the care and education of patients and caregivers, with the goal of reaching the highest quality of personal care and functioning possible. Each Saad's patient receives an individualized home healthcare plan, with periodic adjustments as necessary, to provide appropriate care for each patient. Saad's Healthcare Services continues to enhance training of staff specialists such as Enterostomal Therapy (ET) nurses providing care to patients with ostomies, complex wounds and incisions, and diabetic foot care needs. Located in Biloxi's Central Business District, Saad's services are Medicare and Medicaid certified.

#### **Quality Home Healthcare of the Gulf Coast, Inc.**

Quality Home Health Care has developed home care programs to service the expectant mother, new mother, newborns, children, adults, geriatrics and the terminally ill. With its corporate office located in downtown Biloxi, Quality Home Health Care has eight service offices located across the



# Medical Facilities



# Medical Facilities

Mississippi Gulf Coast for the convenience of its clients.

Rehabilitation Services available through Quality Home Healthcare include physical therapy; restorative and rehabilitation nursing services which are committed to improving the quality of life for individuals with a disability or chronic illness; occupational therapy services which teach patients and caregivers techniques that promote independence in activities of day-to-day living such as eating and dressing; and speech therapy.

Comprehensive nursing services also are available through Quality Home Healthcare, including diabetes education services by Registered Nurses who provide assessment and teaching for newly-diagnosed and long-term diabetic patients; assessment, intervention, medication administration and management of patients with psychiatric diagnoses, under the care of a licensed physician or psychiatrist, by Certified Psychiatric Registered Nurses and psychiatric social workers; and wound care.

Quality Hospice of the Gulf Coast, Inc. provides an interdisciplinary team approach to hospice care to address physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs or concerns of terminally ill patients and their families in the supportive environment of patients' homes. The hospice team is composed of professionals of various fields including physicians, nurses, social workers, clergy, home health aides, and volunteers. The primary goals of the hospice program are to help patients live comfortably until they die and to help the family live with them as they are dying.

Quality Home Health Care and Quality Hospice of the Gulf Coast are accredited with commendation by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and are licensed by the State of Mississippi. Services offered are covered by Medicare, private insurance assignment, Medicaid, and through a Hospice Indigent Fund.

### **Other Medical Facility Expansion/Improvements Plans**

Major plans are underway for new medical facilities in other parts of Harrison County to complement efforts made by Biloxi healthcare professionals to provide a comprehensive array of medical services to Gulf Coast residents. HCA Columbia Garden Park plans to build a \$52 million hospital in the Orange Grove area. The 130-bed facility, which will open in early 2000, will cover 212,000 square feet and will include a medical office building. Memorial Hospital has announced plans for a \$20 million clinic in North Gulfport.

### **Other Major Medical Facilities Within 200 Miles**

- Forrest General Hospital - Hattiesburg, MS
- University Medical Center - Jackson, MS
- Oschner Medical Center - New Orleans, LA
- University of South Alabama Medical Center - Mobile, AL



## **E. Retirement and Life Care Facilities and Communities**

### **Century Oaks Retirement Community**

Consisting of a total of 70 homesites restricted to those 55 years and older, Century Oaks Retirement Community in West Biloxi is the first of its kind in Mississippi. Residents have the option of choosing from among five house designs to be built on their selected lot. To be able to legally restrict the community to those 55 years and older, each individual house is privately owned but the property on which it is constructed is leased from the developer. Residents pay taxes only on the actual value of their homes.

In addition to offering seniors a secure, gated neighborhood, Century Oaks features a community building as well as on-site warranty and maintenance services which include such things as lawn care to accommodate the lifestyles of those wishing to travel and have their yards properly maintained in their absence.

### **Gabriel Manor Retirement Apartments**

Sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Biloxi and managed by Sunstates Realty, Gabriel Manor is a four-story midrise apartment complex featuring a total of 72 efficiency and one-bedroom units for independent living. Each apartment features two emergency call buttons for its residents which are monitored 24 hours a day. Several of the units are wheelchair accessible.

Social activities and transportation services for grocery shopping and medical appointments are organized for residents, and a social services coordinator is available to assist residents with accessing public services.

### **Kare Centre and Rehabilitation Station**

A variety of assisted living services are available to Biloxi's senior citizens through Kare Centre, a skilled nursing facility owned by the nursing home management company Right Care, Inc. With the goal of making the lives of its residents as rewarding and productive as possible, the 240-bed Kare Centre features long-term care services, personal care services for those requiring an assisted living level of care, and specialized care through an Alzheimer's unit.

Kare Centre residents also have access to the Rehabilitation Station, a 5,000 square foot facility which offers a variety of inpatient and outpatient services including physical, occupational, and speech therapies. Individualized patient care includes evaluation, goal-setting, treatment, assessment and patient education provided by rehabilitation therapists from NovaCare, Inc. The Kare Centre and Rehabilitation Station are both medicare and medicaid approved.

### **Life Kare Place**

Offering a quality retirement lifestyle for senior citizens wishing to remain independent in their own living spaces, Life Kare Place offers housing units with support services in a community environment. Included in the monthly rental fee is a 24-hour emergency monitoring service; weekly housekeeping services; laundry service; scheduled transportation services; a full-course luncheon provided 7 days a week with additional meals available.

Consisting of 100 units with varying floor plans, Life Kare Place features attractively decorated meeting and social activity rooms, a library, a beauty shop, and a central cafeteria. Handicapped accessible units are available. Each private living unit is equipped with full kitchens and appurtenances, as well as individual heating and air conditioning controls.

### **Loyalton, an Emeritus Assisted Living Community in Biloxi**

Offering assisted living services for senior citizens who need help with daily living, but want to maintain as much independence as possible, Loyalton features 80 individual apartments, each with a kitchenette and bathroom, and each individually climate controlled. 20 units are for independent-living and 60 are for assisted-living residents.

A detailed Service Care Plan is created for each resident, based on individual needs; this plan is continually monitored and adjusted to increase or decrease assistance as necessary. Trained staff are available to assist with bathing, dressing and grooming; medication administration; dining; escort and walking assistance. Three homemade meals are served to each resident daily in a tastefully-decorated dining room, and Loyalton provides weekly housekeeping, linen and laundry services to its residents. A full-time activity program and scheduled transportation services provide opportunities for socializing and access to the Biloxi community.

Licensed nurses are on staff to monitor care needs 24 hours a day; personal one-touch emergency response pagers are provided to each resident and emergency call buttons are located in each apartment. A wellness center with physical, speech and occupational therapy services is located on site, as is a beauty/barber shop, multi- purpose rooms, and a private dining room which may be reserved by residents for special occasions.

### **Methodist Retirement Community**

A ministry of United Methodist Senior Services of Mississippi, Inc., the Methodist Retirement Community has served Biloxi residents for more than 30 years by offering both independent living and personal care apartments in a beautiful setting located on the Gulf of Mexico. Seashore Manor consists of a total of 124 independent living apartments; Gulf Oaks Manor, government subsidized with rent based on residents' income, consists of 64 independent living apartments; and Seashore Personal Care consists of 42 studio apartments.

# Retirement and Life Care Facilities and Communities

Residents of Seashore Manor and Gulf Oaks Manor may select a studio apartment or a one or two bedroom apartment, all of which are equipped with emergency call buttons monitored 24 hours a day. The Personal Care studio apartments offer residents an alternative for maintaining independence and privacy while they receive a variety of daily assistance services which may include three meals a day, medication monitoring, housekeeping and grooming assistance.

All residents of the Methodist Retirement Community in Biloxi have access to organized social activities, shopping and medical appointment transportation services, library services, exercise classes, beauty/barber shop services and laundry facilities in addition to worship services and Bible studies.

## Santa Maria Retirement Apartments

Owned by Catholic Charities Housing and operated by Sunstates Realty, Santa Maria Retirement Apartments offer senior citizens another option for independent living in Biloxi. Consisting of a total of 209 one bedroom and studio apartments, the 13-floor complex features a breathtaking view of the Gulf of Mexico and is located in close proximity to the Central Business District.

Emergency call buttons are located in the bathroom of each apartment and are monitored on a 24 hour a day basis. While no skilled nursing services are available on-site, a social worker is on staff to assist residents in coordinating access to public services.

Independent living residents may participate in a wide variety of organized social activities and transportation is provided to medical appointments, local grocery stores, and worship services.

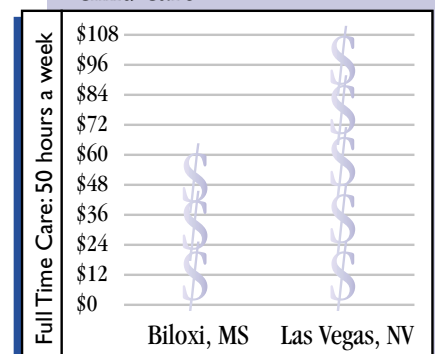
## G. Child Care

To meet the needs of working parents, a total of 55 day care centers exist in Harrison County – 21 in Biloxi alone. Full-time care (approximately 50 hours a week) averages \$50-\$60 a week in Biloxi. Due to the increase in shift work, three facilities in Harrison County now offer 24-hour care. More are scheduled to open in the coming years.

Day care centers are regulated by the State of Mississippi and include provisions for background and criminal investigation checks of personnel, staff/child ratios, discipline policies, menu guidelines to ensure balanced nutrition, length of nap times, and fire safety.

# Child Care

Child Care



# Housing

## COMPARE:

Taxes on a \$100,000 home in Biloxi average: **\$1,340**

Taxes on a \$100,000 home in Las Vegas average: **\$2,613**

## H. Housing

In comparison to other gaming jurisdictions experiencing tremendous rates of growth, prospective home buyers can find a home in Biloxi for significantly less than they would pay in Las Vegas even though the average selling price of a single-family home on the Coast in 1998 was \$101,000, up from \$94,905 in 1997. Steady employment and income growth fueled record housing starts and home sales. 2775 housing units were sold, a 10% increase over 1997, and 2500 spec lots were in development to meet the demand for housing (Source: Harrison County Development Commission Economic Indicator Report, January 1999).

A total of 813 residential permits were issued by the City of Biloxi in 1998 totaling \$32,798,106, compared to 721 issued in 1997 totaling \$15,906,994. From January - September 1999, a total of 899 residential permits have been issued by the City of Biloxi, totaling \$16,271,867. 112 permits were issued during 1998 for new single-family units totaling \$10,938,792, compared to 126 permits issued in 1997 totaling \$11,028,196. From January - September 1999, 114 permits have been issued for new single-family residential units totaling \$11,590,034.

### Apartment Living

There are more than 14,000 market-rent apartment units to choose from along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, more than 4,000 of which are located in the City of Biloxi. Since 1995, a total of 1,940 new market-rent apartments were placed on the market and most of these are considered to be "up-scale" units. Additional apartments, featuring one to four-bedroom units, are in the process of being constructed. In 1998, 543 new multi-family residential units were permitted by the City, valued at \$20,807,015. This is a significant increase over the 97 units permitted in 1997, valued at \$20,807,015. The City's Planning Division currently is reviewing two permit applications for the construction of 640 additional new multi-family residential units.

Despite the increased demand, apartment rental rates have stayed moderate with only a 2.4% increase in 1998 (Source: Harrison County Development Commission Economic Indicator Report, January 1999). While amenities vary from location to location, the following are average base prices for one and two bedroom units:

#### ONE BEDROOM AVERAGE RENT:

- Harrison County: . . . . . \$448
- **Biloxi:** . . . . . **\$453**

#### TWO BEDROOM AVERAGE RENT:

- Harrison County: . . . . . \$538
- **Biloxi:** . . . . . **\$562**

Source: MS Gulf Coast Apartment Survey (June 1999)



## **I. Religious Organizations/Associations**

The City of Biloxi offers a variety of places for its residents to worship according to their diverse personal beliefs, including churches or cathedrals affiliated with Assembly of God; Baptist; Catholic; Church of Christ; Church of the Nazarene; Episcopal; Lutheran; Pentecostal; and United Methodist religions. Biloxi also is home to Full Gospel Tabernacle, Present Truth Ministries, Beth Israel Congregation, and Grace Bible Church.

## Government

### A. City Government

Biloxi operates under a strong Mayor-Council form of government. The mayor, along with seven council members representing individual wards, are elected every four years. The next scheduled election is in 2001.

The Council meets the first, third and fourth Tuesdays of each month at City Hall, located at 140 Lameuse Street. The first meeting of the month is at 6 p.m.; all other meetings are at 1:30 p.m. To submit an agenda item or to appear on public forum, call the Clerk of Council at 228-435-6257. City Council agendas are posted each week on the City's Internet site at <http://biloxi.ms.us>.

All Mayor or Council correspondence should be addressed to P.O. Box 429, Biloxi, MS 39533.

**Mayor:** A.J. Holloway, 228-435-6254

#### City Council

Tom Ferrill	Ward 1
Eric Dickey	Ward 2
Jim Compton	Ward 3
Charles T. Harrison, Jr.	Ward 4
Mike Fitzpatrick	Ward 5
Tom Wall	Ward 6
Bill Fluty	Ward 7

To contact Council members, call the Clerk of Council at 228-435-6257.

<b>Chief Administrative Officer:</b>	228-435-6314
Police Department	228-435-6100
Fire Department	228-435-6200
Public Works Department	228-435-6271
Parks & Recreation Department	228-435-6294
City Attorney	228-435-6256

#### Community & Economic Development Department

David Staehling, Director	228-435-6280
Edward Shambra, Executive Planner	228-435-6266
Bill Prince, Building Official	228-435-6270
Eric Nolan, City Arborist	228-435-6280
Lolly Barnes, Cultural Affairs	228-435-6244
Scottie Maddox, Outreach Services	228-435-6297
Susan Pickich, Federal/State Programs	228-435-6275

#### Frequently Called Numbers

Auto Tags	228-435-8242
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City Hall



Birth Certificates	601-576-7960
Business Licenses	228-435-6247
Building Permits	228-435-6270
Drivers License	228-374-0041
Property Tax Information	228-435-8242
Tree Permits	228-435-6280
Voter Registration	228-435-6279
Vehicle Registration	228-435-8242

## B. County Government

Biloxi is part of Harrison County, which encompasses four other cities: Pass Christian, Long Beach, Gulfport, and D'Iberville. The county is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors who represent individual districts. Elections are held every four years. The next scheduled election is in 2003.

The Board of Supervisors meets the first and second Monday of each month at 9:30 a.m. The first meeting is held in the board room of the Gulfport Courthouse, located at 1801 23rd Avenue. The second meeting is held at the Biloxi Courthouse, located at 730 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. If an additional meeting is needed, it is held on the fourth Monday of the month at the Gulfport Courthouse. To submit an item for the agenda or to appear on public forum, call 228-865-4001.

### Board of Supervisors

Bobby Eleuterius	District 1	228-435-8272
Larry Benefield	District 2	228-865-4001
Marlin Ladner	District 3	228-865-4001
William Martin	District 4	228-865-4204
Connie Rockco	District 5	228-865-4123



### Frequently Called Numbers

Board Attorney	228-865-4511
Chancery Clerk	228-865-4117
Development Commission	228-863-3807
Sheriff's Department	228-865-7061
Tax Assessor	228-865-4044
Road Department	228-831-3367

## C. State Government

The Mississippi Legislature meets annually in Jackson, the State Capital. The session lasts approximately 90 days, with the exception of election years, when the session lasts 120 days.

The House of Representatives is made up of 122 districts - nine of which represent Harrison County. The Senate is made up of 52 districts - four of

# Harrison County





# State of Mississippi

which represent Harrison County. Various deadlines apply for requesting and introducing legislation. To request a copy of the Legislative Timetable, call 601-359-3770.

