TWIN CITIES HARBOR
A Study of Potential in Benton Harbor & St. Joseph, MI
Concept view of Twin Cities Harbor looking West

Refer to pages 41 and 66
Concept view of consolidated port seen from M.63 Blossomland Bridge
Refer to pages 25 and 67
Concept view of mixed-use marina as seen from M.63 Blossomland Bridge
Refer to pages 31 and 67
Concept view of Marina Island waterfront looking East
Refer to pages 27 and 68
Concept view of Marina Island redevelopment and Dock 63 commercial port
Refer to pages 31 and 69
Concept view of mixed-use redevelopment of Central Dock
Refer to pages 37 and 70
Concept view of Main Street Benton Harbor looking West
Refer to pages 45 and 71
Concept view of Main Street and Riverview Drive mixed-use redevelopment
Refer to pages 33 and 72
Concept view of revitalized Benton Harbor Canal looking West
Refer to pages 53 and 73
Concept view towards Riverview Drive from 12th Street
Refer to pages 51 and 74
Concept view looking North along Riverview Drive
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Concept view of County Courthouse Area Redevelopment on Port Street looking East
Refer to pages 57 and 76
Concept view of Inner Harbor from redeveloped Courthouse Bluff
Refer to pages 39 and 77
Concept view of County Courthouse Area redevelopment
Refer to pages 55 and 78
TWIN CITIES HARBOR
A Study of Potential in Benton Harbor & St. Joseph, MI
“This harbor site has great potential!”

This observation was repeated often and by everyone consulted in this study. Locals and visiting professionals quickly recognize the natural advantages of this stunning location on the St. Joseph River near Lake Michigan. Tucked between charming Downtown St. Joseph and the innovative Benton Harbor Arts District, it is home to the County Courthouse, a Fortune 500 company, and a deepwater port with Great Lakes freighters, yachts, anglers, and harbor view restaurants. A true blessing for the Twin Cities.

Yet a journey across the Bicentennial Bridge also reveals acres of vacant land, empty buildings, and underutilized waterfront opportunities. Most have gotten used to it and simply assume that this is the way it must be due to its industrial, natural, and political characteristics. Others are frustrated by the barrier it presents between the two cities, or worse, don’t even see it at all. This study challenges all of these assumptions and asks:

“Well, is this the BEST we can do?”

Building cities presents choices about stewardship and leadership. Especially when times and circumstances produce sweeping changes, such leadership requires a longer view and the ability to look at new circumstances as an opportunity to reboot our thinking. Unfortunately, we are often overwhelmed by the complexity of conditions and resign ourselves to waiting for something or someone else to shift the paradigm.

“Don’t wait for the big thing; ACT TODAY.”

To help initiate action, the City of Benton Harbor led a stakeholder steering committee of diverse private and public leaders representing both cities. They commissioned this study via a four-month process led by Andrews University in collaboration with the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission. Its purpose is to inform public debate with facts and illustrative concepts - more like a “menu” of useful strategies than a master plan.

This study suggests that the Twin Cities harbor area is on the cusp of great transformations. Recent private investment in both cities, generational and demographic changes, market trends, shipping activity, lifestyle preferences, tourism, the arts, political cooperation, the funding climate - all of this points to new opportunities to uplift both cities as one prosperous, healthy, whole community. This is the humble aim of this work: to inform and inspire action.

1. A complete list of stakeholder steering committee members is shown on the next page.
2. More details about the team is included on page 87.
3. A complete list of sub-consultants is shown on page 87.
4. A complete list of focus group participants is shown on page 87.
The 600 acre study area focuses on the harbor and adjacent strategic and underutilized properties. It crosses both cities, but not all of the more than 500 acres of land within it were studied equally. The irregular boundary reflects the turbine-like shape of the place and the natural, economic, and community assets that are tied to it.

