

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2023 – 2027



Southern Mississippi Planning & Development District

BUILDING A STRONGER MISSISSIPPI



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ORGANIZATION

Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District (SMPDD) is one of ten Mississippi planning and development districts. It is a regional not-for-profit organization created to assist in enhancing and promoting the economic assets, resources, and opportunities of South Mississippi. For over 50 years, SMPDD has strategically utilized internal and external resources to build a stronger Mississippi. The region is directly impacted by its geography and natural environment, human and manmade factors – all of which provide the framework for a diverse and growing regional economy.

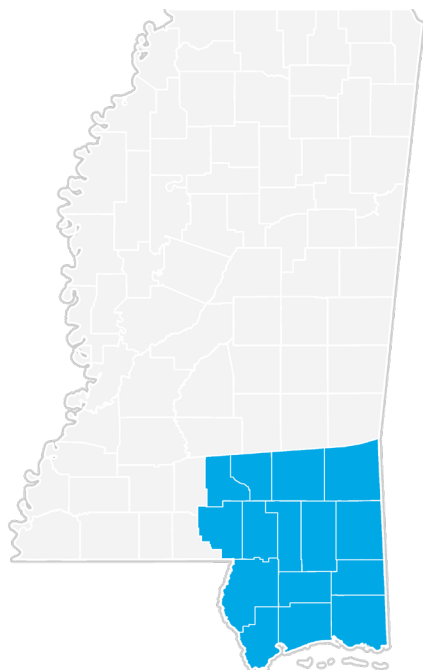
Established in 1967, SMPDD serves a 15-county area, including 38 municipalities. The region covers 8,771 square miles. The district is a mixture of rural and urban areas; ten counties and 21 towns carry a rural designation. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, over 805,000 people reside in South Mississippi.

Headquartered in Gulfport, SMPDD also maintains an office in Hattiesburg. An independent Board of Directors oversees SMPDD operations. The 34-member board meets quarterly, and an executive committee meets as needed to ensure the agency's policies and procedures remain aligned with the organization's mission. Bylaws were adopted at inception on March 10, 1967.

The agency provides economic development, financial and planning assistance, workforce development, and training programs. It also offers senior services through the Area Agency on Aging and Mississippi Access to Care.

The Economic and Workforce Development Division (EWD) has a professional staff with close working relationships with partners and stakeholders throughout the region. The team can assist communities with site selection proposal responses, leveraging financial resources, and general strategic planning. The EWD Division is responsible for the writing and implementation of this document. EWD staff also offers technical assistance to its counties and cities to support their individual economic development needs.

Over the years, SMPDD has been recognized for its innovative and practical approach to economic and workforce development initiatives. Groups, including the National Association of Development Organizations, have awarded SMPDD for its work to improve the lives of South Mississippians.



Covington County
Forrest County
George County
Greene County
Hancock County
Harrison County
Jackson County
Jefferson Davis County
Jones County
Lamar County
Marion County
Pearl River County
Perry County
Stone County
Wayne County

SMPDD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEMBERS	AFFILIATION
Wayne Barrow	Greene County Board of Supervisors
Bobby R Bolton	Perry County Board of Supervisors
Larry Bolton	Perry County Minority Representative
Demarrio Booth	Jefferson Davis County Minority Representative
Mitch Brent	Lamar County Board of Supervisors
Phillip Carlisle	Lamar County Private Sector Representative
Lynn Cartlidge	Workforce Private Sector Representative
Eric Chambless	Harrison County Private Sector Representative
Sterling Craft	Covington County Board of Supervisors
Tommy Dews	Forrest County Private Sector Representative
Marshall Eleuterius	Jackson County Private Sector Representative
Sedgie Foxworth	Marion County Private Sector Representative
Donald Hart	Pearl River County Board of Supervisors
Billy Hewes	Mayor, City of Gulfport
David Hogan	Forrest County Board of Supervisors
Jerry Hutto	Wayne County Board of Supervisors
Rick Hux	Mayor, Town of Seminary
John Johnson	Harrison County Minority Representative
Darrin "Bo" Ladner	Hancock County Board of Supervisors
Patrick Lee	Pearl River County Private Sector Representative
Beverly Martin	Harrison County Board of Supervisors
Larry McDonald	George County Board of Supervisors
Calvin C. Newsom	Marion County Board of Supervisors
Lance Pearson	Stone County Board of Supervisors
Jim Luke	Mayor, City of Picayune
Troy Ross	Jackson County Board of Supervisors
Bobby Rushing	Jefferson Davis County Board of Supervisors
David Scruggs	Jones County Board of Supervisors
Steve Seymour	Workforce Private Sector Representative
Dr. Jesse Smith	President, Jones County Jr. College
Scott Strickland - Secretary	Workforce Private Sector Representative
Paul Walley	Perry County Private Sector Representative
Ray Wesson	Workforce Private Sector Representative
Roderick (Rod) Woullard	Forrest County Minority Representative
Hugh Keating	General Counsel

2023-2027 CEDS Process

The CEDS process is guided by the Economic Development Administration's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Guidelines: Recommendations for Creating an Impactful CEDS. SMPDD has formed a CEDS Advisory Committee of seven individuals throughout the geographic service area. The committee members play an integral part in the process, which benefits from these individuals' expertise and local/regional knowledge.

SMPDD is involved in many planning activities. The Sector Strategy document – a plan for its 24-county workforce district, which is currently being updated, plays an essential role in forming the goals and objectives of the 2023-2027 CEDS. These documents are very inclusive and provide opportunities for input from respective planning committees, elected officials, economic developers, community leaders, and other stakeholders throughout the fifteen-county region. Additionally, the CEDS Plan was made available for the review by the public on SMPDD website www.smpdd.com on August 26, 2022.

The CEDS process is guided by the components listed below, as outlined by EDA. The final document will follow the same outline.

- Background
- Regional Analysis
- Strategic Direction/Action Plan
- Evaluation/Performance Measures
- Economic Resilience

CEDS COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The CEDS committee is comprised of seven (7) members representing both the public sector and private sector. Member selection was made by the SMPDD Economic Workforce Development staff and based on:

- Economic development experience
- Knowledge of the region or a sub-region
- Representative of main economic interests of the region

Committee Member	Affiliation
Raymunda Barnes	Pearl River Community College
Danny Box	Greene County Economic Development
Brandi Hough	Harrison County Development Commission
Melissa Morel	MS Power Company Economic Development
Mark Scott	Halter Marine
Lindsay Ward	Pearl River County Economic Development
Lori Watts	Marion County Development Partnership

REGIONAL ANALYSIS & STRATEGIC FINDINGS

To assist in the formulation of the economic development strategy for the next five years, SMPDD conducted a regional analysis and collected information, demographics, and other data points to assess the current economic situation in the SMPDD region. The focus was on assets, resources, projects completed or in progress, and planned activities that would impact the economic well-being of the SMPDD communities. It was also essential to identify key trends, innovative, future-focused initiatives, and the region's competitive advantage to find synergies, opportunities, and programs that would strengthen the economy and make the area more resilient and prepared for potential natural or manufactured disasters.

SMPDD relied on national, state, and local data sources to conduct economic analysis. A comprehensive survey of economic development organizations and local government entities was also an essential source of information.

SMPDD Region Population & Projections

	Both Genders	Male	Female
Time	Population	Population	Population
2015	792,518	388,804	403,714
2016	794,746	389,783	404,963
2017	798,394	391,386	407,008
2018	800,866	391,936	408,930
2019	804,117	392,738	411,379
2020	808,127	394,745	413,382
2021	812,091	396,766	415,326
2022	815,959	398,742	417,217
2023	819,731	400,668	419,063
2024	823,376	402,520	420,855
2025	826,906	404,321	422,585

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

General Population – Strategic Finding

The population of South Mississippi experienced a steady annual increase of 0.4% between 2015 and 2022, while the state's population remained virtually unchanged in the same period. It is important to note that several counties in the region have made more sizable population gains. Those that experienced the most growth in population are the counties that have a more significant concentration of production companies, providing more employment opportunities. Several inland counties grew due to individuals moving there to be away from more coastal areas, considering them safer locations less affected by potential natural disasters.

SMPDD Region, ACS 5-Year Estimates – Summary

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
White	72.5%	72.3%	72.1%	72.0%	71.7%	71.4%	71.3%	71.2%	70.9%	70.8%	70.3%
Black or African American	23.3%	23.4%	23.7%	23.8%	24.0%	24.1%	24.2%	24.3%	24.3%	24.3%	24.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Asian	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Some Other Race	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	1.1%
Two or More Races	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%	2.0%	2.1%	2.5%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	3.3%	3.6%	3.6%	3.7%	3.8%	3.9%	3.8%	4.0%	4.0%	4.2%	4.3%

Source: JobsEQ®

American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

Population by Race – Strategic Finding

The racial and ethnic makeup of South Mississippi has remained consistent for many years. The percentage representation of various racial groups remains nearly the same in 2022 as in 2010.

SMPDD Region, ACS 5-Year Estimates – Summary

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	49.3%	49.2%	49.3%	49.2%	49.2%	49.2%	49.1%	49.1%	49.1%	49.1%	49.0%
Female	50.7%	50.8%	50.7%	50.8%	50.8%	50.8%	50.9%	50.9%	50.9%	50.9%	51.0%

Source: JobsEQ®

American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

Population by Gender – Strategic Finding

The female and male populations are nearly equal in distribution, with the female group slightly larger at 51%. The gender makeup of the area's total population has held for several decades.

SMPDD Region, ACS 5-Year Estimates – Summary

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Median Age	36.1	36.2	36.2	36.3	36.5	36.7	37.0	37.2	37.5	37.8	38.1
Under 18 Years	25.1%	25.0%	24.9%	24.7%	24.5%	24.3%	24.1%	24.0%	23.8%	23.7%	23.5%
18 to 24 Years	10.4%	10.4%	10.4%	10.3%	10.2%	10.1%	10.0%	9.8%	9.7%	9.5%	9.3%
25 to 34 Years	13.1%	13.1%	13.2%	13.3%	13.3%	13.3%	13.4%	13.4%	13.2%	13.1%	13.1%
35 to 44 Years	13.2%	12.9%	12.8%	12.6%	12.4%	12.5%	12.4%	12.4%	12.4%	12.5%	12.6%
45 to 54 Years	14.3%	14.3%	14.1%	13.9%	13.8%	13.5%	13.2%	13.1%	12.9%	12.6%	12.4%
55 to 64 Years	11.4%	11.6%	11.8%	12.0%	12.1%	12.3%	12.5%	12.6%	12.8%	12.9%	13.0%
65 to 74 Years	7.2%	7.3%	7.5%	7.7%	8.0%	8.3%	8.5%	8.8%	9.0%	9.3%	9.6%
75 Years and Over	5.3%	5.3%	5.4%	5.5%	5.6%	5.7%	5.8%	5.9%	6.1%	6.3%	6.5%

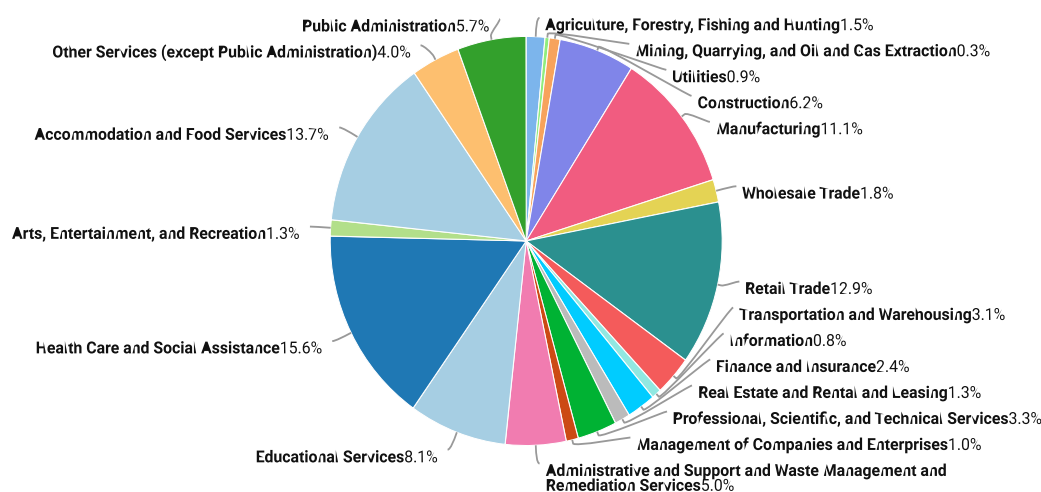
Source: JobsEQ®

American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

Population by Age Distribution – Strategic Finding

Almost a quarter of the area's total population (23.5%) comprises the under-18-year-old group. The part of the population actively involved in the workforce is between the ages of 18 and 64 and is represented by 60.4%. The median age of the area's population rose from 36.1 to 38.1 over ten years. The younger demographic group provides a potential pipeline of workers to fill future positions once they obtain the necessary skills and education. Based on this demographic information, it can be concluded that South Mississippi has a sufficient number of residents to fill the jobs needed by businesses and industries.

Total Workers for SMPDD by Industry



Source: JobsEQ® Data as of 2022Q1

Source: JobsEQ®

Employment by Industry – Strategic Finding

The region's civilian labor force is 363,989. The manufacturing sector has a higher concentration of companies than an average area of the same size and is represented by almost 10% of the labor force. The largest sector by employment in South Mississippi is Healthcare and Social Assistance, followed by Accommodation & Food Services and Retail Trade. Other top industrial sectors are Educational Services, Construction, and Public Administration.

