

THE State of the City 2003



We broke ground in '03; we'll break records in '04

My fellow Biloxian:

I am proud and honored to once again present you the annual State of the City report, detailing the progress we've made in the past year on a wide array of projects, and providing you a vision of what we hope to accomplish in the future.

A wealth of information is contained in this 12-page report, and you'll also find even more information on ongoing projects on the city's web site at biloxi.ms.us.

We've witnessed a great deal of accomplishment in Biloxi in the past year. The ceremonial groundbreaking for major projects in 2003 have turned into new roads, new parks and other municipal facilities.

The explosive growth that we've seen in the past few years – and the successful ways that we're dealing with that growth – may be old news to some of you, but in the past year, the positive things taking place in this city are gaining international attention.

For instance, in December, we had more than three dozen local leaders from cities across Japan visit Biloxi to see how government deals with such growth. A few months ago, our Biloxi Public School system received worldwide acclaim – a front-page story in USA Today, and reports on ABC, CBS, Fox News Network and even the BBC – for being the first school district in the country to have cameras in each classroom of the district.

The city's hazard mitigation plan, a blueprint for preparing for and recovering from storms and other disasters, became the first of 10 in the country – one of three in the Southeast and the first in the state – to receive approval from FEMA, making us first in line to apply for millions of dollars in federal funding.

Our financial management efforts received an international award of excellence. Our building and code enforcement team was named one of top four in the state, and our construction management program received a certificate of excellence for the efficient manner in which road construction projects are managed.

I can't think of any other time in this city's history where we have received so much recognition in so many areas. And, best of all, it was all positive recognition, an endorsement of what we have going on here in Biloxi.

But, as they say, that was yesterday. What are we going to do for you in the future?

Last year, my report on this page was headlined "Another year of milestones for our city." We spoke about \$80 million worth of streets and drainage improvements that have been made in the past several years, repairing, repaving or reconstructing more than 250 streets throughout our city. We spoke about breaking ground on what would become Back Bay Boulevard, about widening Popp's Ferry Road, revitalizing the Caillavet Street area, signing a new agreement that would provide a promising future for the tenants at Point Cadet, continuing a conservative approach in managing tax dollars, opening the new \$32 million state-of-the-art high school, getting the Hope VI housing initiative under construction, and drafting a new Land Development Ordinance that would foster orderly growth, yet not impede the operations of Keesler Air Force Base.

I'm happy to report that most of them have been done, and those that haven't been completed will be this year – and some of them in record time.

Providing efficient roads to help move traffic from one part of the city to the other has been a pressing issue for several years, and I'm proud that we have a method in place that is showing outstanding results in terms of completing projects on time – or ahead of schedule, as you saw on Back Bay Boulevard and as you'll see in a few months on Popp's Ferry Road, which will be wrapped up a year – yes, a year – ahead of schedule.

But these road projects are not merely meant to move traffic. There's a bigger story here – and not only with roads, but with things like the \$35 million Hope VI housing initiative in east Biloxi or the \$20 million in new schools

you'll be seeing opening this fall at Gorenflo and Nichols.

No matter where you live in Biloxi, these projects are meant to improve your quality of life. New roads lead to new businesses and new jobs, which help people buy homes, improving the city's tax base. We'll be in a better position to lower everyone's taxes and continue to enhance your city services. The new housing initiative in east Biloxi means that more people will be living in brand-new affordable homes, and we'll be creating new homeowners, which gives east Biloxi the economic vitality it needs to attract the retailers, the additional supermarkets and grocery stores to adequately serve this area. Those things benefit everyone, whether you live in Edgewater Park, Woolmarket or on Point Cadet.

And the quality of our schools, of course, is one of the key things that people look at when evaluating a community. Our school system, which continues to enjoy the state's highest accreditation, has certainly been making the grade in that area.

I think you'll agree with me that two of the city's primary challenges are: Continuing to manage the growth we're continuing to see, and making sure that we preserve the things that make Biloxi the great place it is – our easy way of life, our low cost of living, our excellent quality of life, our friendly residents and our historic neighborhoods and landmarks.

I hope that this report will show that we are indeed doing the things we need to be doing to keep this city on the right track – and that we're making sure it remains the city that we love well into the future.

Thank you for your continued support and encouragement. I'm proud and honored to be your mayor, and on behalf of myself and the City Council, we wish you the best in the coming year. God bless you and God bless Biloxi.

January 2004

Updated information about your city at your fingertips

The purpose of this brochure is twofold: to summarize progress made by the city in 2003 toward enhancing Biloxi as a great place in which to live, work and play and to provide residents with updated information about municipal issues of general interest. State law requires that the mayor provide an annual report "to the council and the public on the work of the previous year."

We invite you to read this report as well as the other information at the Biloxi website, biloxi.ms.us. There's certainly a great deal of work still to be accomplished throughout our city, but this information will help you to understand what is being done.



George Lawrence
Ward 1



Eric Dickey
Ward 2



Jim Compton
Ward 3



Charles T. Harrison, Jr.
Ward 4

City Council



Mike Fitzpatrick
Ward 5



Tom Wall
Ward 6



David Fayard
Ward 7

Construction management was a new concept in Biloxi, but today residents and business owners can see firsthand the efficiency this concept has brought to major roadwork.

Current view



New Back Bay Boulevard now open for traffic, new development

Since May, motorists have been enjoying easy access from Point Cadet to Back Bay, thanks to Back Bay Boulevard, a 1.25-mile roadway that is the first full-scale project to be completed under the city's construction management program.

The \$6.5 million roadway, which includes three bridges, connects Oak Street and Bayview Avenue. The project, which was completed slightly ahead of schedule and slightly under budget, is designed to offer motorists an alternative to U.S. 90 and spur economic development along Back Bay.

The city opened the first section of the roadway – from the Old Brick House to Lee Street – on March 15, three months before the entire roadway was completed.



One year ago

“This new roadway is a major step toward our goal of improving the flow of traffic here in Biloxi,” Mayor A.J. Holloway told property owners and other leaders who gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony in May. “We’ve straightened and widened what used to be a road that had several 90-degree turns, was poorly lit and flooded when the skies were cloudy. Now, we’ve got a well-designed four-lane boulevard, with state-of-the-art traffic signals, ornamental lighting, and three new bridges.

“And thanks to our construction management program, we were able to do this work – once again – ahead of schedule and under budget. It’s not 5 months ahead, like the first phase of Popp’s Ferry Road, but I’ll take it.”

Photos: www.wingsof anglers.com

Caillavet Street construction to begin later this year

Those who travel the Caillavet Street area should see even more dramatic improvements in the next several months.

In fact, work on the new four-lane boulevard will begin in 2004, and motorists will be traveling the new roadway 12 months later.

“That’s great news to everyone,” Mayor A.J. Holloway said, “but that’s because we’ve laid a lot of the groundwork in the past year or so.”

Under the city’s plan, a new four-lane boulevard with center median will be created from the CSX railway to Bayview Boulevard. The project required purchasing rights-of-way on the east side of the road, where existing and new businesses will re-locate as part of the revitalization project.

In mid-2003, the city completed a half-million-dollar project to widen the adjoining Anglada Street from Barthes to north of Division Street, which will provide better access to delivery trucks serving businesses that will be re-locating in the

Caillavet Street revitalization area.

At the same time, the city was continuing to purchase rights-of-way from property owners on the east side of Caillavet Street. Demolition has begun on existing structures in the right of way.

In fact, two firms, BLP Paints and Dave’s Garage have already constructed new buildings.

A several block area – as far east as Fayard Street – will see improved drainage as a result of drainage outfall that are now being installed as part of the Caillavet Street project. Outfalls that will empty into Keegan’s Bayou are being installed near Percy Street and west of Elder Street.

“This project has been quite a challenge,”

Holloway said. “Purchasing rights of way from property owners who have been on Caillavet Street for decades was a time-consuming process, but in the end we’re going to have a safer thoroughfare with attractive storefronts in a well-planned project.”



