



Vicksburg
Mississippi



SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION

FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

SUBMIT TO

City of Vicksburg
Attn: Office of the City Clerk
P. O. Box 150
Vicksburg, MS 39181-0150

Or email:
dnickson@vicksburg.org

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE FORWARDED TO THE COMMITTEE

Organization Name: Ms Business Journal

Physical Address of the Event: 125 Court Street, Cleveland, Ms 38732

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 117, Cleveland, Ms 38732

Telephone Number: 662-843-2700

Website Address: www.msbusinessjournal.com

Primary Contact Name: Kristy Kitchings

Title: Director of Sales Telephone No: 662-843-2700

Email Address: kristy@coopwood.net

Secondary Contact Name: Jack Criss

Title: Executive Director Telephone No: 662-843-2700

Email Address: jack@coopwood.net

If you are applying on behalf of another organization, please provide contact information for that organization:

Organization: _____

Contact Name: _____

Telephone No: _____ Email Address: _____

Complete The Following Questions Regarding Your Request For City Sponsorship Consideration

Event Date: _____
(Must be between October 1, 2025-September 30, 2026)

1. Is your request for:
(Check all that apply)

In-Kind Sponsorship (specify in question 6)

Cash Sponsorship Amount Requested: \$ 650.00

2. Briefly state your organization's mission and purpose.

April issue of the MS Business Journal will spotlight senior living and retirement communities in Ms. The sponsorship is for the 1/2 page ad promoting Vicksburg as a MS Certified Retirement Community

3. Describe the event in which funds are being requested to support.

The funds will used for a 1/2 page print advertisement in the April issue of the MS Business Journal April issue Senior Living and Retirement.

4. Explain how your organization and/or event further a charitable cause, economic or community growth, or serve a public interest?

Our publication is a statewide publication with over 10,000 subscribers that will benefit our readers in potentially choosing Vicksburg as a choice for their retirement destination

5. Provide detail on how the requested funds will be used support the event partially or in full.

The funds will be used to pay for the print advertisement in the Ms Business Journal.

6. Select all in-kind services the organization is requesting for the event:

- a) Park and facilities fees
- b) Park Personnel (maintenance and building attendants)
- c) Police Personnel
- d) Fire Personnel
- e) Other services not listed (please specify) Print Advertising
- f) Not requesting in-kind services

7. Identify and provide all other funding requests for this event. Provide attachments if needed.

Source	Pending	Approved	Dollar Amount
Ms Business Journal	650.00		\$650.00
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$