SMPDD Region, ACS 5-Year Estimates – Summary

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)	59.8%	59.9%	59.6%	59.1%	58.5%	58.0%	58.0%	58.0%	57.8%	57.7%	58.1%
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)	76.8%	77.7%	77.4%	76.9%	76.4%	76.0%	76.3%	76.5%	77.1%	77.2%	78.0%
Armed Forces Labor Force	1.3%	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%
Veterans Aged 18-64	9.9%	9.7%	9.5%	9.2%	8.6%	8.0%	7.9%	7.7%	7.4%	7.5%	7.5%
Veterans Labor Force Participation Rate and Size, Age 18-64	74.1%	74.1%	73.4%	73.0%	73.5%	72.3%	73.4%	73.8%	74.3%	74.4%	77.1%

Source: JobsEQ®

American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

Labor Force Participation Rate – Strategic Finding

South Mississippi's Labor Force Participation Rate for the civilian population 16 years and over is 58.1%. This relatively low rate is a lingering concern for employers and economic development professionals. Over the years of studying this issue, SMPDD has identified several significant reasons for this low rate. Lack of trade or craft skills, expensive or non-existent childcare, absence of transportation options, prior criminal history, lagging "soft skills," and substance abuse prevent individuals from gaining stable, sustainable-wage employment. Through its

Local Area Workforce Plan and many partnerships with organizations and agencies engaged in workforce development and training, SMPDD will continue to strive to improve the current situation. It is important to note that this problem exists throughout the state and the country. While conducting research, we have also identified that the Prime-Age (25-54-year-old group) Labor Force Participation Rate in South Mississippi is 78%, and the Veteran Population Labor Force Participation Rate is higher than the national average.

Occupational Employment Projections in Demand and Decline 2020 – 2028

	Demand	Decline
Management Occupations		
Financial Managers	15.60%	
Education Administrators	20%	
Medical & Health Service Managers	19.10%	
Postmasters & Mail Superintendents		-20%
Property & Real Estate Managers	9%	
Business & Financial Operations		
Buyers & Purchasing Agents		-8.90%
Claims Adjusters, Examiners		-8.00%
Labor Relations Specialists		-7.40%
Accountants & Auditors	7.10%	
Credit Counselors	12.50%	
Loan Officers	9.50%	
Tax Preparers	10.50%	
Computer Occupations & Analysts	9.60%	
Information Security Analysts	16.70%	
Software Developers	22.20%	
Web Developers	14.30%	
Computer Network Specialists	16.70%	
Architecture & Engineering		
Chemical Engineers	10%	
Civil Engineers	8.90%	
Electronics Engineers (not computer)		-6.70%
Mechanical Drafters		-9.50%
Life, Physical & Social Science		
Clinical, Counseling & School Psychologists	16.70%	
Geological, Petroleum Technicians	25%	
Marriage & Family Therapists	28.60%	
Substance Abuse Counselors	11.90%	
Healthcare Social Workers	13.20%	

	Demand	Decline
Legal		
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	15.20%	
Education, Training and Library		
Business Instructors Post-Secondary	14.30%	
Science Teachers Post-Secondary	18.20%	
Health Specialists Teachers Post-Secondary	27.30%	
Nursing Instructors Post-Secondary	22.20%	
Healthcare Practitioners		
Dietitians and Nutritionists	11.80%	
Optometrists	14.30%	
Anesthesiologists	50%	
Physicians Assistants	18.20%	
Occupational Therapists	22.70%	
Physical Therapists	23.90%	
Exercise Physiologist	20%	
Veterinarians	25%	
Registered Nurses	12.20%	
Nurse Anesthetists	15%	
Nurse Practitioners	24.30%	
Audiologists	33.30%	
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	19%	
Psychiatric Technicians	16.70%	
Respiratory Therapy Technicians		-58.30%
Veterinary Technologists & Technicians	25%	
Physical Therapy Assistants	30%	
Medical Assistants	17.10%	
Phlebotomists	19%	
Protective Service Occupations		
Bailiffs		-14.30%
Security Guards	13.70%	
Food Preparation & Related Occupations		
First Line Supervisors of Food Preparation	12.60%	
Restaurant Cooks	22.30%	
Food Preparation & Serving Workers	19.70%	
Restaurant Hosts	11.40%	

	Demand	Decline
Building & Grounds Maintenance		
First Line Supervisors of Landscaping	17%	
Janitors & Cleaners	16.70%	
Pest Control Workers	27.30%	
Landscaping & Groundskeeping	16.20%	
Personal Care and Service		
First Line Supervisors of Gaming	13.00%	
Gaming Workers	16.70%	
Funeral Attendants		-11.10%
Concierges		-25%
Tour and Travel Guides	13.30%	
Personal Care Aides	37.80%	
Fitness Trainers	13.20%	
Sales & Related Occupations		
Insurance Sales Agents	10.30%	
Travel Agents	50%	
Office & Administrative Support		
Switchboard Operators		-20%
Tellers		-11%
File Clerks		-13%
Cargo & Freight Agents	20%	
Postal Service Clerks		-12.50%
Postal Service Mail Carriers		-12%
Postal Service Mail Sorters		-22.20%
Executive Secretaries		-20.30%
Legal Secretaries		-18.50%
Medical Secretaries	13.10%	
Computer Data Entry Keyers		-22.20%
Word Processors and Typists		-40%
Insurance Claims & Policy Processing Clerks	14.30%	
Office Machine Operators (not computer)		-25%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry		
Farmworkers -Farm, Ranch, Aquaculture Animals	15.70%	
Logging Equipment Operators		-21.40%
Log Graders & Scalers		-16.70%

	Demand	Decline
Construction & Extraction		
Brickmasons & Blockmasons	10%	
Cement Masons	16.20%	
Roofers	14.30%	
Structural Iron & Steel Workers	17.60%	
Helpers - Brickmasons, Tile & Marble Setters	25%	
Helpers - Pipe layers, Carpenters	13%	
Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	33.30%	
Service Unit Operators - Oil, Gas, Mining		-10%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair		
Telecommunications Equipment Installers		-12.10%
Security & Fire Alarm Systems Installers	30%	
Tire Repairers		-10%
Mechanical Door Repairers	33.30%	
Heating, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Mechanics	12.30%	
Telecommunications Line Installers & Repairers	17.20%	
Production Occupations		
Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters		-15.40%
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool	25%	
Rolling Machine Setters, Operators		-14.30%
Grinding, Lapping, Polishing Machine Tool Setters		-10.30%
Molding, Coremaking & Casting Machine Setters		-15%
Multiple Machine Tool Setters	12.50%	
Printing Workers	15%	
Printing Press Operators	15.40%	
Pressers - Textile, Garment & Related Materials		-31.60%
Gas Plant Operators		-10%
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers		-16.70%
Dental Laboratory Technicians	20%	
Transportation & Material Moving		
Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	15.80%	
Motor Vehicle Operators	33.30%	
Material Moving Workers	33.30%	

MDES Labor Market Information with assistance from NSPARC of MSU

Occupations in Demand – Strategic Finding

While researching the data points related to occupations projected to be in demand and careers with a projected decline in demand through the year 2028, SMPDD has noted that every vocation projected to grow requires

specific skills training of various levels. This fact is not surprising as workforce development and training have been and will remain the cornerstone of success for employers in South Mississippi. SMPDD will stay at the forefront of workforce programs and funding, working with business and industry, economic development partners, and workforce training allies to seek and allocate the necessary funding to meet the immediate needs for skills training to keep our existing companies competitive in the global market.

Cost of Living Information

	Annual Average Salary	Cost of Living Index (Base US)	US Purchasing Power
SMPDD	\$44,594	86.0	\$51,850
Mississippi	\$44,455	81.3	\$54,677
USA	\$66,637	100.0	\$66,637

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

Data as of 2022Q1

Cost of Living per [COLI](#), data as of 2021Q3, imputed by Chmura where necessary.

Income and Purchasing Power – Strategic Finding

The average wage of South Mississippians is about the same as the statewide average. The region's average annual wages per worker increased by 5.5% over the preceding four quarters. The cost of living index in the SMPDD region is 86.0. The cost of living index estimates the relative price levels for consumer goods and services. When applied to wages and salaries, the result measures relative purchasing power. The average salary of \$44,594 provides a purchasing power of \$51,850. The cost of living is 14.0% lower in SMPDD than the US average, resulting in the 14.0% increase in purchasing power. The wages and salaries have grown over the past several years across occupations, and the cost of living has remained relatively low compared to our immediate neighbors in Alabama and Louisiana, making South Mississippi more competitive in the price of doing business.

SMPDD Region, ACS 5-Year Estimates – Summary

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Poverty Level (of all people)	18.3%	19.5%	20.3%	20.9%	20.9%	20.9%	20.8%	19.6%	19.5%	19.8%	18.6%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP			14.8%	16.9%	17.9%	18.2%	18.1%	17.0%	16.4%	15.5%	14.6%
Uninsured			19.4%	19.3%	18.6%	17.8%	16.3%	15.1%	14.0%	13.9%	13.1%

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

Poverty – Strategic Finding

The poverty rate in South Mississippi is currently 18.6%, which is a little lower than the state's poverty rate. It has remained unchanged from 2010, with almost the same number of people receiving supplemental food assistance. What remains a concern is that several counties in the SMPDD area have a much higher poverty rate; in some instances, almost a quarter of the population lives in poverty. The number of uninsured residents has dropped by over 6% in the past several years. SMPDD will continue to work with local governments, economic development partner organizations, workforce development, and training allies to improve the working population's skill set so they could have an opportunity for a higher wage job. Female heads of household families are more likely to live in poverty. SMPDD understands the importance of flexible programs to help women return to work or train to improve their earning potential.

Educational Attainment, Age 25-64

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
No High School Diploma	15.8%	15.4%	14.6%	14.6%	14.6%	14.4%	13.6%	13.4%	12.8%	12.4%	11.5%
High School Graduate	31.4%	30.3%	30.2%	30.2%	30.3%	30.1%	30.3%	30.1%	30.0%	29.7%	29.0%
Some College, No Degree	23.9%	24.6%	24.9%	25.1%	24.8%	24.8%	25.0%	25.0%	24.5%	24.4%	24.7%
Associate's Degree	9.4%	9.8%	10.3%	10.2%	10.4%	10.4%	10.6%	10.6%	11.0%	11.7%	12.3%
Bachelor's Degree	12.6%	12.7%	12.8%	12.9%	12.8%	13.1%	13.1%	13.5%	14.0%	14.0%	14.3%
Postgraduate Degree	6.9%	7.1%	7.2%	7.0%	7.2%	7.3%	7.4%	7.4%	7.7%	7.7%	8.2%

Source: JobsEQ®

American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

Educational Attainment – Strategic Finding

From the historical perspective, there is a 4.3% improvement in high school completion from 2010 to 2020. There are more associate's, bachelor's, and postgraduate degrees now than in 2010. 88.5% of South Mississippi residents have earned a high school diploma. 20.6% of the population have either a two-year or a four-year degree, with 12.3% earning an associate's degree and 14.3% having a bachelor's degree. The region continues to raise its high school educational attainment while also increasing the number of individuals earning industry certificates or associate's degrees. The recent investment in high school CTE programs and improved connection between business and industry with school instructors and students provides more specific skills training, and more young people decide on a career in industry. Community colleges offering dual credit classes in high schools have aided an increase in college graduates since it takes fewer semester hours to obtain a diploma. SMPDD will continue to support credit and non-credit training programs, bringing additional individuals into the workforce.

Building Permits

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
SMPDD area	2,427	2,257	2,265	2,300	2,380	2,186	2,261	2,376	2,585	2,667	3,576	3,266

HUD User

Managed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R), HUD User hosts research, publications, and datasets in housing, and community development.

Building Permits - Strategic Finding

In the last decade, the number of building permits issued in South Mississippi has grown exponentially. Between 2018 and 2021 – the number of building permits increased by 1/3. The unusual circumstance of extra income creates a significant uptick in 2020 through the stimulus payments, coupled with newly found "free" time and working from home, have renewed interest in home improvement and finally embarking on previously planned projects. SMPDD will continue to support construction projects in all the communities and facilitate efforts to grow new businesses.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water Supply and Treatment

The adequate availability of water resources (potable, industrial, grey, etc.) and proper treatment facilities are essential to every community's viability. The quality and quantity of existing water and sewer facilities affect the area's quality of life and economic development opportunities. All SMPDD area municipalities operate their own Water Systems. The majority of these systems utilize wells as a water source. The rural areas use water districts, rural water associations, and private water companies to serve the unincorporated areas.

Since 2005, when Hurricane Katrina devastated many South Mississippi communities, significant investments have been made in upgrading the water and sewer infrastructure, allowing more residents and businesses to access publicly operated systems. Sewer facilities have seen significant improvements in recent years, primarily attributable to more stringent federal regulations that have required local governments to improve sewerage treatment. Disposal is provided by municipal systems, water and sewer districts, and private companies. The Mississippi Legislature and Governor Tate Reeves have created the Mississippi Municipality & County Water Infrastructure Grant Program Act (MCWI) to provide matching funds to eligible entities for making necessary investments in water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure. Senate Bill 2822 provides the program's funding and parameters derived from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). More specifically, State Fiscal Recovery Funds available under ARPA are being made available to match Local Fiscal Recovery Funds received by counties and municipalities. The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) will manage this program.

Strategic Finding

As particular infrastructure gets older, repairs and upgrades should be ongoing and mandatory. The MDEQ and MS Municipality & County Water Infrastructure Grant Program will be an essential source for significant upgrades to the water and wastewater systems throughout the SMPDD area to increase capacity and improve the quality.

Solid Waste

Solid waste management is a universal issue that matters to every single person in the world. Beyond individuals and households, waste also represents a broader challenge that affects human health and livelihoods, the environment, and prosperity. Sustainable waste management requires unremitting efforts and a significant investment. In the US, open dumps are prohibited by federal law. In Mississippi, solid waste disposal is closely monitored by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. Local government entities in South Mississippi provide nearly universal waste collection, with a portion of the waste as recyclable materials. There are over thirty solid waste management facilities of various classes in the SMPDD area. Some recycling programs are in place throughout the region, usually through contracts by the counties and municipalities.

Strategic Finding

Solid waste-related emissions will continue to increase, so improving waste management will help our communities become more resilient to the extreme climate occurrences that cause flooding, damage infrastructure, and displace residents and their livelihoods. It is crucial to support appropriately, organize, and expand recycling and reclamation programs. This industry can create employment, improve local industrial competitiveness, reduce poverty, and decrease municipal spending. The programs vary from community to community.