Study Goals

+ To honor and celebrate the essence of Benton Harbor and St. Joseph, both in their distinct and shared identities.
+ To study the existing working harbor and conceptual changes to its location, operations, and site design.
+ To study how the harbor area can support viable commercial shipping and recreational boating in the future.
+ To study how the harbor area can shape an attractive gateway to the cities of Benton Harbor and St. Joseph.
+ To study how the harbor can be embraced by both the community and tourism, including water and trail users.
+ To study how the harbor can support increased real estate values for residential property in and around the area.
+ To study how the harbor can be an aesthetic asset to Benton Harbor and St. Joseph.
+ To study how the harbor can help to support human and environmental health.
+ To study development concepts that are economically sustainable.
PORT CITIES

Commercial shipping has a foundational history in St. Joseph and Benton Harbor. These pages offer some context to the critical economic impact it has on both cities, the county, and the state. While freight volumes vary due to factors presented here, this study promotes a vibrant and sustainable port for the future.

To understand the commercial role of the harbor (officially known as the St. Joseph Harbor), it helps to understand how closely it is tied to the maintenance, funding, and construction of roads.

Service area which benefits from shipping through the Twin Cities

45% of harbor salt is used by Michigan DOT

1. Table 5.1, River Action Plan, 2001
2. Based on records provided by Peter Berghoff, Dock 63
3. Resilient St. Joseph: St Joe Commercial Harbor Presentation
4. Based on records provided by Peter Berghoff, Dock 63
Changing variables have led to a decline in the number of annual ships.

To understand local dredging issues, it helps to understand the differences between the inner and the outer harbor. The rivers bring mostly silts and organics, most of which settle into the inner harbor, partly due to the sudden change of depth. The outer harbor is primarily shoaled up with sand due to wave action on Lake Michigan. Therefore, in most years, the inner and outer harbors collect equal amounts of different material, which impact the cost of dredging unevenly.

Outer Harbor
- 2014
- $442,589
- 53,843 cubic yards

Wave shoaling due to littoral drift on Lake Michigan
- The outer harbor collects mostly sand, which can more easily be moved to renourish local beaches.
- Most dredging occurs at the mouth of the channel.

Inner Harbor
- 2014
- $958,485
- 52,491 cubic yards

Settling basin effect
- The inner harbor collects mostly silts and organics from the river, which can’t be used on beaches.

The USACE is responsible for dredging navigable waterways for commercial shipping, but federal appropriation priorities do not always enable sufficient funds, especially for the inner harbor.

St. Joseph River
- 2013 proposed long term plan to spend $1.5 million for annual maintenance
- Bond funds were proposed to be used for dredging a channel from the Bicentennial Bridge to the Napier Avenue Bridge, in order to provide a minimal depth of 6.5 feet.
- Proposal was not supported by constituents.
DEPTH MATTERS
EVERY FOOT OF ADDITIONAL DEPTH CAN YIELD 1000 TONS OF EXTRA FREIGHT PER SHIP

The Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund was established in 1986 to maintain ports. Officially, funds are more readily available for harbors importing more than 1 million tons of material, but the Army Corps of Engineers has consistently argued that ports should be understood as part of an interdependent system where both small and large ports are necessary.

Similarly, the local COAST GUARD station helps to complete an emergency service system and is not likely to be moved from the harbor.

BRIDGE CHALLENGES
The CSX railroad swing bridge provides a major challenge to recreational boaters, as it does not operate according to a consistent schedule. Its narrow 94 ft opening, together with the Blossomland (M-63) bascule bridge, force some commercial ships to turn in the turning basin for up to 1.5 hours, increasing shipping time and insurance rates.

Most ships that frequent the harbor are almost as long as two football fields.

If federally-funded dredging for commercial depths ceased today, it is estimated that, given normal conditions, it would take 10-15 years before annual dredging would need to be resumed in order to maintain minimal depths for recreational boating.

In such a scenario, dredging costs are likely to be lower than today, as only marked channels would be dredged rather than the entire area of the harbor and its large turning basin. Precise costs are not known.
Political Challenge

A Successful Port next to a Residential Neighborhood

From a port operations standpoint, and in light of immediately adjacent land uses and infrastructure, this is a very logical location to consolidate commercial shipping. However, the Old Edgewater Neighborhood is only 600 ft away, and legitimate concerns exist regarding the protection of quality of life. Also, the sale of a strategic 50 ft parcel would require the unanimous vote of the St. Joseph City Commission and a past survey reveals a lack of consensus amongst residents.

36% NO 35% YES 27% NO ANSWER

5AM - 5PM
Typical Hours of Operation

95% of operations occur between 6am and 5pm, although severe winters and certain road construction projects can demand exceptions to this schedule, even requiring night-time operations. This means that the use of lights would be a rare exception.