8. Anticipated Attendance: _____

9. Explain in detail how the event, program, or exhibition marketing plan will promote the City of Vicksburg.

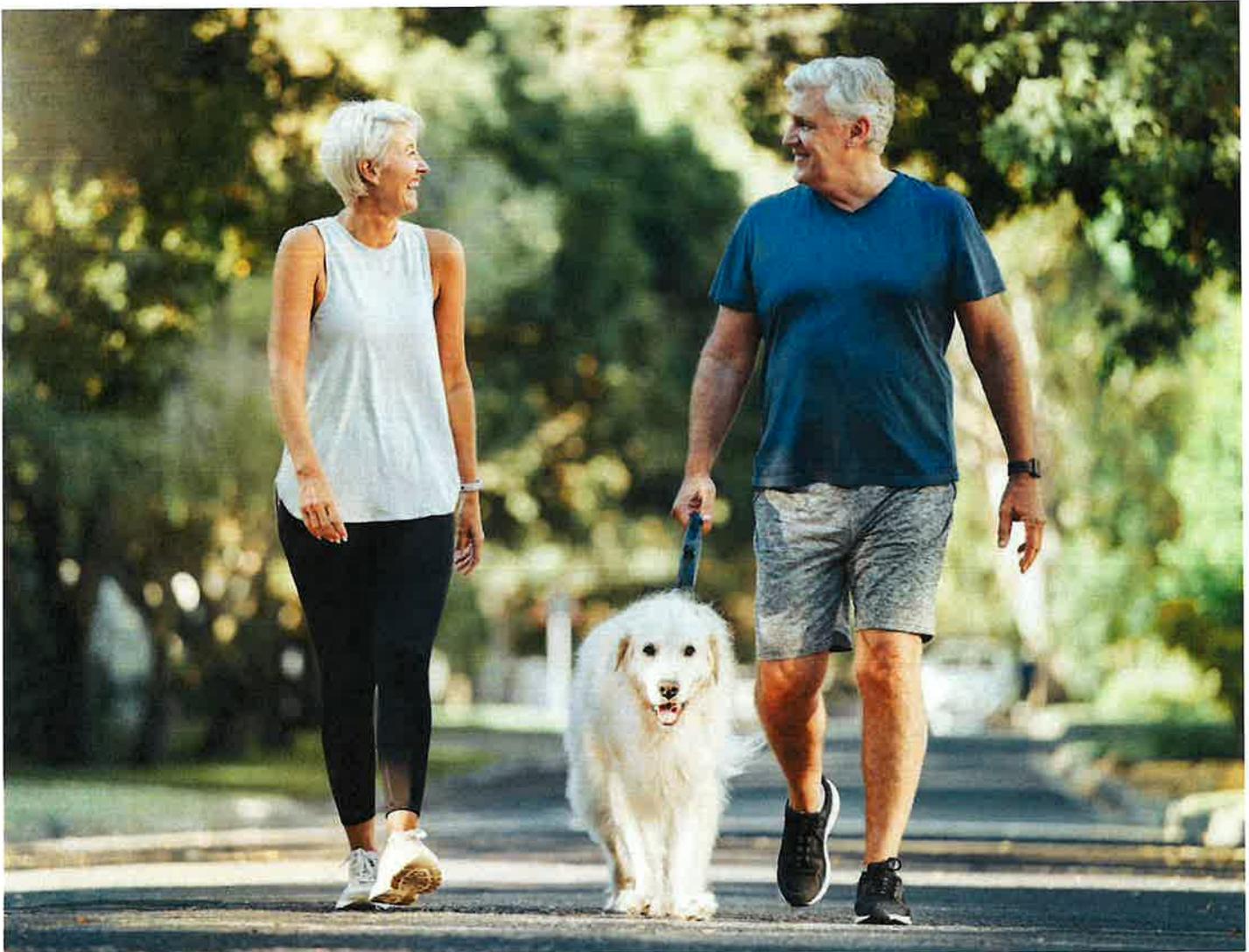
INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

The information provided in this application is for the purpose of obtaining sponsorship funding from the City of Vicksburg on behalf of the undersigned. Each undersigned representative warrants the information provided within this application and its attachments are true and complete until a written notice of change is provided to the City of Vicksburg. The City of Vicksburg is authorized to make all inquiries necessary to verify the accuracy of the provided information.

Kristy Kitchings/Ms Business Journal
Requestor

3/18/26
Date

Printed Name of Requestor from Above Kristy Kitchings/MS Business Journal



The Magnolia State, and its 12 Certified Retirement Communities, offers a plethora of benefits, activities, and opportunities for seniors and retirees.

Retirement in the Magnolia State

A treasure for current residents and those looking to relocate

By MARK H. STOWERS

Mississippi is a treasure to those who live here; but for those considering retirement, the Magnolia State is becoming a treasure chest of affordable fun and amenities that can be enjoyed with a smaller bite out of the retirement world to find.

With so much to offer, from sandy beaches to lakes and rivers for outdoor fun (including award-winning golf courses and trails of every kind), to music

like the Blues to country—evidence abounds in the wonderfulness that is Mississippi.

But this mecca of retirement riches didn't just come together overnight. The treasures were there but needed to be unearthed for the rest of the retirement world to find.