Prepared Industrial Property

The availability of prepared industrial property is essential in economic development opportunities for any community. Fifteen counties in South Mississippi comprise the SMPDD region, and over 90 different sites are available for industrial development. Some are located within industrial parks, and others are stand-alone properties. Getting an industrial property shovel-ready is time-consuming and expensive. Additional funding is needed to complete the necessary environmental studies or extend utilities and roads to a site. Partnerships with economic development allies, government entities, and private developers allow for faster, more comprehensive solutions to industrial property development. In recent years, many communities took advantage of the Site Ready development programs available through electric utility providers like Mississippi Power and Cooperative Energy, advancing these existing sites to being shovel-ready for potential projects. Mississippi Development Authority supports the efforts to increase the number of prepared industrial sites in the state. The Mississippi Site Development Grant Program assists public or private non-profit economic development organizations or local governments in developing available, publicly-owned, greenfield sites for industrial development.

Strategic Finding

SMPDD will work with its economic development partners to identify and develop publicly owned property suitable for industrial development. Our organization will continue partnering with local communities to seek funding for infrastructure development and improvement to create the necessary site amenities to attract new industry and meet the needs of existing industry expansions. A regional approach to site development should also be explored.

Airports

There are fifteen public airports in the SMPDD region, including commercial airports with scheduled air carrier services, general aviation terminals, air cargo and intermodal facilities, and military aviation installations. Commercial airline service is available at the Gulfport-Biloxi Airport and Laurel-Hattiesburg Airport. Though not physically located in the SMPDD area, there are several commercial airports close to our communities within a reasonable drive-time – New Orleans, Mobile, and Jackson. The Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport is the largest in the SMPDD region, with moderate and competitive airfares direct to Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Houston, Orlando, and points beyond.

Strategic Finding

The region has good air service options that provide access to air travel, air cargo, and other needs. The local airports are very proactive in securing funding for necessary improvements, and timely expansions to serve the public better and have seasonal destination offerings in addition to year-round flights. The recent pandemic created an opportunity to complete the necessary upgrades without inconveniencing the public.

PORTS

Port of Gulfport

The Mississippi State Port Authority is an Enterprise Agency of the State of Mississippi and is responsible for the daily operations of the Port of Gulfport. The Port of Gulfport is a bulk, break-bulk, and container seaport encompassing a 300-acre deep-water port and a 116-acre inland port intermodal facility. Roger F. Wicker Center for Ocean Enterprise USM Marine Research Center, located near the North Harbor, is a result of a partnership with the University of Southern Mississippi (USM), advancing the region's Blue Economy and creating a unique maritime technology environment for the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The facility encompasses 62,000 sq ft, near the water for vessel access, maintenance, and testing. The Center for Ocean Enterprise is a research and development partnership program focused on uncrewed maritime systems and blue technology innovation. The complex includes deep and shallow water access for oceanographic research vessels.

Recently, the Port was awarded a \$15.7 million grant from the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Maritime Administration (MARAD) as part of the new Port Infrastructure Development Program. The funds will be used to construct the Port of Gulfport Access Project located just north of the Port's western entrance. The Port of Gulfport is working with the Mississippi Defense Initiative (MDI) to assist in developing strategic plans for defense economies on the Mississippi Coast. The grant is a Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment (DoD OEA) award, implementing Phase 3 of MDI's mission to promote and diversify the state's defense economy through three main industry sectors: blue economy, aerospace, and national security. The port leadership has a goal of a deeper navigational channel to create a more competitive port. Currently, the channel is dredged to its full operational depth of 36 feet. To encourage future growth, the Port is pursuing the necessary approvals to deepen the channel up to 47 feet to allow larger vessels to enter Gulfport. As the Port looks to expand its footprint further, this process is a multi-year effort, including congressional, regulatory, and federal agency approvals.

Port Bienville

Port Bienville is a shallow draft barge port and industrial park serving cargo-oriented development with a 100-ton Manitowac crawler crane and heavy lift services. The Port services offered include barge loading and unloading and transloading to alternative modes of transportation, including rail and truck. The Port runs a warehousing operation, a liquid bulk terminal with berth accommodation for tank barges, and a rail car storage and maintenance facility. The industrial park adjacent to the Port contains 3,600 acres.

Port Bienville connects tenant operations to ports along the Gulf Coast Intercoastal Waterway, including the Port of New Orleans, opening Mississippi River routes and deep-water global access. Leading industrial companies like General Electric Plastic, Kimberly-Clark, and Calgon Carbon rely on Port Bienville for global supply chains that are rapid and cost-effective.

Construction is underway for a new maritime dock and railroad facility at Port Bienville Industrial Park.

The \$8.8 million project includes a 600-foot bulkhead with a 40-foot apron that can accommodate three barges for loading and unloading. The project also includes two Port Bienville Shortline Railroad track extensions to serve the dock with rail-to-barge intermodal operations. Hy Stor Energy, a renewable energy company producing green hydrogen and energy storage, recently partnered with the HC Port & Harbor Commission to provide zero-carbon, zero-methane hydrogen to Port Bienville Industrial Park and Stennis International Airport, accelerating the decarbonization of land, air, sea, and space. Through this partnership, Port Bienville will be the first Port in the Gulf Region to integrate renewable hydrogen as fuel into its operations.

Port of Pascagoula

The Port of Pascagoula, a full-service deep-water port, is centrally located on the Gulf of Mexico with proximity to deep water shipping lanes with an average pilotage time of two hours. The Port's two harbors include a combination of public and private terminals handling over 32 million tons of cargo through the channel annually. Public terminals in the West Harbor and East Harbor have modern shipping facilities for handling cargo worldwide. The Port is the largest seaport in Mississippi and ranks nationally in the top 30 ports in foreign cargo volume. The Port features two 42 ft deep channels, a short distance to shipping lanes, Weather protected rail operations. The inbound cargo includes forest products, crude oil, chemicals, and outbound cargo consists of forest products, paper products, petroleum products, chemicals, wood pellets, and project cargo.

The recent addition to the Port's operation is the \$90m ENVIVA Marine Export Terminal, which can receive products by rail, barge, and truck and support Panamax-sized vessels. The two 170-foot-tall storage domes are on site in the Bayou Casotte Harbor. Each dome accommodates 45,000 metric tons of wood pellets for a total capacity of 90,000. A conveyor transfers pellets from the domes to the ship loader for discharge into vessels bound for markets in Europe and Asia. The Bayou Casotte Harbor facility now serves as the shipment point for pellets manufactured throughout the Gulf region via Enviva's newly opened Lucedale, George County, MS plant and Enviva's forthcoming plants in Epes, AL, and Bond, Stone County, MS.

Strategic Finding

South Mississippi ports are important economic development assets and provide a competitive advantage for the entire region and the state. All three ports continue to make significant improvements, taking advantage of grants and public-private partnership opportunities. Hurricane Katrina provided suitable lessons for building more resilient and storm-resistant facilities, and they have done that over the past 17 years. The ports' strategic location on the Gulf of Mexico makes these three assets the centerpiece for the Coastal Blue Economy and the Gulf Blue Initiative, which sees connecting to more inland communities as an important goal. The Enviva Project is a primary example of such connections.

Railways

Six systems serve SMPDD's fifteen counties, including four Class I and two shortline railroads. Together, they offer comprehensive rail services, including all-type freight movement, transloading options, warehousing terminals, railcar repair, cleaning and maintenance, locomotive repair, railcar storage, industrial switching, track repair, and long and short haul shipments. Railroads play a significant role in industrial operations, from raw materials loaded into railcars at the extraction point to the final product delivery. Due to the low cost per unit and ability to carry large volumes, rail is the best option for moving raw materials. By building track directly into a factory or utilizing nearby transloading facilities to offload products from rail to truck, the factory can receive regular shipments of raw materials with significant cost savings. A rail is a great option for distributing refined or finished products. The existing infrastructure can be utilized to ship the outbound product as well. Containerized shipping is now easily accommodated with many technological advancements. For bulk products needing storage, rail yards are available until the product is sold and diverted to a final destination, or to hold until the end user requests delivery, thus not congesting onsite operations. Operations for offloading products into warehouses for repackaging and sorting are available on most railroads and transload facilities. Rail continues to be the best option for hauling long distances. Moving freight by rail reduces greenhouse emissions and accidents. A typical mile-long freight train replaces more than 500 trucks. Railroads in South Mississippi are part of an almost 25,000-mile track stretching from both coasts of Canada through the central United States to the Gulf Coast, Texas, and Mexico. The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) offers the Mississippi Rail Grant Program, which grants funding to public and private railroads to finance railroad projects that promote economic growth and job creation in Mississippi. MDA also operates the Freight Rail Service Revolving Loan Program, which provides loans to municipalities and counties for freight rail service projects.

Strategic Finding

The rail system in the region is complex and robust. The Class I railroads provide the long-haul service, and the shortline railroads serve as catalysts for industrial development and expansion. Though the intermodal operations have grown over the past several years, especially within the port facilities on the Gulf Coast, additional capacity building must occur to serve South Mississippi adequately. The shortline railroads should continue improving service opportunities for more rural communities in the area.

Highways, Roads, and Bridges

Roads should be considered the most critical infrastructure assets any community has because it links the community internally and connects it to other communities and allows for the flow of people, goods, and services throughout the state, nation, and beyond. Local government entities are responsible for local streets, bridges, and county roads that are non-federal, state, or state-aid designated roadways. They work with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) to complete transportation projects of regional importance. Transportation projects are some of the costliest, and funding is always needed to conduct regular maintenance, repair, and overlay activities. MDOT is responsible for providing a safe intermodal network of planned, designed, constructed, and maintained roadways. All agencies strive to approach road projects in a practical, cost-efficient, and environmentally sensitive manner. MDOT operates the Statewide Improvement Transportation Program (STIP) - a planning tool for developing the state's transportation system. The STIP includes federally funded transportation projects as well as non-federally funded projects that are of regional significance. Projects in the STIP are typically financed by matching federal dollars with either state or local

funding sources. The matching ratios are generally 80 percent federal and 20 percent state for most projects. Funding for transportation activities comes from many sources. These include federal, state, and local dollars. Besides local tax funds and state assessments, there are other sources of transportation funding available, including the Community Development Block Grant Program, Congestion Mitigation, and Air Quality Improvement Program, Congressional Earmarks/Discretionary Project Funding, Federal Lands Access & Transportation Program, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Formula Grants for Rural Areas Program, Rural Transit Assistance Program, Transportation Planning Program, Highway Infrastructure Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program, Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) programs, and National Highway Performance Program. In addition to these traditional sources, innovative funding strategies include HELP Bonds— Highway Enhancements through Local Partnerships, Advance Construction Program that allows initiating a project with non-Federal funds while preserving eligibility for future Federal-Aid funds, and Private Activity Bond Program, name a few.

MDOT focuses on four key program areas when prioritizing construction opportunities and investments for the state's transportation system: System Preservation, Bridge Replacement, Highway Safety Improvement Program, and Highway Capacity Program.

MDA offers the Economic Development Highway Fund that identifies road construction necessary to make business sites accessible to highways. Municipalities and counties can apply on behalf of a new or expanded industry based on the public infrastructure needs of the project.

In 1987, the Mississippi Legislature passed an unprecedented \$1.6 billion long-range highway bill, commonly known as the "1987 Highway Program." At the time, it was one of the most comprehensive in the country and called for the construction of over 1,000 miles of four-lane highways across the state. It also established a funding mechanism for construction in the form of an 18.4 cent per gallon fuel tax. This program, however, did not address funding needs to preserve Mississippi's highway system into the future or account for inflation in the construction of additional roadways. Over the past 35 years, rising construction costs with no increases in funding have forced MDOT to shift to a maintenance-only approach and focus on system preservation.

Strategic Finding

South Mississippi should continue improving its road network, increasing connectivity, and providing new economic development opportunities. The region should continue to work closely with the state to ensure the continuous improvement of transportation infrastructure. The area should consider public-private partnerships where possible, and leaders should stay abreast of federal programs applicable to their communities.

County	Rail Service	Interstates & Highways
Covington	Canadian National	US 49; US 84 MS 35; MS 37; MS 184; MS 588; MS 598; MS 590; MS 532; MS 535
Forrest	Canadian National Kansas City Southern Norfolk Southern	I-59 US 11; US 49; US 98 MS 13; MS 42; MS 44
George	Canadian National Mississippi Export	US 98 MS 26; MS 57; MS 63
Greene	Canadian National	US 98 MS 42; MS 57; MS 63

County	Rail Service	Interstates & Highways
Hancock	CSX Transportation	I-10 US 90 MS 43; MS 53; MS 603; MS 607
Harrison	CSX Transportation Kansas City Southern	I-10; I-110 US 49, US 90 MS 15; MS 53; MS 67; MS 605
Jackson	CSX Transportation Mississippi Export	I-10 US 90 MS 57; MS 63; MS 609
Jefferson Davis	None	US 84 MS 13; MS 35; MS 42; MS 43
Jones	Norfolk Southern	I-59 US 11; US 84 MS 15; MS 28; MS 29
Lamar	Norfolk Southern	I-59 US 11; US 98 MS 13; MS 42; MS 44
Marion	Canadian National	US 98 MS 13; MS 35; MS 43; MS 44
Pearl River	Norfolk Southern	I-59 US 11 MS 13; MS 26; MS 43; MS 53
Perry	Canadian National	US 98 MS 15; MS 29; MS 42
Stone	Kansas City Southern	US 49 MS 15; MS 26; MS 29
Wayne	Meridian Southern	US 45; US 84 MS 63

Broadband Connectivity

Everyone should have a full range of benefits progressive technology has to offer. Mississippi is finally beginning to overcome geographical barriers and level the playing field for its citizens to join the digital age. The 2022 Legislature enacted HB 1029, creating an office of broadband for the State of Mississippi. The Broadband Expansion and Accessibility of Mississippi (BEAM) office will play a key role in providing high-speed broadband access across the state. This digital connectivity will pave the way for improved educational outcomes for students, substantial economic development opportunities for our communities, better access to medical care for the residents, and more.

BEAM will lead the expansion of connectivity to every area of the state in a centralized and coordinated manner. It will also manage grant programs related to broadband infrastructure investments. The BEAM office will function under the Department of Finance and Administration.