Current view



Future view

Award-winning CM program attracts state attention

Biloxi’s construction management program, which is being employed on three multi-million-dollar road projects, has been attracting a good bit of attention across the state – and has been cited by the Mississippi Associated Builders and Contractors for efficiency in the area of Public Works and Infrastructure.

In the innovative program, engineers who design the roadways meet regularly with contractors who are building the roads, with input from the city’s Public Works director and city engineer to more rapidly address issues that arise during construction and integrate time- and money-saving steps into the process.

“This concept allows for more accountability on these major projects,” Mayor A.J. Holloway said. “And we’ve been seeing the results.”

On the initial phase of the widening of Popp’s Ferry Road – from Cedar Lake to Jam Lane – the process trimmed 4 months off a 12-month construction schedule, brought the \$3.4 million project in \$85,000 under budget, including saving \$6,000 by purchasing materials direct and avoiding sales taxes, and another \$30,000 by using recycled crushed concrete as a road base.

Additionally, the process improved communication between contractors and users of the road, with construction schedules adjusted to accommodate two area schools and maintaining access to businesses on Popp’s Ferry.

Leaders from Hattiesburg, Jackson and Meridian also have visited Biloxi in the past year to learn more about the process.

“We felt strongly that this process would be a tremendous benefit in helping us tackle these projects head-on,” Holloway said. “And the proof is in the work you’re seeing.”



Photo: www.wingsof anglers.com

Phase 2B is from the library, near the water tower, to Jam Lane.

Popp’s Ferry to open a year ahead of schedule

If it looks as if construction is progressing on schedule on the widening of Popp’s Ferry Road, you need to look again.

The fact is, says Mayor A.J. Holloway, work will be completed in August – four months earlier than the project’s 16-month schedule and a year earlier than its original 24-month timetable.

At this time last year, Holloway announced that engineers estimated the project – reconstructing and widening the roadway from the causeway to Jam Lane – would take two years to complete and would be done in two back-to-back phases.

At the time of the announcement, Holloway said he would challenge the construction management team to merge the two phases, if possible, to speed up the process.

“We couldn’t be happier with how the construction-management process has worked on this project,” Holloway said. “We weren’t able to completely merge the two phases, but what we did do was have the engineers and contractors make several time- and money-saving improvements to streamline things, which is how we were able to get so far ahead on this job.”

The purpose of the Popp’s Ferry project is to create a three- to five-lane roadway from Cedar Lake to the causeway bridge, widening a major entrance into the city whose traffic count is approaching 20,000 vehicles on an average day.

The \$3.9 million construction on Phase 2A, from the causeway to Margaret Sherry Library, also included constructing a temporary lane from the causeway to Jam Lane to provide a safe environment for construction workers and help traffic flow smoothly and safely.

Phase 2B, from the library to Jam Lane, includes contracts totaling more than \$3.2 million and involving five local contractors. The work is being overseen by W.G. Yates and Sons Construction Co. as part of the city’s construction management program.

Both projects – covering from the causeway to Jam Lane – will link to a \$3.8 million section from Jam Lane to Cedar Lake Road that was widened to five lanes from two and opened to traffic in April, which was 4 months ahead of schedule.

Phase 2A is from the causeway to near the water tower.



Photo: www.wingsof anglers.com

Residents making best of Popp’s Ferry Road work

A family in the midst of the Popp’s Ferry Road widening project added a touch of Christmas to a part of the project in front of their home during the holidays: They decorated a construction portolet with a holiday wreath, stocking and tinsel.

“We just started putting up lights outside our house, and we looked at the outhouse and said let’s decorate that too,” said Peggy Fogleman, whose husband Perry was in the construction business. The couple’s 14-year-old son, Keven, helped, as their 7-year-old daughter supervised.

“We figured the guys would look at it in the morning and probably take it down in the afternoon. But they didn’t, and they’ve left it up. They just go in there and start laughing. It’s the neighborhood outhouse.”

Although he stopped short of calling the Foglemans “johnnies on the spot,” Mayor A.J. Holloway said their gesture and friendly attitude is welcome. “Work of this magnitude disrupts lives, and we try to minimize that as best we can. Trying to work with the neighborhood on a regular basis is one of the bonuses of construction management. This shows that our crews have done a good job on that.”

In fact, contractors worked with the Foglemans to save a palm tree in city right of way near their property line. “My husband asked them if they could save it, and we also asked them if they could try to keep people from parking by it. That’s when they parked the outhouse there.”

The Foglemans moved to the home from St. Martin over a year ago. They were aware of the project, and have been a little surprised by the size of it. In front of their home, the city will have a three-lane road with, curbing and sidewalks on each side.

But no portolet.

Said Fogleman: “We’ll just decorate the palm tree they saved.”



Fourteen-year-old Keven Fogleman stands next to the decorations he and his family applied to a portolet at the site of the Popp’s Ferry Road widening work.



Public Works sign team members Thomas Gazzo, left, and Joey Juanico install a sign at Howard Avenue and Lee Street to notify motorists of the possible removal of the traffic signals at the intersection. By the way, you can get a daily update of roadwork in the Traffic Section of the city website, biloxi.ms.us.

Biloxi storm plan among first in nation to get FEMA approval

Biloxi's plan to reduce damage from floods and other disasters recently became one of the first 10 in the country to receive approval from the federal government, meaning the city should receive favorable attention when applying for matching federal grants for projects designed to lessen recurring damage from storms and flooding.

The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency notified Mayor A.J. Holloway that Biloxi's plan, which was developed to meet new FEMA guidelines, also was the first in the state to be approved and serves as a model for other communities.

Additionally, property owners in Biloxi became eligible for an additional five percent reduction in flood-insurance rates beginning Oct. 1, 2004 because of the city's ongoing efforts to improve drainage and educate residents about steps they can take to reduce storm-related property damage.

"We are very proud of this," said Robert K. Boteler, director of the Mitigation Bureau at MEMA in Jackson. "Y'all are one of the first communities in the nation to have an approved hazard mitigation plan, and you are one of the fastest growing communities in the state. This goes hand in hand with what you're doing in Biloxi to truly make yourself a sustainable community."

Biloxi in midst of improving traffic flow throughout the city

Biloxi motorists have two less traffic signals to deal with on Howard Avenue, thanks to a process that is merely a small part of a multi-million-dollar citywide effort to improve the flow of traffic for Biloxi motorists.

Signals on Howard Avenue at Seal Avenue and Lee Street were removed after a 90-day public comment period.

The removal of the signals is in line with recommendations made in a 2002 analysis of the 56 signalized intersections in the city at that time. Since that analysis was completed, the city has invested a quarter million dollars in purchasing and installing larger and brighter traffic signals. Also, five new intersections have been signalized as a result of opening new roads in the past several months: on Back Bay Boulevard at Lee, Holley, Crawford and Oak streets, and on Popp's Ferry Road at Jam Lane.

"On the new streets we've built or have under construction – Back Bay Boulevard or Popp's Ferry Road – we're using the latest technology, along with turning lanes and other safety features," Mayor A.J. Holloway said, "and at the same time we're upgrading key intersections on major arteries throughout the city. Between the constructing of new roadways and the upgrading of technology on existing roadways, we're hoping to improve the flow of traffic in a safe and efficient manner."

A third signal that had been scheduled for removal – on Pass Road at McDonnell Avenue – will remain in place, based on neighborhood comments.

Engineers are in the process of designing improvements that will be made at all Pass Road intersections in Biloxi. The \$2.7 million project will include upgrading to signals that emit brighter light, improving synchronization and, at key Pass Road intersections, adding right turn lanes. Construction is expected to begin in Spring '04 and may require as much as year to complete.

And, as part of a federal mandate to reduce repetitive damage from storms, the city is asking federal and state officials to help fund a \$2.6 million project to install mast arm, or cantilevered, signals on U.S. 90, where the majority of the 22 traffic signals now dangle from overhead wires and are vulnerable to high winds. Once approved by FEMA and MEMA, the project could be completed in 18 months.

