

Hattiesburg Hosts Grand Opening of Chain Park



Former Hattiesburg mayor Bobby Chain had to wait nearly a decade to see the 37 acres of undeveloped land between Bouie Street and the Leaf River be transformed into the public gem he had envisioned.

But tonight, Chain's deferred dream finally will be realized with the grand opening of Chain Park at Twin Forks - the city's new recreational fun spot for east Hattiesburg.

"It has been something I wanted to do since I purchased the land back in 1982 for that purpose," Chain said. "And it is outstanding. It's as much as I could have hoped for."

The city broke ground on the park's first phase last summer - nine years after Chain donated the land. After several years, plans for the park gained traction in 2006 when - under the direction of Mayor Johnny DuPree - the city received a \$1.1 million enhancement grant from the Mississippi Department of Transportation. The enhancement grant funded the more than \$1.2 million set of amenities that was included in phase one of the project.

The first phase includes lighted walking trails and pathways, playground equipment, a boardwalk and manicured landscaping. Future phases will include additional walking paths, a pavilion, Mississippi 42 access and an amphitheater.