

The Clinton Courier

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"Good news you can use"

New development already boosting interest in Clinton

By Randy Bell

As site work continues on Clinton's most eagerly-awaited business development near Mississippi College, the city is already reaping some benefits from the buzz the project is creating.

Director of Economic Development Daniel Lang says he's getting a lot of calls from companies who've heard about the plans for the property between I-20 and Highway 80 and who are interested in becoming part of a commercial building boom here.

"They're looking at Clinton because of that project," Lang says.

While they may not be among the tenants who locate at the site, Lang says the companies want to take advantage of the traffic the development draws to the city and could wind up opening businesses nearby. Some might even move quickly to be in place before the MC project is completed - but that could involve finding an existing building in which to locate, and that could be a problem in Clinton.

"It's a good challenge to have," says Lang. But he told the Board of Aldermen at their September 6 meeting that the city doesn't have a lot of suitable



Photos by Randy Bell

Work continues on the clearing of the land between I-20 and Highway 80, where an upscale mixed-use development is being planned.

buildings and sites. He's trying to get an updated list of buildings that are currently available or could be soon.

The college's Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer Laura Jackson says clearing trees to make way for streets, utilities and lights at the development site has been the first step as they work with their private developer partners.

"Our focus for probably the next twelve to twenty-four months will be getting that infrastructure in place," she says. But she says they don't have total control over the timeline. "The

Hampstead area to see more development

Home Depot, Sonny's BBQ and the Fairfield Inn and Suites could have new neighbors soon. Daniel Lang, Clinton's director of economic development, told the Board of Aldermen on September 6 that one parcel of land off Hampstead Boulevard has been sold for commercial development, and there are contracts on two other lots. Lang called it "really exciting news," but he says it may be 2024 before those projects are completed.

weather's got to cooperate."

She says people need to realize the developers are working with raw land.

"The only thing that's ever really been on that property is the [MC] President's Home, which was moved years ago."

The City's role in the project is to serve as a conduit for the \$8 million in state funds earmarked for the infrastructure, and Lang says he'll help to recruit tenants for the development.

Beyond that, Lang says, "We want to make sure we don't get in the way of their plans."

Price takes over as Clinton's new director of communications and tourism

By Randy Bell

Marlee Price grew up in a small town and thought she wanted to move to a big city. She took a job at an insurance company in Jackson but grew tired of the daily commute to and from Brookhaven. And when she started looking around for a place to put down roots and raise her son, she decided that Clinton would be the perfect spot. That was nine years ago.

Now, her new job is to help promote Clinton and keep its citizens informed. The Board of Aldermen approved Price's hiring as the City's communications and tourism director at its meeting September 6, and she began her new duties less than a week later.

Years ago, Price had visited Clinton a few times for church events at Mississippi College.

"I always loved this little community,"

she says. "It's accessible to big things, but you still have that small town feel."

In her new role, Price wants to focus on "engaging the community and prospects who would want to live here" and "telling the story of Clinton."

"I would say my goal for the first few weeks in this position is to listen more than I talk. I really want to get input from every department, to figure out what their vision is and learn how I can help them communicate that vision."

She'll be working to revitalize the City's website to make it easier to navigate. Price has heard complaints that people sometimes have a hard time finding what they're looking for, and she

wants to make sure that the information is easily accessible.

Price says her experience in a range of positions at Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company has helped to prepare her for the new responsibilities in Clinton. She's worked as marketing media lead, digital marketing specialist, product marketing specialist, advertising specialist, graphic designer and business analyst.

She earned an Associate of Arts degree from Copiah-Lincoln Community College, a bachelor's degree in public relations from the University of Southern Mississippi and an Associate of Applied Science: Graphic Design Technology from Hinds Community College.



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