

THE TUNICA MIRACLE

★ 20 YEARS OF GAMING ★



Live it up just down the road

GAMING ★ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ★ TUNICA AIRPORT
TUNICA RIVERPARK ★ CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF

★ THE TUNICA MIRACLE ★

Over the last 20 years, Tunica has undergone a dramatic transformation that could only be called “The Tunica Miracle.” Historically, our economy relied on agriculture; technological advances and changing economic conditions left widespread unemployment and poverty in their wakes. By the 1980s, Tunica County was one of the poorest counties in the U.S., with the lowest per capita income in Mississippi. And now, 20 years later, the area that Jesse Jackson once called “America’s Ethiopia” has transformed into a true American success story, thanks to citizens who were bold enough to dream big.

In 1990, the Mississippi Legislature took a step that would change Tunica forever. Gaming was legalized in Mississippi, and the industry became an engine for economic development that spurred Tunica residents out of poverty and into employment.

The effect of the gaming industry on Tunica County has extended well beyond the casino floors. Over \$2.1 billion in state and local gaming tax revenue has been generated by Tunica County alone. The gaming industry has helped to transform our county’s economy through the generation of \$704 million in local tax revenue and the creation of 15,000 jobs. Increased community services and improvements to our once dilapidated infrastructure have created opportunities and a quality of life for our residents not dreamed of just two decades earlier.

But even with all these successes, Tunica still faces challenges. We’re experiencing the worst national economy since Tunica’s first property, Splash Casino, opened its doors in 1992. The recession had the capacity to cripple our town, and the Great Flood of 2011 threatened to further erode both our economy and our spirit. But as we proved 20 years ago, Tunica is not an area that gives up. The worst is behind us, and while gaming revenue is down, we have seen it begin to increase from last year.

We’ve seen how 20 years can transform a one-stoplight town into a thriving and growing community, and our outlook for the next 20 years is even brighter. We are well-positioned to take advantage of our location, improved infrastructure, great corporate partners, and unique culture and heritage to take Tunica to even greater heights.

By dreaming big and working together, we have turned those dreams into a reality. We look forward to what the future has in store for us as we embark on the next phase of the Tunica Miracle.

Sincerely,



Webster Franklin
President & CEO
Tunica Convention and Visitors Bureau



Lyn Arnold
President & CEO
Tunica County Chamber of Commerce



★ THE POWER OF GAMING ★

The Tunica Miracle can be directly attributed to the gaming tax revenue generated by the 14 different casino properties that have operated in Tunica over the past 20 years. The state of Mississippi imposes a 12% tax on the gross gaming receipts of each property. Collected by the Mississippi Tax Commission, 8% is distributed to Mississippi, with the remaining 4% going to Tunica County.

Casino gaming tax revenue:

12%

Revenue distribution:

8% TO MISSISSIPPI

4% TO TUNICA & TUNICA COUNTY

The combined 12% gaming tax on Tunica County properties has generated

OVER \$2.1 BILLION

in state and local tax revenue. The 4% local share has generated over

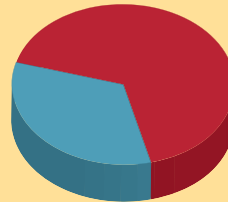
\$704 MILLION that has been invested directly into the Tunica community.

GAMING TAX REVENUE DISTRIBUTION

12% Tax = 4% Local + 8% State

\$2.1 BILLION = COUNTY + STATE TAX REVENUE

**COUNTY
\$704 MILLION**



**STATE
\$1.4 BILLION**

Representing Gaming
Tax Revenue Distribution
from 1992-2008

The 8% state share of gaming taxes has enabled our formerly impoverished county, once considered an economic drain on the state of Mississippi, to contribute over \$1.4 billion to the state's general funds. These funds have been distributed across all 82 Mississippi counties, helping to improve our overall economic well-being over the past two decades.





Tunica has come a long way from a stoplight town. Gaming tax revenue has helped improve the infrastructure of our county, supporting everything from improved roads and expanded sewer systems to a state-of-the-art airport. U.S. Highway 61, once known as one of America's deadliest highways, is now a safe and expanded four-lane highway. The addition of

I-69 provides a DIRECT LINK from TUNICA COUNTY TO I-55,

allowing tourists easier access to attractions and connecting businesses with the distribution opportunities associated with the Memphis metro region.