At the direction of the 2020 Legislature, the Public Utilities Staff administered \$75 million in CARES Act funding in broadband grants primarily for Electric Power Associations. And in February of 2022, the Public Utilities Staff was awarded a \$32 million grant for ten projects across the state. The BEAM office will now administer this grant funding. The upcoming funding opportunity will be \$162 million from the [Capital Projects Fund](#) under ARPA. South Mississippi and the rest of the state will see the exponential growth of broadband infrastructure, especially fiber, and the implementation of digital connectivity technology projects, including devices and public wi-fi development. Under the [BEAD \(Broadband Expansion and Accessibility Development\)](#) program, Mississippi will receive \$100 million based on the amount of unserved and underserved locations. BEAM will engage in a mapping effort to reflect broadband service in Mississippi accurately. South Mississippi has broadband expansion efforts involving investments made by electric cooperatives and power associations. Some of these projects include:

- Pearl River Valley Electric is installing broadband across its entire service territory through the PearlComm subsidiary.
- Coast Electric is installing broadband throughout its service territory through its Coast Connect subsidiary.
- Singing River Electric is installing a pilot phase of broadband through the Singing River Connect subsidiary.

Strategic Finding

Historically unprecedented efforts are underway to provide high-speed broadband access in individual communities in the SMPDD area. SMPDD will continue to work with its economic development allies to support all efforts and ensure that plans are in place to provide broadband access to the region's rural areas.

Electricity

South Mississippi has ample electric power coverage, served by Mississippi Power Company and Cooperative Energy through member cooperatives. Mississippi Power is an investor-owned electric utility and a wholly owned subsidiary of Southern Company. Mississippi Power serves most of the cities, towns, and communities within the 23 counties of southeast Mississippi. Cooperative Energy provides electric power to over one million Mississippians served by their eleven-member electric power association systems from the Mississippi Delta to the Gulf Coast. Five serve the SMPDD area – Southern Pine Electric, Dixie Electric, Pearl River Valley Electric, Singing River Electric, and Coast Electric. Together, these organizations provide reliable, affordable, and plentiful electric power to South Mississippi businesses, industry, and residents. They are responsible for meeting regulatory requirements, financial obligations, and environmental considerations, incorporating technological advancements and focusing on managing facilities, resources, and operations. Based on public data from the US Energy Information Administration, the price of electricity to retail customers in the state increased 5.6% from May 2021 to May 2022 and now averages 13.11 cents per kWh, which ranks the state 18th in the country for the cost of electric power. The average residential electricity rate in the US is 14.92 cents per kWh, which is 8.8% more expensive than the Mississippi average rate.

Strategic Finding

The state, South Mississippi included, has competitive electricity rates and ample electricity coverage area. The electric power providers continuously maintain and upgrade facilities to meet current and future demand.

Natural Gas

Several major distributors supply natural gas in the SMPDD area: CenterPoint Energy, Spire Energy, Enbridge Gas Inc., Sempra US Gas & Power, Dixie Utilities, Atmos Energy, Walthall Natural Gas Company, Chickasawhay Natural Gas District, and Jackson County Utilities. There are also eight municipal gas systems.

According to the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), Mississippi is not as rich in crude oil and natural gas resources as some of our neighboring Gulf Coast states. However, the state's role in America's energy supply is critical as major oil refineries and gas processing facilities are located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Transmission gas and oil pipelines originate in Mississippi and crisscross the state, supplying all corners of the US with natural gas and refined petroleum products. As reported by the EIA, Mississippi's natural gas production accounts for only

about 0.5% of the nation's total. The natural gas production in Mississippi is low, but the state processes approximately 10% of the nation's natural gas supply. Though there are many natural gas transmission pipelines in South Mississippi, natural gas distribution pipelines have not been extended to every corner of the region. Residential customers and even some industrial operations have to resort to using propane tanks instead.

Strategic Finding

Natural gas availability should continue to be extended to areas where natural gas service is not currently available. SMPDD should continue to work with natural gas companies to deliver reliable service and to plan for new development in partnership with local governments. Special efforts should be made to extend natural gas lines to all available industrial sites and parks in South Mississippi since natural gas is a crucial commodity needed for most industrial operations.

Renewable Energy

Electric Power Associations and Cooperatives source 100% of their energy from Cooperative Energy. As the generation provider, Cooperative Energy is ultimately responsible for incorporating more renewable energy sources. However, member cooperatives are involved in the renewable energy behind the meter level - home and business solar panels. On the generation side, Cooperative Energy is incorporating renewables that make financial sense. In Mississippi, specifically in the SMPDD area, solar will be the primary (and only) source of renewable energy at this time. Cooperative Energy began its venture into solar generation sites in 2016 with the installation of five small solar installations (100 kW or less) at five Member locations across the state – Coahoma (Lyon), Coast (Kiln), Delta (Greenwood), Singing River (Lucedale), and Southern Pine (Taylorsville) electric power cooperatives. The company recently constructed four additional 100kW solar facilities at Member locations. Cooperative Energy partnered with Origis Energy USA to construct a 52MW solar energy facility located on 540 acres in Lamar County. The maximum annual output of MS-Solar 3 is approximately 110,000 MWh. The company has recently expanded the solar portfolio with a solar facility named Delta's Edge, partnering with Renewable Energy Systems (RES) and building the 100 MW solar energy facility on a 652-acre site near Greenwood in Carroll County. The target in-service date for Delta's Edge is Q4 2022. Delta's Edge's maximum annual output is approximately 230,000 MWh. Cooperative Energy also has long-standing power purchase agreements for 119 MW of hydropower from the Southeastern Power Administration.

Mississippi Power Company (MPCO) is engaged in finding practical renewable generation options for South Mississippi. They have partnered with Southern Company and other groups to research and evaluate the development of sources in the region that show promise for producing cost-effective and reliable energy. MPCO also works with customers to identify renewable options and technologies for their homes and businesses.

Solar

Solar generation is a cost-effective power source that stabilizes customer prices and benefits the environment. MS Power is collaborating with four solar energy businesses and the US Navy on four utility-scale solar facilities in the company's service territory, generating more than 160 MW of electricity, enough to power more than 23,000 homes for an entire year.

Mississippi Power Utility-Scale Facilities

- A 3-4 MW utility-scale solar energy project at the Naval Construction Battalion Center (Seabee Base) in Gulfport, Miss., where Hannah Solar, the US Navy, and Mississippi Power are partnering on a 15-acre site.
- A 50-MW utility-scale solar energy project in Hattiesburg, Miss., where Silicon Ranch Corporation and Mississippi Power are partnering on a 450-acre site.
- A 52-MW utility-scale solar energy project in Sumrall, Miss., where D.E. Shaw is partnering with Mississippi Power on a 595-acre site.
- A 53-MW utility-scale solar energy project in Lauderdale County, Miss., where Silicon Ranch Corporation is partnering with Mississippi Power.

Biomass

The renewable resource that shows the most promise in the Southeast and Mississippi Power's service area is the use of biomass. Using biomass reduces sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions compared with coal, and the

renewable energy source absorbs carbon dioxide from the air as it grows. For almost 15 years, Southern Company and Mississippi Power have focused renewable research on biomass power — specifically co-firing and re-powering existing plants. Switchgrass, sawdust, and wood chips have all been tested as a fuel source. Engineering and cost studies have also been conducted to determine the feasibility of converting certain older plants for biomass firing.

Wind

Wind-powered generation is in its infancy in Mississippi; therefore, there are no current Local Contents Rules for wind generation. One of the primary challenges with wind generation in Mississippi has been the altitude required for suitable wind speed. Recent advancements in costs and technology make certain areas, primarily the northwest corner of the state, more economically feasible. The first wind farm was approved in 2021 in Mississippi; however, construction of this farm has not yet begun. The certificate was issued to Tunica Windpower, LLC, owned by the Danish company Vestas. Although wind generation in Mississippi is not in place, the manufacturing supply chain to support the industry is growing. There are several companies in our state that manufacture components of wind turbines or support this industry. MS Power and Cooperative Energy will continue to pursue the potential for developing feasible wind energy generation in coastal areas. The advent of lower-speed and more hurricane-tolerant wind turbine designs may overcome economic and technological hurdles. With community support, wind energy may yet someday contribute to the energy needs of the Southeast.

Alternative Fuel

ENVIVA, one of world leaders in wood pellet production, has invested in several facilities in Mississippi over the past ten years. The newest plant will be located in Bond, Stone County, MS. Long-term contracts with customers worldwide will increase wood pellet capacity exported out of the Port of Pascagoula ENVIVA terminal. The new plant in Stone County joins two other Enviva facilities in Mississippi, one in Amory, which is Enviva's first production plant in the state, and the company's most recent manufacturing facility in Lucedale, George County, MS. The company also owns and operates a deep-water marine terminal at the Port of Pascagoula, from which pellets are shipped to customers in Europe and Asia. Combined, Enviva's total investment in the Magnolia State is more than \$600 million and supports over 850 direct and indirect jobs in Mississippi. Mississippi also has one operational ethanol plant located outside of the SMPDD service area and five biodiesel production plants that use a variety of feedstocks, including soy oil.

Strategic Finding

Several factors influence energy policy in the State of Mississippi. First, energy policy may primarily be market-driven. Since energy costs in the state are relatively inexpensive, the market has not demanded that alternative or renewable energy resources be pursued. However, more federal industry regulations require that a certain percentage of electric power produced comes from renewable sources. Mississippi Power and Cooperative Energy understand the importance of investing in renewable energy sources and have been engaged in the process. SMPDD will work with these companies to support their efforts to bring more renewable energy opportunities to the state.

BLUE ECONOMY

A blue economy is a long-term strategy aimed at supporting sustainable economic growth through marine-related sectors and activities while improving human well-being and preserving the environment. South Mississippi had a robust marine-based economy that contributed to the overall prosperity of the region and the state long before the term “Blue Economy” was coined. The Coastal Mississippi blue economy is critical to the stability of our region’s economy. It may not be the largest sector of the economy, but it has a connection to and encompasses elements of almost every defined sector of the economy. The blue economy has better-weathered recessions and shown faster job growth than the overall economy. Investing in the development of the blue economy, including all economic activities related to oceans, seas, and coasts, is essential. The marine industrial activities include construction, transportation, shipping, mineral resources development, shipbuilding, communication cable laying, pharmaceutical enterprises, equipment deployment, sustainable energy from waves and currents, marine research, seaside leisure tourism, fisheries, shrimp-harvesting, oyster growing and aquaculture activities. In addition to traditional maritime development activities, marine-oriented information and science sectors play an increasingly vital role in boosting blue economy development. Expanding the understanding of the marine environment can improve our economic competitiveness, strengthen the country’s national security, protect the environment, and promote continued prosperity. Our local leaders are beginning not only to recognize the role marine resources play in economic security, international trade, sustainable development, people-to-people connection, livelihoods, and military development but are starting to support the investment in them.

Recently, The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) launched a new initiative to help build partnerships, grow businesses, and enhance the blue economy of the Gulf Coast. The Gulf Blue Initiative focuses on innovative technology and research that will help boost the economy in South Mississippi. This endeavor will capitalize on the region’s geography and marine resources, positioning the Mississippi Gulf Coast to lead the development of world-changing innovation. This is an extraordinary opportunity to steward, explore, and utilize the vast marine and maritime resources by embracing public-private partnerships in ocean science and technology. USM has been strategically investing in maritime infrastructure that positions Mississippi to advance technology through an initial set of six blue-tech innovation clusters:

- uncrewed maritime systems
- ocean-friendly plastics
- precision aquaculture
- smart ports
- sea-space systems
- coastal data

Gulf Blue is collaborating with private blue-tech companies, including Ocean Aero, focused on developing intelligent autonomous underwater vehicles; AI Control Technologies Inc. focused on developing automation for the aquaculture industry; and SeaAhead, a blue-tech startup platform; which is also crucial to the success of the Gulf Blue initiative. USM and partner organizations form a unique maritime infrastructure to support the design, testing, and refining of the ocean- and maritime-related technologies, supporting US Naval Operations, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command. USM coastal facilities include the Gulf Park campus (the hub for academic instruction on the Gulf Coast), Hydrographic Science Research Center, Center for Research Fisheries and Development, Gulf Coast Geospatial Center, Thad Cochran Marine Aquaculture Center, Marine Research Center, Roger F. Wicker Center for Ocean Enterprise, and a fleet of research vessels.

USM is the recipient of the Phase I Build Back Better Economic Development Administration (EDA) Program grant and is one of 60 national finalists for EDA’s \$1 billion American Rescue Plan program. SMPDD has partnered with USM on its Gulf Blue Initiative grant. The main idea behind the partnership is to work with more inland communities, including relatively rural counties, and discover synergies and connections of the blue economy to businesses, entrepreneurs, and innovators. And through the support of these groups, the SMPDD-USM partnership will assist in expanding the Coastal blue economy’s reach and impacts.

INDUSTRY SECTORS

SMPDD as the fiscal agent for the Twin Districts Workforce Development Area, established a *Sector Strategy Plan*. Through the planning process and based on reliable market data, four sectors were identified as areas of focus for the region: Advanced Manufacturing, Energy and Chemicals, Healthcare, and Information Technology. These sectors were determined to have quality job growth potential and livable wages. These four sectors are further discussed below.

Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing uses innovative technologies and methodologies for improved competitiveness in the manufacturing sectors. Unlike traditional manufacturing, which uses dedicated plant and production lines with little or no flexibility, advanced manufacturing involves versatile production methods that fully utilize capital plants and are more efficient, effective, and responsive. Although there are circumstances where traditional, reliable methods are still appropriate - such as long, predictable production runs - advanced manufacturing can accommodate the varying production requirements and mass customization commonly encountered by industry without excessive capital investment.

Advanced manufacturing encompasses all aspects of the value chain, from concept to end-of-life considerations, and relies on information communication technology (ICT) to integrate manufacturing and business activities into a seamless, efficient operation. Advanced manufacturing aims to enhance output, increase added value, quality, responsiveness to the market, and flexibility, and reduce time to market, unit quantities, material content, material inventory, and underutilized capital plant.