In the 1990s, the Governor's office focused in on a plan to show people from outside of Mississippi just how affordable, safe and fun retiring in Mississippi could be. Madison Mayor Mary Hawkins Butler

chaired a task force that helped provide retirees with more reasons to spend their golden years as Mississippians.

“(The late) Jimmy Heidel was our Director of Economic Development and we had people on the task force that were from other parts of the state. We put together some things that retirees were looking for. We understood that Florida wasn't the best place, as some believed, and that not everybody wanted to retire in Florida because there was too much sand. A lot of people wanted to see the

greenery and the trees and have a different setting for where their home would be. We decided to promote Mississippi as a place to retire,” explained Butler.

The 1990s task force crunched numbers and figured out that “a retiree's investment would yield more to a community than 3.1 factory workers. They shop for themselves, they shop for their kids and grandkids and they travel!”

The key components to attracting retirees included having close and

accessible medical care along with being in a safe community. Mayor Butler took those things to heart in Madison and with help from key city staff, started implementing those factors.

“We have a great medical facility in our city, so that is available,” she said. “And Madison has been listed on numerous occasions as Mississippi’s safest city. And we have also been listed nationally as a safe city. We’ve been listed on of the Top Ten Best Cities to live in the U.S. Naples, Florida was first and we were seventh. We tout that. We want retirees to come.”

She also noted that are very engaged in the community.

“They volunteer, they serve on committees, they’re very active and they just give back to the community.”

She noted that Madison’s population is 38% retirees and that the city first focused on building housing when she began her mayoral tenure in 1981 and the city had 2,000 residents. Now more than 40 years later, the city has parks, trails and sidewalks connecting residential and business areas and has a large focus on retirees with local events. St. Catherine’s Village, a retirement center, is a complete care home from independent living to memory care.

This Jackson suburb is one of the fastest-growing cities in Mississippi and offers a suburban lifestyle with easy access



Autumn Cummings



Billy Nowell



Chris Rials



Jessica Byrd

to Jackson’s urban amenities like shopping, dining and healthcare facilities. The city is often praised for its well-maintained parks and recreational opportunities.

The Mississippi Development Authority picked up the baton on promoting the Magnolia State as a retirement haven with their Welcome Home Mississippi program and certified 12 cities as Certified Retirement Communities. The 12 are Aberdeen, Brandon, Cleveland, Hattiesburg, Madison, Natchez, New Albany, Oxford, Picayune, Southaven, Starkville and Vicksburg.

Overall, the state has retirement appeal for its affordable cost of living, mild climate, southern hospitality and community feel, scenic beauty and outdoor activities, tax benefits for retirees, low property taxes, rich history and culture, healthcare access, peaceful rural

and urban options and affordable entertainment and dining.

Lower than national averages for home prices and rentals allows retirees to get more for their hard earned and saved up retirement dollars. Add in the lower cost of living and a mild climate makes it an ideal situation for retirees escaping harsher, colder weather allowing more outdoor time year round.

Mississippi also has a strong sense of community and a reputation for Southern hospitality. Retirees can expect a welcoming environment and the chance to become part of close-knit, friendly communities. With natural attractions stretching from north to south, Mississippi has the Gulf Coast, lakes, forests and state parks. Whether fishing, boating, hiking or birdwatching, Mississippi has a variety of outdoor activities to offer. The state also is filled with beautiful historical architecture and

small-town charm.

A tax-friendly state for retirees, Mississippi does not tax Social Security benefits and provides exemptions for certain forms of retirement income, such as pensions.

With attractive tax burdens, Mississippi also combines low property taxes to create a desirable and affordable option for those on fixed incomes. The state’s rich history includes contributions to music, literature, Civil Rights and more. Museums throughout Mississippi highlight this rich heritage.

Additionally, the state has healthcare facilities and medical centers that cater to retirees, particularly in larger cities like Jackson and Gulfport. While it may not have as many world-renowned hospitals as larger states, there are still reputable options for medical care.