The Tunica Airport, once an agricultural airstrip, has been expanded to include a fixed-base operator, full-service terminal and the conveniences of a modern airport. These improvements, along with our expanded runway of 8,500 feet, have turned this asset into the



busiest airport in Mississippi. Over 75,000 annual passengers arrive via regularly chartered aircraft, with our facility poised for the addition of regularly scheduled service.



The dramatic increase in tax revenue as a result of the gaming industry has allowed Tunica's leadership to invest in what matters most — the people of Tunica. With those funds, Tunica's leaders have exercised a two-pronged focus on community investment:

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OUR CITIZENS, AND BUILD PUBLIC FACILITIES THAT HELP STIMULATE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH. Efforts have focused on providing opportunities for our youth, providing services for our elderly, and creating a climate conducive to both job growth and diversification in employment opportunities.

Tunica has invested in our young people through dramatic improvements in our education system. New and renovated schools, increased per-pupil expenditures, and the establishment of after-school community and recreational facilities have provided the youth in Tunica with a better support system to enable them to reach their potential and positively contribute to our community in the long-term.

Efforts to ensure a quality of life for our senior citizens have also been a priority over the past **20 YEARS**. New recreational programs, senior-assistance programs and housing rehabilitation programs have all been successful in assisting in our community's elderly and providing a quality of life not imagined just years earlier.

In addition to our focus on **YOUTH** and **SENIOR CITIZENS**, Tunica also invests heavily in recruiting and developing our human capital. In partnership with Northwest Community College, we have begun a Manufacturing Basic Skills course to provide individuals with the skills they need to be competitive when seeking jobs in the newer high-tech and high-skill job fields. Jobs in manufacturing pay very well by today's standards, and people who have the required skills can generally be hired quickly and be promoted quickly. In Tunica County, we want to be known not only as the best place for industry, but also the best place for employees.



Throughout gaming's **20 YEARS IN TUNICA**, there have been countless casino renovations and changes, but area casino destinations' mission to provide travelers with a memorable getaway has stayed the same.

NINE

properties in Tunica provide numerous gaming options, live music and entertainment, upscale and casual dining, spas and golf.

6,000 HOTEL ROOMS

9 PROPERTIES

10-12 MILLION VISITORS ANNUALLY

12,000 CASINO EMPLOYEES

Casinos are, without a doubt, the biggest driver of tourism in Tunica. But with the revenue they provide, Tunica has made great strides in expanding the options available to visitors.

Over the past 10 years, Tunica County has **INVESTED MILLIONS** in developing additional attractions to supplement the casinos' offerings and broaden the area's appeal, such as the

**TUNICA RIVERPARK,
TUNICA NATIONAL GOLF & TENNIS,
THE TUNICA ARENA & EXPO CENTER
AND THE GATEWAY TO THE BLUES VISITORS CENTER.**

We will continue to focus on creating a diverse tourism environment that caters to visitors with a wide range of interests in order to ensure the ongoing relevance of Tunica as a destination.



★ JAMES DUNN ★ LARRY GREGORY ★

“ One of the major reasons gaming was brought in to Mississippi was to encourage the kind of positive change that has occurred in Tunica. The Tunica Miracle shows what happens when good corporate citizens and a community work together. Gaming has not only contributed to the economy of Tunica, but it has consistently carried its weight in total state gaming revenue. ”

– Larry Gregory

Executive Director of the Mississippi Casino Operators Association

“ I have witnessed firsthand the transformation Tunica has experienced over the last two decades due to casino presence. The turnaround Tunica has made a reality is truly an accomplishment that we can step back and be proud of. I’m looking forward to seeing what casino revenue will do for Tunica over the coming years. ”

– James Dunn

Member of the Tunica County Board of Supervisors since 1984



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
INDUSTRY DIVERSIFICATION ★**

THROUGH THE POWER OF GAMING,

Tunica has been able to expand our economic opportunities through infrastructure improvements, enhance our quality of life through community investment and broaden our appeal through tourism investment. And though the effect of gaming on our community has indeed been miraculous, it is really only the beginning. Our opportunity now lies in leveraging the strong foundation that has been built as a result of the gaming industry to continue the Tunica Miracle through economic development and industry diversification.