The technologies involved in advanced manufacturing can be divided into three main groupings: efficient production, intelligent production, and effective organization.

Efficient production involves design, simulation, physical and computer modeling, advanced production technologies, and control techniques. The emphasis is on simultaneous rather than sequential engineering. Relevant production technologies include rapid prototyping, near-net shape manufacture, precision casting, machining, and joining techniques.

Intelligent production involves the use of ICT in manufacturing and related logistics systems. As well as production-orientated intelligent machines, cells and production lines, the philosophy consists in implementing procedures for the extended life and optimal use of production facilities through efficient monitoring, maintenance and repair strategies.

Effective organization involves the efficient coordination and exploitation of manufacturing resources. This encompasses both physical resources and knowledge. Relevant topics include virtual tendering and enterprises, shared facilities and resources, novel organizations, incubation units, knowledge management, trading, and electronic commerce.

Advanced manufacturing in South Mississippi is characterized by a skilled labor force, innovative production systems, and dynamic nature. Advanced manufacturing in the SMPDD area is rapidly evolving and incorporating new technologies and requires more advanced skill sets. Numerous local shipbuilding and aerospace enterprises are prime examples of advanced manufacturing in the SMPDD region.

SMPDD works closely with industry partners, economic development allies, and training providers, especially community colleges, to design the most relevant and up-to-date training, including upskilling options, to meet

and exceed industry expectations. New partnerships have been established to increase the number of highly skilled employees. One such collaboration is between Mississippi State University Bagley College of Engineering and Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, where two years at MGCCC pre-engineering program and two years of MSU engineering studies results in a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical, mechanical, or industrial engineering at the Jackson County campus, providing a pipeline of engineers to the local workforce. Other programs address the skill gaps and workforce availability shortages, such as welding, electrical, millwrights, machinists, forklift drivers, computerized machine operators, and electrical and instrumentation engineering specialists. In addition, SMPDD maintains close communication with Career and Technical educators in high schools to ensure that students acquire skills essential to advanced manufacturing enterprises, and a particular focus is paid to standing up and advancing new technology programs that teach mechatronics and robotics.

Energy and Chemicals

The energy and chemical segments are interconnected sectors that produce a broad range of materials used to manufacture downstream consumer products. The energy sector supply chain consists of the exploration and development of oil and gas reserves, crude oil refining to produce fuels, and other materials used downstream in petrochemical plants. The energy sector includes alternative energy in producing solar, wind, biofuels, and hydrogen. The chemical sector is an integral component of the global economy that uses petroleum feedstocks to manufacture, store, and transport products in a wide range of downstream consumer goods. The chemical industry is experiencing strong demand for both commodity and specialty chemicals, increasing capital expenditure as leading industry players focus on building capacity and expanding into growing end markets through organic and inorganic routes. One of the critical areas of focus for most US chemical companies is sustainability and decarbonization. Major industry players create goals and plans around reducing emissions and monetizing waste. Many chemical companies are expected to increase investment in research and development (R&D) capabilities and leverage advances in decarbonization and recycling technologies to lower their and their customers' carbon footprint and reduce plastic waste. The combined Energy and Chemicals sector is well-represented in the SMPDD region. From petrochemical giants like Chevron to chemical manufacturers like Chemours and Calgon, the need for an advanced skilled workforce continues to be crucial for future industry growth. SMPDD is committed to working with community colleges in its territory, which are the key to providing ongoing training through their credit and non-credit offerings, educating in the field of process technology, instrumentations and controls, electric lineman, machine and equipment operator, mechatronics, relay technicians, industrial troubleshooters, and mechanical maintenance technicians, to name a few. SMPDD will also continue to work with its secondary school partners to ensure that the Career and Technical Education programs have a direct correlation to industry needs, creating a pipeline of future workers who will earn a good living if they decide to join the ranks of industries within the energy and chemical sector.

Healthcare

Healthcare is the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease, illness, injury, and other physical and mental impairments in humans. It refers to the work done in providing primary care, secondary care, and tertiary care, as well as in public health. Practitioners deliver healthcare in medicine, chiropractic, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, allied health, and other care providers.

The healthcare industry, or medical industry, is a sector that provides goods and services to treat patients with curative, preventive, rehabilitative, or palliative care. The healthcare industry comprises establishments devoted to diagnosing, diagnosing, treating, and rehabilitating medical conditions. Such treatment may be through providing products or services and may be provided privately or publicly. The modern healthcare sector is divided into many sub-sectors and depends on interdisciplinary teams of trained professionals and paraprofessionals to meet the health needs of individuals and populations. This includes medical, nursing, dentistry, allied health professionals, public health practitioners, community health workers, and assistive personnel, who systematically

provide personal and population-based preventive, curative, and rehabilitative care services. The healthcare industry includes establishments ranging from small-town private practices of physicians who employ only one medical assistant to busy regional hospitals and medical centers that provide thousands of diverse jobs. The healthcare industry is one of the world's largest industries, and it directly affects people's quality of life. The healthcare industry is almost always a community's largest employer. The aging of the baby-boomer generation and the recent pandemic affirmed the importance of the medical sector and reinforced the need for a continued pipeline of highly-trained workers.

It is not surprising that one of the largest industries in the SMPDD region is the healthcare sector. It is a well-established industry, a significant employer, and has aligned workforce training programs throughout the region. South Mississippi is fortunate to have various medical facilities to serve the population's needs. SMPDD has worked with medical establishments for many years and will continue engaging healthcare partners in entry-level and advanced training through many programs available in the region. SMPDD will continue promoting career exploration and work-based learning in school CTE programs. Our organization will encourage partnerships between schools and local medical centers in each community to help grow their programs, encouraging students to consider healthcare careers, cultivating their interests, and helping them develop skills that they can use professionally. This approach is built on the idea that health professionals are more likely to consider serving in the community in which they were raised. It does not provide healthcare workers who will enter the labor force immediately. Instead, it is a long-term strategy that moves people into the health workforce pipeline and enables rural communities to address their future healthcare workforce needs more effectively. In addition, SMPDD will support career ladder programs sponsored by healthcare facilities to help employees advance their education by developing higher-level skills. These programs increase employee satisfaction, leading to higher retention rates. Program suggestions may include one-on-one career counseling and mentorship, tuition reimbursement or assistance with other educational expenses, paid time off to pursue training, onsite training, and education opportunities, including apprenticeships. Healthcare workers employed by facilities offering career ladder programs can grow professionally and prepare for jobs with a higher level of responsibility while retaining their current positions. By providing a reward system for employees who have shown potential to learn new skills and develop new competencies, healthcare systems reduce employee turnover, increase productivity, improve worker satisfaction, and promote staff versatility.

Information Technology

The Information Technology Sector is central to the nation's security, economy, and public health and safety as businesses, governments, academia, and private citizens increasingly depend on Information Technology Sector functions. These virtual and distributed functions produce and provide hardware, software, information technology systems and services, and—in collaboration with the Communications Sector—the internet. The sector's complex and dynamic environment makes identifying threats and assessing vulnerabilities difficult and requires that these tasks be addressed in a collaborative and creative fashion.

Information Technology Sector functions are operated by a combination of entities—owners and operators and their respective associations—that maintain and reconstitute the network, including the internet. Although information technology infrastructure has a certain level of inherent resilience, its interdependent and interconnected structure presents challenges as well as opportunities for coordinating public and private sector preparedness and protection activities. As the Information Technology Sector affects every aspect of our lives, there is a tremendous need for an educated workforce to enter this growing field. The information technology (IT) sector includes companies that produce software, hardware, or semiconductor equipment, companies that provide internet or related services, and companies and individuals that offer cybersecurity services. The four major industry groups within the IT sector are software and services, technology hardware and equipment, semiconductors and semiconductor equipment, and cybersecurity. The software and services industry group is made up of companies that provide internet services, as well as companies that provide software and IT services. Internet services include companies that provide online databases or interactive

services, such as search engines or social networks. IT services include companies that provide IT consulting or data processing services to other companies. Finally, software consists of any software for business or consumer use, ranging from enterprise software and systems software to video games. Technology hardware and equipment are divided into three industries: communications equipment; technology hardware, storage, and peripherals; and electronic equipment, instruments, and components. Semiconductors are substances that can conduct electricity under some conditions, but not others, making them ideal for controlling electrical currents. Silicon is a material that is frequently used as a semiconductor. This industry group includes companies that produce semiconductors and make peripheral equipment for semiconductors. And finally, cybersecurity protects internet-connected systems such as hardware, software, and data from cyber threats. Individuals and enterprises use the practice to protect against unauthorized access to data centers and other computerized systems. A strong cybersecurity strategy can provide a good security posture against malicious attacks designed to access, alter, delete, destroy or extort an organization's or user's systems and sensitive data. Cybersecurity is also instrumental in preventing attacks that disable or disrupt a system's or device's operations. With an increasing number of users, devices, and programs in the modern enterprise, combined with the growing deluge of data -- much of which is sensitive or confidential the importance of cybersecurity continues to grow. The ever-increasing volume and sophistication of cyber attackers and attack techniques compound the problem even further.

South Mississippi has a significant presence of IT sector companies and individuals employed in IT within other sectors of the economy. That is why it is imperative to continue developing a robust pipeline of talent entering the field. Local educational institutions have developed programs in the field of IT. From short-term certificate training to two-year associate's degree programs to a 4-year Bachelor's degree program and beyond, are available to the residents of the SMPDD area. These programs include coding technology, computer programming, simulation & game design, data analytics, smart technology, and the internet, and computer networking, to name a few. In addition, South Mississippi is home to MS Cyber Initiative. Mississippi Cyber Initiative provides statewide leadership, preparing for future cyber threats through collaboration and collective expertise among academia, the private sector, state, federal, and local government, law enforcement, the US Department of Defense, and the Mississippi National Guard.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Every economic development strategy should include a resiliency plan for a region. As proven in the past several years, even the best intentions and plans are subject to unpredictable situations and events for which no plan exists. There are specific steps that a region can take to mitigate some possible disruptions and maintain as healthy an economy as possible, even in the most challenging times.

Since Hurricane Katrina devastated South Mississippi in 2005, SMPDD has recognized the link between resiliency planning and economic development planning. Each subsequent CEDS has included an objective to assist in planning for disaster and recovery activities. This has become even more important in recent years, and SMPDD will continue to assist communities in their planning activities as part of its 2023-2027 CEDS work plan.

For many years, SMPDD has been directly involved in hazard mitigation planning for its cities and counties as either primary author or committee member. Plans are written by assessing risks and developing mitigation strategies. The plans are for a five-year period as mandated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). All 15 counties and 38 municipalities either maintain their plans or are part of a county or regional plan.

Through this CEDS process, SMPDD has identified some forces that could impact the economy. The forces are listed below and will be addressed in the Action Plan.

- Natural disasters, especially hurricanes and tornadoes
- A rise in insurance rates
- Elevation requirements in low-lying areas
- Oil spills or other environmental hazards
- National economic downturns
- Uncertainty of state grant/bond programs
- Uncertainty of federal funding programs

Addressing these issues will help the SMPDD area better withstand any economic disruptions that may occur.

Pandemic Lessons Learned

The world and South Mississippi learned a great deal from the recent devastating COVID-19 pandemic. Like many other funding agencies, we shifted into immediate and ultimately sustained crisis response mode in 2020 and 2021, believing the steps and lessons we learned would make us even more helpful and responsive in any unprecedented future event. It helped SMPDD modify how this organization operates internally and deepened trust with our partners so that we could act with greater speed and purpose. One could say that we developed a muscle for thinking creatively, working across programs, quickly organizing ourselves, and responding swiftly but strategically.

- Knowing the communities that we serve and ongoing connection to local governments proved the importance of partnering with people on the ground
- It is important not to assume but ask grantees what they need
- People in communities are seeing circumstances as they develop. They know who the trusted partners are and who is doing what in an evolving crisis. SMPDD relied upon public officials and community organizations with deep roots. Together, we were best positioned to get resources quickly to those in need. In addition, these partners pushed us to think more expansively.
- Staying flexible has proven to be of extreme value. What is needed at the beginning may not be what is needed later in a crisis. In the beginning, there was an emergency mode. What was initially envisioned as a short-term, immediate response strategy has become an ongoing approach, and SMPDD continues to adjust.

- Broadband connectivity is imperative to building resilient communities as the world of technology evolves and will continuously require internet connections in every sphere of everyday life. Video conferencing and virtual education options are here to stay.

Natural Disaster Preparedness

Over the years, South Mississippi has seen its share of natural disasters. Today, even more communities are vulnerable to natural calamities. An increased number of people are affected by natural hazards such as hurricanes, tornadoes, storms, and floods. Advancements in technology now allow for more precise data collection, and the responses to major natural disasters have been analyzed in hundreds of case studies and examined by experts from various fields, especially in the past decade. Lessons learned from these are then tested in subsequent crises and further data is collected. People who are directly involved in disaster response have begun to benefit from data driven decision making, similar to commercial and military procedures.

Over the years, SMPDD has been involved in planning occurring in cities and counties along the Gulf Coast and throughout the 15-county area. Even though plans have been made, there is an ongoing need for effective, comprehensive plans which incorporate up-to-date disaster preparedness recommendations. Major tropical storms and hurricanes occur with such a relatively low frequency for any one place, that planners and engineers can easily become complacent about planning for future risks. General planning activities are not equal to comprehensive hazard planning.

SMPDD will continue to work with its communities to develop and update disaster planning strategies and create redevelopment plans that provide guidance in case of a hazardous event, since planning is an evolving process. Each major storm and disaster bring greater awareness of the need to plan for safer growth and resilience. We know what it takes to create an effective redevelopment plan. Very often the best opportunity to correct some of the mistakes from the past is after a disaster. But that is also the very worst time for strategic and resiliency planning, when recovery occupies all available energy. Unless some good solid thinking has gone into how areas damaged by a storm should be rebuilt and redeveloped, they will most likely redevelop as they were before.