Mississippi offers both the bright lights and fun atmosphere of city life or the slower pace and calmness of rural communities. Home to a range of affordable dining options, particularly in Southern and seafood cuisine combined with accessible and affordable entertainment is showcased at local festivals, outdoor concerts and historical tours.

Ultimately, the decision to retire in Mississippi depends on individual preferences for lifestyle, climate, budget

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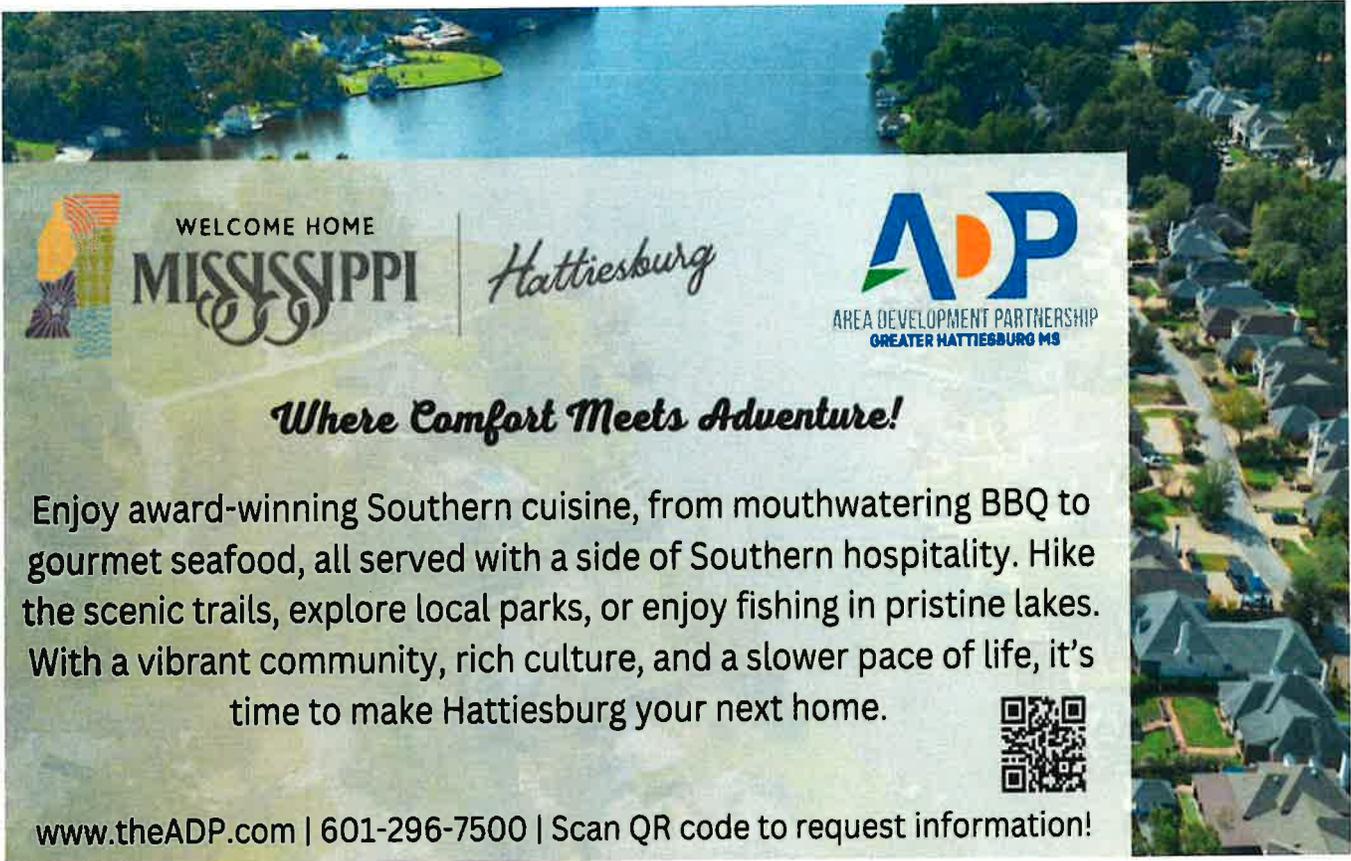
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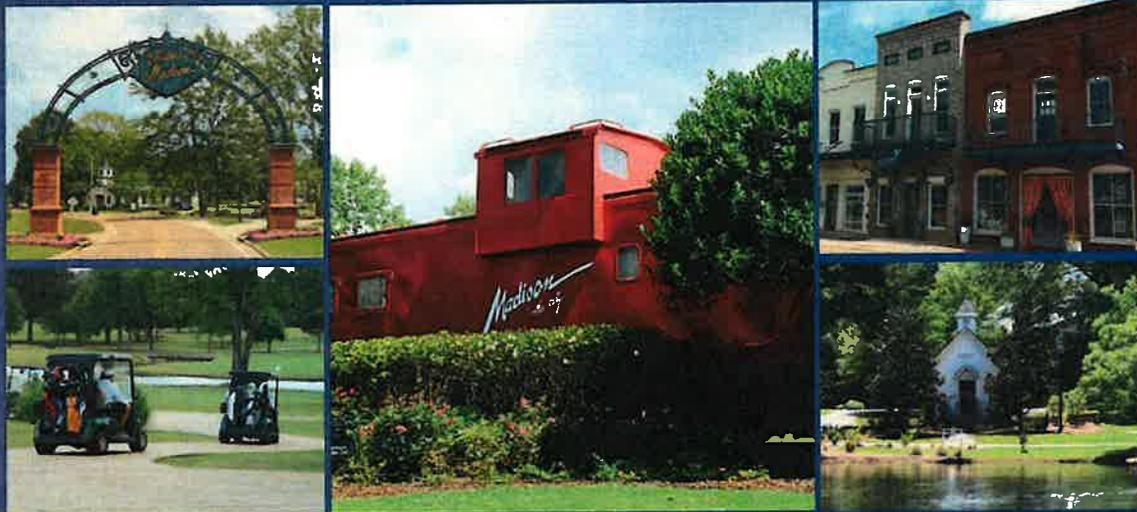
Best Place to Raise a Family in Mississippi