## Harrison County Delegation

### House of Representatives

Dirk Dedeaux	District 93	228-255-7156
Daniel D. Guice, Jr.	District 114	228-864-7440
Jamie Creel	District 115	228-374-0363
Les Barnett	District 116	228-392-2539
Michael Janus	District 117	228-435-3700
Roger Ishee	District 118	228-864-4975
Frances Fredericks	District 119	228-864-9319
James Simpson, Jr.	District 120	228-863-4893
Diane C. Peranich	District 121	228-255-5955

### Senate

Scottie Cuevas	District 46	228-255-2639
Debbie Dawkins	District 48	228-452-3868
Billy Hewes III	District 49	228-832-6731
Tommy Gollott	District 50	228-374-1070

### State Officials

Ronnie Musgrove	Governor	800-832-6123
Amy Tuck	Lt. Governor	601-359-3200
Eric Clark	Secretary of State	601-359-1350
Marshall Bennett	Treasurer	601-359-3600
Phil Bryant	State Auditor	800-321-1275
Mike Moore	Attorney General	601-359-3680
Michael Callahan	Public Service Commission, So. District	601-264-2708
Lester Spell	Agriculture & Commerce	228-863-8957
George Dale	Insurance Commissioner	601-359-3581
Ed Buelow	State Tax Commission	228-896-1393
Wayne Brown	Transportation Commission, So. District	601-583-0859



State Capitol in Jackson

Currently, Federal District Courthouses are located in both Biloxi and Gulfport. In addition, District and Regional offices of the Small Business Administration, Internal Revenue Service, Farmers Home Administration, as well as many other agencies, are located in Harrison County. The State of Mississippi recently renovated the old Biloxi Regional Medical Center property on the Back Bay of Biloxi for additional State offices.



## D. General Tax Information

### PROPERTY TAX

Most property is assessed at 15% of true value, according to the formula identified below. Millage rates for the City of Biloxi have decreased by 12 mills, or about 10%, over the last six years and are among the lowest in the State at 128.73.

Owner-occupied, single-family residential properties are assessed at 10% of true value. Owner occupants of single-family residences may qualify for an additional property tax reduction through homestead exemption. For seniors 65 and older and those who are 100% disabled, the first \$60,000 of the value of their home is tax exempt.

Motor vehicles are assessed at 30%.

### Approximate Tax Calculation Formula:

$$(V \times A \times M) / 1,000 = \text{ANNUAL TAX}$$

V = Property Value (\$)

A = Assessment Percentage (%)

M = Millage Rate

*The Gulf Coast is constantly changing  
– for the latest information, check out  
our website at <http://biloxi.ms.us>*

## Tax info

SALES TAX .....7%

### INCOME TAX

3% ....first \$5,000 of taxable income

4% ...next \$5,000 of taxable income

5% .....taxable income over \$10,000

\*No tax is levied on income from state and federal retirement.



# Population & Demographic Trends

## A. Population

According to adjusted 1990 U.S. Census information, Biloxi is the second largest city in Harrison County and the third largest city in the State of Mississippi with its population of 53,403 residents. In August 1999, a 34 square mile area north and west of Biloxi, including the Woolmarket community, was annexed by the City of Biloxi, increasing its population by an estimated 5,000 to 8,000 residents.

Since the legalization of dockside gaming in 1992, Biloxi's population has grown 15.3% from the 1990 Census count of 46,319. Similarly, the population in Harrison County has grown to an estimated 183,000, 11% greater than the 1990 population of 165,365. In 1998, the Mississippi Coast experienced a 15% increase in households, its strongest increase in twenty years.

Future growth is projected as additional people relocate to the area in pursuit of opportunities created by the service industry and related development. This, coupled with a growing retirement community and additional land gained through the Woolmarket annexation, is projected to increase Biloxi's population by 24% by 2005, for a total of 66,360 residents.

### Demographic Breakdown

Females account for 51% of the Biloxi population. This number is expected to increase slightly over the next ten years. Minorities account for 28% of the population - the majority are African-Americans, followed by a large Asian population. Projections show that the minority population will grow by 6%, totaling nearly a third of the City's population by 2010. (Source: Mississippi Institutes of Higher Learning).

### Income Levels

Median household income in the Biloxi/Gulfport/Pascagoula Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has risen from \$26,426 in 1990 to \$37,900 in FY98-99 (Source: U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development). Per capita personal income levels in Biloxi are 8% higher than the Harrison County average of \$17,187 and 11% higher than the State average of \$16,683 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau).

Other statistical measurements reflect this additional income. According to the Harrison County Development Commission, residential home sales have increased 84.6% and automobile registrations have increased by 16% since 1992. The Coast experienced a record \$4.3 billion in retail sales -

over 40% of the state's total retail sales collections in 1998 and a 16% increase from 1997.

# Population Growth

## Population Growth for Harrison County from 1950 to 2010

Year	Biloxi	D'Iberville	Gulfport	Long Beach	Pass Christian	TOTAL Harrison County
1950	37,425	-	22,659	2,703	3,383	-
1960	44,035	-	30,204	4,770	3,881	-
1970	48,486	-	40,791	6,170	4,525	134,582
1980	49,311	-	39,676	7,967	5,014	157,665
1990	46,319	6,566	40,755	15,804	5,557	163,365
1995	53,403	6,865	66,296	15,887	6,105	177,506
2000	63,041	7,048	69,503	18,207	6,306	187,315
2005	66,360	-	-	-	-	194,319
2010	69,487	-	-	-	-	201,892

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Joseph A. Lusteck & Associates, Inc.

## Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics for Biloxi

Total Persons:	53,403
Persons Per Household:	2.44
Median Household Income:	\$37,900
Median Age:	29.7
Median School Years Completed:	12.5
% High School Graduates:	75.2
% Bachelor Degrees or Higher:	18.0
Minority Population:	28.1
Black.....	19.1
Asian .....	7.2
Hispanic.....	1.8
Total Labor Force (1998):	28,791
Civilian.....	19,300
Armed Forces.....	9,491

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (1990), Gulf Regional Planning Commission, Mississippi Employment Security Commission, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Joseph A. Lusteck & Associates, Inc.

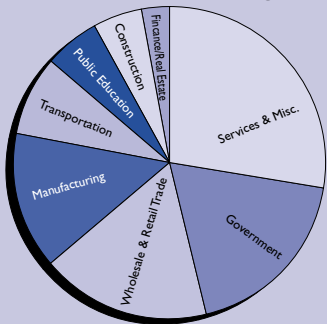


*“The Mississippi Gulf Coast has the largest number of businesses, the largest cluster of military and federal installations, and a distinctive destination resort industry making Biloxi and the Mississippi Gulf Coast one of the top mid-sized markets in the South.”*

– Michael Olivier, Director,  
Harrison County  
Development Commission

# Employment & Commerce

## Gulf Coast Establishment Based Employment 1998 Annual Averages



Service & Misc. ....	45,786
Government .....	30,856
Wholesale & Retail Trade .....	29,199
Manufacturing.....	23,514
Transportation .....	13,703
Public Education .....	9,526
Construction .....	8,455
Finance/Real Estate .....	4,817

# Employment & Commerce

## A. Overview

Traditionally, Biloxi's location on the Gulf of Mexico has fueled three major economic engines - the seafood industry, tourism, and government/military installations. Today, these three have spawned new growth in the retail and services industry, significant residential and commercial construction, and the opening of many new businesses.

This prosperity in Biloxi has contributed significantly to the designation of the Mississippi Gulf Coast as the top mid-sized market in the South by Southern Business and Expansion Magazine (MSA Size: 350,000).

*“We are issuing new business licenses at a rate of one a day. Now that's serious economic development.”*

– A.J. Holloway, Mayor,  
City of Biloxi

Since 1992, job growth on the Coast has increased by 12.4%. The civilian labor force in the three Coast counties rose to 163,441 in 1998, with Harrison County accounting for more than 50% of the labor force at 83,360 people. In 1998, the City of Biloxi had a civilian labor force of 19,300 which grew to 19,930 by September 1999.

Unemployment levels have reached their lowest levels on the Coast since 1974 and have steadily declined since 1995. Preliminary data for September 1999 reflected Biloxi's unemployment rate at 4.3% and Harrison County's unemployment rate at 3.4%, compared to the State's unemployment rate of 4.8% and the U.S. unemployment rate of 4.2%. (Source: Mississippi Employment Security Commission, September 1999, Preliminary).

## B. The Services Industry

When comparing pre-gaming establishment-based employment, the transportation/utility industry has experienced the most dramatic growth with a 137% increase in the number of jobs since 1992. However, the service industry remains the leader in terms of actual job creation, adding 19,896 new jobs to the local economy, a 77% increase.



**Tourism / Gaming**

Tourism is now the largest non-military employer in the City of Biloxi. This mirrors trends in Harrison County, where tourism employs more than 21,000 individuals directly and another 5,000 through related businesses. In 1998, Grand Casino Biloxi, Casino Magic Biloxi, and Imperial Palace created additional jobs with the opening of their new hotels to support gaming operations and the March 1999 opening of the Beau Rivage created thousands more jobs.

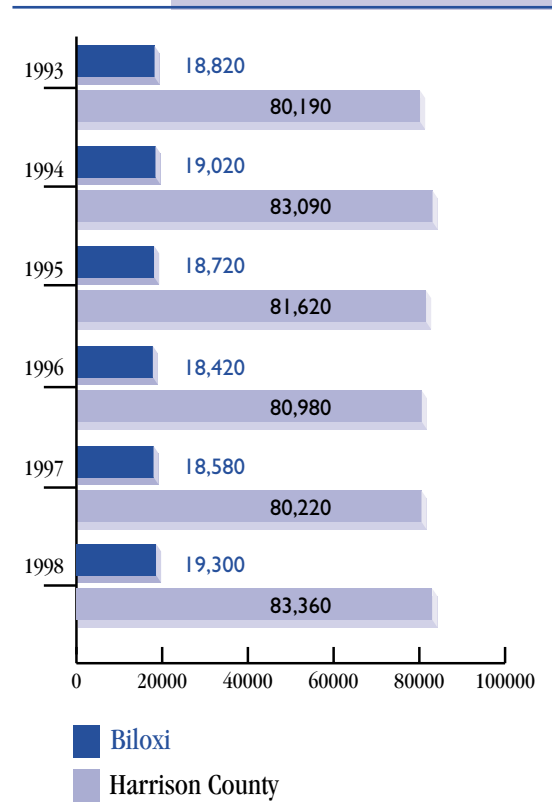
**Military**

Almost one-fourth of Biloxi's civilian employment is in support services for the government/military sector. The majority of this employment is attributed to Keesler Air Force Base, one of the largest training centers in the United States and home of the 81st Training Wing and the computer and electronics training center of the Air Force. In addition, it is the home of the Second Air Force which directs the training of five operational centers. Keesler and the other federal and state installations on the Mississippi Gulf Coast are estimated to directly support over 50,000 persons in the Biloxi-Gulfport metropolitan area.

**Medical**

In 1998, the medical services sector of the Gulf Coast economy employed approximately 6,750 residents. With a growing population and expansion of employee benefits packages, over \$90 million in private investment is being made in healthcare in Harrison County. (Source: Harrison County Development Commission 1998 Annual Report)

**Biloxi's Contribution To Harrison County's Labor Force**



**C. Manufacturing/Industrial Development**

Over the last three years, over \$82 million in new manufacturing investment has been made, according to the Harrison County Development Commission. The number of manufacturing jobs in Harrison County rose from 4,600 in 1997 to 5,490 in 1998. Coastwide, the number of manufacturing jobs increased from 22,500 in 1997 to 26,070 in 1998. Over 50% of the manufacturing jobs are located in Harrison County's industrial parks.

To ensure that there is adequate land and resources for the core base of manufacturing/distribution businesses to grow, the Harrison County Development Commission is entering the second year of a long-range capital projects program. This multi-year program will yield over \$10 million in new project development and enhancement of existing and new industrial properties in 1998-99:

- Biloxi Commerce Park .....\$3.3 million
- Port Intraplex - Phases I & II.....\$3.2 million
- Pass Christian Industrial Park/Bayou Portage Dredging .....\$1.2 million



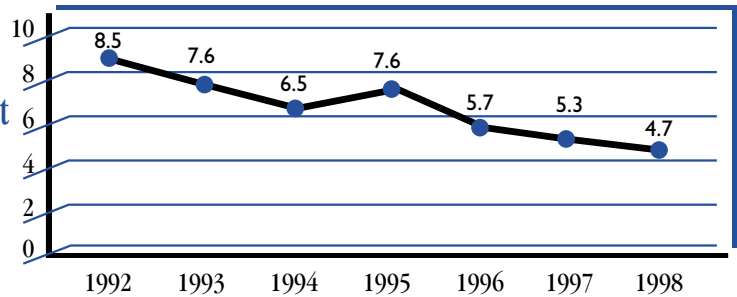
## Annual Unemployment Rates

	Biloxi	Harrison County	MS	U.S.
1992	8.5	7.5	8.2	7.4
1993	7.6	5.1	6.4	6.8
1994	6.5	5.5	6.5	6.1
1995	7.6	6.4	6.1	5.6
1996	5.7	4.9	6.1	5.4
1997	5.3	4.6	5.7	4.9
1998	4.7	3.9	5.4	4.5

21st Century Industrial Park Property Acquisition.....\$1.0 million  
 Mitigation Bank Development .....\$1.0 million  
 Existing Industrial Park Mitigation Projects .....\$599,000  
 Long Beach Industrial Park/Manufacturing/Vendor Center .....\$500,000  
 Intraplex 10 - Phase III .....\$200,000

In early 1999, the U.S. Department of Commerce Foreign Trade Zones Board is expected to authorize expansion of the Mississippi Coast Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ No. 92), to include new properties in Hancock and Jackson Counties as well as properties already designated at the Mississippi State Port, Gulfport/Biloxi Regional Airport, Bernard Bayou Industrial District, and the Long Beach Industrial Park. Within the Foreign Trade Zone, a new air cargo facility has been developed at a cost of \$700,000 and is ready for business at the regional airport.

