

# Eagles Flock — North Parcel City & County Benefits Summary

**Location:** Hattiesburg, Mississippi (Inside City Limits) — Corner of East Hardy Street and Old River Avenue **Parcel:** PPIN 26700, ±1.93 acres on the Leaf River (Parcel 1 of the Rayborn property) **Surveyor / Engineer:** Christopher T. Johnson, PE, PS — Environmental Management Services, Inc., Hattiesburg **Flood Zone:** AE

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## The Ask

	Current	Requested
<b>Zoning</b>	A-1 General Agricultural (3-acre minimum, residential)	B-3 General Commercial
<b>Use</b>	Residential / agricultural	General store and boat / kayak ramp with access piers
<b>Building Size</b>	—	Retail under 10,000 sq. ft. (§5.4.35, permitted with conditions in B-3). <b>Current plan is ±2,000 sq. ft.</b> with footprint reserved for future additional retail. The ask is limited to the <10,000 sq. ft. retail category; the 10,000-50,000 sq. ft. category, while also available in B-3, is not requested.

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B-3 is the minimum single-district rezone that covers both intended uses — retail under 10,000 sq. ft. (§5.4.35) and boat / canoe / kayak rental (§5.4.10) — in one district. A-1 permits the ramp and rental but not the retail. B-2 permits the retail but not the ramp and rental.

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## Project Scope

The North Parcel is a standalone commercial node, separate from the larger 28.25-acre South Parcel. The proposed program is:

- A ±2,000 sq. ft. general store on piers, elevated per floodplain requirements, selling light groceries, bait, beer, fishing tackle, paddling supplies, and convenience items.
- A boat and kayak ramp on the Leaf River with access piers, providing a public-facing launch point on the Pinebelt Blueways trail system.

- Surface parking, accessible spaces, and pedestrian connections sized to support the store and ramp.
- Footprint reserved for a future additional retail space, sized and oriented at design time based on operator interest, within the B-3 size limits.

The store is intended to be leased to a third-party operator. The ramp is public-facing.

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## Estimated Annual Recurring Revenue & Economic Activity at Full Build-Out

Benefit Category	Low Estimate	High Estimate	Notes
Ad Valorem Tax — Commercial Improvement	\$7,500	\$22,000	Store at \$250K-\$500K plus future retail addition; 15% assessment, ~184 mills
Sales Tax — City Diversion	\$5,000	\$20,000	18.5% municipal return on Mississippi 7% sales tax; store gross \$400K-\$1.5M annual
Kayak & Canoe Rental Operations	\$25,000	\$80,000	Paddle craft serving Pinebelt Blueways through-traffic and day visitors
Boat Ramp Day-Use Activity	\$15,000	\$60,000	Launch fees and concessions; option for city-operated or operator-run
Utility Revenue (Commercial Water / Sewer)	\$4,000	\$12,000	New commercial connections at the corner
Visitor Spend Captured in Hattiesburg	\$150,000	\$400,000	Lodging, dining, fuel, and ancillary retail by paddlers, anglers, and event visitors

## Estimated Total Annual Recurring Economic Activity

Scenario	Estimated Range
Conservative (Low)	~\$200,000 per year
Base	~\$400,000 per year
Higher Scenario	~\$600,000 per year

Direct ad valorem, sales tax, and utility revenue to the City and County is estimated at \$16,000–\$54,000 per year. The balance is captured economic activity that circulates through other Hattiesburg businesses.

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## One-Time & Construction Period Benefits

Benefit	Estimated Range	Notes
Construction Employment	8-15 jobs	Phased build across store, ramp, piers, and site work
Permit, Connection & Impact Fees	\$10,000–\$25,000	Building permits, water and sewer impact fees, rezoning, site plan review
Local Material & Services Spend	\$250,000–\$500,000	Lumber, concrete, equipment rental, pile driving, subcontractor wages
Pier Construction Skills	4-8 workers trained	Elevated commercial-on-piers experience transferable across the corridor

Total one-time direct city revenue (permits, impact fees, rezoning) is estimated at \$10,000–\$25,000.

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## Public Access & Community Benefits

These are separate from direct city revenue and are the principal civic case for the North Parcel.

- **Public river access.** The boat and kayak ramp provides a new public launch point on the west bank of the Leaf River, at a location currently without public access. This fills a gap in the corridor's launch infrastructure.
- **Pinebelt Blueways node.** The ramp adds a serviced access point with a store, restrooms, and parking to the existing 52-mile mapped paddle trail system. The corridor today has launches but no equivalent serviced node at this location.
- **Last-stop convenience.** The store is positioned as the last bait, supply, and convenience stop before the river — a service that the corridor currently lacks at this segment.
- **No public subsidy required.** The North Parcel is privately financed, market-rate commercial development. There are no annual operating subsidies, affordability obligations, or compliance monitoring for the City.

- **Floodplain-compatible design.** The store is elevated on piers, the ramp is a water-side improvement, and there is no fill in the floodway or floodplain that would affect adjacent properties. An interim no-rise review is underway with Flood & Coast Engineering, LLC.
  - **Replaces unproductive land.** The parcel currently produces minimal property tax revenue. Any of the scenarios above is a net increase to the tax base on land that today contributes negligibly.
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## Grant Revenue Positioning

The North Parcel infrastructure positions the City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County to pursue funding streams that require built river-access assets as a qualifying condition.