#7 Best Place to Live in the United States - Scholaroo

Madison, Mississippi

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Madison offers its retirees a charming suburban hometown with fabulous restaurants and a wide selection of shopping including well-known retail and unique locally owned boutiques. Safety and a sense of belonging are at the heart of Madison, ensuring a tranquil lifestyle in a welcoming small-town atmosphere. The city offers a variety of opportunities to enjoy an active lifestyle, including a thriving retirement program, beautiful parks for an afternoon walk and an active community filled with year-round events.



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SPECIAL REPORT SENIOR LIVING

and interests. Those of a certain age seeking a laid-back, affordable and friendly environment could find Mississippi an ideal retirement destination.

But where exactly? The state is filled with destinations that vary in size and amenities. The Mississippi Development Authority's list of 12 Certified Retirement Communities run the gamut to fill any retirees' needs and desires.

College towns offer a gamut of fun, restaurants, culture and much more. Oxford, Starkville, Hattiesburg and Cleveland offer their unique environments that many retirees find of special interest.

Oxford, for instance, has long been a popular retirement destination. Home to the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), the town has a vibrant cultural scene with art galleries, music, festivals and excellent restaurants. The small-town feel combined with the amenities of a university town makes it attractive to retirees who want access to cultural and social activities.

Rosie Vassallo, Director of Retiree Attraction for the Oxford-Lafayette County Economic Development Foundation, explained more of the uniqueness of Oxford for retirees.