Biloxi  
 Unemployment  
 Rates  
 1992-1998



## Annual Labor Force Report

Harrison County	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>RESIDENCE BASED DATA</b>							
Civilian Labor Force	75,280	80,190	83,090	81,620	80,980	80,220	83,360
Unemployed	5,610	4,090	4,530	5,220	3,950	3,720	3,250
Unemployment Rate	7.5	5.1	5.5	6.4	4.9	4.6	3.9
Employed	69,670	76,100	78,560	76,400	77,030	76,500	80,110
<b>EMPLOYMENT BY PLACE OF WORK</b>							
Manufacturing (Total)	6,850	6,390	5,900	5,140	5,170	5,450	5,490
Non Manufacturing (Total)	57,680	66,830	76,500	75,590	78,630	78,110	82,540
Total Trade	16,310	17,540	18,340	19,850	19,870	18,240	21,390
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	2,850	2,830	2,890	3,080	3,060	3,210	3,490
Services & Misc.	15,660	22,180	29,600	27,420	29,260	30,080	30,100
Government	16,190	16,640	17,180	16,850	16,940	17,380	17,310
Public Education	4,110	4,370	4,320	3,920	4,230	4,470	4,150

# Annual Labor Force Report



## Harrison County's Industrial Parks & Number of Employees

### EAST HARRISON COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK

Bay Marine Boat Works, Inc. ....	8
Ershigs - Biloxi, Inc. ....	66
Rebel Boat Works ....	3
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>77</b>

### BERNARD BAYOU INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (Gulfport)

AARIG Terminal Services .....	18
Abita Springs .....	14
Avondale Industries, Inc. GRP Division .....	275
B&J Vacuum Company .....	3
Blacklidge Emulsions .....	30
Brimmer Castings, Inc. ....	5
Casino Classics .....	9
Channel Chemical Corporation .....	10
Collins Filter Manufacturing .....	10
Fansteel Hydrocarbide .....	57
Fayard Fast Freight .....	250
Goldin Building Systems .....	20
Goldin Industries, Inc. ....	100
Gulf Coast Coors .....	20
Gulf Coast Laundry .....	70
Gulf Concrete .....	55
Gulf States Ready Mix .....	10
Gulfport International Supply Company .....	8
Halter Marine, Inc. ....	379
Harrison County Correctional Facility .....	270
Harrison County Department of Human Services ..	145
Hartson-Kennedy Cabinet Top Company, Inc. ...	114
Highside Chemical Company .....	14
Holden Earth Moving & Construction .....	36
Hubbell's Central Industrial Supply .....	9
Klumb Forest Products .....	12
Magnolia Bus Services .....	2
McElroy Machine & Manufacturing Company, Inc. .	38
Metal Parts, Inc. ....	35
Motion Industries .....	5
Necaise Construction Company .....	60
Redman Homes, Inc. ....	150
Roy Anderson, Inc. ....	55
Seemann Composites, Inc .....	21
Shippers Express .....	12
Southern Scrap Recycling Gulf Coast, LLC. . .	30
Sunbelt Chemicals, Inc. ....	3
Treated Materials Company, Inc. ....	20
Turnbull Metal Products .....	75

Vulcan Materials .....	1
Warren Publishing Co. ....	50
WGCM .....	23
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>2,523</b>

### INTRAPLEX 10 (Gulfport)

Ameriserve (formerly PFC-PEPSICO) .....	60
AMR .....	230
Arrow SYSCO .....	30
Associated Food Equipment & Supply .....	10
Associated General Contractors of MS .....	2
F.E.B. Distributing Co., Inc. ....	74
Federal Express .....	36
Hill & Brooks .....	5
Homebuilders Association of MS Coast .....	2
Keeling Company .....	2
Magnolia Air Condition .....	7
Mississippi Allied Technology .....	41
Rehability Center .....	3
Rex Distributing .....	104
Ryder Truck Leasing .....	5
Schwan's Sales Ent. Inc. ....	12
Sears .....	35
Southern Elec. Supplies .....	10
U.S. Postal Service .....	235
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>903</b>

### LONG BEACH INDUSTRIAL PARK

Allied Enterprises .....	45
American Commercial China .....	40
MGCCC W. Harrison County Occupational Training Center .....	30
Oreck Manufacturing Company .....	525
Planning Systems, Inc. ....	18
Professional Divers Institute .....	5
Stuffed Shirt, Inc. ....	80
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>743</b>

### PASS CHRISTIAN INDUSTRIAL PARK

Gulf Coast Pre-Stress, Inc. ....	209
Moore & Munger, Inc. ....	47
Transtec, Inc. ....	6
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>262</b>

### TOTAL ALL INDUSTRIAL PARKS

..... 4,508

Source: Harrison County Development Commission

# Industrial Development



*“From the onset, we have felt the beauty and character of the Mississippi Gulf Coast provided the foundation to position Biloxi as a must-see destination in the Southeast United States.”*

– Barry Shier,  
Mirage Resorts

# Tourism

## LEADING EMPLOYERS

### Tourism

#### A. The Gulf Coast’s Success Story

Recognition of the Biloxi and the Mississippi Coast as the "Playground of the South" has led Coast tourism to become a \$2.8 billion industry with over 20 million visitors annually. Non-gaming related expenditures now account for nearly 75 cents of every visitor dollar. Tourism, historically one of the Coast's most important industries, has gained even more momentum since the advent of gaming and is now one of the fastest growing segments of the economy. This tremendous growth has resulted in the Mississippi Gulf Coast being selected as "One of the Top 10 Destinations for the New Millennium" by the editors of Successful Meetings.

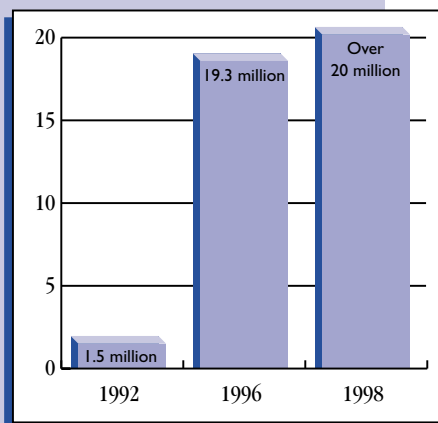
Strong daytrip visitation indicates the regional appeal of the market for "impulse" getaways, as well the impact of the motorcoach market. Overnight visitation remains strong, aided by increased jet service to key feeder markets from Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport.

These expenditures demonstrate that visitors are taking advantage of many of the Gulf Coast's attributes - the great food, shopping, historic attractions, outdoor recreation, and gaming. In fact, tourism sales represent approximately 47% of total retail sales in Biloxi. Unlike many jurisdictions dominated by gaming, Biloxi has managed to increase non-gaming as well as gaming revenues through a well-diversified economy.

Unemployment in Biloxi dropped to its lowest rate since 1974 due in part to increased opportunities in the tourism industry, now the City's largest non-military employer. Several factors have contributed to the impressive growth of tourism on the Mississippi Gulf Coast during the last six years, including:

- Continued growth of casino gaming, especially in the City of Biloxi, resulting in new hotels rooms and 24-hour entertainment to round out the product mix.
- Increased national recognition as a destination in the trade and consumer press, including over 200 national and regional articles from 1997 to 1999.
- Increased consumer awareness in primary markets due to an additional \$15 million in private sector marketing.
- Dramatic rebound in golf rounds during the fall and winter seasons due to new signature course development, product appeal, and hotel packaging.
- Strong consumer response to unique special events, such as Cruisin' the Coast, which have extended the traditional summer visitor season.
- New and existing charter and scheduled jet service, allowing more

Visitor Totals



visitors to experience the "Playground of the South."

- Increased bookings from travel agents, tour operators, wholesalers, and meeting, convention and tradeshow planners.

## B. Capital Investment & Improvements

By the end of 1999, over \$2 billion will have been invested on the Coast in resort development since 1991. The region has an estimated 18,000 hotel rooms (including four 1000+ room hotels and 7,000 casino rooms); 12 casinos; a state-of-the-art Convention Center boasting over 180,000 square feet of exhibit space; 25 golf courses, including three signature courses; and an additional 1.32 million square feet of retail space. This development is in addition to the \$7.8 million expansion at the Gulfport- Biloxi Regional Airport and numerous restaurant/business additions.

### Hotel Development

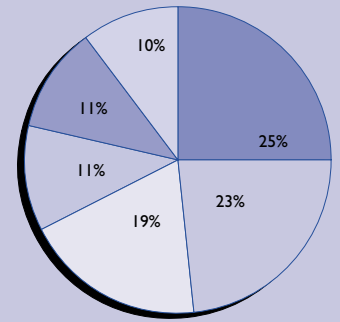
The Mississippi Gulf Coast's hotel room inventory has increased from 10,027 rooms in 1996-97 to an estimated 18,000 in 1998-99. In 1997-98, approximately 3,000 hotel rooms were added to the local hotel inventory, and the opening of the Beau Rivage Casino Resort in March 1999 added an additional 1,780 hotel rooms in Biloxi.

Occupancy levels have remained near 70%, indicating that supply has kept up with demand, with many properties at capacity on weekend nights. Average daily rates remain near \$62; however, some newer hotels are selling rooms at over \$100 a night on weekends.

Since 1996, the number of casino hotel rooms has increased by 74% in the City of Biloxi with the opening of Grand Casino's second property, the Bayview Hotel (500 rooms); Casino Magic's first hotel (378 rooms); and the opening of the 1086-room Imperial Palace. As previously noted, the much-anticipated Beau Rivage resort (a Mirage Resort property) opened in March 1999 with 1,780 hotel rooms. Biloxi's three bed & breakfast inns continued to do well in 1998-99, adding variety to the Biloxi hotel market with comfortable rooms complemented by historic settings.

Future room inventory development is expected to come from two main categories: casinos and condominiums. In the casino segment, construction began in September 1998 on a 230+ room hotel and marina for the New Palace Casino. In addition, hotels have been proposed for Boomtown Casino (500 rooms); Treasure Bay Casino (500 new rooms); and the Isle of Capri (418 new rooms). (Source: Harrison County Tourism Commission)

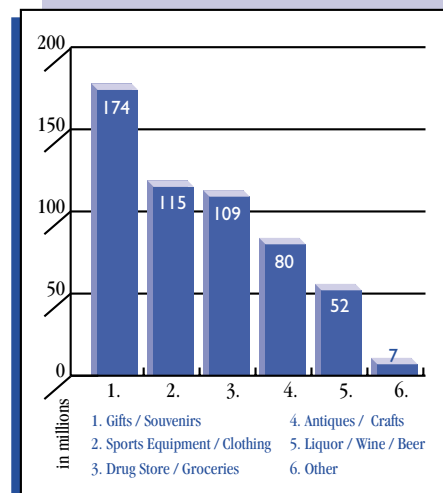
## Visitor Expenditures by Category



Total .....	\$2.84 million
Casino Gaming	25%.....\$724 million
Food	23%.....\$650 million
Retail	19%.....\$537 million
Accommodations	11%.....\$320 million
Recreation	11%.....\$315 million
Transportation	10%.....\$297 million

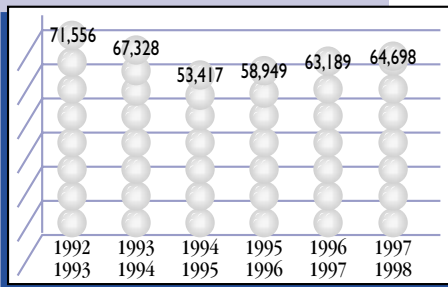
## Hotels

### Retail Expenditures



# Golf

## Golf Rounds

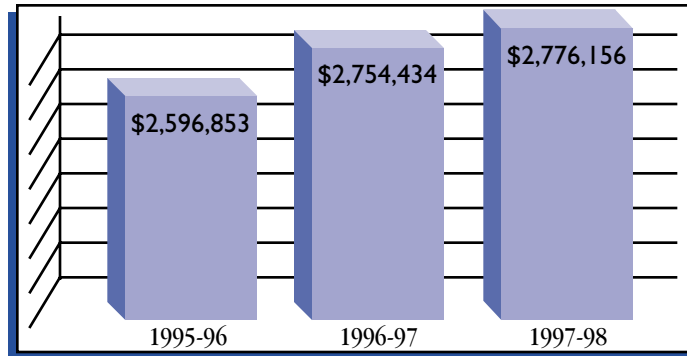


*“We see the Mississippi Gulf Coast emerging as a top pleasure and meeting destination in the new millennium”*

– Stephen Richer,  
Mississippi Gulf Coast  
Convention & Visitors  
Bureau



## 3% Hotel Sales Tax Collections



7% Increase

## Golf Course Development

Arnold Palmer started the PGA-pro migration to the Gulf Coast when he designed The Bridges for Casino Magic in Bay St. Louis. Since then, The Oaks - a \$5 million course designed by Landmark National in the tradition of Kiawah Island, Oak Tree, and PGA West - has opened and Grand Casinos signed Jack Nicklaus to design and develop Bear Creek, an 18-hole course which recently opened as part of a 1,750 acre sports complex located just north of Gulfport. The NIKE Golf Tournament is returning to the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 1999, to complement activities available to golf enthusiasts.

## Restaurant Development

Due to increased visitor traffic and the introduction of casino gaming, many new nationally-known restaurants have opened on the Coast:

- Applebee's
- Cracker Barrel
- Roadhouse Grill
- Ruby Tuesday (2 locations)
- The Homestead
- Copeland's (planned)

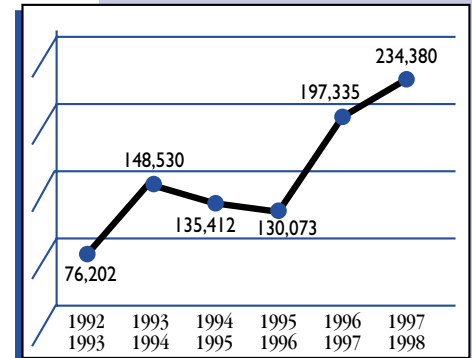
In addition to the national chains, almost 20 casino-based restaurants with a variety of themes and outstanding menus have opened in Biloxi during the past seven years to complement the offerings of Biloxi's long-established restaurants such as Mary Mahoney's, McElroy's, the French Connection and The Schooner.

## VISITOR APPEAL

Identified by Fodor's Travel Publications as a "hot new emerging destination for '99," Biloxi offers an exciting variety of unique annual festivals and events – along with the traditional appeal of a beach resort, mild year round climate, deep sea fishing, golf, gaming, historical attractions, and superb cuisine. On any given weekend of the year, visitors can get a snapshot of Biloxi's wealth of cultural resources at these events - many of which have been selected as top tourism events in the Southeastern United States. (For a list of annual festivals, see Appendix).

## Inquiries

The Mississippi Gulf Coast Convention & Visitors Bureau recorded more than 234,000 inquiries in 1997-98, a 19% increase over 1996-97, and more than 332,500 inquiries during the first nine months of 1999. Inquiries continue to be generated from a national audience including states such as New York, Michigan, California, Illinois, Texas and Florida, indicating that the Gulf Coast's appeal has expanded beyond traditional drive markets. Biloxi is also becoming a favorite stop for international visitors from Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and the Netherlands.



Media attention also has remained high with 628 requests for information and numerous national stories written for publication.

## Visitor Profile— THE TYPICAL VISITOR TO BILOXI IS...

Gender:	Female (51%)
Age:	45+ (58%)
Marital Status:	Married (68%); traveling with her spouse/partner
Income:	Earns under \$50K annually (70%)
Education:	College-educated (56%)
Employment:	Works full-time (49%); white collar/professional job (78%)
Planning Cycle:	Plans 1 month or less (51%)
Info. Source:	Based on personal experience (46%)
Distance Traveled:	Travels less than 500 miles (60%)
Transportation:	In personal vehicle (72%)
Length of Stay:	Stays 2.3 nights
Accommodations:	At hotel/motel (55%)
Time of Year:	During April - December
Average Expenditure:	Spends \$78/day
Activities:	Enjoy beach (76%); Gambling (74%); Shopping (46%); Sample local cooking (31%); See shows/entertainment/local music (25%); Tour Historic District (22%); Beauvoir (14%); Keesler Air Force Base (14%); and Ship Island (7%).

(Source: Harrison County Tourism Commission)

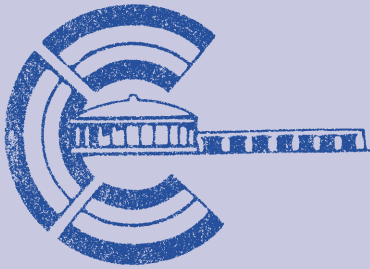
# Visitor Profile

## Entertainment

### D. Entertainment

The national spotlight and positive economic climate have enabled Gulf Coast entertainment venues to attract more headliner acts and professional sports. Every casino offers some type of entertainment on a regular basis - from Las Vegas-style shows to comedians to lounge acts. Bill Cosby, Trisha Yearwood, Chris Rock, Tom Jones, Vince Gill, and Percy Sledge are examples of the top-name entertainment featured at Biloxi casinos.





## Entertainment

In June 1999, the Biloxi Grand Casino brought world championship boxing to Biloxi with the light heavyweight unification title match between Roy Jones and Reggie Johnson. On the opposite end of the entertainment spectrum, tickets went on sale in Fall 1999 for a Spring 2000 concert by the world-famous tenor, Luciano Pavarotti, to be hosted at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Biloxi by special arrangement with Grand Casino.

Cruisin' the Coast, a recent addition to the Mississippi Gulf Coast Calendar of Events, received a Shining Example Award as the Best Event with attendance under 100,000 from the Southeast Tourism Society in 1999. Touted as the South's largest block party, Cruisin' the Coast features over 3,000 classic cars from more than 30 states. A nostalgic celebration showcasing classic automobiles and music, the weekend event is held each fall and includes a variety of stage entertainment and special attractions as well as organized "cruises" for cash prizes. Since its inception four years ago, Cruisin' the Coast has doubled in size each year and is expected to continue to do so.