Said Holloway: "These cantilevered lights that you'll be seeing more of around town will not only be more attractive and less susceptible to storm damage, but we're also looking to equip those on Highway 90 with battery systems so they can remain in service even if there was an interruption in electrical service. That means we won't have to man these busy intersections with police officers around the clock before, during and after storms, which is a savings to our citizens and helps things return to normal quicker after storms."

Biloxi has spent tens of millions of dollars in the past decade to improve drainage citywide. That work, along with community outreach programs, had previously earned Biloxians a 10 percent reduction in flood insurance rates.

Communities must have a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan in place by Nov. 1, 2004, and an approved plan will influence current FEMA grants. Said Boteler: "Those who can say they already have an approved plan will receive more points in the rating system."

Mayor Holloway was also pleased with the announcement: "It says something about the job we are doing that MEMA chose us to serve as a model, but the important thing is what this means for the citizens of Biloxi. Having this plan in place early on means that we'll be among the first approved communities to apply for a share of \$150 million that FEMA plans to make available for things like buying out flood-prone homes, replacing wooden piers with concrete piers, and making major drainage improvements."

A few years ago, Biloxi used mitigation funds to install riprap at Bayview Avenue near Forest Avenue, where past storms had eroded the roadside.

The FEMA announcement was also timely news for MEMA, which will be in Biloxi in May 2004 to host the National Association of State Flood Plain Managers – a group of 900 representing communities from across the country and as many as 20 foreign countries.

"This approval was a big thing," Boteler said, "because in our literature we were able to say that we'll be having this convention in one of the first 10 communities in the country to have an approved mitigation plan. We've found Biloxi to be a pleasure to work with."

Visit <http://biloxi.ms.us> to see the city's online Storm and Flood Info Center.



Photo: www.wingsofanglers.com

Sports complex now hosting softball, soccer

Biloxi's new sports complex, a 70-acre site south of Popp's Ferry and Cedar Lake roads, hosted its first events last year, and majority of the complex is scheduled to be completed this year.

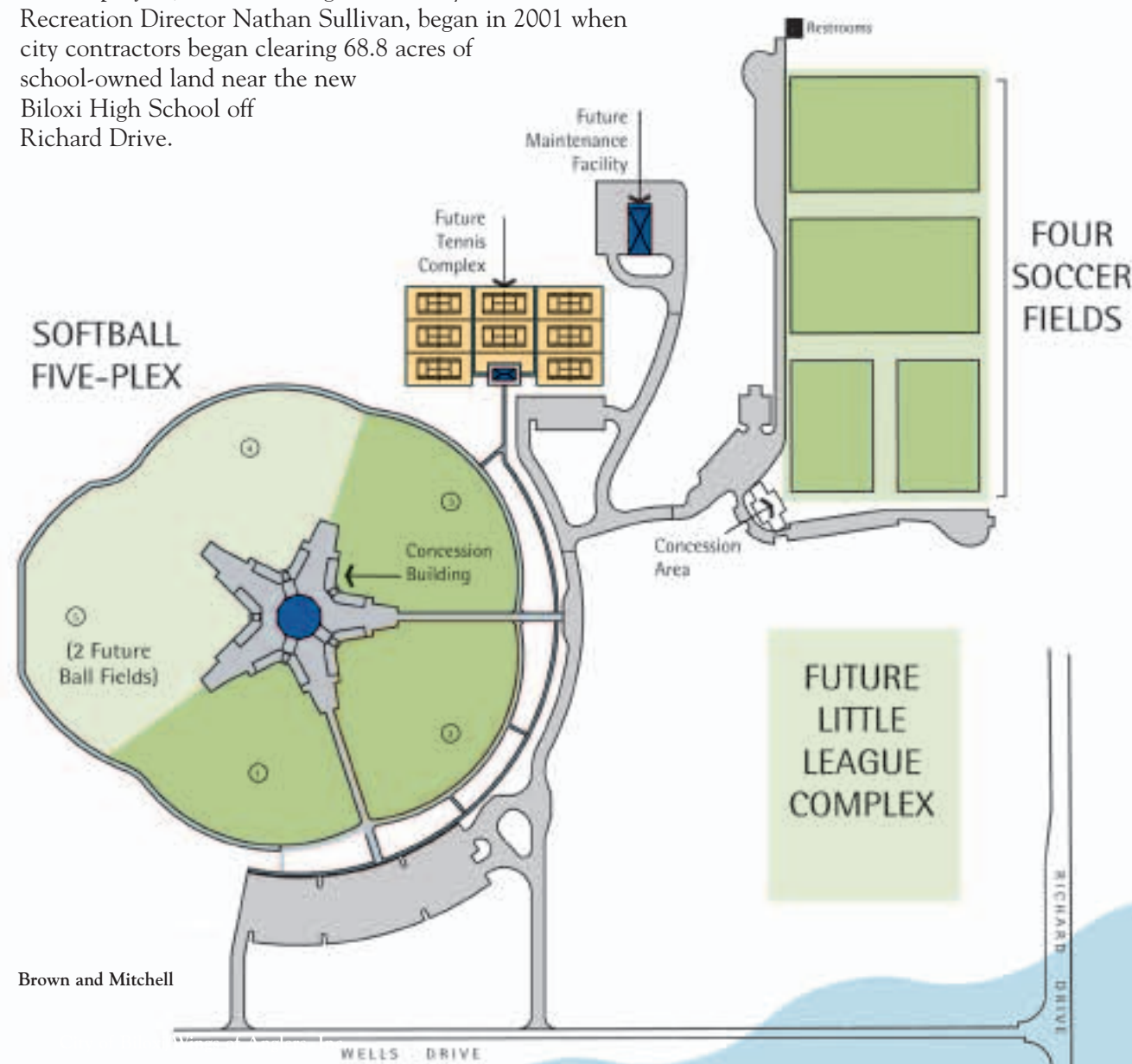
Three of the five phases of the planned \$10 million complex have been completed: three softball fields, soccer fields large enough to host eight games simultaneously, concession stands, restrooms, lighting and parking.

By Fall 2004, the facility will have its fourth softball field, an adult baseball field, five Little League fields, additional lighting and a concession building.

"This has been a huge undertaking, and we're delighted to be able to begin play at this impressive facility," Mayor A.J. Holloway said. "Participation in our city youth leagues has skyrocketed since we abolished fees a few years ago, and this facility will help meet our needs, as well as those of the school system. The complex also is in a great location, with easy access from the school as well as Interstate 10, so it's going to be quite an asset for the people of Biloxi and in neighboring communities."

Holloway noted that Harrison County has helped fund portions of the project, including as much as \$600,000 in cash and in-kind services.

The project, which is being overseen by Biloxi Parks and Recreation Director Nathan Sullivan, began in 2001 when city contractors began clearing 68.8 acres of school-owned land near the new Biloxi High School off Richard Drive.



