



- Approximately 20 pieces of public art are located in the median of U.S. Highway 90 in Biloxi. One of the Coast's top visitor attractions, the marine-related wood sculptures are carved from standing dead trees killed by Hurricane Katrina's storm surge. Created by artists Marlin Miller and Dayton Scoggins, these works of art are referred to collectively as the **Highway 90 Sculpture Garden**.
- The Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport also is expanding public access to the arts through its **Arts in the Airport**, which invites artists to submit works for display to showcase the Coast's cultural heritage.
- The **Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra** is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2011!
- Biloxi is listed as #6 on the City-Data list of "Top 100 cities with strongest arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services industries" in its size category.



Biloxi Arts & Cultural Heritage

There is a long history of public and private support for the arts in Biloxi, as demonstrated by consistently high levels of attendance at local performances and productions, exhibits, cultural activities and festivals as well as through generous monetary and other contributions. For such a small metro area, Biloxi residents and visitors enjoy access to a surprisingly diverse and affordable range of high quality visual and performing arts.

Performing Arts

Biloxi's historic **Saenger Theatre for the Performing Arts** is the host site for many events throughout the year, including concerts by the **Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra** and **Youth Orchestra**, programs sponsored by the **Coast Community Concert Association**, productions of the **Mississippi Gulf Coast Opera Theatre** and performances by the **Gulf Coast Ballet Theatre**.

Other Biloxi arts entities that provide regularly-scheduled performances are **Center Stage Theatre**, the **Biloxi Little Theatre**, **KNS Theatre**, and the **Mississippi Coast Jazz Society**.

Visual Arts

Named "Best New Arts Venue" in the January 2011 edition of *Southern Living* magazine, Phase I of the Frank Gehry-designed **Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art**, opened in 2010. Phase I complex includes the Mississippi Sound Welcome Center, IP Casino Resort Spa Exhibitions Gallery, Gallery of African American Art and the Pleasant Reed House. The City of Biloxi Center for Ceramics and the John S. and James L. Knight Gallery are under construction and are scheduled to open in 2012.

The Museum showcases the works of local, regional and international artists, hosts a variety of art classes and special exhibits and sponsors **Mud Daubers Camp**, a five-week summer camp for children.

Gallery 782 Co-Art, a nonprofit arts cooperative, is the anchor of a burgeoning downtown arts district. Advocating arts-based redevelopment of the historic downtown, the Gallery works collaboratively with Biloxi Main Street and the nearby **Duste Bonge Art Foundation** to entice residents and visitors into the downtown through public art receptions, exhibits, workshops and special events.

The **Duste Bonge Art Foundation** features a rotating exhibit of original works by the Biloxi native, along with other works. The Foundation is planning a new book about Bongé, one of the few female abstractionists, to be published by the University Press of Mississippi.

Biloxi Museums and Cultural Heritage

Biloxi's Maritime and Seafood Industry Museum operates two 65' two-masted Biloxi Schooners, offering sailing experiences to the public. The schooners dock at the Schooner Pier Complex on U.S. Highway 90, which also is host site for the annual **Billy Creel Memorial Wooden Boat Show**.

Temporarily located at Edgewater Mall, the Museum conducts year-round educational programs and a summer **Sea-n-Sail Adventure Camp** for children. Reconstruction of a 25,000 square foot museum is estimated to cost between \$7 – 8 million; construction and exhibit fabrication and installation are projected to be complete within two years, following FEMA design approval.

Beauvoir, Harrison County's only **National Historic Landmark**, reopened in 2008 after extensive restoration work. Beauvoir was the last home of Davis, the only President of the Confederacy; the mansion has been

restored to reflect the period during which he was in residence, 1879-1889. The grounds, House Museum, reconstructed pavilions and a gift shop are open to the public seven days a week. The Presidential Library and Museum Building is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2011.

The **Magnolia Hotel**, restored at a cost of about \$694,000, is scheduled to open in early 2012 as the **Biloxi Mardi Gras Museum**, featuring state-of-the-art exhibits and original Mardi Gras costumes to interpret the history and traditions of Biloxi's Mardi Gras season.

The **West End Hose Company No. 3 Fire Museum** on Howard Avenue interprets the history of Biloxi firefighters through exhibits and displays of vintage equipment.