Such intense competition in the local entertainment arena has raised the standards across the board - the Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center, the Southeast's largest beachfront facility, hosted 233 events in 1998 that resulted in attendance of over 781,000 people and generated economic impact of over \$230 million for the local economy. (Source: Harrison County Tourism Commission)

In its twentieth year, the Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center reached new heights in entertaining Coast audiences by hosting such events as concerts by Elton John, Shania Twain, Michael Bolton, and Aerosmith, performances by the Bolshoi Ballet, the introduction of indoor soccer, continued success of professional hockey, and the hosting of major regional and national conventions such as Travel South USA.

Fresh from a 80,000 square foot expansion completed in November 1997, the Convention Center now features 178,000 square feet of single-level meeting space. The facility offers banquet service for up to 7500 or can be partitioned into as many as 32 individual meeting rooms. Improvements include a portico for covered motorcoach drop-offs, over \$1 million in decor/lighting, new concession stands and show manager facilities, expanded food and beverage service, and 4,000 new parking spaces. In addition, the facility is now fully-ADA compliant.

Development plans over the next five years include expansion of the Convention Center to 430,000 square feet to accommodate city-wide conventions, the addition of a 2,000 space parking garage, and the construction of an 8,000 seat baseball stadium. (Source: Harrison County Development Commission 1998 Annual Report)



# America's Number One Travel Value

## E. America's Number One Travel Value

This broad range of amenities allows Biloxi to position itself as a true vacation value and avoid the price wars experienced in other areas dominated by gaming (such as Atlantic City and Reno) or in destinations experiencing a rapid rate of growth (such as Myrtle Beach). In fact, the Biloxi/Gulfport MSA was named **America's number one travel value** in 1996 by the Rochester Institute, surpassing the 1995 winner, Las Vegas, **with an average daily cost of \$144.21**. In 1999, the Mississippi Gulf Coast was second only to Jackson, Mississippi at a per diem rate of \$172.93. (Source: Harrison County Tourism Commission)

## F. Key Market Segments

### Meeting / Convention & Trade Show Planners

The opening of the newly-expanded Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center in late 1997, along with the availability of new meeting space at area casino hotels, helped the region post a 15% increase in the number of meetings, conventions, and tradeshow held. In 1998, over 98,000 meeting delegates visited the Gulf Coast, stimulating additional mid-week occupancy at area hotels.

The meeting/convention sector of the local economy has grown over 65% since 1990. Conventions and tradeshow accounted for more than 98,000 new visitors to the Coast in 1998 and an economic impact of over \$84 million.

Identified by Fodor's Travel Publications as a "hot new emerging destination for '99," Biloxi has also been named one of the top meeting destinations in the United States by Facilities magazine. In addition to hosting numerous well-attended conferences in 1999, the City of Biloxi enjoyed the honor of hosting a board meeting of the International Travel Services Association for its first out-of-state meeting; the National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners Spring Convention; the Travel Agent Gaming Expo and Southern Showcase; and the annual retreat of the top 35 United Kingdom industry producers.

In 1998, the City played host to the following major conventions: ASTA Southeast/ Southwest Regional (travel agents from New Mexico to the Carolinas); Southern Republican Leadership Conference (preview of year 2000 presidential candidates); Travel South Showcase/What's Up Down South (marketplace for over 1,500 domestic and international tour operators); National Tour Association Board Meeting; and the Pennsylvania Bus Association Annual Meeting (the first time this group has met this far away from home).

# Key Market Segments



Travel agents will once again gather on the 'Playground of the South' in March 2000, when hundreds of agents convene in Biloxi for the Association of Retail Travel Agents national convention. Travel industry meetings will continue well into the new millennium. More than 100 tour operators will travel to the Mississippi Gulf Coast for the National Tour Association Spring Meet that will be held in 2002 for the first time in the South.

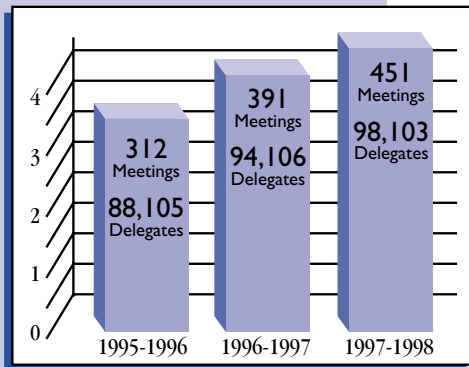
**Motorcoach Operators**

Over 13,000 motorcoaches traveled to the Mississippi Gulf Coast during 1998, introducing 472,612 visitors to the region. Their expenditures totaled more than \$37.8 million - nearly 70% of all motorcoach expenditures in the State of Mississippi. Biloxi continues to be ranked one of the Top 25 Motorcoach Destinations in the United States (National Motorcoach Network, 1996-1998), demonstrating that the volume of North American bookings from this market segment will continue to grow.

**Travel Agents / Wholesalers**

For the first time, Biloxi and the Mississippi Gulf Coast are being marketed through commissionable air-inclusive hotel packages - making it easier for the front-line travel agent to send visitors to the Gulf Coast. Since the addition of these packages, over 4,400 new leads have been generated in this segment.

**Growth of Conventions & Trade Shows**



44% Increase

Motorcoach  
Travel Agents  
Wholesalers



# Casino Gaming

Outside of Las Vegas, the Global Gaming Almanac labels the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and specifically the City of Biloxi, as this nation's next most desirable gaming destination. A vacation resort located on a peninsula with water on three sides, Biloxi was ideal for the development of dockside gaming. In seven short years, Biloxi has grown from hosting the first casino in the State of Mississippi (the Isle of Capri; August 1992) to being the home to nine casinos.

Biloxi Casinos	1998 Square Footage	1998 Hotel Rooms	Proposed Square Footage	Proposed Hotel Rooms	Timeline
• Beau Rivage	73,000	1,780	–	–	–
• Boomtown Casino	61,600	–	–	–	–
• Casino Magic - Biloxi	47,700	378	–	–	–
• Grand Casino Biloxi	110,000	1,000	52,000	–	12/1999
• Imperial Palace	70,000	1,086	–	–	–
• Isle of Capri Casino	45,000	370	–	418	To be determined
• New Palace Casino	43,500	–	207,000	236	4/2000
• President Casino	46,100	510	–	–	–
• Treasure Bay Casino	50,000	264	–	500	To be determined
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>546,900</b>	<b>5,388</b>	<b>259,000</b>	<b>1,154</b>	

Source: Biloxi casinos

In May 1997, Biloxi was cited as one of three cities across the country where gaming had a positive economic influence (Arthur Andersen: Economic Impacts of Casino Gaming in the United States). Specific findings included:

- 62% (or 11,200) of the 18,100 jobs created since 1990 were created by the casino industry.
- Average casino employee's salary is \$22,000 -- \$2,000 higher than State employee's average.
- 35% of the new casino jobs created were filled by minorities (including 60% women) 13% higher than the overall percentage of minority employment in the MSA.
- The number of AFDC recipients dropped more than 9% in 1995 and 15% in 1996.
- Food stamp recipients have dropped steadily each year since 1993.

Each casino in the city of Biloxi employs an average of 1150 individuals from the following geographies:

- 33% Local Biloxians
- 33% Work in Biloxi, but live elsewhere
- 33% Relocated to Biloxi to work and live

However, perhaps the largest impact of casino gaming has been the revenue generated for much-needed city and county improvements. From August



# Gaming Revenues

*“I can personally verify that the gaming phenomenon on the Mississippi Gulf Coast is for real. It’s growing at a pace that can only be described as aggressive.”*

– Martin Deutsch,  
Editor at Large,  
Travel Agent Magazine

1992 through December 1998, gross gaming revenues generated in the City of Biloxi totaled more than \$2.9 billion. In 1998, casinos operating in the City of Biloxi accounted for approximately 71% of the total revenues generated on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, demonstrating the impact of Biloxi's large concentration of gaming facilities. (Source: Mississippi State Tax Commission)

## City of Biloxi - Gross Gaming Revenues

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
January	–	17,455,414	26,152,703	37,921,748	38,553,000	41,382,611	50,220,180
February	–	18,245,892	32,143,386	38,851,614	40,809,932	43,329,531	47,803,398
March	–	20,595,591	34,289,733	41,306,378	46,877,105	44,635,234	51,582,512
April	–	20,512,646	36,774,049	41,072,144	41,470,803	42,929,275	44,428,077
May	–	19,506,323	39,690,559	39,606,606	41,535,417	44,559,770	50,305,939
June	–	19,654,382	38,389,326	38,343,766	42,892,819	43,652,990	48,176,854
July	–	24,320,962	46,281,997	49,621,589	47,726,982	46,441,916	55,276,964
August	10,616,709	24,695,926	42,054,729	40,038,182	45,517,841	49,976,880	52,746,770
September	18,290,080	22,374,912	40,641,290	41,357,954	43,058,696	43,149,413	42,304,451
October	16,989,697	22,507,607	39,787,487	36,925,744	39,469,352	44,662,089	39,475,147
November	16,115,373	22,051,592	36,620,222	38,638,169	41,275,153	42,278,194	46,887,214
December	15,526,673	22,439,231	36,069,752	38,503,504	40,021,524	39,906,692	47,092,374
Year End <b>TOTALS</b>	\$77,538,532	\$254,360,478	\$448,895,233	\$483,187,420	\$509,208,624	\$526,904,595	\$576,299,880

In general, casinos operating in the City of Biloxi are taxed at a rate of about 12%. Of that, 8% is channeled to the State of Mississippi. An eight-tenths of one percent tax is split between the City and Harrison County on the basis of population. The larger 3.2% local tax is divided according to the following formula:

- 40% City General Fund
- 20% City Public Safety
- 20% City Public Schools
- 10% County Public Safety
- 10% County and Other Public Schools



# Gaming

## The Continued Growth of Biloxi's Casino Industry

Currently, approximately 85% of the Gulf Coast's gaming revenues is generated by visitors within a 200-mile radius. Therefore, continued success will depend upon drawing visitors up to 500-miles away - an audience of 40 million potential visitors. The 32-story Beau Rivage ("Beautiful Shore") resort has brought Biloxi and the Gulf Coast to the next level of destination development with its March 1999 opening.

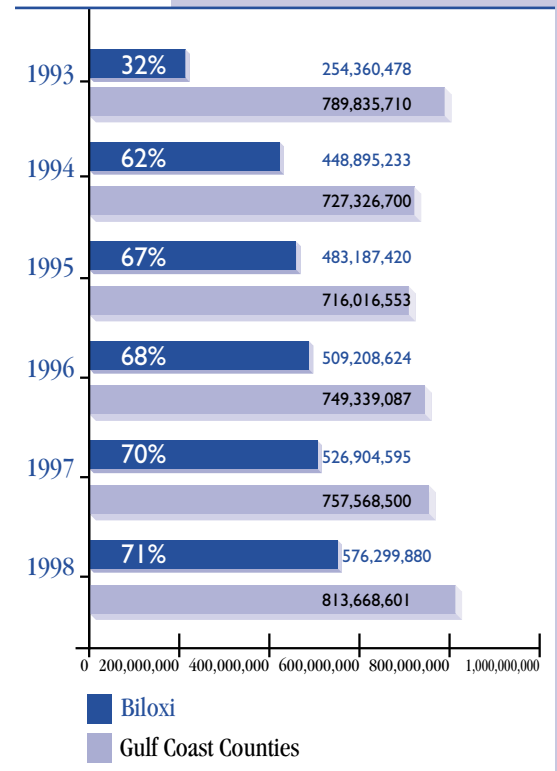
The 3.2 million square foot, \$650 million resort is the largest beachfront resort in the Southeast. The new resort features 1,780 luxury guest rooms, including 66 suites; 12 restaurants, including a Brew Pub; formal gardens, featuring 33 Live Oaks; one of the largest spas and salons in the Southeast; a 1,550 seat showroom, featuring Cirque du Soleil; 50,000 square feet of meeting space; 73,000 square foot casino; an on-site parking garage; and a 31-slip marina. The resort also includes retail space featuring high-end men's and ladies' fashions, footwear, jewelry, and a Warner Brothers store.

In anticipation of this increased competition, many of Biloxi's leading casinos are taking steps to maintain market share. Grand Casinos, cited by *Fortune Magazine* as "America's Fastest Growing Company," moved its corporate headquarters from Minnesota to Harrison County in July 1998 and purchased Lady Luck Casino (adjacent to Grand Casino Biloxi) in order to expand its real estate holdings. Grand Casinos merged with the Hilton Corporation in January 1999, at which time a new gaming operations corporation was formed to administer Hilton's casino properties. Thus, the Grand Casino Biloxi is now part of the midSouth regional division of Park Place Entertainment Corporation. Completion of the Grand's 52,000 square foot expansion/ improvement project is anticipated by December 1999.

Casino Magic anticipates funding a \$2 million refurbishment project in 2000 to improve the casino area, upgrade restrooms and provide a new restaurant off the main casino level. The New Palace Casino is planning for 207,000 square feet of improvements to add 236 new hotel rooms; project completion is anticipated by Spring 2000.

The Isle of Capri is preparing for a \$150 million expansion which will more than double its size and will include an estimated 418 new hotel rooms. Construction is expected to be complete within 18 - 24 months of permit approval. Treasure Bay also intends to expand, planning for the construction of 500 additional hotel rooms within the next several years to support increased activity.

## Biloxi's Contribution To Gulf Coast Gaming Revenues



## Military

The presence of several military and federal installations along the Mississippi Gulf Coast continues to have a strong impact on the local economy and no where on the Coast is the military more deeply rooted than in Biloxi, proud home of Keesler Air Force Base. Keesler, the John C. Stennis Space Center, the Naval Construction Battalion Center, Naval Station Pascagoula, the Army and Air National Guard, and two VA hospitals generate a combined economic impact of more than \$2 billion annually and employ an estimated 19,000 active-duty personnel. Besides active duty personnel, there are more than 6,600 civilian employees and thousands of dependents and retirees of the government who reside on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

### **Keesler Air Force Base**

The best known military installation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast is Keesler Air Force Base, located in Biloxi. Keesler is the home of the 81st Training Wing and the computer and electronics training center of the Air Force. In addition, it is the home of the Second Air Force which directs the training of five operational centers.

Keesler was established in 1941 when the City provided nearly 3,600 acres of land for the facility. Since its first class graduated in January 1942, Keesler has graduated over 2,000,000 students. Today, Keesler's focus is high-technology training - avionics maintenance, radio and radar systems maintenance, computer systems programming, and air traffic control technology. In addition, Keesler trains future pilots, including those responsible for tactical airlift support and weather reconnaissance. The famous "Hurricane Hunters" are headquartered at Keesler and run routine missions tracking storms and relaying information to the National Hurricane Center in Miami, Florida.

Keesler also boasts the second largest medical treatment facility in the Air Force. In 1998, the hospital was named the Air Force's number one medical facility for customer satisfaction. Serving over 600,000 patients annually, the Keesler Medical Center is equipped with 100 hospital beds and a staff of over 2,000 and provides comprehensive health and dental care in more than 60 specialties.

Keesler's total population is over 23,600 people; therefore, it is not surprising that it has a tremendous economic impact on the Biloxi and Gulf Coast economies. In fiscal year 1998, Keesler generated an economic impact of \$1.4 billion. This does not include the estimated \$153 million generated by the over 10,000 retirees in the area. Keesler's current population includes an average of 10,200 active-duty personnel, more than 4,000 full-time civilian employees, and nearly 10,000 military family members.



In 1998, Keesler's payroll was more than \$500 million. Local contracts added to Keesler's economic clout in 1998 with more than \$200 million allocated in areas from construction to education. Keesler's economic impact has been growing at a rate of \$33 million annually and is expected to continue.

