

PLEASE NOTE

In an effort to gather additional comments and suggestions during the 2040 Long Range Transportation Planning process the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission is making the working draft sections of the plan available to the public.

Additional data collection and analysis is still being conducted and this information will be included in the next draft which is to be released mid April 2013.

Questions or comments can be directed to:
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Regionally Significant Projects

Harbor Shores

During the 2009 TwinCATS LRTP update, construction was underway on the Harbor Shores golf course in Benton Harbor. The cities of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, as well as Benton Charter Township, came together to partner with Harbor Shores Community Redevelopment, Inc. to develop and redevelop over 530 acres of land along the Paw Paw and St. Joseph Rivers near Lake Michigan. The \$500 million, multi-year project is slated in the end to bring over 826 residential units, over 43,000 square feet of commercial and office space, two hotels, a conference center, a water park, and a Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course into the TwinCATS area. The golf course is currently open and hosted the Senior PGA championship in 2012 for the first time.

The next major phase of development within the Harbor Shores project is known as Harbor Village at Harbor Shores. Harbor Village includes a hotel, condominiums, cottages, and a marina on the north bank of the St. Joseph River. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2013. The Environmental Assessment for the Harbor Village project, released in January 2013, found that no further roadway capacity expansion would be needed for the project, and that existing roadways are adequate for traffic coming to and leaving from Harbor Village. The assessment found that any significant new adverse air quality impacts from transportation would come during the construction process only, which was acceptable under EPA standards.

In terms of transit connections, the Environmental Assessment showed that the project was well within Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA)'s door-to-door "Dial a Ride" service Area and was also within an acceptable walking distance to TCATA's "Red" fixed route service. Discussions between the Harbor Village developer and TCATA are ongoing regarding expansion of door to door service, and possible inclusion of the project site itself on one of the fixed routes.

The project will also improve upon local trails by continuing to build the 12.2 mile non-motorized path system outlined in the Harbor Shores Master Plan. In particular, a non-motorized path on public property adjacent to the Harbor Village development will be developed in conjunction with the private development, improving pedestrian and bicycle access along the St. Joseph River, all through ADA-accessible facilities. See map below for information on the non-motorized facilities.

The significance of this project to the Twin Cities area is unmistakable. Significant land use changes are taking place on previously vacant land, new residents will purchase second homes in the area, and many visitors will use the hotels, golf course, and marina, along with other businesses and services in Benton Harbor and St. Joseph. As the development continues to progress, regular updates will be provided at TwinCATS TAC committee meetings to review transportation impacts.