The **Purple Heart Memorial** and the **USS Biloxi Bell/US Navy Biloxi Mast** remind those visiting **Glennon Park/Guice Park** by the Biloxi Small Craft Harbor of the sacrifices past generations have made to preserve democracy. The **Hurricane Camille Memorial** and the **Hurricane Katrina Memorial** remind residents and visitors of two devastating events that reshaped Biloxi's built environment.

Annual Local Cultural Events

- Mardi Gras Celebration
- St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Fireman's Day Parade
- Mississippi Gulf Coast Spring Pilgrimage
- Crawfish Festival at the Coast Coliseum
- Smokin' the Sound
- Scrapin' the Coast
- Blessing of the Fleet
- Billy Creel Memorial Wooden Boat Show
- Great Biloxi Schooner Races, "Race of the White Wings"
- 4th of July Fireworks Display
- Summer Fair at the Coast Coliseum
- Biloxi Seafood Festival
- Fall Muster at Beauvoir
- Cruisin' the Coast
- Old Biloxi Cemetery Tours
- Veterans Day Parade
- Christmas in the City festivities
- Christmas on the Water Boat Parade
- Blues Festival at the Coliseum
- Preservation in May Programs

Environmental Conservation & Enhancement

The City of Biloxi actively supports conservation and restoration of the natural resources that provide a vast array of recreational and commercial opportunities to its residents and visitors. For instance, the City of Biloxi was one of the first cities in the state to employ a full-time City arborist and to adopt a **tree protection ordinance** to safeguard its magnificent Live Oaks, magnolias and other significant trees; the City is a long-time **Tree City, USA** designee.

A partner of the **Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain**, established to conserve and protect local open spaces of ecological, cultural or scenic significance, the City of Biloxi also was one of the first cities in Mississippi to establish a **Community Court** system to facilitate enforcement of local codes to improve the safety and appearance of residential and commercial property throughout Biloxi. Enforcement of local codes in 2010 resulted in 2,576 code violations being resolved, of which 937 involved the clearing of weeds and debris.

Biloxi's **Comprehensive Land Development Ordinance** requires a specific ratio of pervious surface to impervious area for residential and commercial development, which enhances stormwater management efforts in compliance with federal and state-mandated regulations.

Biloxi Code Enforcement

Year	Code Violation Requests Processed	Total # Cleared
2011*	844	641
2010	2435	2576
2009	4787	3928
2008	3739	603
2007	1983	1847

*Through July 15, 2011
Source: Biloxi Community Development Department Annual Reports

Development of a comprehensive **Stormwater and Flood Management Ordinance** is underway, with adoption anticipated in early 2012, which will not only help minimize residential and commercial property damage from flood events, but will improve local water quality and erosion control efforts.

The City contracts for citywide, weekly **recycling pickup service** and participates in the Harrison County Beautification Program, a public-private partnership, to provide the monthly **Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program** to protect air, water and soil resources by providing a free alternative to illegal dumping and improper disposal

of harmful waste in local landfills. The City also participates in annual Telephone Directory Recycling, Christmas Tree Recycling, and Great American Clean Up Programs.

Deer Island and the Gulf Islands National Seashore

Located directly off of Point Cadet, the City annexed **Deer Island** in 1999. In 2002, 90% of the island was purchased by the state from private owners to become part of the **Mississippi Coastal Preserves System**, which is comprised of natural areas managed by the state to restore, enhance and maintain their ecological integrity.

Through its participation with the **Gulf Coast Heritage Trails Partnership** (GCHTP), the Biloxi Parks and Recreation Department is working with the Coastal Preserves Program and National Park Service to create a Deer Island Blueway that will highlight the ecological, cultural and historical resources of the island and enhance public access through designated canoe and kayak paddling routes and, possibly, pedestrian boat-ferry services.

Inclusion of Horn Island, Petit Bois Island, Ship Island, and two miles of the western tip of Cat Island in the **Gulf Islands National Seashore** ensures that these offshore resources are protected through federal reef re-establishment, erosion control and other island conservation programs. In 1978, Congress designated Horn Island and Petit Bois Island as national wilderness areas to minimize human impact on their ecosystems. All four of these barrier islands, located 10 -12 miles south of Biloxi, are home to a diverse range of plant and animal life, including a greater variety of bird species than any other ecosystem in the continental U.S. Lands and waters of the barrier island system provide habitat for marine creatures, insects, birds and mammals, including threatened and endangered species.