"Since the inception of the Retiree Attraction Program in Mississippi in 1993, Oxford has been featured in hundreds of news commentaries, national publications and online stories as one of the top retirement destinations in the country," said Vassallo. "Oxford offers an exceptional retirement lifestyle, recapturing the tranquility and community spirit that many recall as a cherished part of the past, especially retirees."

Recognized as a cultural hub for Southern arts, literature and intellectual



Mary Hawkins Butler



Rhonda Brown



Rosie Vassallo

life, the city boasts a strong literary climate celebrating distinguished writers such as John Grisham and William Faulkner. And Ole Miss has plenty of appeal and connection to the city.

"The University's relationship with the community is truly unparalleled, with alumni eager to return to their beloved alma mater. Ole Miss offers a wealth of cultural and educational opportunities, making Oxford a vibrant hub of learning and engagement," she said.

Retirees get discounts on classes as well. Plenty of activity revolves around SEC sports seasons and the Gertrude C. Ford Performing Arts Center on campus which offers plentiful culture options. Oxford balances small-town appeal with modern convenience.

"The historic Oxford Square is home to nationally acclaimed restaurants, charming boutiques, art galleries, law offices, banks and a renowned independent bookstore, Square Books, celebrated as America's number one bookstore," said Vassallo.

Baptist Memorial Hospital-North Mississippi offers top-tier medical care with state-of-the-art facilities, renowned specialists and a commitment to patient-centered care, Oxford stands as a premier destination for healthcare excellence.

Of its 27,000 residents, 25% are seniors and the retiree population continues to grow. Senior Living Communities include the Beau Ridge at Oxford Farms located just south of the historic Square. Beau Ridge offers one and two-bedroom apartments with personal entrances and private balconies. Full kitchens, full-size washer/dryer in each apartment, in-house culinary team, complimentary transportation and housekeeping as well as physical, occupational and speech therapy are also available at the facility.

Heritage Park Apartments (55+ Independent Living Community) includes a Pool, clubhouse, gazebos and walking trail and other amenities are geared toward retirees. There are also assisted living and skilled nursing facilities in town including The Pinnacle of Oxford with assisted living, memory care and short-term/respite care.

Other facilities in town include the Ellison of Oxford (assisted living), The Magnolia Commons (assisted living, memory care and short term/respite care) and the Oxford Health and Rehab that offers skilled nursing, long-term residential care and rehabilitation.

The city offers free public transit for easy access to shopping and medical care. "With its blend of cultural richness,

intellectual vibrancy and high-quality senior living options, Oxford continues to be a premier retirement destination, offering the perfect balance of relaxation, engagement and Southern charm," said Vassallo.

Starkville also offers the benefits of a university town and its attractions along with rural highlighted quite living. The city provides opportunities that even larger communities can't boast.

Pleasant and affordable, and the home of the Mississippi State University, the cost of living in Starkville is about 14% lower than the national average. Everything from housing to health to transportation falls below the national average. The median home cost in Starkville is below \$200,000, making homeownership a comfortable reality for many local retirees. In addition, Mississippi offers low property tax rates with substantial exemptions for those over 65.

Retirees seeking medical care will find just what they need at Oktibbeha County Hospital (OCH) Regional Medical Center in Starkville. The medical center is designated a Level III Trauma Center. OCH Regional Medical Center has over 300 doctors and nurses with 20 medical specialties, including urology, gastroenterology and pulmonology covering every medical need.

Starkville's proximity to the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson and UAB Health Systems in Birmingham means that world-class medical centers are just a couple of hours away if the need for more specialized treatment arises.

An outdoorsman's paradise, hiking, hunting, fishing, bird watching, canoeing or kayaking, or golf exists in and around Starkville. And the milder Mississippi climate allows year-round outdoor recreation. One way to enjoy that is at the Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, a 42,500-acre reserve with bottomland and upland woodlands which is home to various wildlife, including several species of birds, quail, deer and turkey.

Starkville's burgeoning historic downtown offers shopping and dining options that offer hundreds of worthy reasons to leave the house and explore.