### **John C. Stennis Space Center**

As NASA's lead center for rocket propulsion testing, as well as for commercial remote sensing, the John C. Stennis Space Center plays a vital leadership role in the nation's space program. Located approximately 40 miles west of Biloxi in Hancock County, Stennis Space Center houses more than 20 federal and state agencies, including the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command, Naval Oceanographic Office, and Naval Research Laboratory - which perform ocean surveys and produce maps and other material for the Department of Defense.

1998 began with the January 22 liftoff of Space Shuttle Endeavor, the first shuttle to use three, redesigned and enhanced main engines called Block II-A. Stennis was responsible for testing these engines and making sure they were ready for flight. Throughout 1998, the Commercial Remote Sensing Program continued to build the remote sensing industry of the U.S. through partnerships with more than 500 companies, with the goal of enhancing U.S. economic competitiveness through the development of the multibillion dollar remote sensing industry.

Work continued in 1998 on the second phase of the \$50 million Science Data Buy project. During this phase, approximately 15 terabytes of data will be purchased from five companies; the data will be made available for global environmental research within NASA's Earth Science Enterprise. Data provided by the five companies address the scientific research themes of land cover and land use research and natural hazards research and applications. Throughout phase II, which will run through 2001, NASA will continue to purchase data from the commercial sector and will work to understand scientific needs and industry concerns. This investment, to promote cooperation between science and industry, is good for the country and good for the world.

In 1998, Stennis Space Center had an economic impact of \$366 million on the local area within a 50-mile radius of the center, up from \$293 million in 1997. According to an economic report prepared by Dr. Charles Campbell, professor of economics at Mississippi State University, Stennis Space Center's presence accounted for total employment of more than 20,000 residents in 1998, taking into account both direct and indirect economic effects within a 50-mile radius of the center.

The Center injected \$52 million in tax revenues into local governments and an estimated \$353 million in retail sales into the coastal economy

# Military



during the same period. It is anticipated that Stennis' role will continue to grow in importance with recent discoveries of possible fossilized life on Mars. The federal government plans to spend an additional \$95 million to upgrade test facilities. As a result, Stennis could add another 1,000 to 1,500 people to the payroll during the next several years.

Of the 3,911 employees at Stennis Space Center in 1998, 39% were involved in scientific and engineering fields; 29% were technicians or were involved in craft or productions; 13% worked as business professionals; 13% held clerical positions; and 6% held other positions. Among civil service and military employees, 6% held doctorate degrees; 18% had master's degrees; 31% had bachelor's degrees; and 9% had associate's degrees making Stennis Space Center one of the most educated labor pools in the state.

### **Naval Construction Battalion Center**

Located on 1,098 acres in Gulfport, the Naval Construction Battalion Center is home to the Atlantic Fleet Seabees. The base, established in 1942, is one of only two of its kind in the United States. Construction Battalion Center (CBC) Gulfport is a vital part of the Mississippi Gulf Coast and is one of the finest installations the Navy has. With military readiness as its primary concern, CBC Gulfport is the Navy's best homeport, mobilization base and logistics support center; the leader in efficient base operations; number one in innovative technology; and the finest in sound business practices.

Numerous capital improvements were planned and initiated in 1998 to enhance the Seabees' ability to achieve their mission, including modification of an existing base facility to provide for a Human Resource Service Center (HRSC) for the Southeast Region. The plan is to stand up the Gulfport HRSC Southeast Region in May 1999, following the opening of the Stennis Space Center Human Resource Support Center.

In 1998, a total of 4,445 people were employed at CBC Gulfport. Of this, 3,602 were military personnel; 729 were civilians; 62 were contractors and 53 were resident business employees. 1,491 military personnel lived on base in 1998, up from 1,250 in 1997. In 1998, the Naval Construction Battalion Center had a local economic impact in excess of \$249 million, including a payroll of more than \$98 million and construction contracts in excess of \$15.4 million. It is estimated that CBC Gulfport had a tax revenue impact on local government revenues of \$20 million and a retail sales impact of \$134 million.

### **Naval Station Pascagoula**

Naval Station Pascagoula was conceived as a modern, efficient, strategic homeport that would have an active, progressive partnership between the Navy and the community. The base was approved as a strategic homeport in 1985 and officially became operational in 1992 on 187 acres in Jackson County, approximately 30 miles east of Biloxi.

Since its opening, the Naval Station's total population has grown from about 400 personnel to over 3,000. Naval Station Pascagoula's 1998 annual economic impact on the Mississippi Gulf Coast is estimated to be \$91 million, up from \$85 million in 1997.

The mission of the homeport is to provide responsive, quality support to the fleet and the Navy community through superior service and facilities. Port and hotel services are provided to homeported and visiting ships. Currently, there are seven afloat commands homeported at Naval Station Pascagoula: three Aegis class cruisers; two fast frigates; one U.S. Coast Guard cutter and a destroyer squadron.

Naval Station Pascagoula is known for its unique relationships with the surrounding communities. The base has minimal infrastructure, allowing the government to save approximately \$2.7 million annually by relying on the Gulf Coast communities for housing, child care, churches, a small arms gun range and much more. The base's infrastructure consists solely of support facilities for the ships and sailors stationed at the homeport.

### **Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair, U.S. Navy**

The Office of Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Pascagoula Mississippi (SUPSHIP Pascagoula) was established in 1951 to administer Navy Department and other Department of Defense shipbuilding and repair contracts at assigned private shipyards along the 210 miles of the Gulf of Mexico stretching from the Florida panhandle to the Louisiana border. SUPSHIP provides military and administrative support to all precommissioning units within this area. Initially staffed with five officers and ten civilians, SUPSHIP Pascagoula reached its peak growth of 58 military and 487 civilians in 1987; in 1998, SUPSHIP has 40 military employees and 312 civilian personnel.

Since 1981, contracts totaling \$5.6 billion have been awarded to construct seven LHD class amphibious assault ships, six of which have been delivered to the Navy. Contracts awarded for \$6.7 billion to construct 25 Aegis destroyers, 11 of which have been delivered.

In addition to its contracts with Ingalls, SUPSHIP Pascagoula administers contracts with Halter Marine Group, Inc. for T-AGOS, T-AGS, and AGOR 24 Class ships, as well as other MSRA/ABR holders for repair of different types of Navy vessels. Since 1983, SUPSHIP Pascagoula has provided "cradle to grave" Expanded Planning Yard contract administration and planning for DD 963 class destroyers and CG 47 class Aegis cruisers.

### **National Guard**

Approximately 600 people were employed to serve the four local branches of the National Guard in 1998. Many of these are based at the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport to conduct search and rescue missions in conjunction with the 255th Air Control Squadron, the 173rd Civil Engineering Squadron, and Aviation Classification Repair Activities Depot,

# Military

and the Mississippi's Air National Guard's Combat Readiness Training Center.

### **U.S. Veterans Administration**

The Veterans Administration has hospital facilities in both Biloxi and Gulfport. These facilities serve approximately 200,000 veterans in Mississippi, Alabama and Florida and are staffed by over 1,500 full-time personnel. Serving retirees from various branches of the military, the capacity of V.A. facilities on the Gulf Coast is 715 hospital beds - 206 in the domiciliary; 74 for on-site skilled nursing; and the balance for medical/surgical and psychiatric needs.

### **Litton Ingalls Shipbuilding**

Located in Pascagoula, approximately 30 miles east of Biloxi, Litton Ingalls Shipbuilding is Mississippi's largest private employer with 10,700 employees and it is one of the nation's leading companies for the design, engineering, construction, and life cycle support of major combatant vessels for the U.S. Navy, international navies, and commercial customers. Few shipyards can match the record of Ingalls for having produced such a diverse line of ships, including amphibious assault ships, cruisers, destroyers, nuclear submarines, luxury cruise liners, general cargo vessels, and tankers.

*To learn more about the City of Biloxi  
and contact staff members, check  
out our website at <http://biloxi.ms.us>*



# Retail & Trade Development

A strong tourism market coupled with population growth and increased per capita income enabled total gross retail sales on the Gulf Coast to soar to nearly \$4.3 billion in 1998, an increase of 16% over 1997. Total gross retail sales in Harrison County now exceed \$2.6 billion, accounting for over 60% of total gross retail sales on the Coast. Total gross retail sales in the City of Biloxi during 1998 totaled \$668.9 million, resulting in \$44.7 million in city sales tax collections compared to \$43.2 million in 1997.

The significant growth in retail sales in 1998 is attributed to the completion of the Edgewater Mall expansion, lease-up of Prime Retail Shops in Gulfport, and the growth of specialty retailers in Harrison County.

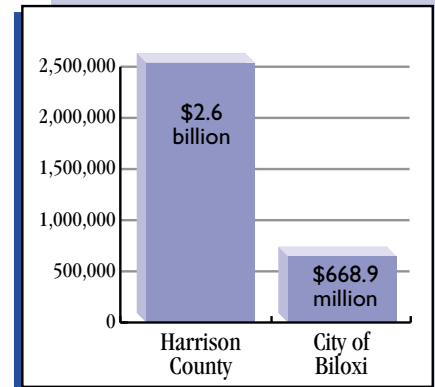
According to a University of New Orleans Real Estate Market Data Center 1998 report, there is 7.53 million square feet of retail space serving the 350,000 citizens residing in the Mississippi Gulf Coast MSA. Since 1994, over one million square feet of retail space has been absorbed -- 476,000 square feet in 1997 alone.

In 1998, overall occupancy rates remained strong at 93% while mall occupancy was slightly higher at 95%. Biloxi/Gulfport area businesses remained the leader on the Coast in apparel and food/beverage sales, capturing customers on average 40% better than their competition in Jackson and Hancock Counties.

Forecasts for 1999 indicate that the Coast will continue to grow 3% faster than the national average due to the rising number of households and income levels. The Coast's second largest retail shopping center, Crossroads Mall, came on-line in mid 1999 adding 850,000 square feet to the retail market. This \$70 million investment will add at least ten new national retailers and a 16-screen Cinemark movie complex to the Gulf Coast retail mix. The growth in the number of small specialty retail businesses also is expected to continue and to be successfully supported by the broad-based Gulf Coast population.

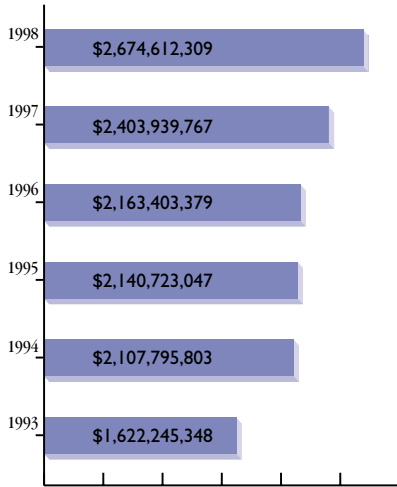
According to analysts, the Gulf Coast population should only be able to support an additional 350,000 square feet of retail space. The thousands of daily visitors to the Gulf Coast are the essential source of demand for over half of the new retail floor area. It is estimated that the average visitor accounts for \$40/day of retail shopping sales on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. (Source: Harrison County Development Commission)

1998 Retail Sales

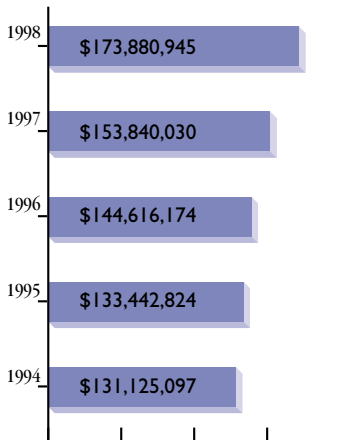


Retail & Trade  
Development

## Harrison County Gross Sales



## Harrison County Sales Tax Receipts



Source: Harrison County  
Development Commission

# Sales Tax



## Mississippi State Sales and Tax Collections

### Biloxi

Industry Group	# of Taxpayers	Gross Tax	Gross Sales
•Automotive	112	2,945,924	50,567,884
•Machinery, Equipment & Supplies	68	1,035,625	15,209,540
•Food & Beverage	259	11,404,951	163,475,540
•Furniture & Fixtures	46	1,807,140	25,816,263
•Public Utilities	3	2,355,429	51,008,240
•Apparel & General Merchandise	91	11,666,996	166,608,747
•Labor & Building Materials	50	1,128,665	17,204,050
•Miscellaneous Retail	276	6,574,470	94,591,770
•Miscellaneous Services	126	5,204,422	74,348,816
•Contracting	31	136,780	3,346,511
•Recreation	19	470,290	6,718,424
<b>Total Retail</b>	<b>1,081</b>	<b>44,730,692</b>	<b>668,895,831</b>

### Harrison County

Industry Group	# of Taxpayers	Gross Tax	Gross Sales
•Automotive	725	22,139,443	409,326,458
•Machinery, Equipment & Supplies	290	6,345,200	105,224,845
•Food & Beverage	1,005	34,646,295	496,537,922
•Furniture & Fixtures	196	5,040,739	72,050,848
•Public Utilities	20	6,228,741	136,607,466
•Apparel & General Merchandise	338	29,895,583	426,658,430
•Labor & Building Materials	393	11,761,020	173,642,394
•Miscellaneous Retail	1,201	14,790,489	213,415,422
•Miscellaneous Services	419	11,561,611	165,176,352
•Wholesale	8	4,401,977	73,366,430
•Contracting	314	13,804,612	390,383,837
•Recreation	44	855,534	12,221,905
<b>Total Retail</b>	<b>4,953</b>	<b>161,471,245</b>	<b>2,674,612,309</b>

Source: MS State Tax Commission (FY98).

## **Edgewater Mall**

Edgewater Mall, located on the beach in Biloxi, is centrally located on the Coast, near casinos, hotels and golf courses, and is one block west of the Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center. This 900,000 square foot regional shopping center features Dillard's, JC Penney, McRae's and Sears as well as more than 100 specialty stores including GAP, Bath & Body Works, and American Eagle.

Edgewater Mall completed a 280,000 square foot expansion and redevelopment in 1998, making it the largest enclosed retail center on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. It draws high volumes of business from regional, local and tourist markets. Edgewater Mall is managed and leased by Jim Wilson & Associates, Inc.

## **Prime Outlets at Gulfport**

Celebrating its third anniversary in 1998, Prime Outlets at Gulfport attracted more than 3.15 million shoppers, a 7.1% increase over the number of shoppers in 1997. Adding to its successful year was the announcement that Mademoiselle magazine voted Prime Outlets at Gulfport as the best place to find a bargain in the southeast. Thirteen new stores opened in 1998: Koret of California, Lorianna, Remington, Paul Harris Direct, Strasburg Children, Chicago Cutlery Gourmet, London Fog, Quiksilver, Coleman, Vitamin World, Samsonite, Christmas World and The Bean and Leaf.

This open-air, village-style manufacturers' outlet contains 302,431 square feet and features more than 80 outlet shops. The center is owned and operated by Baltimore-based Prime Retail.

## **Crossroads Mall**

Coming on-line in mid 1999, the Coast's second largest retail shopping center, Crossroads Mall, includes over 850,000 square feet of retail space to accommodate major retailers like Circuit City, Barnes & Noble, Old Navy, and TJMaxx as well as a 16-screen Cinemark movie complex. This \$70 million complex will provide national tenants the opportunity to expand services on the Gulf Coast.

*“There’s a big trend worldwide toward aquaculture. The demand is outgrowing the resource.”*

- Clay Gutierrez, Vice President, Global Seafood Technologies

## Seafood Industry

The Mississippi Gulf Coast's seafood industry is a major contributor to the state's economy and Biloxi's connection to the seafood industry is legendary, dating back to the late 1800's when the city became known as the "Seafood Capital of the World" for the volume of shrimp, fish, and oysters caught, packed and processed.