The **Gulf Coast Heritage Trails Partnership** is a public-private effort to establish a safe, coast-wide network of trails connecting neighborhoods, businesses, schools, and green and blue spaces to enhance the general public's enjoyment of and access to scenic, historic, educational and natural areas. The **Bike Biloxi Program**, which hosts a "Dinner Ride in Downtown" series and - thus far - has established downtown and East Biloxi bicycle routes, is one product of this partnership.

Biloxi's social offerings, aesthetics and openness are what attach residents to the community, according to the Knight Foundation and Gallop's 2010 "Soul of the Community" study.

A designated **Preserve America Community**, Biloxi's built environment benefits from the commitment of City officials and residents to preserve and enhance historic buildings, sites and cultural activities. The **Biloxi Preservation in May Celebration** is an annual collaborative effort of the City, Biloxi Main Street, Biloxi Bay Chamber, Biloxi Chamber of Commerce, Local History and Genealogy Department of the Biloxi Library and Biloxi Public School District that honors the past and showcases the City's rich cultural heritage through special programs, exhibits and receptions.



New and Recently-Restored Biloxi Public Facilities and Structures

Construction of new facilities and structures in Biloxi has maximized the use of public resources to meet existing and future needs of residents and visitors. Funding from Hurricane Katrina Recovery Block Grants, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and numerous other federal and state agencies is helping the City administration achieve its goal of rebuilding public buildings and structures efficiently, while incorporating design elements that reflect the vernacular architecture of old Biloxi.

The \$12 million **Biloxi Lighthouse Park and Visitors Center**, dedicated on July 14, 2011, is approximately 25,000 square feet, which includes 15-foot deep porches on both levels. In addition to an information area and gift shop, the Center houses exhibits that trace the City's 312-year history, a theater, meeting rooms that can be reconfigured to accommodate small and large gatherings, and offices for both local chambers of commerce.

At more than 70,000 square feet, the \$19.7 million **Biloxi Public Library and Civic Center** is the largest municipal building ever constructed in Biloxi. Actually two separate buildings, the nearly 50,000 square-foot Civic Center is attached by a large open air courtyard to the 22,000 square-foot library.

The Civic Center's 42,000 square-foot ballroom features balcony seating around three sides and boasts a 30-foot ceiling as well as a portable dance floor. The large central courtyard will enhance the facility's appeal as a year-round venue for community events and activities.



Building or Structure	Rehab Cost
Biloxi Lighthouse	\$ 421,629
City Hall	\$ 805,457
Creole Cottage	\$ 28,000
Old Brick House	\$ 684,176
Swetman House	\$ 219,685
West End Hose Company No. 3 Fire Museum	\$ 74,162
White House Fountain	\$ 114,983

Recently- and Soon-to-Be Restored Public Facilities & Structures

Within the last several years, the City of Biloxi has completed restoration of or major renovations to five of the historic buildings and two of the historic structures it owns and operates.

Ongoing renovation of four historic buildings owned by the City in the downtown involves work on the **Magnolia Hotel**, which includes installation of an elevator to bring it into ADA-compliance; this project is expected to cost about \$694,000 and to be complete in early 2012.

Interior and exterior renovation of the **Saenger Theatre for the Performing Arts**, totaling almost \$402,000, will be complete in December 2011, as will Slay House restoration work of approximately \$250,000. The architecturally-significant Slay House was donated to the City after Hurricane Katrina with the condition that it be relocated from its original site on the corner of Reynoir and Jackson Streets; it now contributes to the historic streetscape of the Rue Magnolia. Funding assistance for this project was provided by a Mississippi Department of Archives and History grant.

The City is in the process of renovating the **Old Biloxi Library** located south of City Hall on Lameuse Street for Administration Department offices. At an estimated acquisition and renovation cost of \$950,000, this project is projected to be complete in the spring of 2012, accomplishing the dual purposes of consolidating administrative functions into a more efficient space and preserving an important local landmark.