In **2000**, the county hired a professional economic developer whose mission was to prepare Tunica County for the next step by identifying and developing industrial properties, networking with state development officials and preparing a marketing and recruitment plan. The result of this planning was the 2,200-acre Tunica Mega Site, a “shovel-ready” site that has already attracted considerable interest from corporations looking to relocate or expand.

GREEN TECH AUTOMOTIVE began site-preparation work on 100 acres within the Tunica Mega Site in March of 2012. The site-prep work is nearly completed, with construction soon to begin in preparation for the company’s planned January 2014 start date. Green Tech will build neighborhood electric vehicles and then transition into hybrid vehicles. The company will

**SPEND OVER
\$100
MILLION**



**AND EMPLOY
APPROXIMATELY
350 IN ITS
FIRST PHASE.**

German pipe manufacturer Schulz Xtruded Products has also established a presence in Tunica. SXP manufactures a stainless steel seamless pipe that is used in the oil and gas industry. After a complex construction process, the company began commercial production on January 1, 2012. SXP will invest a minimum of

\$300,000,000

and will hire 500 employees at peak production — likely around 2016.

TUNICA COUNTY

is now recognized internationally for its commitment to industry and as an attractive place to locate. Our business-friendly climate, our ability to attract workers and our location make us very competitive for new projects. Our current project list is very active, and we are hopeful of more announcements soon.

**ACTUAL INVESTMENT
TO DATE IS OVER**

**\$400
MILLION.**



★ TUNICA TIMELINE ★

1990

- Mississippi Legislature legalizes dockside gambling along the Mississippi River.

- Gaming is legalized in Tunica County without opposition.

1991

1992

- Splash Casino, Tunica's first casino, opens at Mhoon Landing.

- Harrah's Tunica and Bally's Casino open.

1993

1994

- Hollywood, Resorts and Sam's Town open.

1995

- Horseshoe opens.
- Methodist Clinic opens.

1996

- Fitz opens.
- Highway 61, funded by the Casino Road Fund, opens as a four-lane highway from Tennessee to Highway 304 in Tunica.

1997

- Gold Strike opens.
- Tunica Convention and Visitors Bureau opens.

1998

- Renovations to the Tunica County Courthouse are completed.

1999

- Welcome Center and Office Complex on Highway 61 opens.
- Casino Factory Shoppes opens.

- Tunica Arena & Expo Center opens.

2000



★ TUNICA TIMELINE ★

2002

- Tunica County Museum opens.

2003

- Tunica Airport opens as a transportation point for corporate and regional aircraft.
- Tunica Queen docks at Tunica RiverPark.
- Tunica County establishes 2,200-acre Mega Site to expand economic development opportunities.

- Major expansion of Tunica Airport is completed. Expansion extends the airport's runway length to 7,000 feet and allows it to accommodate larger aircraft.
- Tunica RiverPark and Tunica National Golf & Tennis open.

2004

2005

- First major aircraft, a Boeing 737, lands at Tunica Airport.
This landing opens the door for commercial service at Tunica Airport.

2006

- Harrah's buys Grand Casino, Horseshoe and Sheraton.
- I-69 joins Highway 61 and I-55; this addition cuts driving time in half from I-55 to Highway 61.

2008

- Grand Casino becomes a part of Harrah's.

- Tunica Roadhouse (formerly Sheraton) opens, with casino-floor, restaurant, lobby and entry-suite renovations.

2009

2011

- The Great Flood shuts down gaming in North Mississippi for the first time ever.
- Gateway to the Blues Visitors Center opens.

2012

- Green Tech Automotive begins site preparation for an automobile plant at the Tunica Mega Site.
- Schulz Xtruded Products begins full commercial production of metal pipes.





Live it up just down the road

TUNICA COUNTY

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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

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