In 1998, approximately 211 million pounds of seafood products were landed in Mississippi ports, worth an estimated \$48 million to the fishermen. The total value of the seafood industry now exceeds \$450 million annually. More than 5,000 people are employed in the harvesting, processing and distribution of seafood products and an additional 10,000 people are employed indirectly through marine-related sales, services and support of the seafood industry. Biloxi/Gulfport and Pascagoula/Moss Point are among the leading seafood ports in the nation.

Biloxi/Gulfport ranked 15th in the value of pounds landed at \$30.1 million and Pascagoula/Moss Point ranked 8th in the number of pounds landed at 193 million.

Although landings on the Mississippi Gulf Coast are significant, the bulk of economic activity is generated by the processing sector. Much of the seafood processed in Mississippi is landed in other Gulf states. There are 38 processing plants and 36 wholesale operations in Mississippi, employing an estimated 1,200 people. There are four major fisheries in which Mississippi producers and processors participate: shrimp, crabs, oysters and finfish.

Mississippi seafood businesses annually process about 45 million pounds of shrimp, 80% of which comes from other Gulf states or is imported. The shrimp fishery is estimated to have an annual economic impact of \$200 to \$250 million. There are approximately 600 documented shrimp vessels in Mississippi, employing over 1,600 individuals. About 1,200 residential and 100 nonresident commercial shrimp licenses are sold in Mississippi each year, indicating that many smaller boats which are not required to be documented also participate in the fishery. Mississippi shrimp landings were 16.1 million pounds (heads-on), valued at \$32.9 million (ex-vessel) in 1998.

The crab fishery had an economic impact of \$3 million in 1998. Landings in 1998 totaled 592 thousand pounds, far below the two million pound average annual harvest. Processors met competition from out-of-state plants by trucking crabs during winter months from Louisiana to meet market demands for fresh crab meat. About 200 commercial crab licenses are sold annually in Mississippi, but only an estimated 60 fishermen trap crabs; the other licenses are sold to allow for incidental harvest in other fisheries.

Ex-vessel oyster prices increased 7% from 1997 to 1998 while production increased 4%. The Gulf of Mexico region led in oyster landings with 59% of the national total. Annual oyster production is highly variable from year to year, due primarily to natural environmental fluctuations. Many of the Mississippi Coast's most productive areas have been lost to harvest due to increased pollution associated with coastal development. Due to this variability in production, anywhere from 100 to 400 oyster licenses are sold annually in Mississippi and approximately 80% of the oysters processed here are harvested in other Gulf states. The Mississippi oyster industry has an economic impact of \$22 million and the state sees a direct annual impact of \$6 million of value added because most of the product is consumed locally. Total landings for the 1997-98 season were 3.5 million pounds of meats valued at \$5.3 million.

The finfish industry in Mississippi is composed of two segments: menhaden and edible finfish. The state's menhaden industry is centered in Pascagoula and is responsible for Mississippi's 10th place national ranking in total pounds of seafood landed. The Gulf menhaden fleet contains approximately 50 large vessels owned by individual processing firms. Major products include fish meal, used primarily in animal feeds, and fish oils. Mississippi landings in 1997 were about 181 million pounds, valued at \$9 million.

Mississippi is a very small producer of edible finfish obtained by commercial fishermen with fewer than 30 individuals participating as full-time commercial fishermen. However, more than 300 commercial licenses are sold annually for the harvest of edible finfish, so many part-time fishermen also harvest finfish. Trawlers catch foodfish incidental to shrimping and industrial fishing. Total foodfish landings average about one million pounds annually in Mississippi.

Docking space and room for processing facilities are now at a premium in Biloxi, with the introduction of dockside gaming and development of prime commercial waterfront properties. Most of Harrison County's shrimp processing plants are now located on less than two miles of shoreline along Biloxi's Back Bay and Point Cadet in east Biloxi. (Source: Sea Grant Advisory Services)

### **Prospects for Continued Development of the Seafood Industry**

In an attempt to foster the continued development of this valuable industry, state and local government entities are developing a long-range program to encourage expansion into new areas like biotechnology/aquaculture and underutilized marine species, as well as the development of a full-service fleet support facility.

The Coast aquaculture industry has grown slowly during the past six years, and profits have been elusive because of foreign competition, falling prices and the difficulty of raising fish. In a pilot program, Mississippi State University is working with Global Seafood Technologies, an Ocean Springs seafood processing company, to help create a freshwater prawn industry in

# Seafood Industry



# Seafood Industry

the state. The giant prawns cost an estimated \$3 per pound to raise, but they will sell for \$4 to \$6 per pound. Under ideal conditions, the freshwater prawn industry can produce a profit of \$500 to \$800 per acre, which is a 50 - 60% return on investment.

Because of the worldwide trend toward aquaculture and the growing consumption of seafood, it is predicted that aquaculture operations in Mississippi may produce two to three million pounds of prawns within a few years, demonstrating the potential of this segment of the economy to grow along with everything else. (Source: The Sun Herald October 31, 1999)

*The City of Biloxi is ready to assist your  
business – check out our business  
incentives on page 61 or our website at  
<http://biloxi.ms.us>*



# Construction & Housing

## A. Overview

During the first nine months of 1999, the City of Biloxi issued 13 more permits than during the entire 1998 year, for a three-quarter total of 1,177 commercial and residential permits, and a dollar valuation of more than \$60.3 million. A total of 1,164 commercial and residential building permits was issued by the City of Biloxi during 1998, for a total dollar valuation of \$106.9 million.

Valuations are based on conservative estimates provided by the applicant at the time of permit application and typically are lower than the actual value of the completed project.

While the number of permits issued in 1998 exceeded the number issued in 1997 by 38 permits, the dollar valuation was down, as expected, from the 1997 record-breaking high of \$271 million. 1997 was a banner year for large commercial development projects in Biloxi, with several permits being issued for multimillion dollar casino resorts as well as other large commercial projects. Considering that Biloxi's combined building permit valuation in 1991 was \$11 million, 1998-99 combined building permit valuations are a healthy indicator of continued economic growth and a sign that the economy is becoming more diversified as smaller, noncasino-related commercial projects are developed.

The valuation of new multi-family residential permits issued in 1998 was more than five times greater than in 1997. In 1998, permits were issued for 543 new multi-family residential units, totaling \$20.8 million, compared to permits issued in 1997 for 97 units valued at \$4.1 million. Two permit applications currently are under review by the City's Planning Division which will add an additional 640 new multi-family residential units to the Biloxi housing market.

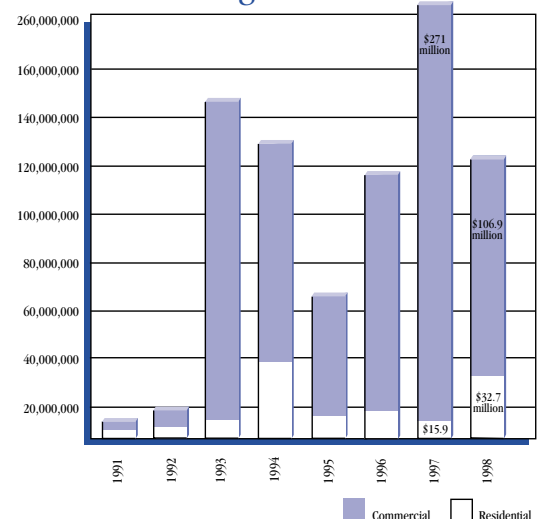
## B. Residential

### Single Family

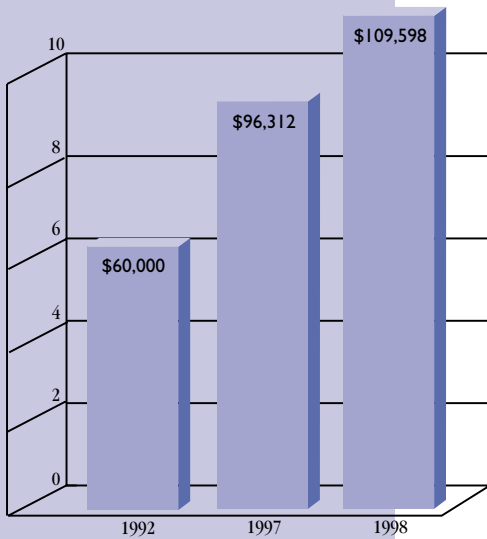
Prior to the advent of dockside gaming, yearly housing starts in Harrison County averaged 75 per year. Since then, the Biloxi area housing market has grown dramatically with an average of over 100 new single-family homes constructed each year between 1993 and 1996. As a result, U.S. News and World Report listed the Biloxi-Gulfport area as the fifth "hottest housing market in the country." And the growth continues: in 1997, the City issued permits for a record 115 homes valued at over \$10.8 million; 112 permits were issued in 1998, valued at more than \$10.9 million; and dur-

# Construction & Housing

City of Biloxi Dollar Valuation of Building Permits



## Average Selling Prices of Homes in Biloxi



Source: MS Gulf Coast Multiple Listing Service, Inc.

ing the first three quarters of 1999, 114 permits have been issued, valued at \$11.6 million.

Existing home sales also remain strong as more people relocate to the area. In 1998, a total of 597 homes were sold in the Greater Biloxi area compared to 478 in 1997. The average selling price was \$109,598, up from \$96,312 in 1997, with 128 days on the market and a list to sell ratio of 96.5%. Selling prices have increased considerably since the first casino opened on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, when the average selling price was \$60,000. Despite the increase, the Coast is still seen as affordable when compared to other resort communities.

As average household incomes have risen and more executives and management personnel relocate to the Gulf Coast, the market has grown for expensive (\$200,000+) homes. Of the 2,881 single-family residential units sold Coastwide in 1998, 175 homes were valued at \$200,000 or above. (Source: Mississippi Gulf Coast Multiple Listing Service)

The growth for new homes at all selling levels is anticipated to continue as new residents move-up from initial multi-family housing. Approximately 2,525 spec lots are in development from Bay St. Louis to Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Plans for the Gulf Coast's first master planned community were recently announced which will add an additional 15,000 single family and retirement housing units to northern Harrison County over the next two decades. (Source: Harrison County Development Commission 1998 Annual Report)

## Construction & Housing

### Multi-Family

Of the Mississippi Gulf Coast's estimated 7,000 market-rent apartment units, 4,066 units are located in the Biloxi area. Nearly 20%, or 800 units, were constructed from 1994 to 1997, ending a drought of new construction which lasted from 1989 to 1994. Responding to the changing demographics of the area, developers are building more "upscale" units with amenities such as high ceilings, fireplaces, crown molding, security systems, hot tubs, fitness centers, and they are emphasizing a high quality of construction and finish.

Since the October 1997 Mississippi Gulf Coast Apartment Survey, no additional apartment properties have been completed in the Biloxi area. Consequently, conditions have "tightened" in the local apartment market with steady employment growth sustaining the demand for these rental units. The 1997 apartment survey indicated a vacancy rate of 6.9% in the Biloxi area which declined to 4.3% in the 1999 survey.

Due to Biloxi's close proximity to employment centers, rents in the Biloxi market are approximately 12% higher than those recorded for other locations on the Gulf Coast. Because of the increasingly tight rental market, Biloxi rental rates have increased 6.7% for a three-bedroom apartment; 10% for a two-bedroom apartment; and 9.5% for a one-bedroom



apartment since 1997. Contained in the following chart are selected characteristics of apartment units located in the Biloxi area. (Source: Mississippi Gulf Coast Apartment Survey June 1999, W.S. Loper & Associates)

City of Biloxi Rental Market Summation				
	Studio	1-BR Units	2-BR Units	3-BR Units
# of Apartments	174	1,557	2,104	231
Vacancy Rate	3.4%	4.6%	4.1%	3.9%
Average Rent (1999)	\$329	\$453	\$562	\$669
Average Rent (1997)	\$286	\$386	\$437	\$560
Average Rent (1992)	\$247	\$331	\$390	\$497
Average Size (sq. ft.)	350	637	928	1,178

Source: Mississippi Gulf Coast Apartment Survey (June 1999)

At present, 510 market-rent apartments are under construction in the Biloxi area, in addition to 500 units being built in sister cities D'Iberville and Ocean Springs. Keesler Bay Villa Apartments recently opened, adding 144 affordable, rental units in Biloxi.

A variety of independent- and assisted-living options also are available to meet the housing needs of Biloxi's senior citizens. Gabriel Manor Retirement Apartments features 72 independent-living units; Life Kare Place offers 100 independent-living apartments; Loyaltown of Biloxi features 20 independent-living and 60 assisted-living apartments; the Methodist Retirement Community offers 188 independent-living and 42 assisted-living apartments; and Santa Maria Retirement Apartments features 209 independent-living apartments. The Kare Centre can accommodate a total of 240 assisted care residents. Century Oaks Retirement Community has a total of 70 home sites available for those 55 years and older.

To further address the growing demands of Biloxi area retirees, two new independent- living facilities are under construction in Harrison County, with one expansion underway in Hancock County. These developments will add 259 units to the current inventory.

### C. Commercial

During the first three quarters of 1999, a total of 278 commercial permits have been issued by the City of Biloxi for more than \$44 million in development. Of the total, nine permits were for new commercial development, valued at \$11.7 million. More than \$74 million in commercial construction was permitted by the City of Biloxi in 1998. Of this total, \$34 million in new commercial development was permitted. A total of 351 commercial permits were issued, of which 13 were for new development construction.

Construction of new commercial offices is on the rise - especially in the



# Construction & Housing

growing medical support services industry - in spite of the high cost of building materials on the Coast. Facilities for hospitals, doctors, and suppliers are scheduled to be built in downtown Biloxi as well as in the growing area north of Biloxi's Back Bay. The first phase of construction of the \$10 million Cedar Lake Medical Park was completed in early 1999 and Biloxi Regional Medical Center will begin construction of a \$10 million medical office building and parking garage in the Central Business District in Fall 1999 with completion in 2000.

Developers forecast additional new construction in the following categories: 1) small office parks with free parking; 2) full-service drug stores, such as Eckerd's and Walgreens; and 3) large service center space with offices and warehouse area.

Premium pricing of Gulf Coast real estate along major transportation corridors has encouraged smaller, "mom and pop" businesses to relocate north to newly annexed areas and secondary arteries in an effort to maintain current rent levels and to be near new population centers. Growth corridors along Popp's Ferry and Cedar Lake Roads in North Biloxi are experiencing considerable commercial growth in terms of new construction and redevelopment of existing facilities.

Rent for existing space in the Biloxi-Gulfport market averages \$12 to \$16 a square foot. Most businesses are opting to refurbish the current inventory rather than invest in the high price of new construction. One of the many positive aspects of this trend toward redevelopment is the increased investment in Central Business Districts along the Gulf Coast. Biloxi's historic downtown Vieux Marche area is experiencing a healthy revival with a wide variety of new businesses including coffee shops, a bookstore, medical and legal services offices, antique shops, and restaurants in addition to the long-term downtown businesses such as Ellzey's Hardware Store, Mary Mahoney's Restaurant and Peoples Bank.

Occupancy in the Biloxi-Gulfport office space market has remained high for the past three years, at or above 95%. Approximately 246,000 square feet of Class A Office Space and 194,921 of Class B Office Space are available in Harrison County. (Source: Harrison County Development Commission)

*The Gulf Coast is  
constantly changing  
— for the latest  
information, check  
out our website at  
<http://biloxi.ms.us>*



# Transportation & Infrastructure

Strategically located in the fastest-growing region in America - the MidSouth - Mississippi Gulf Coast businesses and residents have easy access to other cities, states and countries. Approximately 55% of the U.S. population lies within one day's drive of Mississippi. Interstate 10, which runs through South Mississippi, links Florida to the West Coast and gives Biloxians direct access to seven major interstate highways in the Alabama-Mississippi-Louisiana area.