**Relevant Precedent:** The Sims Road boat ramp project (approximately 5 miles downstream on the same river) exceeded \$1 million in total investment, including a \$480,000 Mississippi Outdoor Stewardship Trust (MOST) grant for river access infrastructure.

**Forrest County Track Record:** MOSTF has funded three regional river-access projects — Sims Road boat ramp (\$480,000, 2023), Gordon's Creek development (\$2,246,419, 2024), and the River Avenue Pedestrian Bridge and Leaf River Overlook (\$674,638, 2025) — totaling more than \$3.4 million in state river-access investment in this corridor.

**Hattiesburg's Current Investment Trajectory:** Since 2019, the city's 1% tourism sales tax has generated over \$8 million for parks investment and leveraged an additional \$3 million in state, federal, and private grants — a total of \$11 million. The city recently secured a National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund grant for new park construction. Currently, only 1% of Hattiesburg's land is dedicated to parks, compared to a 15% national median.

### Applicable Grant Programs Include:

- **Mississippi Outdoor Stewardship Trust (MOST)** — River access, ramps, conservation; same program that funded Sims Road and Gordon's Creek
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (NPS)** — Park acquisition and development; Hattiesburg has prior awards
- **FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grants** — Elevated construction in flood-prone areas reduces future federal exposure
- **EPA / State Environmental Grants** — Water trail infrastructure on the Pascagoula system
- **USDA Rural Development** — Community facilities and recreational infrastructure
- **EDA Tourism & Economic Development** — Destination infrastructure supporting regional economic growth

The North Parcel is small enough to be funded privately on its own. The ramp component, however, is the kind of public asset that would qualify the City for matching MOST or LWCF

funds if the City chose to co-invest in expanded access at the same location.

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## Strategic Context

**The Pascagoula River System.** The Leaf River at Hattiesburg is a principal tributary of the Pascagoula — identified by *Science* magazine in 1994 as the largest undammed, unchannelized major river system in the lower 48 states. The Nature Conservancy, American Rivers, and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality all affirm this designation. The North Parcel ramp provides direct public access to this nationally significant natural asset at a corridor location currently without public access.

**The Pinebelt Blueways.** The North Parcel ramp connects to a 52-mile mapped and signed paddle trail system on the Leaf and Bouie Rivers. The city, county, and state have already invested over \$1 million in this network. The North Parcel adds a new serviced access point — store, restrooms, parking, launch — filling a gap in existing infrastructure rather than building something from scratch.

**Companion to the South Parcel.** The North Parcel functions as the commercial node serving the larger Eagles Flock development on the adjacent 28.25-acre South Parcel. The two parcels share ownership, share river frontage, and share the same engineering oversight, but the North Parcel is sized and structured to stand on its own — it produces income and provides public benefit whether the South Parcel proceeds on its current concept or evolves.

**Floodplain-Compatible Design.** All structures are elevated on piers, designed for the floodplain rather than fighting it. This approach eliminates the repetitive FEMA claim cycle and reduces the City's long-term flood risk liability — no buyout exposure, no ongoing mitigation costs, no fill in the floodway.

**No Ongoing Public Subsidy Required.** The North Parcel is market-rate commercial development. There are no annual operating subsidies, affordability compliance obligations, or monitoring costs for the City. Revenue flows in; nothing flows out.

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## Application Status

- **Pre-Application Form** prepared (May 2026) under Concept Only review. Shared with the Mayor and copied to Councilmember Eric Boney (Ward 2). Not yet submitted to the Planning Division.
- **Plat of survey** dated April 1, 2026, prepared by Christopher T. Johnson, PS 3129, defining Parcel 1 ( $\pm 1.93$  ac) and Parcel 2 ( $\pm 28.25$  ac).
- **Site Plan** dated May 19, 2026, EMS Project No. BAT1-26-001, showing proposed store footprint, future retail footprint, parking, and boat / kayak ramp with access piers.

- **Interim no-rise review** underway with Flood & Coast Engineering, LLC.
  - **Zoning path:** A-1 to B-3 General Commercial map amendment through Planning Commission and City Council, with EMS preparing the submission.
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## Summary Statement

At full build-out, the Eagles Flock North Parcel is projected to generate roughly \$200,000 to \$600,000 per year in combined direct revenue and captured local economic activity for the City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County — from 1.93 acres of riverfront land that currently produces negligible public revenue. Direct annual revenue to the City and County is estimated at \$16,000–\$54,000, with the balance circulating through other Hattiesburg businesses. The development requires no ongoing public subsidy, adds a new public access point on the Pinebelt Blueways and the Pascagoula river system, fills a service gap in the corridor, and positions the City to capture grant funding through built river-access infrastructure.

*All figures are conceptual estimates drawn from comparable projects, published industry data, and representative local rates. Ranges are intended to convey order of magnitude and are pending formal market studies, an operator commitment, and completion of the rezoning and floodplain review processes. Final outcomes depend on actual operator sales, ramp utilization, occupancy rates, operating models, millage adjustments, and market conditions.*