The phases of the Biloxi sports complex

- Phase I**
Clearing land, earthwork, and utility construction
– \$934,000
– Completed
- Phase II**
Concession and restroom building for 5-plex, bleacher pavilions and scorers booths
– \$698,000
– Completed
- Phase III**
Construct three softball fields, soccer fields to host eight games, concession and restroom buildings, lighting, roads and parking
– \$2.27 million
– Completed
- Phase IV**
Construct one softball field, one adult baseball field, five little league fields with concession and restroom building, lighting, roads and parking
– \$800,000
– Under Construction
- Phase V**
Construct tennis complex with meeting room for all sports, maintenance building, water well, all roadway and parking area paving, roadway lighting, and fencing
– \$1.7 million;
– Under Design



Status of major projects

January 2004

Citywide streets and drainage projects

- In-house construction and cured-in-place piping \$2.77 million ongoing
- Traffic signalization analysis and upgrades, Ph. I \$250,000 completed
- Upgrades to computer hardware and software \$600,000 ongoing
- Maintenance of elevated water tanks \$590,000 ongoing
- ADA improvements \$215,000 ongoing
- Lift stations upgrades and maintenance \$843,827 ongoing
- Street overlay \$500,000 pending
- Construction materials for in-house construction teams \$300,000 ongoing
- Stormwater Ph. II \$10,000 under design
- Marina and harbor capital improvements \$250,000 budgeted



Sources: municipal budget, department reports and/or project contracts

Major streets and drainage projects

(includes projects completed, under construction or under design)

1.	Final phase of First Street drainage improvements	\$1.27 million	under construction
2.	Improvements to Kuhn-U.S. 90 intersection	\$500,000	budgeted
3.	Reconstruction of Holley Street	\$475,000	completed
4.	Reconstruction of Keller Avenue	\$1 million	under construction
5.	Lee Street drainage improvements (design)	\$25,000 budgeted	under design
6.	Construction of Back Bay Boulevard	\$6.5 million+	completed
7.	Nichols Drive reconstruction	\$1 million	completed
8.	Delauney Street improvements	\$375,000	under design
9.	Caillavet Street revitalization project	\$9 million+	ongoing
	Ph. I, widening of Anglada	\$582,000	completed
	Ph. II, install drainage outfalls	\$501,000	completed
	Ph. III, ROW demolition		completed
10.	Columbus-Corso-Cherokee drainage improvements	\$650,000	completed
11.	Graham-Iroquois drainage improvements	\$5 million	budgeted
12.	Benachi Street reconstruction (Division to Bayview)	\$355,000	budgeted
13.	New Keesler entrance at Division Street, (design & acquisition)	\$250,000	budgeted
14.	Brister Place-St. Jude drainage improvements	\$773,000	completed
15.	Veterans Avenue storm drain installation (RR to 90)	\$500,000	budgeted
16.	Pass Road intersection and signal upgrades	\$550,000	under design
17.	Popp's Ferry-Atkinson Road intersection improvements	\$400,000	contract awarded
18.	Bay Vista drainage improvements, Ph. IV	\$136,000	completed
19.	The Landing drainage improvements	\$541,687	completed
20.	Edgewater Park drainage improvements, Ph. I	\$1.3 million	completed
21.	Edgewater Park drainage improvements, Ph. III	\$1.05 million	completed
22.	Rue Petit Bois drainage improvements	\$450,000	under design
23.	C.T. Switzer Sr. Road drainage, Ph. II	\$750,000	under design
24.	Popp's Ferry, Ph. 2A (Sherry library to causeway)	\$3.8 million+	under construction
25.	Sunkist drainage improvements		
	Ph. I	\$777,550	under construction
	Ph. II	\$1.92 million	under design
	Ph. III	\$500,000	budgeted
26.	Wildwood Trace drainage improvements		
	Design	\$25,000	completed
	Construction	\$286,504	underway
27.	Popp's Ferry, Ph. 2B (Country Club to Jam Lane)	\$3.3 million+	under construction
28.	Campbell Drive sewer installation	\$200,000	under design
29.	Wetzell Drive (water and sewer system design)	\$25,000	budgeted
30.	Popp's Ferry Road, Ph. 5 (Brasher Road)	\$4.5 million+	design completed
31.	Popp's Ferry, Ph. 1A (Richard Drive ext.)	\$4.69 million+	completed
32.	Popp's Ferry, Ph. 3B (Jam Lane-Cedar Lake Road)	\$3.8 million+	completed
33.	Popp's Ferry, Ph. 1B (Wells Road, Cedar Lake Road)	\$3.8 million	completed
34.	Installation of Brodie Road water line	\$100,000	completed
35.	Popp's Ferry, Ph. 4 (Cedar Lake-Gay Road)	\$150,000+	budgeted
36.	Cedar Lake traffic signal, south of I-10	\$50,000	under design
37.	Install waterline north of I-10 on Cedar Lake	\$385,600	completed
38.	Cedar Lake subdivision road reconstruction, Ph. I	\$800,000	under design
39.	Cedar Lake-Old Highway 67 intersection imp.	\$165,400	completed
40.	Husley Road improvements	\$250,000	under design
41.	Woolmarket sewer collection system design	\$100,000	underway
42.	Install water line in Woolmarket	\$500,000	budgeted

+does not include right-of-way acquisition

Major public works projects

(includes projects completed, under construction or under design)

A.	Point Cadet Plaza hangar improvements	\$130,000	under design
B.	Install new fencing at Point Cadet Plaza	\$63,800	completed
C.	Clay Point park improvements	\$10,000	completed
D.	East Biloxi elevated water tank	\$1.5 million	under design
E.	Construction of new fire station for east Biloxi	\$948,500	underway
F.	Crawford House exterior restoration	\$200,000	completed
G.	Crawford House interior restoration	\$300,000	pending
H.	Biloxi Community Center refurbishment (design)	\$50,000	pending
I.	Saenger Theater refurbishment, Ph. IV	\$1.3 million	completed
J.	Migues Ball Park (playground equip. and pavilion)	\$24,000	completed
K.	Keegan's Bayou restoration and conservation	\$192,000	budgeted
L.	Relocation of Bond House on Howard Avenue	\$50,000	budgeted
M.	Mardi Gras Museum relocation to Dantzler House, Ph. I	\$125,000	under construction
N.	Biloxi Lighthouse interpretive display	\$100,000	under design
O.	Lighthouse Pier reconstruction	\$127,000	completed
P.	Lopez Park project	\$20,000	budgeted
Q.	Businessmens Park (playground equip. and pavilion)	\$24,000	completed
R.	Install additional lighting at Biloxi cemetery	\$12,500	completed
S.	Savarro Park improvements (playground equip.)	\$10,000	completed
T.	Natorium painting and tile repairs	\$15,000	completed
U.	Swetman House repairs	\$114,000	completed
V.	New fire truck at Veterans Avenue station	\$300,000	in service
W.	Hiller Park, installation of pier and boardwalk along Bay	\$172,000	budgeted
X.	Tanglewood Park improvements (playground equip.)	\$10,000	completed
Y.	Coliseum Pier reconstruction	\$147,517	completed
Z.	Donal M. Snyder Community Center, interior masonry wall	\$29,500	under construction
AA.	Water well to serve west Biloxi	\$500,000	completed
BB.	Parkview lift station upgrade	\$650,000	budgeted
CC.	Popp's Ferry causeway park		
	master plan	\$22,000	completed
	clearing and grubbing	(county labor)	completed
	removal of derelict pilings	\$345,000	underway
	Ph. I construction	\$1 million	out for bids
DD.	Expansion of Margaret Sherry library	\$600,000	completed
EE.	Install pavilion at Popp's Ferry soccer complex	\$77,000	completed
FF.	Popp's Ferry soccer complex drainage, Ph. II	\$62,000	completed
GG.	Sports complex		
	Ph. I (clearing land, install utilities)	\$934,000	completed
	Ph. II (concession and restroom building for five-plex, covered bleachers, scorers booths)	\$698,000	completed
	Ph. III (3 softball and 4 soccer fields, concession and restroom buildings, lights, roads, parking)	\$2.27 million	completed
	Ph. IV (one softball field, one adult baseball field, five Little League fields with concession and restroom building, lighting, roads, parking)	\$2.4 million	under construction
	Ph. V (tennis complex and multi-use meeting room, maintenance building, water well, roads, parking)	\$1.7 million	under design
HH.	Popp's Ferry elevated water tank	\$1.5 million	completed
II.	Construction of new Woolmarket fire station	\$950,382	underway
JJ.	Construction of Woolmarket Park	\$502,200	under design
KK.	Construction of Woolmarket elevated water tank	\$1.5 million	under design
LL.	Water well to serve Woolmarket	\$500,000	under design
MM.	Lorraine Road bridge	\$500,000	budgeted
NN.	Upgrade of Eagle Point chlorinator	\$401,000	city portion completed



Families expected in homes by December '04

Construction had been underway for several weeks in December when the Biloxi Housing Authority and local leaders made it official: Ground was ceremoniously broken at the Bayview/Bayou Auguste Hope VI housing development in east Biloxi.