Air, rail and sea arteries give Biloxi-Gulfport area businesses and residents access to the rest of the world through the following transportation resources:

- An international airport, fresh from a \$7.8 million expansion, which handled over 379,764 boardings in 1998, and has the longest runway in the region at 9,000 feet;
- Two major railroads, with service by two cargo lines and connections to the Mississippi State Port at Gulfport to minimize costly transportation by truck; and
- Deep sea water port, with direct access to the shipping lanes of the Gulf of Mexico and capable of handling over two million tons of cargo.

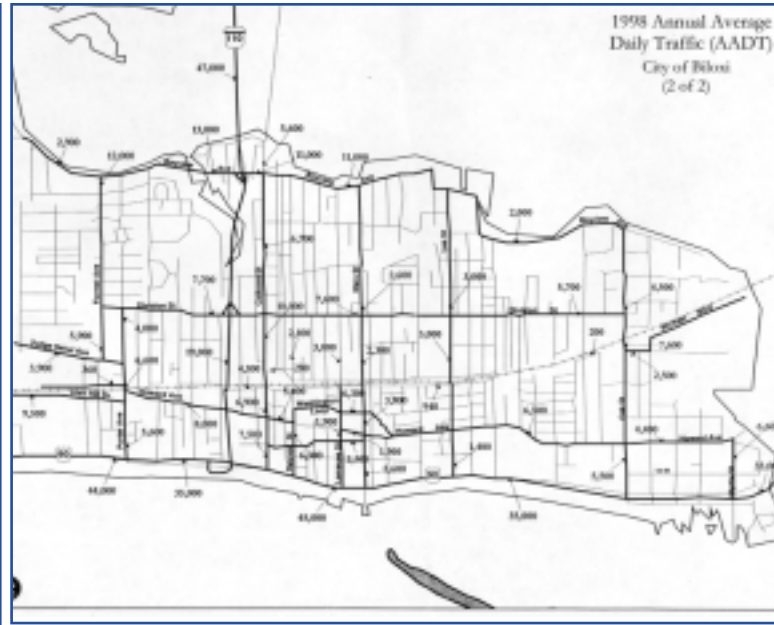
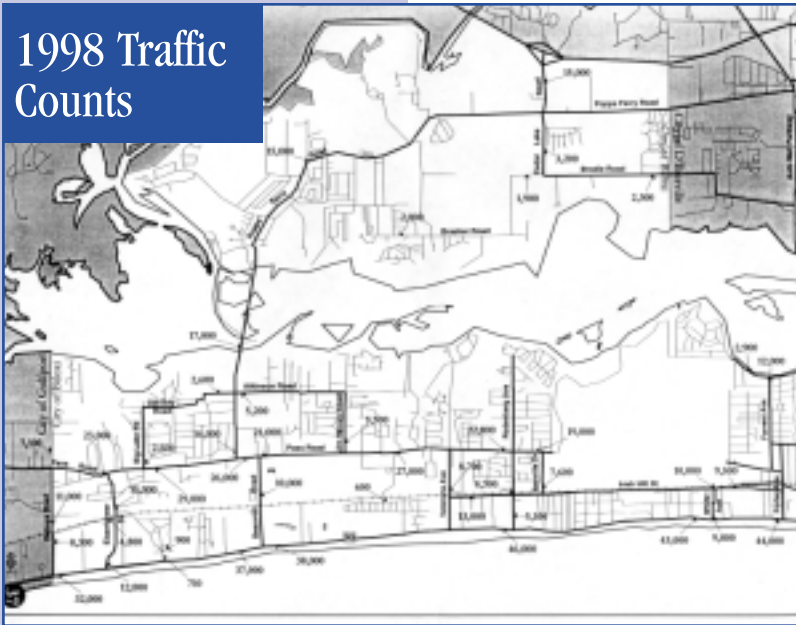
Residents can take advantage of jet service offered by Delta, Northwest, Continental, and Airtran at the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport; Amtrak rail service; interstate bus service provided by Greyhound and Trailways bus links; and local bus service provided by Coast Transit Authority.

To address the growing demands on roads and infrastructure, over \$440 million is being invested in new and expanded roadways, a new airport terminal, major drainage work, and construction of two new wastewater treatment facilities in Harrison County.

## **BY LAND: Road & Infrastructure Improvements**

As Biloxi has grown as a tourism destination and employment center, traffic on major roadways has increased dramatically. Approximately 45,000 cars travel daily along U.S. 90, the Gulf Coast's major east-west corridor. This is an increase of more than 57% since 1990. Secondary arteries like Pass Road, Bayview Drive, Popp's Ferry Road, and streets near Casino Row have seen similar increases. The Mississippi Department of Transportation predicts that these traffic counts will continue to increase from three to seven percent annually.

## 1998 Traffic Counts



To properly address this growth, the Mississippi Department of Transportation and Coastal municipalities are investing over \$330 million for street and highway improvements. In a recent survey of nearly 50 potential road projects throughout Mississippi, 19 of the top 23 were on the Gulf Coast.

Specifically formed to address large-scale transportation projects and issues transcending the political boundaries of Harrison County, the Harrison County Transportation Commission (HCTC) is working to organize a long-range strategy that will address present and future transportation problems on the Gulf Coast.

The newly-formed HCTC's first initiative is to address the need for a new east-west transportation corridor to link all Coast municipalities. Identification of the best route, securing funding for the multi-phased \$250 million project, and provision of adequate multimodal facilities to meet the needs of an ever-growing population are among the problems to be addressed.

Another of the top transportation priorities is provision of an additional north-south corridor linking I-10 and U.S. 90 in West Biloxi to improve traffic flow and to provide an additional evacuation route for Coastal residents. As part of the planning process for this project, public input is being solicited to determine the best route.

Since 1992, the City has paved or rebuilt more than 50 miles of streets in Biloxi - about half of the streets in the city - including the widening of the vital Oak Street link from U.S. 90 to Bayview Drive, near Casino Row. By streamlining front-end engineering and bidding procedures, the City has been able to complete more projects and minimize inconvenience to residents and businesses. As a result, the City has completed more than 135 public works projects since 1996. The City's Public Works Department coordinated a capital projects budget of \$25 million in 1998-99, comprising 82 projects.

Efforts are ongoing in 1999 to improve the flow of traffic on Popp's Ferry Road, Caillavet Street, and Bayview Avenue, in addition to other transportation improvements. These major capital improvements projects,

## Transportation & Infrastructure



which will take several years to complete, involve acquisition of private property as well as actual construction activities.

The City also is working with Coast Transit Authority to plan for a multimodal transportation system which will include a park and ride public transportation program for the Central Business District. Currently in the planning phase, the park and ride program will move people more effectively through the downtown area and will encourage more efficient use of limited public parking resources.

In addition to transportation projects, a \$10 million state-of-the-art Wastewater Treatment Plant was completed in March 1998. The facility, located on Keegan's Bayou along Biloxi's Back Bay, doubled current capacity and allows room for further expansion.

Caillavet Street	Widen to four lanes to link U.S. 90 to Bayview Avenue in the Central Business District.
Bayview Avenue	Widen and straighten the roadway to create a four-lane boulevard connecting Oak Street with I-110 and Caillavet Street.
Popp's Ferry Road	Widen this major residential thoroughfare from Cedar Lake Road to Riverview Drive.
Cedar Lake Road	Reconstruct and widen to four lanes with a continuous center turn lane from Popp's Ferry Road to I-10.
Main Street	Improve traffic flow through the Central Business District.
U.S. 90	Four-phase lighting project from the Gulfport to Ocean Springs city lines. Phase I, II and III have been completed. Phase IV, providing lighting from Rodenburg Avenue to Porter Avenue, began in 1998.
Miss. Highway 67	Planning is underway for realignment and reconstruction of this state highway, from U.S. Highway 49 to Interstate-110, which will greatly enhance access to Biloxi from points north.

### BY AIR: Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport

Located minutes from I-10 in Gulfport, scheduled airline passengers have increased by 217% in six years with significant growth in both the leisure and business travel sectors. In 1998, the airport handled 379,764 passengers and is forecasting 669,700 scheduled passengers in 1999.

Airport officials predict double digit passenger increases for the next two years based on a 60% increase in airline seats available in 1999. To keep up with this growth, terminal capacity has been increased by 130% and more than \$22 million has been invested in terminal and runway facilities since

*“Improving the flow of traffic, making it easy to move from one end of this city to the other, is our top priority.”*

– Mayor A.J. Holloway  
City of Biloxi

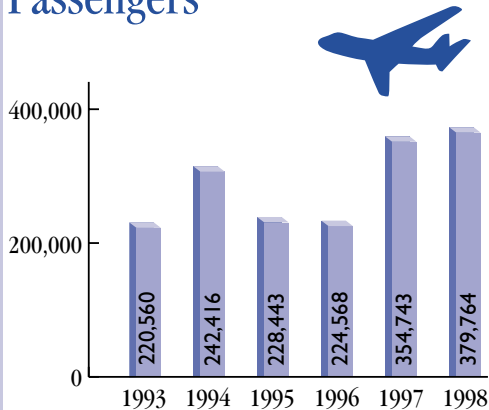
## Major Infrastructure Projects



Airport officials predict double-digit passenger increases for the next two years based on a 60% increase in airline seats available in 1999.



## Total Scheduled Passengers



1993. The total economic impact of the airport in 1998 was \$568 million, up from \$494 million in 1997.

Currently, the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport offers nearly 50 daily arrivals and departures on five airlines with 3,300 seats available for purchase. AirTran Airways, ASA/Delta, Continental Express, Northwest Airlines, and Southeast Airlines provide jet service to hubs in Atlanta, Dallas, Ft. Lauderdale, Houston, Memphis, Orlando, St. Petersburg and Tampa. Additionally, two tour operators offer non-stop jet charters to 15 other cities.

The airport has two runways - a 9,000 foot all-weather jet runway capable of landing B-747 type aircraft; and a 5,000 foot general aviation runway planned for extension to 8,100 feet in three to five years, based on demand. The airport is equipped with full instrument landing systems and an FAA Control Tower. In addition to a strong general aviation operation and an Air National Guard Training Center, the airport offers world-wide overnight cargo shipping and is located in the Mississippi Coast Foreign Trade Zone No. 92. For high-quality business users, the airport has opened the Concourse Office Park adjacent to the terminal area, offering Class A office buildings in a 20-acre office complex.

The Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport Authority currently is updating its master plan. Expected growth will likely queue a \$40 million terminal expansion in the next three years, a \$10 million runway extension project, expansion of military aviation facilities, an Interstate 10 connector for even faster access to Biloxi, and the development of a new general aviation area including the future parallel runway.

Gulf Coast residents also can take advantage of two regional airports - New Orleans International and Mobile Regional Airport - both accessible within a one and a half hour drive.

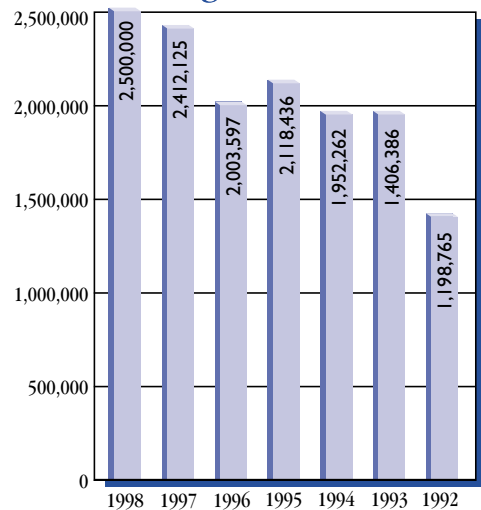
### BY SEA: Mississippi State Port at Gulfport

This 36-foot deep water port has grown to become the number one banana port in the United States and the largest tropical fruit port in the Gulf Region. In 1998, the Port moved over 2.5 million tons of cargo - including tropical fruit, frozen poultry, forest products, textiles and apparel goods, paper products, and various chemicals. The facility generates 5,000 jobs, \$500 million in sales, \$100 million in income, and \$70 million in state tax revenues. Analysts have identified that the Port's channel depth is suitable for cruise ship berthing, a natural extension of the Gulf Coast's tourism product.

The Mississippi State Port at Gulfport is poised for additional growth in 1999, with a new containerized shipping service to Mexico and Central America making 80 new vessel calls to the port each year.



## Port Tonnage



# Business & Development Assistance

The City of Biloxi, along with several economic development agencies along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, has programs and staff ready to assist new and expanding businesses. Listed on the following pages are key agencies and some of the incentives available.

## **City of Biloxi – Community Development Department**

The lead agency for economic development in Biloxi is the City's Department of Community Development. In this single location, information on planning, zoning, permits, building inspections, licensing, historical preservation, grants, and general economic development statistics are available.

For assistance, contact:

M. David Staehling, Director

Post Office Box 508

676 Washington Loop

Biloxi, MS 39530

Phone: (228) 435-6280 • Fax: (228) 435-6188

Internet: [www.biloxi.ms.us](http://www.biloxi.ms.us)



## **Greater Biloxi Economic Development Foundation**

Established in 1981 by the City of Biloxi and the Biloxi Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Biloxi Economic Development Foundation (GBEDF) is a nonprofit corporation funded by investor contributions from Biloxi's banking and business community, client service fees, and contract fees from the City. The GBEDF provides resources to assist small business development, operates the Gulf Coast Business Technology Center, administers Biloxi's Revolving Loan Fund, and coordinates other business and economic development activities in conjunction with the City of Biloxi and the private sector.

For additional information contact:

Greater Biloxi Economic Development Foundation

1636 Popp's Ferry Road

Biloxi, MS 39532

Phone: (228) 392-9744 • Fax: (228) 392-9743

E-Mail: [btc@datasync.com](mailto:btc@datasync.com) • Internet: [www.gulfcoast.org](http://www.gulfcoast.org)

## **Harrison County Development Commission**

The Commission is the primary development agency for Harrison County, which encompasses the cities of Biloxi, D'Iberville, Gulfport, Long Beach, and Pass Christian. Designated by the State Legislature, its staff works closely with prospective developers by providing information on financing,

site location and analysis, industrial park and Foreign Trade Zone development, statistics, and one-stop coordination with various Coastal governmental agencies. A 12-member Commission oversees the agency's activities: five members are appointed by the Harrison County Board of Supervisors (one per district); five by the mayors in Harrison County; and two by the Governor of Mississippi.

For additional information contact:  
Harrison County Development Commission  
Post Office Box 1870  
One Hancock Plaza, Suite 1105  
Gulfport, MS 39501  
Phone: (228) 863-3807 • Fax: (228) 863-4555  
E-Mail: [hcdc@mscoast.org](mailto:hcdc@mscoast.org)  
Internet: [www.mscoast.org](http://www.mscoast.org)

### **Harrison County Tourism Commission**

The Harrison County Tourism Commission operates the Mississippi Gulf Coast Convention & Visitors Bureau, which serves as the primary tourism marketing organization for the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Established in 1979 and funded by a 2% lodging tax, the CVB spends approximately \$2 million annually in advertising and promotional activities. The CVB publishes the official visitors guide for the region; maintains a web site, attends numerous national and international tradeshows to generate additional business for the region; and plans familiarization tours to introduce the region to key market segments, including tourism-related developers.