1. Provided by John Hodgson, Manager, City of St. Joseph, Sep 24
3. Provided by Peter Berghoff, Dock 63, Nov 4, 2015
4. Traffic Noise Basics, Caltrans District 11
5. Provided by Peter Berghoff, Dock 63, Nov 4, 2015
6. Provided by Peter Berghoff, Dock 63, Nov 4, 2015
7. “Stalking the TIGER”, Herald Palladium, Mar 8, 2015
8. Peter Berghoff, Dock 63, Nov 4, 2015 and confirmed by on-site measurement
**Piles as Art**
Tarps are necessary to protect water quality from salt runoff. Current tarps are black, but additional investment could yield creative tarps that annually transform piles into art.

**Sustainable Port Due to Predictable Depth**
Depths are naturally more predictable in the outer harbor and ships here must only navigate around one bridge. This makes shipping here more attractive and helps to sustain healthy port business.

**Quality of Life in Old Edgewater Neighborhood**
600 ft beyond the concept port site lies a historic lakefront neighborhood, where some residents are very concerned about noise, lights, safety, and the visual impact a new port would have. Likewise, there is some concern that the residential tax base could be negatively impacted. Also see p. 36.

**Conveying System**
The deep nature of the existing site would require the installation of a mechanical conveying system to distribute material from ships to various piles.

**Downtown St. Joseph**

**Art on Silos**
In keeping with the art spirit of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, the existing silos could be painted with murals, as can be found in some vibrant port cities.

**Existing La Farge Commercial Port**

**Dock Site Development**
2013 estimates in a Berrien County application for a TIGER grant included a $12.5 million total site investment, resulting in a $185 million return over 20 years. The grant was recommended for funding but ultimately not awarded because local cost-sharing was insufficient and city approval was absent.

**Upton Arboretum**

**New Seawall**

**Conveying System**
The deep nature of the existing site would require the installation of a mechanical conveying system to distribute material from ships to various piles.

**55’ tall max**

**55’ tall max**

**85’ tall**

**Concept view of a outer harbor from M-63 Blossomland Bridge**
Also refer to pages 4 and 67
Boating Harbor Concept
Possible Advantages of Port Consolidation

$20 Million per year
Recreational boating on the St. Joseph River brings about $20 million into the local economy, but this relies on dredged waterways.  
Boating impact on Twin Cities

1600 Boat Slips
Most are not walkable.
Few boat slips exist in Benton Harbor, and most of the many boat slips in St. Joseph are not within easy walking distance to retail or restaurants - a missed economic opportunity.  
35% Out-of-State Seasonal

81% Tourism Up
Most county residents surveyed in 2009 perceive a shift from industry to tourism as an economic base in Berrien County.  

Only 10 Transient Slips
Private marinas prioritize seasonal slips, so visitors arriving by boat have few dedicated transient slip options in the Twin Cities. Compare this to:  
40 in New Buffalo.

$3,600 Per Year Average
Boat Expenses:

53% Equipment and Service
Local marinas provide much of this service and sell equipment.

22% Fuel
On average, a Great Lakes boater spends 23 days annually boating.

17% Restaurants
The most successful port towns make it easy to walk from boats to restaurants.

14% Groceries
Local retailers can benefit if conveniently located near boats slips.

Redevelopment Through Consolidation

For a sense of scale and opportunity, this diagram shows how much development could fit on these two sites.

2. St. Joseph City Website
4. Berrien County Master Plan, 2009, p. 22
Most of this area has been removed from BFE by fill.
Letter of Map Revision-F 13-05-3375A, 4/12/2013
Recreational Dredging
If dredging for commercial depths ceased today, it is estimated that, under normal conditions, dredging would need to be resumed in 10-15 years to provide minimal recreational depths. However, the dredged area would likely be reduced to channels, thereby reducing costs. See page 23.

Benefits for Both Cities
Redevelopment of existing commercial ports could substantially benefit St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, as it could bring vibrant activity in both cities within closer proximity to each other. Central Dock is only 230 ft from Marina Island.

Public Access and Views
The most successful harbor cities preserve continuous public access and views to the waterfront. Slow vehicular access can help to sustain businesses during the winter.

Waterfront Economy
The existing market is estimated to be able to support an additional 7-11 restaurants (See pages 34-35). Also, on average, boaters spend 31% of annual trip expenses on restaurant visits and groceries.