The Starkville community has several assisted living and nursing home facilities and home health care available, as well as assistance and hospice service providers. In addition, the GTPDD's Area Agency on Aging provides services to seniors that include the Bridge to Independence program, home-delivered meals and nutrition program for homebound seniors, insurance counseling, legal referrals, respite services and more.

And, as home to the Bulldogs, retirees are afforded educational opportunities at a discount.

Known as the "Hub City," Hattiesburg offers a balance of small-town living with access to big-city conveniences. The cost of

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living is low and it has a thriving arts community, good healthcare facilities and plenty of green spaces.

Hattiesburg is a growing city with a plethora of retirement communities and senior services. This affordable -iving south Mississippi mecca has excellent healthcare, a growing cultural scene and a friendly community.

Boasting a booming arts community with local productions at the Saenger Theater and several arts festivals throughout the year, Hattiesburg is also home to the University of Southern Mississippi and William Carey University.

An eclectic collection of athletic events, museums and symphony and theater performances also take place in town. The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, for example, offers enriching programs and learning opportunities for active adults.

A premier healthcare hub of South Mississippi with two state-of-the-art hospitals, Forrest General Hospital and Merit Health Wesley and the state's largest private multi-specialty group practice, Hattiesburg Clinic.

Long Leaf Trace, a 41 mile running, biking and equestrian trail, 27 state parks within a day's drive and an abundance of rivers, streams and lakes for boating, canoeing, kayaking or fishing keep residents and visitors outside and happy. There are also three nationally known



golf courses: Canebrake Country Club, Hattiesburg Country Club and Timberton Golf Club.

The home of Delta State University, Cleveland, referred to as the Diamond of the Delta continues to grow and attract retirees who crave a small town atmosphere with big city amenities. Cleveland Mayor Billy Nowell explained more about his hometown.

"The quality of life issues are so good here that with Delta State and all the athletic programs that we have," said

Mayor Nowell. "It's also just a fantastic place for hunting and fishing. We have plenty of activities here in town available to participate in and pickleball is really taking over. We really just a great quality of life here in Cleveland."

With independent living available and plenty of affordable housing, Cleveland continues to draw retirees' attention.

The white sands of the Mississippi Gulf Coast offer a background that is second to none for retirees who enjoy outdoors, great seafood and plenty of activities.

The region offers a laid-back lifestyle, with a wide variety of outdoor activities like boating, fishing and beautiful beaches. Biloxi, for instance, has a rich history and offers entertainment options like casinos, golf courses and great seafood restaurants.

Another popular Gulf Coast destination, Gulfport, offers coastal charm, as well. Beautiful beaches, a revitalized downtown area and numerous leisure activities for retirees, such as fishing, boating and golf. The cost of living is affordable and there are plenty of entertainment options for retirees who want to stay active.

Vicksburg has a rich history and heritage and offers plenty for the retiree to consider making this their retirement zip code. Christine J. Rials, M.A., Chamber and Corporate Programs Director for the Vicksburg Warren Chamber of Commerce explained the appeal of the historic city.

"Vicksburg offers a variety of housing options for retirees aged 55 and older, catering to diverse preferences and needs. Our town has charming historic homes along with single-family houses in peaceful neighborhoods," said Rials. "Those looking for a low-maintenance home will find that our patio homes are perfect for easy living."

There's also a number of apartments and condominiums available. In

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particular, Downtown Vicksburg provides stylish apartment living with the convenience of being close to shops, restaurants and cultural attractions. In addition, luxury high rise condos are under construction.

For those who want a more tranquil environment, Vicksburg also offers a number of apartment options in the county of Warren where it is located. For those seeking a more supportive environment, the city also offers a reputable independent living community in addition to skilled nursing facilities for those who require comprehensive medical care and assistance with daily activities.

Healthcare services for seniors are abundant, ensuring they receive the care and support they deserve. From state-of-the-art rehabilitation facilities to compassionate home care options, the community is well-equipped to meet the diverse needs of its elderly population.