Public housing leaders, HUD representatives and Mayor A.J. Holloway gathered on two oak-laden sites off Biloxi's Back Bay, which formerly held 322 units of barracks-style public housing, to break ground on 233 mixed-income housing units – the first of which will be available by December 2004.

The 233 units are part of an overall 387-unit HOPE VI master plan for east Biloxi. It will include 65 single-family units: 31 homes to be built in the neighborhood surrounding the Bayview/Bayou Auguste site, and 34 on the former East End homes site, where a 76-unit elderly complex will also be constructed.

"This project is more than building places for people to live," Mayor Holloway told the gathering of realtors, bankers, builders and others at the groundbreaking. "This project is about building our future. This project is about improving the quality of life and the quality of neighborhoods, which will instill pride and self-esteem in residents.

"And when you do that, you create an environment that will attract commercial and retail businesses, which will create jobs, which improves the tax base, which helps improve the lives of ALL residents of this entire city."

Development plans went into motion when BHA was awarded with a \$35 million HUD Hope VI grant – the largest dollar amount currently awarded to any city of any size. That grant was leveraged to obtain an additional \$25 million through tax credits, tax credit equity, first mortgage financing, a \$1 million contribution from the City of Biloxi and a \$150,000 contribution from Harrison County – bringing the total to \$60 million.

In this first component of the development, BHA is investing over \$6 million in infrastructure and site improvements. This includes streets, roads, sidewalks, utilities, water, sewer and exterior lighting. Neighborhood street lighting will mirror the lighting on Bayview Avenue, helping the development to blend in with the rest of the neighborhood.

According Bobby Hensley, BHA executive director, community input has been critical to many decisions related to the project ranging from design to unit mix, trees, financing and social services. The Bayview/Bayou Auguste plans were

refined through an in-depth series of planning meetings with public housing residents, city officials, non-profit groups and members of the community.

The site was re-oriented to restore the traditional street grid and to feature the natural beauty of the bayou – Bayou Auguste. Now, a bridge will be built over the bayou to join the properties of what were once two totally separate, fenced-off housing projects. The architecture of the townhomes, garden-style apartments and single-family homes on-site has been carefully designed to blend favorably with the typical bungalow style of the homes in the surrounding neighborhood, Hensley said.

An added benefit to future residents of the HOPE VI is the construction of two nearby state-of-the-art elementary schools. Nichols Elementary is on property adjoining the Bayview/Bayou Auguste site, and Gorenflo Elementary is a couple of blocks away. Both are scheduled to open for the 2004-2005 school year.

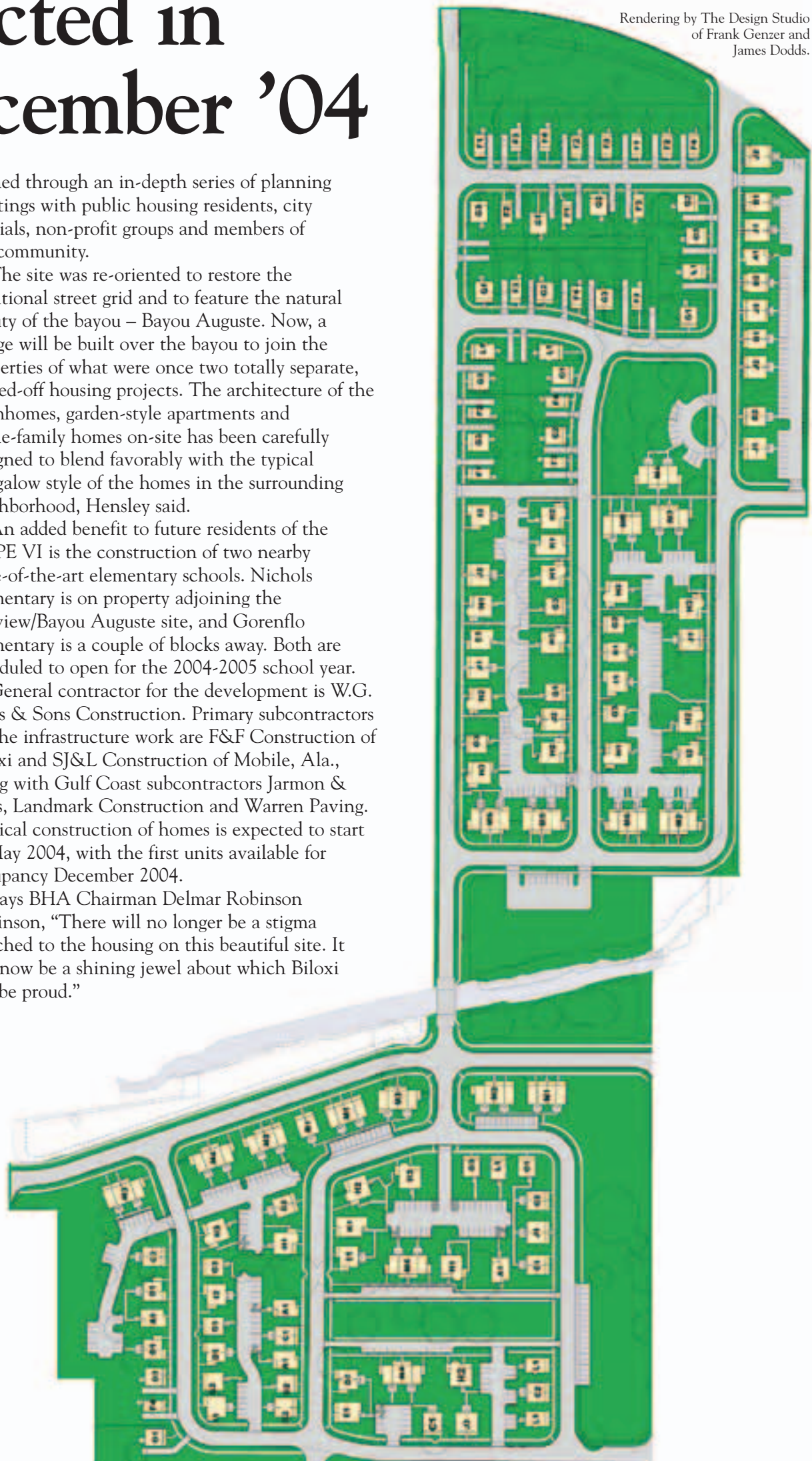
General contractor for the development is W.G. Yates & Sons Construction. Primary subcontractors for the infrastructure work are F&F Construction of Biloxi and SJ&L Construction of Mobile, Ala., along with Gulf Coast subcontractors Jarmon & Sons, Landmark Construction and Warren Paving. Vertical construction of homes is expected to start in May 2004, with the first units available for occupancy December 2004.

Says BHA Chairman Delmar Robinson Robinson, "There will no longer be a stigma attached to the housing on this beautiful site. It will now be a shining jewel about which Biloxi can be proud."

"The federally-funded Hope VI project in east Biloxi is about improving the quality of life and the quality of neighborhoods... When you do that, you create an environment that will attract commercial and retail businesses, which will create jobs, which improves the tax base, which helps improve the lives of all residents of this entire city."

– Mayor A.J. Holloway

Rendering by The Design Studio of Frank Genzer and James Dodds.



New Woolmarket, East End fire stations under construction

The City of Biloxi has begun construction on new fire stations in Woolmarket and east Biloxi, and Mayor A.J. Holloway said he expects the two stations to be completed in November.

KEL Construction Co. of Saucier will construct the Woolmarket station for \$950,382, and Starks Construction Co. of Biloxi, which bid \$948,500, will build the new station on Howard Avenue, immediately west of the aging Kurt Jacquet station.

"We had hoped to begin construction on these two stations earlier," Holloway said, "but the company that was originally hired to build both

had to pull out of the project. That meant that we had to go through the process again – advertising for bids and so forth. This means that we should be in these two new stations by Christmas instead of by Thanksgiving."

