

GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI

The following is the tax rates from 1915 to 1920 for both City and County on property within the City of Gulfport, which is typical of the conditions in all of the other cities and towns in the County, to-wit:

G U L F P O R T

YEAR	CITY	COUNTY	TOTALS
1915	13 mills	12.81	25.81
1916	17 "	18.20	35.20
1917	17 "	21.34	38.34
1918	17.5	20.22	37.72
1919	19.75	20.20	39.95
1920	21.75	30.75	51.75

You will notice from the above that the tax rates for 1920 was five and two-tenths per cent and is based upon a rather high valuation. This will be made clear to you by considering the assessment of an average beach home. Very few of them are worth less than Six thousand Dollars and the average would be approximately \$8,000. The usual assessed valuation of a property worth \$8,000 is from five to six thousand and this at five and two-tenths per cent produces \$260.00 per year in taxes. In other words it costs a man \$21.00 per month to live in his own beach home. I mention this in order that you may understand the difficulties to be met in order to secure the necessary funds to carry out the Spanish Trail project in Harrison County, as you indicated it to me. I anticipate from what you told me that the bridge across Back Bay Biloxi will cost approximately \$50,000; the bridge across Bay St. Louis not less than \$500,000; ten miles of beach protection at \$30,000 per mile would cost \$300,000; 20 miles of road improvements at \$25,000 per mile would cost \$500,000. In order to complete the project One Million six hundred thousand dollars would be required. Of which Harrison County would be required to put up at least \$800,000. A bond issue of this size at this time taking into consideration the bonds now outstanding would increase the rates of taxation on property in this county to about eight per cent which would practically amount to a confiscation of a property, as no business man would care to own real property anywhere with such a rate of taxation.

In regard to the Laws of Mississippi governing the issuance of bonds: The Laws of 1916, Chap. 174 amending the Laws of 1914 Chap. 176 requires Boards of Supervisors to order an election to ascertain the will of the people on the issuance of road bonds in excess of \$500,000. Sec. 331 of the Code of 1906 relating to the issuance of bonds by County Supervisors prohibits the issuance of bonds to an amount which added to all other bonded indebtedness of a county which exceeds five per cent of the valuation of the