The Heritage House of Vicksburg offers a state-of-the-art rehabilitation gym, hydrotherapy spa rooms, dietitian approved meal plans, community outings and religious services. In addition, it provides support for rehabilitation therapies, wound care, memory care and hospice care. The skilled nursing facilities offer a number of services and include physical and occupational therapy, speech

therapy, trach and respiratory care.

Vicksburg offers an ideal blend of scenic beauty, rich history and a welcoming community. Nestled along the Mississippi River, Vicksburg provides breathtaking river views, charming neighborhoods and a relaxed pace of life that appeals to many seeking a serene retirement experience.

The city's historic sites, cultural attractions and vibrant arts scene are a significant draw for retirees. From exploring the Vicksburg National Military Park to visiting local museums, attending live performances and enjoying seasonal festivals, there's always something to do. Annual events like the Mardi Gras Parade, Southern Cultural Foundation Center's Spring Classics in the Courtyard, Miss Mississippi competition, Independence Day Fireworks Extravaganza, "Gold in the Hills" play, Old Courthouse Spring/Fall Flea Market, Porchfest and Downtown's Christmas Parade offer unique experiences in Vicksburg.

The Catfish Row Museum is a cultural heritage museum that showcases the diverse aspects of Vicksburg, including its music, history, storytelling, food heritage, worship and visual arts. By providing an immersive experience into the city's rich cultural tapestry, the Catfish Row Museum offers retirees engaging

opportunities for learning and community involvement.

Fishing and boating on the Mississippi River, biking along gravel trails and hunting in Warren County's picturesque terrain offers recreational opportunities. Eight pickleball courts make it easy for seniors to stay active and social. For golf lovers, Vicksburg Country Club and Clear Creek Golf Course provide beautiful, well-maintained courses perfect for a relaxing day on the green.

Vicksburg's commitment to senior care, active living and cultural engagement makes it a very desirable place for retirees to enjoy their golden years. Whether embracing nature, staying socially active, or seeking top-quality healthcare services, Vicksburg truly has it all.

Each city offers plenty to do but for those who are looking for a retirement community, they are abundant across the Magnolia State. The Blake at Flowood offers assisted living staffed 24/7 with nurses and caregivers. The care is set up so that residents can be as independent as they desire. Plenty of freedom, chef-prepared meals three times a day and activities and day trips keep retirees on the move and living.

The Waterford on Highland Colony in Ridgeland offers independent living for those 62 and older. Described as a cruise

ship, there's plenty of great food and fun activities for everyone. The Waterford has all-day dining with home-cooked meals to order. Transportation to doctor appointments and other activities is available and residents can bring their own vehicles as well. Pets are allowed and The Waterford has vet who visits once a month along with a pet groomer.

Day excursions are popular with casino trips, restaurants, Capital tours and sporting events are offered throughout the year for residents. The 118 apartments have top notch appliances and are offered in both one- and two-bedroom sizes.

With so many options for independent and assisted living, Prime Care Nursing helps facilities across the state with top level nursing staff. RN, LPN, CNAs and caregivers are provided to fit the need at each facility.

And for those retirees who are looking for an annual vacation, McGehee Cruise & Vacation offer trips and cruises to fit any budget. Jessica Byrd noted that since Covid restrictions ended, travel is bustling. Cruises and trips to Europe have been trending, especially for seniors.

Mississippi is a unique and affordable best place for retirees to spend their golden years soaking up the sun, enjoying the outdoors and living life to the fullest.

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Steeped cultural, social, and educational opportunities for residents and visitors alike, Cleveland is the home of Delta State University, a regional institution that provides numerous continuing educational amenities and the fiercest anthropomorphic vegetable mascot on the college circuit - The Fighting Okra! Cleveland offers high-octane recreation, small-town service, and award winning restaurants to everyone who chooses to call Cleveland home in the storied Mississippi Delta!