Fire Chief David Roberts said this will mark the first time since the 1930s that the city has had two stations under construction simultaneously.

The Woolmarket station will be situated on a site the city purchased off Oaklawn Drive, south of the I-10 exit at Woolmarket. The Point Cadet station will be positioned on former Biloxi Housing Authority



property immediately west of the current station.

The 6,882-square foot stations, which were designed by architect Mark Williams of Williams and Associates, PA of Biloxi, will be similar in appearance. They are designed to withstand 155 mph winds, sleep up to eight firefighters, and will feature two drive-through engine bays.

The stations also will have state-of-the-art electronic communications systems and have uninterrupted power supply systems capable of fully powering each station in the event of an emergency.

Biloxi launches video arraignment program

Arraignment of prisoners in Biloxi city court used to be a two to three-hour process each Tuesday and Friday, but now it's done in minutes.

The City of Biloxi is using internet technology to allow municipal court judges in downtown Biloxi to hear pleas from inmates housed miles away at the Harrison County jail in Gulfport.

The video arraignment program, one of the first in the state, is a federally funded project that could serve as a model for cities along the Coast and throughout the state.

Since the program was launched in July, more than 2,300 inmates have been arraigned by video.

"This new program has a number of benefits for the city," said city paralegal Connie Mercer, who helped obtain the grant to fund the program. "Judges can dedicate their time to hearing cases in court, instead of being delayed by traveling to

Gulfport. We'll no longer be tying up manpower transporting the inmates, which will not only save the taxpayers money but it avoids the safety risk of transporting prisoners."

The judge uses a laptop computer and small camera on a desk in his chambers at the Lopez-Quave Public Safety Center to communicate with inmates who sit in front of a laptop computer and small camera in a courtroom at the county jail.

Biloxi used a portion of an \$85,000 Local Law Enforcement Block Grant to fund the program, which is being used only for arraignments. The program can be initiated in other Coast cities for a few thousand dollars now that the hardware is in place.

"Judge Henry was able to hear pleas from six prisoners the first day," said Randy Manning, Biloxi's information technology manager. "It took



Under the plan, a judge hears pleas via computer link from the jail in Gulfport to the courtroom in Biloxi.

him about 30 minutes and two minutes after that he opened court. Ordinarily, the judge, bailiff and officer must make separate arrangements to travel to Gulfport to handle prisoners outside of the regular court times. If the inmates are transported to Biloxi, the judge would have to hear their pleas first while everyone else had to wait or the judge would try to work them in around other court business and leave them sitting in a holding area all day."

Saenger restoration tops list of milestones in area of preservation



It's been eight years since the City of Biloxi launched a multi-phase initiative to restore the Saenger Theater to the luster of its opening day in 1929, and, for the most part, the improvements have involved

expensive, behind-the-scenes chores – new roofing, new plumbing and new electrical wiring.

But all of that changed in November 2003, when the doors were opened to the most dramatic improvements in the eight year, \$2.5 million project: the Saenger's auditorium has a newly restored ceiling and walls, new seating and new carpeting, and the lobby area has been re-configured to provide more room and a more functional concession area.

The Saenger effort was the highwater mark of a year that also saw several other significant milestones in the area of preservation:

- The Maritime and Seafood Industry Museum unveiled its 8,000 square foot addition in February. The expansion includes many new exhibits, such as the Wade Guice Hurricane exhibit.
- The West End Hose Company No. 4, the city's fire museum on Howard Avenue, continued to offer educational programs and tours, as well as sponsoring the Fireman's Day Parade. The original firehouse has been restored, with artifacts and photographs collected to build exhibits.
- Work continued on the \$100,000 Tidelands grant project for the restoration and interpretation of the Biloxi Lighthouse. A Lighthouse Interpretive Plan and Exhibits Plans was developed with the input of the Biloxi Lighthouse Committee.
- Refurbishment began on the Dantzer House, the city property north of the Biloxi Lighthouse that will be the future home of the Mardi Gras Museum. Plans are to have the museum in its new home by Mardi Gras '05.
- Work was completed on the exterior restoration of the Crawford House at Tullis-Toledano Manor in the amount of \$170,000, which was funded in part with a \$30,000 grant from the Mississippi Department of Archives. An Interpretive Plan for the Slave Quarters was also completed in

2003. It will guide the historically accurate interpretation of the slave quarters.

The big news, of course, was the renovation of the Saenger Theater, which is in the heart of Biloxi's downtown, two blocks north of the Beau Rivage Resort and Casino.

In 1995, the city developed a master restoration plan for the Saenger and subsequently partnered with local, state and federal agencies, as well as the Friends of the Saenger and community businesses to raise funds for the project. The Mississippi Arts Commission provided more than \$582,000; Harrison County contributed \$450,000; and the Friends of the Saenger raised more than \$115,000.

The latest phase of the restoration began in January '03 and represents an investment of \$1.28 million.

You can learn more about each of the museums in Biloxi – including seeing before and after photos of the Saenger Theater and the Crawford House – by visiting the city's website at <http://biloxi.ms.us>.

