

An advertisement for Watkins Construction & Roofing. The background is a dark blue gradient. On the right side, there is a 3D rendered blue cartoon character with large white eyes, a wide smile showing teeth, and a single raised hand. In the center-left, the company logo is displayed: the word 'WATKINS' in large, bold, white capital letters, with 'CONSTRUCTION & ROOFING' in smaller white capital letters below it, all enclosed within a red-outlined hexagonal shape with a small roof icon above the 'A'. Below the logo, the text 'Industry-leading service, always-on emergency support, and your satisfaction before payment. That's The Watkins Way!' is written in white. At the bottom, a dark blue horizontal band contains the text 'SCHEDULE A CONSULT TODAY. YOUR HOME WILL THANK YOU LATER!' on the left, the phone number '(601) 769-2092' in large white font in the center, and a QR code on the right. Below the QR code, the license number 'LICENSE# AL 55766, 23167-MC' is printed in small white text.

Clarion Ledger

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Spikey Van Dykey performs during the fifth annual It's Pride Y'all festival on East Capitol Street in Jackson on Sept. 20, 2025. The festival returns Oct. 16-18, for its sixth year, with events planned at the Mississippi Museum of Art and Hal & Mal's. AYRTON BRECKENRIDGE/CLARION LEDGER

Jackson's Capital City Pride festival returns Oct. 16-18

Charlie Drape
Mississippi Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Jackson's annual Pride celebration returns this weekend with three days of music, comedy, drag performances and other events at the Mississippi Museum of Art and Hal & Mal's.

Mississippi Capital City Pride's sixth annual "It's Pride, Y'all!" festival runs Friday, Oct. 16, through Sunday, Oct. 18, with the main event scheduled for Saturday at the Mis-

Mississippi Museum of Art.

Saturday's festival, themed "Rooted & Rising," is free and open to all ages. Gates open at noon, with performances and activities scheduled through the evening.

The lineup includes Jackson comedian Rita Brent, rapper Yung Jew-elz, the Jackson Gay Men's Chorus, local bands, drag performers and Mia Starr from Season 18 of "Ru-Paul's Drag Race." Other activities include a drag story hour, live podcast recording, vendors and a dance party.

The weekend begins Friday with a ticketed VIP kickoff party at the museum. Festivities conclude Sunday with a Halloween-themed drag brunch at Hal & Mal's.

VIP weekend passes cost \$100. Admission to Saturday's main festival is free.

For the full schedule and ticket information, visit Mississippi Capital City Pride's website.

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Jackson wants data center safeguards

Charlie Drape
Mississippi Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

There appears to be little disagreement among Jackson's city leaders that data centers need safeguards before they're allowed to move forward.

That includes Mayor John Horhn, who sees the facilities as a potential source of much-needed revenue for a city with limited funds available.

"One of the surefire ways to put a great infusion of cash and resources back into a community of late is data centers," Horhn said in an Oct. 12 one-on-one interview with the Clarion Ledger. "So, I would be crazy as a mayor of this city, which is cash-strapped, not to at least want to consider data centers."

But what those safeguards should look like, where data centers could be built and when the city might settle on permanent rules remain unanswered questions.

Horhn said he wants to ensure the facilities do not negatively affect residents, including through increased utility costs, noise or environmental impacts.

“We don’t want the water to be impacted in a negative way. We don’t want the air quality or noise quality to be impacted in a negative way,” Horhn said. “And we don’t want the utility costs of average citizens who are rate-payers to go up because a data center is part of the uses.”

He also suggested developers could contribute money toward Jackson's water and wastewater systems to help offset potential rate increases. But he did not identify any specific financial commitments from developers.

As for where data centers should be built, Horhn said he has consulted state officials and private-sector experts rather than identify suitable locations himself.

"I have been in contact with folks who are experts, both at the state level and the private sector, who have a better sense of what's an appropriate site for a data center, rather than the mayor saying, 'oh, I want it over there,'" Horhn said.

So, what have city leaders done to move things forward?

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Farish Street restaurateur lands high-profile Jackson museum cafe

Ross Reily
Mississippi Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Nissan Cafe at the Two Mississippi Museums is getting a new operator, with veteran Jackson restaurateur John Tierre taking over the high-profile downtown space that was previously home to celebrity chef Nick Wallace.

State and local leaders are scheduled to hold a ribbon-cutting Friday for the new Nissan Cafe by John Tierre Hospitality, a venture that adds another dining option in Downtown Jackson.

The project is being launched through

a partnership involving the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Visit Jackson, the Greater Jackson Chamber Partnership and others.

"We're excited to welcome Tierre's culinary vision to the Two Mississippi Museums through our partnership with the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services' Business Enterprise Program," MDAH Director Barry White said in a release. "The cafe not only serves our museum visitors, but it also expands job opportunities and adds to the vibrant Downtown Jackson restaurant landscape."

From Farish Street to the museums

For Tierre, the new venture marks an expansion of a hospitality career that has largely been synonymous with Downtown Jackson.

He is best known as the owner of Johnny T's Bistro & Blues, the Farish Street restaurant and entertainment venue that helped inject new life into Jackson's historic Black business district when it opened in 2015. The restaurant quickly became one of the district's most prominent destinations, combining Southern cuisine, live music and nightlife at a time when city leaders and inves-

tors were searching for signs of momentum on Farish Street.

When Johnny T's debuted, crowds packed the venue and overflowed into the surrounding district. The restaurant became a symbol of Farish Street's potential revival and has remained one of Jackson's best-known nightlife destinations.

The Nissan Cafe gives Tierre a second major downtown operation and places his hospitality company inside one of Mississippi's most visible cultural attractions.

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