Destination-Based Boat Slips
Boat slips within convenient walking distance to amenities and quality public spaces help to enhance economic productivity and quality of life.
5-8 YEARS Average

**West Basin Marina Waiting List**
Seasonal slips at the West Basin Marina are in high demand, partly because its location enjoys access with no bridges and the shortest possible time in a no-wake zone. While this demand at this single marina may not indicate an overall shortage of slips in the Twin Cities, it does suggest that an additional Marina west of M-63 way be sustainable.¹

**Water Recreation District**

**Zoning and Master Plan**
The existing zoning on the parcel is intended for any use that is specifically compatible with waterfront development, including limited industrial and mixed-use concepts. Private development requires approval through a PUD process. The existing Master Plan and the 2015 draft master plan echo this intention in their Future Land Use descriptions.⁵

**M-63 Blossomland Bridge**
If new non-motorized ramps and sidewalk improvements were approved by MDOT to connect the site with M-63, it would be about an 8-minute walk to downtown St. Joseph. However, comfortable and safe pedestrian access is further complicated because the historic bascule bridge is listed on the National Historic Register⁴ and modifications may be impossible.³

1. Provided by John Hodgson, Manager, City of St. Joseph, Dec 8
2. City of St. Joseph Zoning Ordinance
3. Provided by John Hodgson, Manager, City of St. Joseph, Sep 24
   "Any new industrial uses must be functionally dependent on or associated with the waterfront. This district should not be used for industrial uses that do not require a relationship with the waterfront."
Mixed Use Waterfront Development
Former site of a water tower and Whirlpool’s enormous St. Joseph Division plant. The concept shown here is for a marina, residential development, and a waterfront inn, restaurants, and limited retail.

Channel
During certain festivals, boats are tied to the seawall at the Upton Arboretum. However, this type of slip is not a safe solution for seasonal use due to the frequently severe lake surge.

Old Edgewater Neighborhood
The historic lakefront neighborhood lies about 600 ft beyond the site. Some concerned residents have expressed opposition to increased commercial port activity at this site, but generally support the idea of marina- and leisure-based mixed-use development.

Dredging and Navigation
The bay shown here is relatively well protected from the lake surge and could be used as a marina. It is currently too shallow for most boats and would need to be dredged regularly.

Mixed Use Waterfront Development
Former site of a water tower and Whirlpool’s enormous St. Joseph Division plant. The concept shown here is for a marina, residential development, and a waterfront inn, restaurants, and limited retail.
Port Cities

Working Harbor
Portsmouth, NH is a successful example of an authentic port city of similar size, where commercial docks and high-value mixed-use coexist comfortably.

USACE Dredging
The scenario presented here assumes that the inner harbor would retain commercial shipping activity and be dredged regularly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

2,500 Yards of Estimated Fill
The existing private parcel next to Dock 63 could be redeveloped if it was elevated above the flood plain. See page 26 for additional information on flood plains.

Pedestrian Connectivity
Downtown St. Joseph and the site itself would benefit from improvements to Wayne Street and from a new pedestrian bridge over Morrison Channel. It would be operable or tall enough for most motor yachts.

Morrison Channel
Sailboats generally do not use the channel due to its strong current. This is why the existing Wayne Street bridge is not a bascule bridge, and why a pedestrian bridge could be considered here.²

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1. Provided by Rick Chellman, P.E., Portsmouth, NH
2. Provided by Boating Focus Group, November 18, 2015
Dock 63
This scenario maintains the commercial port in the existing location.

Noise
Sensor technology can eliminate virtually all back-up beeping on equipment. The remaining noise would be limited and typical of authentic port towns, which would not bother certain target markets, if provided with good sound insulation.

Mixed Use Development
Development here would target loft-style residential, dining, hotel, office, and retail that can complement a working harbor waterfront development.

Future of USACE dredging somewhat uncertain
In February 2015, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers graded the harbor at a “C” and said it was at medium risk for failure/closure due primarily to uncertain funding and the challenges of the inner harbor. See p. 20-23.

Public Access Waterfront
The most successful harbor cities guarantee continuous public access to waterfronts.