For additional information contact:  
Harrison County Tourism Commission  
Post Office Box 6128  
Gulfport, MS 39506-6128  
Phone: (228) 896-6699; (888) 467-4853  
Fax: (228) 896-6796  
E-Mail: [tourism@gulfcoast.org](mailto:tourism@gulfcoast.org)  
Internet: [www.gulfcoast.org](http://www.gulfcoast.org)

### **Mississippi Department of Economic & Community Development**

The state agency has a local office in Biloxi and offers economic development services to prospective and existing businesses. Some of their programs include:

- Mississippi Business Investment Act Program
- Development Infrastructure Loan Program
- Agribusiness Enterprise Loan Program
- Mississippi Small Business Assistance Program
- Mississippi Major Economic Impact Authority
- Economic Development Highway Program
- Mississippi Access Road Program
- Energy Investment Program

For additional information contact:  
Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development  
1636 Popp's Ferry Road, Suite 1105  
Biloxi, MS 39502  
Phone: (228) 392-0907

### **Mississippi Business Finance Corporation**

An entity of the Mississippi Department of Economic & Community Development, this agency represents a cooperative effort between the public and private sectors to stimulate both commercial and industrial development and expansion by administering financing programs which provide competitive or below-market interest rates. MBFC serves as a comprehensive financing source, allowing companies locating or expanding in Mississippi to review all financing and incentive alternatives through one contact. Incentives coordinated through MBFC include:

- Loan Guaranty Program
- Minority Business Enterprise Loan Program
- Industrial Development Revenue Bond Program
- Small Enterprise Development Program
- Rural Economic Development Assistance Program

For additional information contact:  
Mississippi Business Finance Corporation  
Post Office Box 849  
Jackson, MS 39205  
Phone: (601) 359-3552 • Fax: (601) 359-3619

### **Mississippi Contract Procurement Center**

This nonprofit agency provides bid opportunities from the Department of Defense, other federal, state and local government agencies plus commercial firms and prime contractors (as available) to Mississippi small businesses within its network. Marketing assistance, technical support, counseling and training are provided to PCPC clients. Clients are notified of bid matches via e-mail or fax. These services are offered at no cost to participating businesses.

For additional information contact:  
Mississippi Contract Procurement Center  
1636 Popp's Ferry Road, Suite 229  
Biloxi, MS 39532  
Phone: (228) 396-1288 • Fax: (228) 396-2520  
E-Mail: [mprogoff@mscpc.com](mailto:mprogoff@mscpc.com)  
Internet: [www.mscpc.com](http://www.mscpc.com)

### **Mississippi Technology Extension Partnership**

The Mississippi Technology Extension Partnership is a nonprofit grassroots effort to help manufacturers integrate technological and business advancements necessary to compete in today's global economy. The

# Business Assistance



Partnership is a growing network of public and private organizations with a common interest in growing Mississippi's manufacturing base.

For additional information contact:  
Mississippi Technology Extension Partnership  
Building 3101, Suite 119  
Stennis Space Center, MS 39529-6000  
Phone: (228) 688-3535 • Fax: (228) 688-1426  
Internet: [www.tecnet.org/mtep](http://www.tecnet.org/mtep)

### **Mississippi Power Company – Economic Development Department**

The region's leading utility, a Southern Company, provides various economic development services to new and existing businesses, including demographic data along with site information about both industrial and commercial properties.

For additional information contact:  
Mississippi Power Company Economic Development Department  
Post Office Box 4079  
Gulfport, MS 39502-4079  
Phone: (228) 865-5875

### **U.S. Small Business Administration**

The U.S. Small Business Administration has a district office in Gulfport which administers traditional SBA loans, loan guaranties, and other business assistance programs. The SBA and the University of Southern Mississippi work cooperatively to operate a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at USM's Gulf Park Campus in Long Beach. The SBDC provides business planning and organizational services to start-up and businesses in need of assistance.

For additional information:  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
Bancorp South Plaza  
2909 13th Street, Suit 203  
Gulfport, MS 39501  
Phone: (228) 863-4449 • Fax: (228) 864-0179

Small Business Development Center  
USM Gulf Park Campus  
136 Beach Park Place  
Long Beach, MS 39560  
Phone: (228) 865-4578 • Fax: (228) 865-4581

### **Additional Development Agencies**

Biloxi Chamber of Commerce  
(Member of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce)  
1048 Beach Blvd. / Post Office Box 1928



Biloxi, MS 39533  
Phone: (228) 374-2717 • Fax: (228) 374-2764  
Internet: [www.biloxi.org](http://www.biloxi.org)

Biloxi Bay Chamber of Commerce  
Post Office Box 889  
Biloxi, MS 39533  
Phone: (228) 435-6149 • Fax: (228) 435-6334  
Internet: [www.biloxibaycoc.com](http://www.biloxibaycoc.com)

Biloxi Port Commission  
Post Office Box 1908  
Biloxi, MS 39533  
Phone: (228) 374-6600  
Fax: (228) 435-7228

Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport Authority  
14035-L Airport Road  
Gulfport, MS 39503  
Phone: (228) 863-5951 • Fax: (228) 863-5953  
E-Mail: [gpt@gulfcoast.org](mailto:gpt@gulfcoast.org) • Internet: [www.gulfcoast.org](http://www.gulfcoast.org)

Mississippi State Port Authority  
Post Office Box 40  
Gulfport, MS 39502  
Phone: (228) 865-4300 • Fax: (228) 865-4307  
E-Mail: [stateport@gulfcoast.org](mailto:stateport@gulfcoast.org)  
Internet: [www.gulfcoast.org](http://www.gulfcoast.org)

## Business Incentives & Assistance

### **Corporate Headquarters Relocation Assistance**

This incentive offers a tax credit of \$1,000 per next full-time employee and exemption from state sales and use taxes on materials used in the construction or expansion of a building or the purchase of machinery or equipment. The exemption is granted by the Mississippi Department of Economic & Community Development on an annual basis for a maximum of ten years.

### **Mississippi Coast Foreign Trade Zone**

To provide a higher level of competition for Coast businesses in international commerce, the U.S. Department of Commerce Foreign Trade

Zones Board is expected to authorize expansion of the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) No. 92 in early 1999. The expanded nonprofit corporate entity, Mississippi Coast Foreign Trade Zone, Inc. will include new properties in Hancock and Jackson Counties as well as properties already designated at the Mississippi State Port, Gulfport/Biloxi Regional Airport, Bernard Bayou Industrial District, and the Long Beach Industrial Park.

Merchandise brought into the FTZ may be used in an assembly or manufacturing process, stored, tested, repackaged, relabeled, displayed, or otherwise manipulated. If the final product is exported, no U.S. customs duty or excise tax is levied. If the final product is imported into the U.S., the duty and tax are due only at the time of its physical removal from the FTZ into the U.S., and then either on the product itself or its imported parts, whichever is lower.

### **Historic Preservation Districts**

In addition to many individual properties listed on the National Register of Historic Place, the City of Biloxi has two existing and one proposed National Register historic districts. Restoration work on buildings listed on the National Register may be eligible for a 20% federal tax credit. Please contact the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, which administers this program, at 601-359-6940 for more information.

### **Tax Abatement**

The City of Biloxi has adopted a tax abatement program for specific areas of Biloxi. Restoration projects may be eligible for up to a 100% tax abatement for a seven year period. Please contact the Community Development Department of the City of Biloxi, which administers this program, at 228-435-6280 for more information.

### **Main Street Biloxi**

An affiliate of the nationally recognized Main Street program, Main Street Biloxi oversees a partnership between area banks, the City of Biloxi and the Mississippi Main Street Association to offer low interest loans to new and existing businesses in the Main Street target area. Please contact Main Street Biloxi at 228-435-9321 for more information.

### **Revolving Loan Funds**

By utilizing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds provided through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City of Biloxi, with administration through the Greater Biloxi Economic Development Foundation, is able to provide long-term, nominal fixed interest rate project financing for qualifying businesses. The maximum loan amount is \$100,000 with collateral requirements more flexible than a bank. A short application must be completed to begin the process. To qualify, projects must meet at least one of the three national CDBG objectives: 1)

benefit low- to moderate-income persons; 2) prevent or eliminate slums or blight in the community; or 3) meet a current urgent need in the community. Please contact the Greater Biloxi Economic Development Foundation at 228-392-9744 for more information.

### **Southern Mississippi Planning & Development District**

This agency offers gap financing and capital loans to small businesses which demonstrate job creation or retention. A total of \$5.5 million is available - \$3.5 million to serve the fifteen counties in South Mississippi and \$2 million for the three coastal counties. Maximum loan amount is \$200,000 and the average loan amount is \$45,000. The interest rate is tied to the U.S. Treasury bill rate and the terms are flexible. Please contact SMPDD at 228-868-2311 for more information.

### **Tax Exemptions for Manufacturing Enterprises**

The City of Biloxi is authorized to grant exemptions from ad valorem taxes to new or expanded manufacturing businesses. The maximum duration of each exemption is ten years. To be implemented, the manufacturer must make application to the City Council and, upon local approval, the application must be reviewed by the Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development.

### **Gulf Coast Business Technology Center**

The Gulf Coast Business Technology Center (BTC) is Harrison County's small business incubator. The BTC provides shared office and warehouse space, services and support to its tenant companies which are start-up ventures or new small businesses in the Biloxi area. The BTC offers a wide range of services including telephone answering, postal metering, basic utilities, janitorial, access to conference room, computer and Internet access, shipping services, copy and fax machine access, and business counseling and assistance.

The Greater Biloxi Economic Development Foundation serves as manager of the 33,000 square foot facility located in North Biloxi. The BTC is a cooperative economic development project of the City of Biloxi and Harrison County, developed to create new businesses and new jobs on the Gulf Coast. For more information about the BTC, please contact the Greater Biloxi Economic Development Foundation at 228-392-9742.

**Gulf Coast Business Services Training Program** This nonprofit corporation was organized to assist businesses with their training needs and to assist unemployed individuals find employment opportunities through the Job Partnership Training Act.

# Business Incentives



# City of Biloxi

## Historic Time-Line

- 1500's Indian Village
- 1699 Iberville establishes Biloxi as capital of Louisiana Territory.**
- 1723 French capital moves to New Orleans.
- 1763 Mississippi Coast ceded to Great Britain.
- 1779 Mississippi Coast ceded to Spain.
- 1811 Biloxi becomes part of U.S. Territory.**
- 1817 Mississippi becomes 20th state in the Union.
- 1838 Biloxi incorporates.
- 1840 Biloxi becomes popular resort.**
- 1872 New Orleans & Mobile Railroad built.
- 1880s Seafood canneries established on Point Cadet and Back Bay.
- 1900 Biloxi becomes known as "Seafood Capital of the World."**  
Most infrastructure and institutions in place; street cars; paved streets; artesian wells and complete water distribution; electric plant; high school and four elementary schools; three state banks; country clubs and yacht club.
- 1920s Isle of Caprice casino built offshore on Dog Key Island.
- 1927 First seawall established.
- 1941 Keesler Air Force Base established.**
- 1950s Sand beach dredged in and U.S. Highway 90 (Beach Blvd) four-laned.**
- 1965 West Biloxi is annexed; doubling size and population.**
- 1968 Harrison County Development Commission establishes Clay Point Industrial Park.
- 1969 Hurricane Camille devastates region**
- 1970 Urban renewal is initiated; work on Vieux Marche downtown marketplace begins.
- 1977 North Biloxi annexed; Pass Road widened to become commercial corridor and additional east-west corridor; Mississippi Coast Coliseum opens.**
- 1981 Mayor-Council form of government adopted; City streamlined from 22 to 5 departments.
- 1982 Greater Biloxi Economic Development Council established.
- 1986 Biloxi Regional Medical Center builds new 147-bed hospital in downtown district.**
- 1987 East Biloxi Enterprise Zone established; Sand Beach Master Plan adopted by cities and county government.
- 1992 Dockside casino gaming passes county-wide referendum; within 6 months, three casinos open; 1.5 million visitors recorded.**
- 1993 Six casinos open; four more begin construction.**
- 1994 Eight casinos open; record year for housing/construction starts and low unemployment; casino industry begins to shake-out with two closures.**
- 1995 6.5 million visitors recorded; new hotels/motels under construction to meet increased tourism demand.**
- 1996 Mirage Resorts and Imperial Palace begin construction of two 1000+ room properties in Biloxi. ASA/Delta reinstates jet service at Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport. 19 million visitors reported.
- 1997 National Arthur Anderson study names Biloxi one of three communities where gaming has had a positive economic influence. City proposes annexation to handle growth. 80,000 square foot expansion of Mississippi Coast Coliseum & Convention Center complete.**
- 1998 Lowest unemployment rate since 1974 reported in Harrison County.**  
Grand Casinos moves corporate headquarters from Minnesota to Gulf Coast.
- 1999 Hotel room inventory tops 15,000; Biloxi celebrates Tricentennial with year-long festival. Biloxi annexes 34 square-mile area, including the Woolmarket community.**

# City of Biloxi Annual Festivals & Celebrations

## **JANUARY**

- Black Heritage Festival
- Martin Luther King Celebration
- Vietnamese TET (New Year)

## **FEBRUARY**

- Coast History Week and French Encampment Re-enactment
- Mardi Gras Balls and Parades\*

## **MARCH**

- Irish Heritage Festival and St. Patrick's Day Parade\*
- Oyster Festival
- Spring Pilgrimage of Historic Homes

## **APRIL**

- Crawfish Festival
- Twilight Concerts
- Confederate Memorial Day

## **MAY**

- Great Biloxi Schooner Races
- Greek Heritage Festival
- Blessing of the Fleet & Shrimp Festival\*

## **JUNE**

- Arts Fair for the Handicapped
- Boaters Rendezvous at Ship Island
- Billfish Tournament
- Summer Fair & Music Festival
- Juneteenth Celebration

## **JULY**

- Independence Day Celebration & Fireworks
- "Race for the Case" Schooner Race

## **AUGUST**

- Mississippi Coast Pro Rodeo

## **SEPTEMBER**

- Blues Festival
- Seafood Festival\*
- Sand Sculpture Contest

## **OCTOBER**

- Oktoberfest
- Scottish Festival and Highland Games
- Cruisin' the Coast
- Firemen's Day Parade
- Wooden Boat Rendezvous
- Beauvoir's Fall Muster\*
- Race of the White Wings
- George E. Ohr Fall Festival of the Arts/Mad Potter's Ball\*
- American Power Boat Association Offshore World Championships
- Mayors' Cup Regatta

## **NOVEMBER**

- Keesler Air Force Base Open House & Air Show
- Jazz Festival
- Race of the White Wings

## **DECEMBER**

- Ethnic Christmas Tree Display at Tullis-Toledano Manor
- Christmas Parade/Lighting of Fishing Net Christmas Tree
- Christmas on the Water Boat Parade\*
- Victorian Christmas at Beauvoir

## Appendix

\* Listed as one of the Southeast Tourism Society's Top 20 Events.

# Frequently Called Numbers

Area Code 228 for all numbers

Auto Tag Info . . . . .	435-8242
This county office is in the Harrison County Courthouse, Lameuse Street and Washington Loop.	
Building Permits . . . . .	435-6270
This department issues permits for construction and improvements.	
Business Licenses . . . . .	435-6247
To obtain a license to do business; also handles calls about cemetery plots.	
City Council . . . . .	435-6257
To reach Council Members.	
Driver's License . . . . .	374-0041
This office is on Bayview Avenue at Parker Street.	
Fire Department . . . . .	435-6200
Mayor's Office . . . . .	435-6254
Citizens complaints, proclamations, media inquiries, public records requests.	
Police Department . . . . .	435-6100
Streets and Drainage . . . . .	435-6271
To report street and drainage problems, pot holes, damaged street signs or traffic signals.	
Tree Permits . . . . .	435-6280
Call this number to apply for a permit to remove a protected tree.	
Visitor Info (Biloxi Visitors Center): . . . . .	1-800-BILOXI-3 or 228-374-3105
Voter Registration . . . . .	435-6279
To register to vote or notify registrar of change in address.	

## City Museums & Other Points of Interest

Many of these historic facilities are available for private parties  
and receptions as well as being open for public tours.

Maritime & Seafood Industry . . . . .	435-6320
George E. Ohr Arts & Cultural Center . . . . .	374-5547
Mardi Gras Museum . . . . .	435-6245
Saenger Theatre . . . . .	435-6290
Tullis-Toledano Manor . . . . .	435-6121
Old Brick House . . . . .	435-6121
J.L. Scott Marine Education Center . . . . .	374-5550
Beauvoir: The Last Home of Jefferson Davis . . . . .	388-1313
Biloxi Natatorium . . . . .	436-6108
Hiller Park . . . . .	435-6281