As a part of its economic development strategy, SMPDD will continue to promote and be actively involved in

- Building community resilience and facilitating resiliency discussions
- Research, collect and share disaster response lessons learned
- Working with experts to understand Integrated Coastal Zone Management
- Understanding federal and state directives for local plans
- Promoting the importance of planning and specify what makes a good plan
- Encouraging partnerships and collaborative efforts
- Working with partners to assess vulnerabilities
- Understanding that climate change adaptation and hazard mitigation are mutually compatible goals
- Supporting the construction of sturdier buildings
- Assisting in flood proofing activities
- Identifying proximity to refuge
- Logistics planning for transit and evacuation

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

1. Pursue and encourage a greater voluntary regional collaboration with the focus on partnerships in economic and community development - a connected, integrated, and sustainable approach to regional economic development that builds upon our region's strengths.
 - Evaluate existing assets while primarily focusing on existing businesses. Reconnect with companies' leadership, identify pressing needs, and meaningfully support their growth.
 - Champion entrepreneurship efforts and the culture of innovative ideas by connecting individuals to resources, programs, and opportunities that would enhance local economies. (Angel Fund)
 - Create and advance partnerships with university research programs and technology transfer specialists, linking them, when appropriate, with entrepreneurs and developers to help grow local talent and creative class.
 - Promote and support the USM Gulf Blue Initiative, seeking to enhance the traditional longstanding connection of the blue economy to the region while building on new and emerging technologies that open opportunities for collaboration to more inland communities in the area.
 - Promote economic diversification across the region, strengthening communities and making local economies more agile and resilient, allowing for less impactful economic downturns and shifts in global markets.
 - Encourage partnerships, especially public-private partnerships, that bring value to projects, bolster funding opportunities, and unite and strengthen communities.
 - Look for development opportunities, especially in the region's Opportunity Zones and other designated economic zones, to improve the quality of life in these communities.
2. Support and enhance physical infrastructure upgrades and improvements, including water, sewer, natural gas, electricity, broadband, and others identified by economic development partners.
 - Prioritize broadband expansion to include all communities in the region. Seek additional resources to expand connectivity and availability of the most advanced internet technologies to improve access and thus the quality of life of the area citizens.
 - Work with communities and economic development partners to identify potential sites for development, including industrial, commercial, and others. Assist with implementing site readiness programs.
 - Assist with identifying brownfield locations and encourage redevelopment and reuse plans to make these sites viable for development and create new tax base opportunities.

- Support road and highway programs that will improve the transportation network in the region. Encourage short-line railroads that serve the rural communities to improve service.
 - Support development and growth of airports and seaports in the region, including intermodal facilities with access to rail and truck.
 - Recognize the importance of floodplain mitigation and encourage continued planning for impacts of climate change and future natural disasters.
- 3. Acknowledge the essential nature of the ongoing need for a highly-skilled, educated pipeline of talent and workforce development programs.**
- Understand that the chronically low labor participation rate has specific reasons behind it. Create deliberate partnerships that would improve the situation once some of the following issues are addressed, and barriers are removed – childcare challenges, lack of reliable transportation, absence of skills, substance abuse, criminal past, etc.
 - Meet workforce demands of existing companies through continued communication about their needs. Support and encourage apprenticeship programs and work with community colleges and other training providers to remain agile and responsive.
 - Support new & emerging professions and skill sets. Plan for the increase in demand for skilled workers in emerging high technology occupations like IT technicians, robotics machinery operators, certified drone specialists, cybersecurity experts, virtual reality professionals, and artificial intelligence engineers. Encourage strengthening the school curriculum by incorporating more science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) – an essential foundation for emerging technologies careers.
 - Respond to the need for a continued pipeline of workers through supporting the upskilling opportunities for dislocated and laid-off workers, increasing their ability to earn a living wage through higher wage jobs.
 - Promote the development of affordable workforce housing that would attract and retain skilled employees in the area industries.
 - Collaborate with workforce training providers to understand the expectations of the industry sectors with high growth potential, including advanced manufacturing, energy & chemical production, healthcare, and information technology.
 - Support career coaching initiatives and innovative career and technical education programs in area high schools. Encourage exploration of career pathways, internships, and work-based learning opportunities from an early age.
- 4. Empower local governments, civic organizations, and educational institutions to partner and seek creative solutions to build more viable, livable, and resilient communities with an improved quality of life for its citizens by supporting new and established economic development programs.**
- Prepare comprehensive plans, strategic plans, and other action plans for communities that will give them the tools to compete for economic development projects.

- Support tourism-related industries (nature and outdoor recreation, cultural and historical resources) and unique assets of each community to attract visitors, build civic pride, and enhance community livability.
- Encourage cities, counties, and economic development organizations to promote and market their assets and resources.
- Work with local governments and other partners to ensure communities have a robust, up-to-date disaster preparedness plan covering various calamities.
- Work with state and federal legislative delegations to address the rising insurance cost, especially flood insurance.

PLAN OF ACTION

GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINES	ACCOUNTABILITY	MEASURES & INDICATORS
Pursue and encourage a greater voluntary regional collaboration with the focus on partnerships in economic and community development - a connected, integrated, and sustainable approach to regional economic development that builds upon our region's strengths.	Coordinate the preparation, maintenance and implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that includes all 15 SMPDD counties.	Ongoing with an annual update	Semi-annual reports to EDA; Annual review and update; 5-year complete rewrite; Department meetings	Approval by EDA; Endorsement by SMPDD Board (5-year rewrite)
	Evaluate existing assets while primarily focusing on existing businesses. Reconnect with companies' leadership, identify pressing needs, and meaningfully support their growth.	Ongoing	Semi-annual reports for EDA; Coordination with the regional office of EDA	Updated lists of companies in SMPDD-served communities
	Champion entrepreneurship efforts and the culture of innovative ideas by connecting individuals to resources, programs, and opportunities that would enhance local economies. (Angel Fund)	Ongoing; As requested	Ongoing communication with economic development partners	Formation of new small businesses and entrepreneur lead enterprises
	Create and advance partnerships with university research	Ongoing; As requested	Ongoing communication with	Successful connections of university research

GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINES	ACCOUNTABILITY	MEASURES & INDICATORS
	programs and technology transfer specialists, linking them, when appropriate, with entrepreneurs and developers to help grow local talent and creative class.		university partners; Department meetings	with visionaries and entrepreneurs in communities
	Promote and support the USM Gulf Blue Initiative, seeking to enhance the traditional longstanding connection of the blue economy to the region while building on new and emerging technologies that open opportunities for collaboration to more inland communities in the area.	Ongoing; As requested	Ongoing communication with USM Gulf Blue Initiative Team and local economic development partners; Grant reporting	Increase in understanding of Blue Economy connection to communities, including inland counties
	Promote economic diversification across the region, strengthening communities and making local economies more agile and resilient, allowing for less impactful economic downturns and shifts in global markets.	Ongoing	Ongoing communication with local government officials and economic development partners	New jobs created by existing companies and increase in local tax revenue
	Encourage partnerships, especially public-private partnerships, that bring value to projects, bolster funding	Ongoing; Seek potential opportunities that benefit communities	Ongoing; When appropriate – facilitating meetings with potential partners	More collaborative environment in communities

GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINES	ACCOUNTABILITY	MEASURES & INDICATORS
	opportunities, and unite and strengthen communities.			
	Look for development opportunities, especially in the region's Opportunity Zones and other designated economic zones, to improve the quality of life in these communities.	Ongoing; Seek potential opportunities that benefit communities	Ongoing communication with economic development partners	Improved potential for development in the designated areas
Support and enhance physical infrastructure upgrades and improvements, including water, sewer, natural gas, electricity, broadband, and others identified by economic development partners.	Prioritize broadband expansion to include all communities in the region. Seek additional resources to expand connectivity and availability of the most advanced internet technologies to improve access and thus the quality of life of the area citizens.	Ongoing, As requested	Annual update on broadband improvements	Increase in miles of lines installed and improved connectivity in local communities
	Work with communities and economic development partners to identify potential sites for development, including industrial, commercial, and others. Assist with implementing site readiness programs.	Ongoing, As requested	Periodic update of infrastructure improvements made to development sites	More sites with potential for development identified
	Assist with identifying brownfield locations and encourage	Ongoing, As requested	Ongoing communication with local government officials and MDEQ	More potential brownfield sites identified

GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINES	ACCOUNTABILITY	MEASURES & INDICATORS
	redevelopment and reuse plans to make these sites viable for development and create new tax base opportunities.			
	Support road and highway programs that will improve the transportation network in the region. Encourage short-line railroads that serve the rural communities to improve service.	Ongoing; As requested	Ongoing communication with local government and MDOT	Approval of construction projects submitted for funding; increase in projects
	Support development and growth of airports and seaports in the region, including intermodal facilities with access to rail and truck.	Ongoing; As requested	Aid economic development partners in seeking funds when needed	Improved access to world markets & additional investment
	Recognize the importance of floodplain mitigation and encourage continued planning for impacts of climate change and future natural disasters.	Ongoing; As requested	Assist local governments in updating plans	Utilizing innovative solutions in planning & mitigation
Acknowledge the essential nature of the ongoing need for a highly-skilled, educated pipeline of talent and workforce development programs.	Understand that the chronically low labor participation rate has specific reasons behind it. Create deliberate partnerships that would improve the situation once some of the following issues are addressed, and barriers are	Ongoing	Ongoing communication with partner agencies involved in workforce solutions, training providers and MDHS	Increased labor participation rate

GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINES	ACCOUNTABILITY	MEASURES & INDICATORS
	removed – childcare challenges, lack of reliable transportation, absence of skills, substance abuse, criminal past, etc.			
	Meet workforce demands of existing companies through continued communication about their needs. Support and encourage apprenticeship programs and work with community colleges and other training providers to remain agile and responsive.	Ongoing; As requested	Site visits and ongoing communication with economic development and training partners	Increased pipeline of skilled workers for existing and new companies
	Support new & emerging professions and skill sets. Plan for the increase in demand for skilled workers in emerging high technology occupations like IT technicians, robotics machinery operators, certified drone specialists, cybersecurity experts, virtual reality professionals, and artificial intelligence engineers. Encourage strengthening the school curriculum by incorporating more science, technology, engineering, and	Ongoing	Work with industry and training partners to ensure enough programs are in place	New programs at local community colleges

GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINES	ACCOUNTABILITY	MEASURES & INDICATORS
	math (STEM) – an essential foundation for emerging technologies careers.			
	Respond to the need for a continued pipeline of workers through supporting the upskilling opportunities for dislocated and laid-off workers, increasing their ability to earn a living wage through higher wage jobs.	Ongoing	Work with MDES WIN Job Centers and other agencies	Lower unemployment rate
	Promote the development of affordable workforce housing that would attract and retain skilled employees in the area industries.	Ongoing	Work with developers and local governments	New affordable housing locations
	Collaborate with workforce training providers to understand the expectations of the industry sectors with high growth potential, including advanced manufacturing, energy & chemical production, healthcare, and information technology.	Ongoing; As requested	Conduct regular meetings with economic development partners and training providers	Adequate supply of highly skilled workers ready for in-demand jobs
	Support career coaching initiatives and innovative career and technical education programs	Ongoing; As requested	Support outreach activities and serve as a liaison, connecting educators with industry professionals	Increase in the number of high school graduates who are prepared for a career path in

GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINES	ACCOUNTABILITY	MEASURES & INDICATORS
	in area high schools. Encourage exploration of career pathways, internships, and work-based learning opportunities from an early age.			workforce or education
Empower local governments, civic organizations, and educational institutions to partner and seek creative solutions to build more viable, livable, and resilient communities with an improved quality of life for its citizens by supporting new and established economic development programs.	Prepare comprehensive plans, strategic plans, and other action plans for communities that will give them the tools to compete for economic development projects.	Ongoing, Participation in efforts as requested by local governments	Ongoing communication with local government and economic development allies; Department meetings	Increase in projects
	Support tourism-related industries (nature and outdoor recreation, cultural and historical resources) and unique assets of each community to attract visitors, build civic pride, and enhance community livability.	Ongoing; As requested	Ongoing communication with local government/tourism economic development allies; Department meetings	Increase in visitors to the state
	Encourage cities, counties, and economic development organizations to promote and market their assets and resources.	Ongoing; As requested	Ongoing communication with local government and economic development allies	Increase in projects

GOALS	ACTIONS	TIMELINES	ACCOUNTABILITY	MEASURES & INDICATORS
	Work with local governments and other partners to ensure communities have a robust, up-to-date disaster preparedness plan covering various calamities.	Ongoing; As requested	Ongoing communication with local government	Increased preparedness for disasters
	Work with state and federal legislative delegations to address the rising insurance cost, especially flood insurance.	Ongoing; As requested	Ongoing communication with legislative delegations	Stabilization of the insurance market, especially flood insurance

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Following EDA guidelines, a semi-annual report detailing progress achieved on economic development activities will be prepared. The report will effectively adjust the CEDS as needed, assimilating new opportunities and addressing unexpected regional problems. An annual review will be conducted by SMPDD staff and the CEDS Committee. In addition to the required reporting, other accountability activities and performance measures are listed in the Plan of Action.

The SMPDD staff and the CEDS Committee will file a new, updated, or revised CEDS every five years. However, should unforeseen circumstances in the economic climate occur, such as a natural disaster or significant economic adjustment, a new CEDS may be prepared to realign the plan with the current needs.