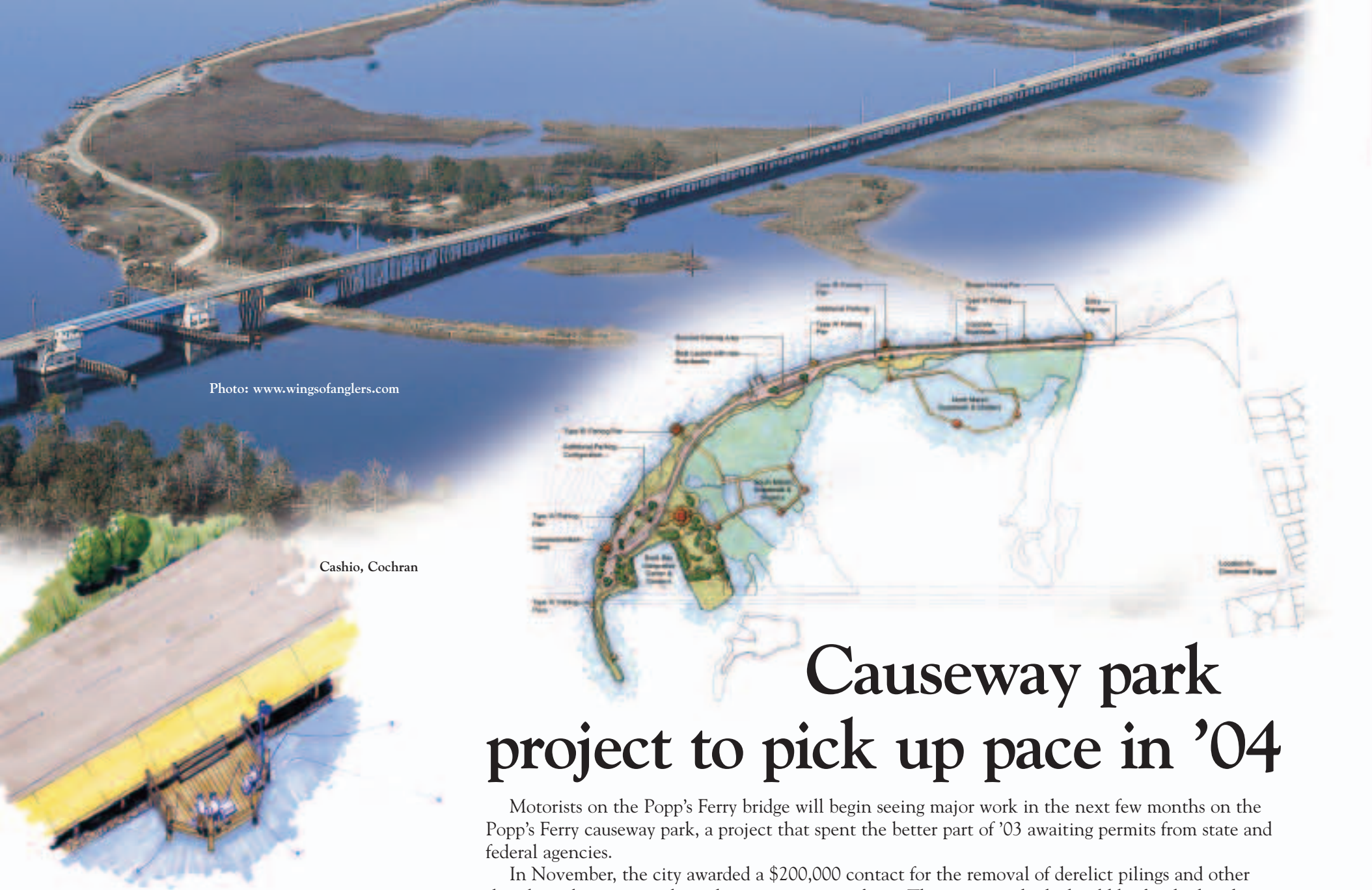


Photo: www.wingsof anglers.com

Cashio, Cochran

Causeway park project to pick up pace in '04

Motorists on the Popp's Ferry bridge will begin seeing major work in the next few months on the Popp's Ferry causeway park, a project that spent the better part of '03 awaiting permits from state and federal agencies.

In November, the city awarded a \$200,000 contract for the removal of derelict pilings and other shoreline obstructions along the causeway waterfront. The project, which should be finished within six months, would also include the installation of riprap to stabilize the shoreline.

The city expects to award a contract shortly for the next phase of work at the 10-acre site: the installation of a concrete boardwalk, covered and uncovered fishing kiosks, new lighting, improved boat ramps and a boardwalk through the marsh. The work has a budget of more than a million dollars.

The city purchased the 10-acre site west of the current Popp's Ferry bridge in 2000 for \$650,000. Public meetings were held for citizens to suggest ideas for the park, and the city employed a design firm, Cashio, Cochran of New Orleans, which specializes in outdoor waterfront design, to create a master plan.

Harrison County workers cleared land on city-owned property at Popp's Ferry causeway to make way for a new multi-million waterfront park that will make the area more inviting to the public.

Said Mayor A.J. Holloway: "This project is going to make this area much more accessible and inviting, not just for boaters and fishermen, but for everybody."

Pictures of progress at Biloxi public schools

It's been quite a year for Biloxi Public Schools, with worldwide attention as being the first school district in the nation to have cameras in each classroom throughout the district, and '04 appears to be an even more promising year.

New elementary schools at Gorenflo and Nichols – part of the school system's \$53 million building program – are scheduled to welcome students in this fall.

The schools, which represent a \$20 million investment, will each have their own design – more contemporary with geometric features at Nichols, and a more traditional look at Gorenflo, with a nod to the former elementary school's arches. Nichols will accommodate 400 to 450 students, while Gorenflo will accommodate from 550 to 600. Both schools will feature the latest in safety features.

Another new facility that will begin construction in the next few weeks and be completed by next football season is a \$4.6 million athletic stadium and lockerroom expansion, which will be situated near the two-year-old, \$32 million high school off Popp's Ferry Road.

The stadium, which will feature an artificial turf with "grass roots" rubber footing to absorb shock and help prevent injuries, is part of an \$11 million building program that will also include a performing arts center.

The opening of these new schools follows several weeks of international publicity, with such media outlets as USA Today, the three major networks and the BBC publicizing the fact that Biloxi schools were the first in the country to employ surveillance cameras in all classrooms throughout the district.

Said Mayor A.J. Holloway: "We've seen some great accomplishments in our public school system in the past few years. This is due in no small part to the hard work of the school board, the dedication of Dr. Larry Drawdy and the staff, and, of course, the teachers and students, who have earned the highest accreditation level in the state."



Photo: www.wingsof anglers.com

New Nichols Elementary School



New Gorenflo Elementary School

Photo: www.wingsof anglers.com



Rendering of new stadium

By the numbers

Holloway: Spending now outpacing annual revenue

Mayor A.J. Holloway had a revelation for members of two Biloxi civic groups he spoke to recently: The City of Biloxi is now spending more money than in takes in on an annual basis. And, Holloway says, that's not necessarily a bad thing.

"We have what you could call an interesting situation here in Biloxi," Holloway said in luncheon speeches to the Edgewater Rotary and Biloxi Businessmen's Club. Some people think that with all of the growth that we've seen in the past 10 years, we have an excess supply of money in city coffers. Added the mayor: "Some of you may remember what I said when this issue came up before: 'We're healthy, not wealthy.'"

Holloway addressed the groups as he and City Council members worked on a budget for the new fiscal year, which began Oct. 1. Holloway's budget is based on flat revenues while the city continues work on a growing list of projects and new responsibilities.

The truth is, Holloway said, the city's revenue in the past 10 years – money collected from property taxes, sales taxes, the tax on casino gaming revenue, and fees from licenses and permits – has more than doubled, while the city's expenditures have almost tripled.

For instance, in fiscal year '02, the city had \$62 million in revenue and spent \$72 million on services and major projects.

That's not a problem because the city has saved money over several years to pay cash for some large projects, as well as uses long-term financing to help pay for such major projects, the mayor said.

"The work you're seeing going on right now to widen Popp's Ferry Road, the Caillavet Street re-development and the new Back Bay Boulevard is going to benefit us for years to come," Holloway said, "so we're going to be paying for it over the

long term. In fact, we're going to be using money generated by businesses locating on these streets to pay off the bonds."

For FY '04, which began Oct. 1, the city's budget is based on having operating revenue of \$52.4 million. The budget relies heavily on gaming and sales taxes: 36 percent of the revenue is from the tax on gaming revenue, 22 percent comes from sales tax collections, and only 15 percent is from property taxes. The budget proposal includes no change in the city taxes paid by residents and business owners.

Holloway's budget also includes a capital projects budget of about \$44 million. It funds continuing work on Popp's Ferry, Caillavet and the sports complex, and includes construction of new fire stations on the east end of Biloxi and in Woolmarket; continuing work on installing water and sewer systems in Woolmarket; repairing bridges on Lorraine Road and Bayview; and continuing drainage work in Petit Bois and Sunkist.

Said Holloway: "Our challenge each year is drafting a budget that includes all of those new things, providing the level of service that you and your neighbors have become accustomed to, and doing it all with the same revenue levels in the current budget – and doing it without any new taxes."

"The notion that Biloxi is flush with money is offset almost immediately by the fact that we are flush with responsibilities. It's not easy to get people fired up about a ribbon cutting at a water well, or constructing a new one-million-gallon water tank like the one at Cedar Lake and I-10, but these things and the new roads and new schools are vitally important to continuing the growth of the economy here in Biloxi. And that benefits everyone."

