

Will Margaritaville revitalize east Biloxi? - WLOX

Written by Administrator
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By Doug Walker – [bio](#) | [email](#)

BILOXI, MS (WLOX) - Katrina leveled east Biloxi five years ago. And signs of the devastation are still there: piles of rubble, empty slabs, and fire hydrants that protect no homes.

Martie Bryant hopes a new casino at the end of 5th

Street will be the start of real recovery in her neighborhood.

"We need something down here to make stuff get better," Bryant said. "It's bad now. I've been here 25 years and it went from a busy street to a dead street."

Up the street, Elaine Parker agrees with her neighbor, but only to a point.

"We need something here, but is a casino the answer?" Parker asked. "It looks like it's the only answer for the east end is a casino."

While most people who live in east Biloxi believe a new casino, built on the 5th Street site would be good for the city's economy, they're not so sure it would actually make people move back to the Point and rebuild their homes.

You can put Frank Parker in that camp. Every day he spends some quality time with his son, but wonders if the youngster will leave east Biloxi when he grows up, even with a new casino.

"As far as helping the Point, I really don't see where it's going to bring more residents or things like that," Parker said. "There's just too many obstacles for the local people to have somebody move in."

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Even with new development, Elaine said Hurricane Katrina did something that can never be undone.

"It's cleaned out. It gave us a cleansing down here, but I miss my neighbors."

Developers of Margaritaville say the \$48 million resort could be under construction by the spring. But before that happens, the city and the Gaming Commission must sign off on the plans. Those hearings could be held as soon as February.

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