COMMUNITY & PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION

There are many partners involved in implementing the CEDS and who are key leaders in the economic development activities of the region and the state. Some of those partners include:

Airport Authorities	Mississippi Energy Institute
Economic Development Administration	Mississippi Enterprise for Technology
Delta Regional Authority	Gulf Coast Foreign Trade Zone
Department of Labor	Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College
Gulf Coast Business Council	Mississippi Manufacturers Association
Gulf Regional Planning Commission	Mississippi Main Street Association
Hattiesburg-Lamar-Forrest- Petal MPO	Mississippi State Legislature
Innovate Mississippi	Mississippi State University
International Economic Development Council	National Association of Development Organizations
Local and Regional Banks	Office of the Governor
Local Chambers of Commerce	Pearl River Community College
Local Economic Development Offices	Port Authorities
Jones County Junior College	Renaissance Corporation
Mississippi Department of Employment Security	Small Business Administration
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality	State Workforce Investment Board/AccelerateMS
Mississippi Department of Human Services	Stennis Space Center
Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services	U.S. Congressional Delegation
Mississippi Department of Transportation	University of Mississippi
Mississippi Development Authority	University of Southern Mississippi
Mississippi Economic Council	Utility Companies – electric, gas
Mississippi Economic Development Council	USDA, Rural Development
Mississippi Energy Institute	Water Associations & Utility Authorities

SMPDD

Office/Distribution/Warehouse



Address: 103 Central Avenue

City: Laurel

County: Jones County

Zip Code: 39440

Min Size: 31,000 sqft

Max Size: 31,000 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County

Contact Name: Ross Tucker

Phone: 601-649-3031

Cell: 601-842-9771

Email: rosst@edajones.com

Industrial | Warehouse/Distribution

EDC Building



Address: 27 Neil Gunn Drive

City: Ellisville

County: Jones County

Zip Code: 39437

Min Size: 126,223 sqft

Max Size: 126,223 sqft

Column Spacing: 50X50

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County

Contact Name: Ross Tucker

Phone: 601-649-3031

Cell: 601-842-9771

Email: rosst@edajones.com

Industrial

McLain Site



Address: 311 Industrial Drive

City: McLain

County: Greene County

Zip Code: 39456

Min Size: 34 acres

Max Size: 34 acres

Commercial | Industrial

Waveland Plaza



Address: 407 Highway 90

City: Waveland

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39576

Min Size: 37,400 sqft

Max Size: 37,400 sqft

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Commercial | Retail

Equine Products Building



Address: 824 Bass Burkett Road

City: Bassfield

County: Jefferson Davis County

Zip Code: 39421

Min Size: 18,000 sqft

Max Size: 18,000 sqft

Company: Jefferson Davis County Community Development Association

Contact Name: Gary Bass

Cell: 601-303-5511

Email: grb1111@gmail.com

Agriculture | Commercial | Flex | ...

Site #08 Stennis International Airport



Address: 7250 Stennis Airport Drive, Site #8
City: Kiln
County: Hancock County
Zip Code: 39556
Min Size: 1,100 acres
Max Size: 1,100 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission
Contact Name: Bill Cotter
Phone: 228-467-9231
Cell: 228-596-8002
Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Laurel Oil Building (Airport Industrial Park)



Address: 100 Base Drive
City: Laurel
County: Jones County
Zip Code: 39441
Min Size: 21,600 sqft
Max Size: 21,600 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County
Contact Name: Ross Tucker
Phone: 601-649-3031
Cell: 601-842-9771
Email: rosst@edajones.com

Site #20 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 13260 Road C
City: Bay St. Louis
County: Hancock County
Zip Code: 39520
Min Size: 44 acres
Max Size: 44 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission
Contact Name: Bill Cotter
Phone: 228-467-9231
Cell: 228-596-8002
Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Longleaf Business Park



Address: John Street Extension
City: Prentiss
County: Jefferson Davis County
Zip Code: 39474
Min Size: 20 acres
Max Size: 20 acres

Company: Jefferson Davis County Community Development Association
Contact Name: Gary Bass
Cell: 601-303-5511
Email: grb1111@gmail.com

Stennis Space Center Enterprise Park - Site B1



Address: Stennis Space Center
City: Stennis Space Port
County: Hancock County
Zip Code: 39529
Min Size: 150 acres
Max Size: 150 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission
Contact Name: Bill Cotter
Phone: 228-467-9231
Cell: 228-596-8002
Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Eagle One Mega Site



Address: 4516 U.S. Highway 11, Purvis, MS 39475
City: Hattiesburg
County: Forrest County
Zip Code: 39401
Min Size: 2,222 acres
Max Size: 2,222 acres

Company: Area Development Partnership
Contact Name: Chelsey Everett
Phone: 601-325-3525
Cell: 601-325-3525
Email: c.everett@theadp.com

North Harrison Industrial Complex



Address: 22140 Sadler Rd

City: Saucier

County: Harrison County

Zip Code: 39574

Min Size: 2 acres

Max Size: 632 acres

Company: Harrison County Development

Commission

Contact Name: Bill Lavers

Phone: 228-896-5020

Cell: 228-343-5149

Email: blavers@mscoast.org

Marion Regional Airplex



Address: MS Highway 44

City: Columbia

County: Marion County

Zip Code: 39429

Min Size: 475 acres

Max Size: 475 acres

Company: Marion County Development

Partnership

Contact Name: Lori Watts

Phone: 601-736-6385

Cell: 601-818-3987

Email: lwatts@mcdp.info

Site #13 Stennis International Airport



Address: 13093 Fred and Al Key Rd.

City: Kiln

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39556

Min Size: 1 acres

Max Size: 885 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor

Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

George County Industrial Park



Address: Evanston Road

City: Lucedale

County: George County

Zip Code: 39452

Min Size: 1,200 acres

Max Size: 1,200 acres

Company: George County Community

Development

Contact Name: Ken Flanagan

Phone: 601-247-2104

Cell: 601-530-2829

Email: kflanagan@georgecountymys.gov

Bayou Casotte Deep Water Industrial Site



Address: 601 Industrial Road

City: Pascagoula

County: Jackson County

Zip Code: 39581

Min Size: 106 acres

Max Size: 106 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic

Development Foundation, Inc.

Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson

Phone: 228-769-6263

Cell: 228-623-1320

Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

13233 Webre Road



Address: 13233 Webre Road

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39520

Min Size: 22,800 sqft

Max Size: 22,800 sqft

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor

Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Collins Industrial Park



Address: 4000 U.S. Highway 49
City: Collins
County: Covington County
Zip Code: 39428
Min Size: 65 acres
Max Size: 65 acres

Company: Covington County Economic Development Authority
Contact Name: Marie Shoemake
Phone: 601-795-6012
Cell: 601-517-6604
Email: ms@covingtonchamber.com

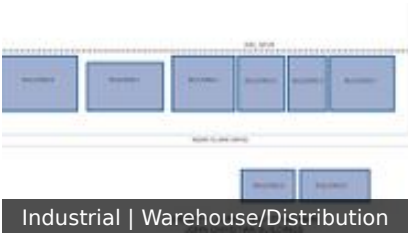
Site #21 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 13151 Road C, Site #21
City: Bay St. Louis
County: Hancock County
Zip Code: 39520
Min Size: 5 acres
Max Size: 5 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission
Contact Name: Bill Cotter
Phone: 228-467-9231
Cell: 228-596-8002
Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Warehouse Services Company Building No. 3



Address: Nemo Clark Drive, #3
City: Laurel
County: Jones County
Zip Code: 39441
Min Size: 12,600 sqft
Max Size: 12,600 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County
Contact Name: Ross Tucker
Phone: 601-649-3031
Cell: 601-842-9771
Email: rosst@edajones.com

Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport Site



Address: John Hill Blvd
City: Gulfport
County: Harrison County
Zip Code: 39503
Min Size: 241 acres
Max Size: 241 acres

Company: Harrison County Development Commission
Contact Name: Bill Lavers
Phone: 228-896-5020
Cell: 228-343-5149
Email: blavers@mscoast.org

Site #11 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 13041 Road A, Site #11
City: Bay St. Louis
County: Hancock County
Zip Code: 39520
Min Size: 45 acres
Max Size: 45 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission
Contact Name: Bill Cotter
Phone: 228-467-9231
Cell: 228-596-8002
Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Moss Point Industrial Sites East & West



Address: Grierson Street
City: Moss Point
County: Jackson County
Zip Code: 39563
Min Size: 74 acres
Max Size: 128 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.
Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson
Phone: 228-769-6263
Cell: 228-623-1320
Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

Site #02 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 13233 Webre Road

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39520

Min Size: 67 acres

Max Size: 67 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor

Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

I-59 Supply Chain Park



Address: 1002 Terminal Drive

City: Hattiesburg

County: Forrest County

Zip Code: 39459

Min Size: 20 acres

Max Size: 264 acres

Company: Area Development Partnership

Contact Name: Chelsey Everett

Phone: 601-325-3525

Cell: 601-325-3525

Email: c.everett@theadp.com

Goss Sawmill Site



Address: 3111 Highway 13 North

City: Columbia

County: Marion County

Zip Code: 39429

Min Size: 80 acres

Max Size: 80 acres

Company: Marion County Development

Partnership

Contact Name: Lori Watts

Phone: 601-736-6385

Cell: 601-818-3987

Email: lwatts@mcdp.info

Stennis Space Center Enterprise Park - Site A1



Address: Stennis Space Center

City: Stennis Space Port

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39529

Min Size: 250 acres

Max Size: 250 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor

Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Site #07 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 3051 Port and Harbor Drive, Site #7

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39520

Min Size: 5 acres

Max Size: 5 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor

Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

72,000 SF Warehouse



Address: 3310 Port and Harbor Drive

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39520

Min Size: 72,000 sqft

Max Size: 72,000 sqft

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor

Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

I-59 South Industrial Site



Address: Highway 11 & Dacetown Road

City: Ellisville

County: Jones County

Zip Code: 39437

Min Size: 446 acres

Max Size: 446 acres

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County

Contact Name: Ross Tucker

Phone: 601-649-3031

Cell: 601-842-9771

Email: rosst@edajones.com

Hillsdale Industrial Park



Address: Hillsdale Gumpond Rd.

City: Poplarville

County: Pearl River County

Zip Code: 39455

Min Size: 215 acres

Max Size: 215 acres

Company: Pearl River County Economic Development

Contact Name: Lindsay Ward

Phone: 601-749-7780

Email: lward@pearlrivercounty.net

1200 Martin Luther King Industrial Facility



Address: 1200 Martin Luther King

City: Picayune

County: Pearl River County

Zip Code: 39466

Min Size: 46,500 sqft

Max Size: 46,500 sqft

Company: Pearl River County Economic Development

Contact Name: Lindsay Ward

Phone: 601-749-7780

Email: lward@pearlrivercounty.net

Greene County Rail Site



Address: McLain, MS

City: McLain

County: Greene County

Zip Code: 39456

Min Size: 100 acres

Max Size: 415 acres

Site #05 Hancock County MegaSite



Address: Lower Bay Road

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39572

Min Size: 1,333 acres

Max Size: 1,333 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hpcphc.ms

Hattiesburg-Forrest County Industrial Park 23 Acre



Address: 700 JM Tatum Industrial Drive

City: Hattiesburg

County: Forrest County

Zip Code: 39401

Min Size: 10 acres

Max Size: 22 acres

Company: Area Development Partnership

Contact Name: Chelsey Everett

Phone: 601-325-3525

Cell: 601-325-3525

Email: c.everett@theadp.com

Moss Point Marine Operations



Address: 7801 Trinity Drive

City: Moss Point

County: Jackson County

Zip Code: 39562

Min Size: 207 acres

Max Size: 207 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.

Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson

Phone: 228-769-6263

Cell: 228-623-1320

Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

McDonald Training Center 9,277 SF



Address: 3060 Port & Harbor Drive Bay St. Louis, MS 39520

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39520

Min Size: 9,277 sqft

Max Size: 9,277 sqft

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Site #01 Stennis International Airport



Address: 7250 Stennis Airport Road

City: Kiln

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39556

Min Size: 8 acres

Max Size: 8 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Millard Industrial Site



Address: Hwy 11

City: Picayune

County: Pearl River County

Zip Code: 39466

Min Size: 250 acres

Max Size: 250 acres

Company: Pearl River County Economic Development

Contact Name: Lindsay Ward

Phone: 601-749-7780

Email: lward@pearlrivercounty.net

Franklin Creek Industrial Site



Address: Forts Lake Road

City: Moss Point

County: Jackson County

Zip Code: 39562

Min Size: 730 acres

Max Size: 730 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.

Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson

Phone: 228-769-6263

Cell: 228-623-1320

Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

Long Beach Industrial Park



Address: A Avenue

City: Long Beach

County: Harrison County

Zip Code: 39560

Min Size: 4 acres

Max Size: 26 acres

Company: Harrison County Development Commission

Contact Name: Bill Lavers

Phone: 228-896-5020

Cell: 228-343-5149

Email: blavers@mscoast.org

McHenry East Industrial Site Building 600



Address: 466 East McHenry Road, #600
City: McHenry
County: Stone County
Zip Code: 39561
Min Size: 16,000 sqft
Max Size: 16,000 sqft

Company: Stone County Economic Development Partnership
Contact Name: Betsy Rowell
Phone: 601-928-5418
Cell: 601-550-5699
Email: browell@stonecounty.com

Columbia New Generation Park



Address: Eagle Day Avenue
City: Columbia
County: Marion County
Zip Code: 39429
Min Size: 81 acres
Max Size: 81 acres

Company: Marion County Development Partnership
Contact Name: Lori Watts
Phone: 601-736-6385
Cell: 601-818-3987
Email: lwatts@mcdp.info

Meadowlands Industrial-Commerce Park



Address: U.S. Highway 45 North
City: Waynesboro
County: Wayne County
Zip Code: 39367
Min Size: 120 acres
Max Size: 260 acres

Company: Wayne County
Contact Name: Wayne County Economic Development
Phone: 601-735-6056
Email: j.dunlap@cmaaccess.com

Helena Industrial Complex



Address: Saracennia Road
City: Moss Point
County: Jackson County
Zip Code: 39563
Min Size: 45 acres
Max Size: 85 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.
Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson
Phone: 228-769-6263
Cell: 228-623-1320
Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

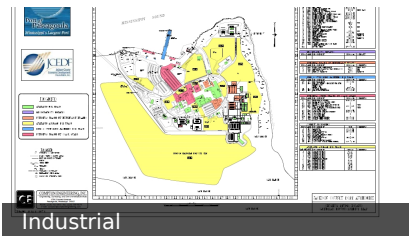
Bayou Casotte Parkway Industrial Site



Address: Bayou Casotte Parkway
City: Pascagoula
County: Jackson County
Zip Code: 39581
Min Size: 9 acres
Max Size: 17 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.
Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson
Phone: 228-769-6263
Cell: 228-623-1320
Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

Singing River Island



Address: 1000 Singing River Island
City: Pascagoula
County: Jackson County
Zip Code: 39581
Min Size: 5 acres
Max Size: 150 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.
Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson
Phone: 228-769-6263
Cell: 228-623-1320
Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

Marion Regional IndustryPlex - Phase I



Address: Highway 44 - Phase 1

City: Columbia

County: Marion County

Zip Code: 39429

Min Size: 156 acres

Max Size: 156 acres

Company: Marion County Development Partnership

Contact Name: Lori Watts

Phone: 601-736-6385

Cell: 601-818-3987

Email: lwatts@mcdp.info

McHenry East Industrial Site Building 400



Address: 466 East McHenry Road, #400

City: McHenry

County: Stone County

Zip Code: 39561

Min Size: 9,400 sqft

Max Size: 9,400 sqft

Company: Stone County Economic Development Partnership

Contact Name: Betsy Rowell

Phone: 601-928-5418

Cell: 601-550-5699

Email: browell@stonecounty.com

Tillery Property



Address: U.S. Highway 11 South Ellisville

City: Ellisville

County: Jones County

Zip Code: 39437

Min Size: 20 acres

Max Size: 43 acres

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County

Contact Name: Ross Tucker

Phone: 601-649-3031

Cell: 601-842-9771

Email: rosst@edajones.com

Sunplex Call & Processing Center



Address: 6608 Sunscope Drive

City: Ocean Springs

County: Jackson County

Zip Code: 39564

Min Size: 27,500 sqft

Max Size: 27,500 sqft

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.

Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson

Phone: 228-769-6263

Cell: 228-623-1320

Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

McHenry East Industrial Site Building 300



Address: 466 East McHenry Road, #300

City: McHenry

County: Stone County

Zip Code: 39561

Min Size: 4,800 sqft

Max Size: 4,800 sqft

Company: Stone County Economic Development Partnership

Contact Name: Betsy Rowell

Phone: 601-928-5418

Cell: 601-550-5699

Email: browell@stonecounty.com

Greene County Industrial Park



Address: Leakesville, MS

City: Leakesville

County: Greene County

Zip Code: 39451

Min Size: 5 acres

Max Size: 20 acres

Jefferson Avenue Industrial Building



Address: 4219 Jefferson Avenue
City: Moss Point
County: Jackson County
Zip Code: 39563
Min Size: 29,000 sqft
Max Size: 184,000 sqft
Column Spacing: 20

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.
Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson
Phone: 228-769-6263
Cell: 228-623-1320
Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

Prentiss Industrial



Address: John Street Extension - Building
City: Prentiss
County: Jefferson Davis County
Zip Code: 39474
Min Size: 44,625 sqft
Max Size: 44,625 sqft

Company: Jefferson Davis County Community Development Association
Contact Name: Gary Bass
Cell: 601-303-5511
Email: grb1111@gmail.com

Site #06 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 13011 Port and Harbor Dr., Site #6
City: Bay St. Louis
County: Hancock County
Zip Code: 39520
Min Size: 50 acres
Max Size: 50 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission
Contact Name: Bill Cotter
Phone: 228-467-9231
Cell: 228-596-8002
Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

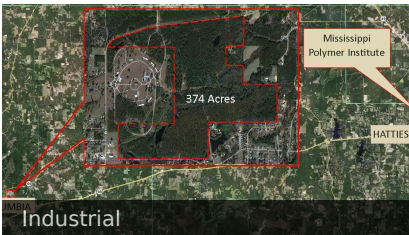
Laurel Airport Authority



Address: Laurel Airport
City: Laurel
County: Jones County
Zip Code: 39442
Min Size: 10 acres
Max Size: 57.80 acres

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County
Contact Name: Ross Tucker
Phone: 601-649-3031
Cell: 601-842-9771
Email: rosst@edajones.com

Marion Regional IndustryPlex - Phase II



Address: Highway 44
City: Columbia
County: Marion County
Zip Code: 39429
Min Size: 10 acres
Max Size: 200 acres

Company: Marion County Development Partnership
Contact Name: Lori Watts
Phone: 601-736-6385
Cell: 601-818-3987
Email: lwatts@mcdp.info

Site #12 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 13010 Sea Plane Road, Site #12
City: Bay St. Louis
County: Hancock County
Zip Code: 39520
Min Size: 15 acres
Max Size: 15 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission
Contact Name: Bill Cotter
Phone: 228-467-9231
Cell: 228-596-8002
Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Site #03 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 13076 Road B

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39520

Min Size: 55 acres

Max Size: 55 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Warehouse/Distribution Bldg



Address: 902 Ellisville Blvd

City: Laurel

County: Jones County

Zip Code: 39440

Min Size: 27,411 sqft

Max Size: 27,411 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County

Contact Name: Ross Tucker

Phone: 601-649-3031

Cell: 601-842-9771

Email: rosst@edajones.com

Lux Road Property



Address: 202 Lux Road

City: Collins

County: Covington County

Zip Code: 39401

Min Size: 654 acres

Max Size: 654 acres

Company: Covington County Economic Development Authority

Contact Name: Marie Shoemake

Phone: 601-795-6012

Cell: 601-517-6604

Email: ms@covingtonchamber.com

Retail Building For Lease



Address: 403 US 90

City: Waveland

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39576

Min Size: 11,180 sqft

Max Size: 11,180 sqft

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

South Mississippi Industrial Rail Site



Address: Evanston Rd

City: Lucedale

County: George County

Zip Code: 39452

Min Size: 353 acres

Max Size: 353 acres

Company: George County Community Development

Contact Name: Ken Flanagan

Phone: 601-247-2104

Cell: 601-530-2829

Email: kflanagan@georgecountymys.gov

University of Southern Mississippi Innovation and Commercialization Park



Address: Classic Drive

City: Hattiesburg

County: Forrest County

Zip Code: 39401

Min Size: 22 acres

Max Size: 225 acres

Company: Area Development Partnership

Contact Name: Chelsey Everett

Phone: 601-325-3525

Cell: 601-325-3525

Email: c.everett@theadp.com

Jackson County Industrial Road Site



Address: 3719 Industrial Road

City: Pascagoula

County: Jackson County

Zip Code: 39581

Min Size: 10 acres

Max Size: 10 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.

Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson

Phone: 228-769-6263

Cell: 228-623-1320

Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

McHenry East Industrial Site Building 301



Address: 466 East McHenry Road, #301

City: McHenry

County: Stone County

Zip Code: 39561

Min Size: 4,800 sqft

Max Size: 4,800 sqft

Company: Stone County Economic Development Partnership

Contact Name: Betsy Rowell

Phone: 601-928-5418

Cell: 601-550-5699

Email: browell@stonecounty.com

SUNPLEX Light Industrial Park



Address: Sunplex Drive

City: Ocean Springs

County: Jackson County

Zip Code: 39564

Min Size: 1 acres

Max Size: 12 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.

Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson

Phone: 228-769-6263

Cell: 228-623-1320

Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

Stennis Technology Park Manufacturing Facility #1



Address: Stennis Airport Road

City: Kiln

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39556

Min Size: 39,200 sqft

Max Size: 39,200 sqft

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Perry County Industrial Park



Address: U.S. Highway 98 East

City: New Augusta

County: Perry County

Zip Code: 39462

Min Size: 170 acres

Max Size: 170 acres

Company: Area Development Partnership

Contact Name: Chelsey Everett

Phone: 601-325-3525

Cell: 601-325-3525

Email: c.everett@theadp.com

72 Acres Seaway Rd



Address: Seaway Rd

City: Gulfport

County: Harrison County

Zip Code: 39503

Min Size: 72 acres

Max Size: 72 acres

Company: Harrison County Development Commission

Contact Name: Bill Lavers

Phone: 228-896-5020

Cell: 228-343-5149

Email: blavers@mscoast.org

25,000 SF Warehouse



Address: 3025 Port & Harbor Drive
City: Bay St. Louis
County: Hancock County
Zip Code: 39520
Min Size: 10,000 sqft
Max Size: 25,000 sqft

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission
Contact Name: Bill Cotter
Phone: 228-467-9231
Cell: 228-596-8002
Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Hudson Retail Store



Address: 308 North 12th Avenue
City: Laurel
County: Jones County
Zip Code: 39440
Min Size: 40,000 sqft
Max Size: 40,000 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County
Contact Name: Ross Tucker
Phone: 601-649-3031
Cell: 601-842-9771
Email: rosst@edajones.com

72 Acres Seaway Rd



Address: Seaway Rd
City: Gulfport
County: Harrison County
Zip Code: 39503
Min Size: 72 acres
Max Size: 72 acres

Company: Harrison County Development Commission
Contact Name: Bill Lavers
Phone: 228-896-5020
Cell: 228-343-5149
Email: blavers@mscoast.org

Howse Foundry, #1



Address: 2013 Highway 184 East, #1
City: Laurel
County: Jones County
Zip Code: 39443
Min Size: 26,556 sqft
Max Size: 26,556 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County
Contact Name: Ross Tucker
Phone: 601-649-3031
Cell: 601-842-9771
Email: rosst@edajones.com

Warehouse Services Company Building No. 2



Address: Nemo Clark Drive, #2
City: Laurel
County: Jones County
Zip Code: 39441
Min Size: 31,500 sqft
Max Size: 31,500 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County
Contact Name: Ross Tucker
Phone: 601-649-3031
Cell: 601-842-9771
Email: rosst@edajones.com

The Accelerator



Address: 46 Shelby Thames Drive
City: Hattiesburg
County: Forrest County
Zip Code: 39402
Min Size: 60,000 sqft
Max Size: 60,000 sqft
Column Spacing: 30

Company: Area Development Partnership
Contact Name: Chelsey Everett
Phone: 601-325-3525
Cell: 601-325-3525
Email: c.everett@theadp.com

George County Ports & Passage Site



Address: Evanston Road

City: Lucedale

County: George County

Zip Code: 39452

Min Size: 75 acres

Max Size: 75 acres

Company: George County Community Development

Contact Name: Ken Flanagan

Phone: 601-247-2104

Cell: 601-530-2829

Email: kflanagan@georgecountymys.gov

Site #04 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 3310 Port and Harbor Drive, Site #4

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39520

Min Size: 35 acres

Max Size: 35 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

South Lamar Industrial Park



Address: Old MS Highway 11

City: Lumberton

County: Lamar County

Zip Code: 39455

Min Size: 250 acres

Max Size: 250 acres

Company: Area Development Partnership

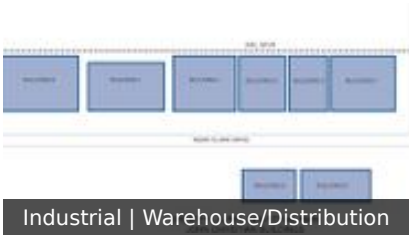
Contact Name: Chelsey Everett

Phone: 601-325-3525

Cell: 601-325-3525

Email: c.everett@theadp.com

Warehouse Services Company Building No. 7



Address: Nemo Clark Drive, #7

City: Laurel

County: Jones County

Zip Code: 39441

Min Size: 54,000 sqft

Max Size: 54,000 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County

Contact Name: Ross Tucker

Phone: 601-649-3031

Cell: 601-842-9771

Email: rosst@edajones.com

Howse Property, #2



Address: 2013 Highway 184 East, #2

City: Laurel

County: Jones County

Zip Code: 39443

Min Size: 48,000 sqft

Max Size: 48,000 sqft

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County

Contact Name: Ross Tucker

Phone: 601-649-3031

Cell: 601-842-9771

Email: rosst@edajones.com

DARK CASINO-92K SF



Address: 160 5th Street, Biloxi, MS 39530

City: Biloxi

County: Harrison County

Zip Code: 39530

Min Size: 92,283 sqft

Max Size: 92,283 sqft

Company: Harrison County Development Commission

Contact Name: Bill Lavers

Phone: 228-896-5020

Cell: 228-343-5149

Email: blavers@mscoast.org

Howard Technology Park



Address: Technology Boulevard

City: Ellisville

County: Jones County

Zip Code: 39437

Min Size: 10 acres

Max Size: 50 acres

Company: Economic Development Authority of Jones County

Contact Name: Ross Tucker

Phone: 601-649-3031

Cell: 601-842-9771

Email: rosst@edajones.com

Site #02 Stennis International Airport



Address: 14261 Fred and Al Key Rd

City: Kiln

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39556

Min Size: 4 acres

Max Size: 4 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Jackson County Aviation Technology Park



Address: AvTech Parkway

City: Moss Point

County: Jackson County

Zip Code: 39563

Min Size: 10 acres

Max Size: 72 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.

Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson

Phone: 228-769-6263

Cell: 228-623-1320

Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

Site #01 Port Bienville Industrial Park



Address: 13011 Port and Harbor Dr., Site #1

City: Bay St. Louis

County: Hancock County

Zip Code: 39520

Min Size: 475 acres

Max Size: 475 acres

Company: Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission

Contact Name: Bill Cotter

Phone: 228-467-9231

Cell: 228-596-8002

Email: bcotter@hcphc.ms

Halter Moss Point Operations



Address: 5801 Elder Ferry Road

City: Moss Point

County: Jackson County

Zip Code: 39563

Min Size: 56 acres

Max Size: 56 acres

Company: Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.

Contact Name: Mary Martha Henson

Phone: 228-769-6263

Cell: 228-623-1320

Email: mhenson@jcedf.org

Hattiesburg-Forrest County Industrial Park (63 Acre Site)



Address: Sullivan Drive and S. Hills Drive

City: Hattiesburg

County: Forrest County

Zip Code: 39401

Min Size: 63 acres

Max Size: 63 acres

Company: Area Development Partnership

Contact Name: Chelsey Everett

Phone: 601-325-3525

Cell: 601-325-3525

Email: c.everett@theadp.com

Greene County Industrial Building



Address: Grand Avenue

City: Leakesville

County: Greene County

Zip Code: 39451

Min Size: 126,220 sqft

Max Size: 126,220 sqft

McHenry East Industrial Site Campus



Address: 466 East McHenry Road

City: McHenry

County: Stone County

Zip Code: 39561

Min Size: 100 acres

Max Size: 465 acres

Company: Stone County Economic Development Partnership

Contact Name: Betsy Rowell

Phone: 601-928-5418

Cell: 601-550-5699

Email: browell@stonecounty.com