City Expenses IN MILLIONS

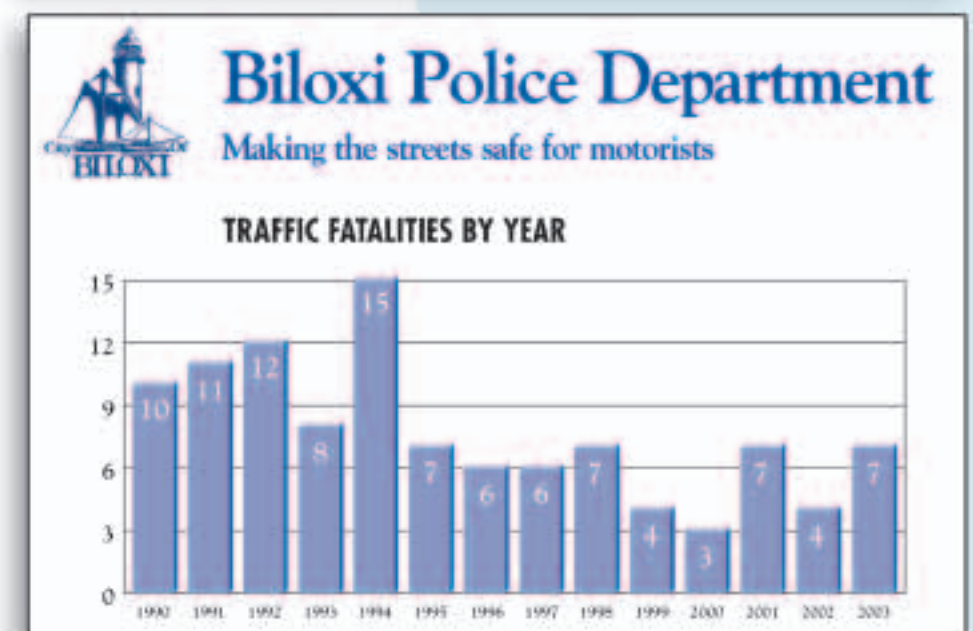
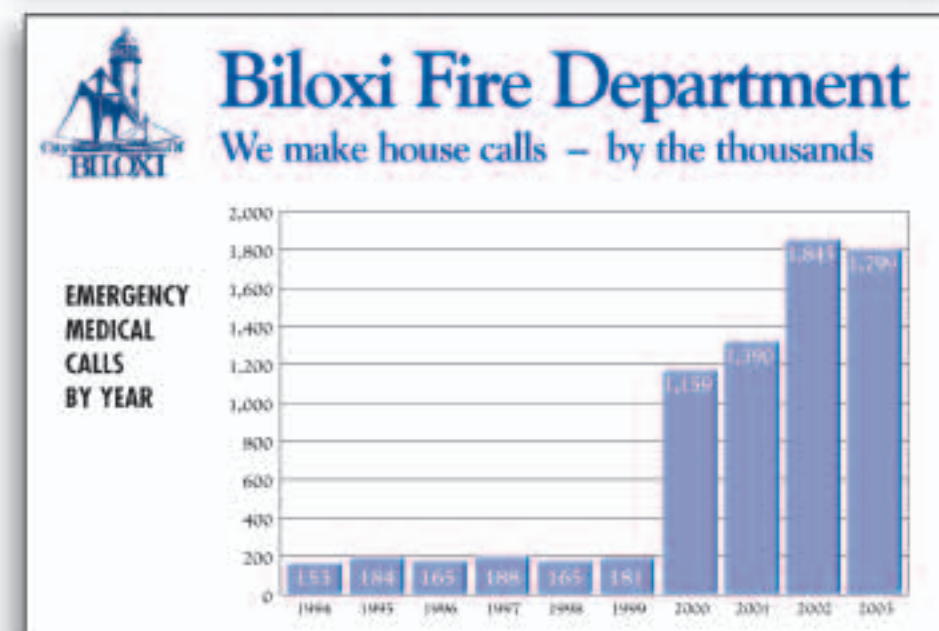
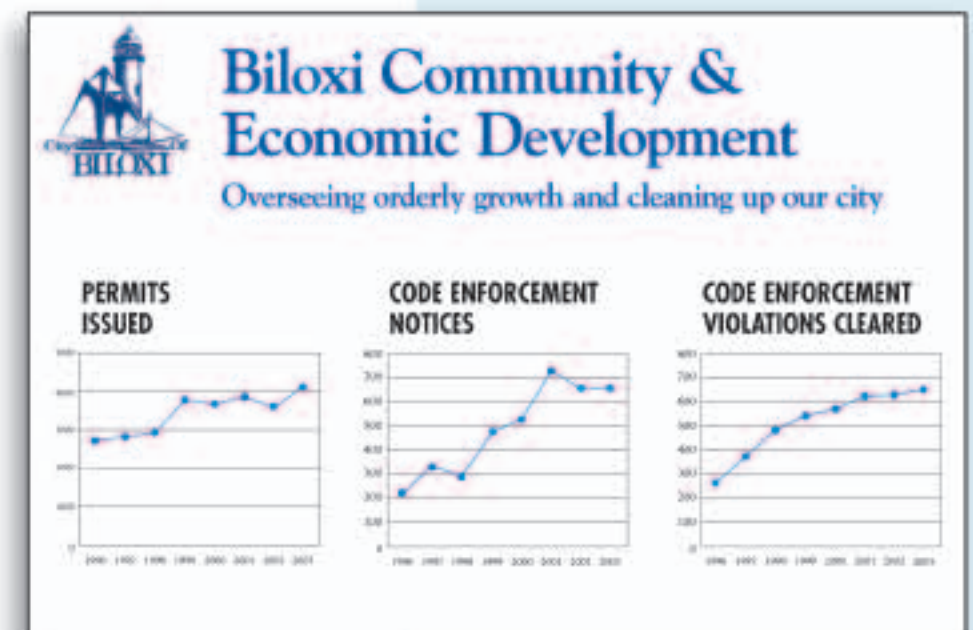
Fiscal Year Ending:	09/30/93	09/30/02
General Government	\$ 1.93	\$ 4.15
Parks & Recreation	1.76	4.25
Public Safety	6.54	22.20
Public Works	3.10	7.63
Community Development	1.55	3.77
Non-departmental	1.66	4.81
Retirement Contribution	1.09	2.72
Capital Outlay	.93	18.00

Debt Service IN MILLIONS

Fiscal Year Ending:	09/30/93	09/30/02
Principal	\$ 6.47	\$ 2.62
Interest	1.58	1.82
Total	\$26.60	\$72.00

City Revenues IN MILLIONS

Fiscal Year Ending:	09/30/93	09/30/02
Taxes	\$ 10.40	\$ 15.70
Licenses & Permits	1.84	3.32
Intergovernmental	13.90	36.10
Charges for Services	1.06	1.21
Fines	.42	1.13
Other	1.69	4.78
Total	\$29.40	\$62.30





Frequently called numbers

You can also find detailed information about city projects, programs and initiatives by visiting the city’s web site at <http://biloxi.ms.us>.

(Area code is 228 for all numbers, unless noted otherwise)

- Animal control 435-6103**
To report stray or dead animals, leash-law violations
- Auto tag info. 435-8242**
Harrison County Courthouse at Lameuse Street and MLK Boulevard
- Birth Certificates . . . 601-576-7960**
State Department of Vital Statistics in Jackson
- Building permits 435-6270**
To obtain permits for construction and improvements
- Business licenses. 435-6247**
To obtain a license to do business in the city
- City Council 435-6257**
To reach council members or clerks of council
- City Court. 435-6125**
Information on traffic tickets and court docket
- Code enforcement. 435-6270**
To report weeded lots, unsafe structures, abandoned vehicles

- Drivers licenses. 432-7803**
At Dr. Eldon Bolton State Office Building, Bayview Avenue
- Emergency police and fire 911**
For non-emergency, call 435-6100 (police) or 435-6200 (fire)
- Garbage collection 392-5108**
BFI manages the city’s residential garbage collection.
- Housing Authority. 374-7771**
To get information on public housing
- Human Resources 435-6259**
For info on city employment; located on third floor of City Hall
- Mayor’s Office 435-6254**
Citizen services, proclamations, public records requests
- Museums information . . . 435-6244**
Information on city museums or to rent historic properties

- Parks & Recreation 435-6281**
Information on youth leagues and programs, or to rent most city facilities
- Planning Commission. . . . 435-6244**
To apply for a change in your zoning or land use
- Public schools 374-1810**
Administrative office for all Biloxi public schools
- Streets and drainage 435-6271**
To report pot holes, damaged street signs or traffic signals
- Visitor info 374-3105**
or 1-800-BILOXI-3
Visitors Center is on the Biloxi Town Green
- Voter Registration 435-6279**
To register to vote or notify registrar of change in address
- Water service 435-6240**
ECO Resources manages the city’s water and sewer service

Are you in the loop?
Sign up at <http://biloxi.ms.us>
for the most current
news about your city.

THE State of the City 2003



P.O. Box 429
Biloxi, MS 39533

PRST STD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 57
BILOXI, MS 39530

Postal Customer
ECRWSS