Morrison Channel Footbridge
The bridge could be designed to be operable or tall enough to enable passage for most motor yachts.
URBAN PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity per Acre

The productivity of land can be measured by looking at public tax records and calculating the Tax Base per acre. Cities have a finite amount of land, so promoting productive development types helps to grow tax base. The diagram above clearly illustrates that urban, walkable, compact, mixed-use places are consistently more productive than low-density, suburban, automobile-oriented development models.¹

1. Tax base per acre is calculated using data from the Berrien County 2015 public tax records, available on the county GIS website

2. Ibid. - Note: This comparison is not an evaluation of private businesses models, but simply a comparison of two urban development models.
Residential Units
Residential development creates a customer base for neighborhood-serving retail, especially grocery stores and other retail anchors designed to compliment the area’s urban character. In Benton Harbor, dwellings are also within walking distance to numerous jobs, including Whirlpool Corporation’s design and administrative offices.

Parking
As much as possible, streets should feature convenient on-street parking. This helps private land to be more productive by reducing the need for off-street parking, which should be located mid-block, behind buildings. On-street parking should be metered to promote higher customer turn-over and avoid inefficient use.

Liner Building
25-30 ft buildings that conceal parking in the rear and preserve a quality pedestrian experience on the street.

Whirlpool Corporation
About 1,000 employees work inside this North American Headquarters building. Over 4,000 employees are located in the Twin Cities area.

100 % Corner
This strategic intersection at Main Street and Riverview Drive in Benton Harbor experiences high daily traffic averages and was identified by this study’s retail consultant as the best corner to concentrate new retailers, especially if traffic can be maintained at slow operating speeds. See pages 34-35.
Retail Analysis

Primary Trade Area

85,000
Population in Trade Area

$20.4 Million\(^2\)
Additional Supportable retail by 2020

Robert Gibbs, AICP, ASLA, CNU-A, Gibbs Planning Group, Birmingham, MI
This retail analysis was prepared by Robert Gibbs, a nationally renowned retail planner. Profiled in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and Urban Land, Gibbs is a recognized leader in the New Urbanism, having pioneered the implementation of environmentally sustainable principles of Traditional Town Planning and Smart Growth. For the past 25 years, Gibbs has been active in developing innovative yet practical methods for applying modern trends in commercial development to more than 400 town centers and historic cities here and abroad.\(^1\)

Trade Area Tapestry Lifestyles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Tapestry Segment</th>
<th>2015 Households Cumulative</th>
<th>2015 U.S. Households Cumulative</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Comfortable Empty Nesters (5A)</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Modest Income Homes (12D)</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Midlife Constantine (3E)</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Salt of the Earth (6B)</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>City Commons (11E)</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
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<td>Subtotal</td>
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<td>45.9%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
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$19.2 MILLION\(^3\)
Additional Supportable Retail in 2015

1. Gibbs Planning Group website
Trade Area Demographic Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristic</th>
<th>Primary Trade Area</th>
<th>Niles-Benton Harbor MSA</th>
<th>State of Michigan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015 Population</td>
<td>85,500</td>
<td>155,600</td>
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<td>2015 Households</td>
<td>34,900</td>
<td>63,100</td>
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<td>2020 Population</td>
<td>85,100</td>
<td>155,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020 Households</td>
<td>34,800</td>
<td>63,000</td>
<td>3,902,000</td>
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<td>2015-2020 Annual Population Growth Rate</td>
<td>-0.09%</td>
<td>-0.05%</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
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<td>2015-2020 Annual HH Growth Rate</td>
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<td>2015 Average Household Income</td>
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<td>2015 Median Household Income</td>
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<td>2020 Average Household Income</td>
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<td>2020 Median Household Income</td>
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<td>$51,400</td>
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<td>% Households w. incomes $75,000 or higher</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
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<td>% Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
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<td>% Graduate or Professional Degree</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
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<td>Average Household Size</td>
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<td>2.47</td>
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<td>Median Age</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>43.1</td>
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2015 Supportable Retailers

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<tr>
<th>Retail Category</th>
<th>Estimated Supportable SF</th>
<th>2015 Sales/SF</th>
<th>2015 Estimated Retail Sales</th>
<th>2020 Sales/SF</th>
<th>2020 Estimated Retail Sales</th>
<th>No. of Stores</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apparel Stores</td>
<td>6,080</td>
<td>$255</td>
<td>$1,550,400</td>
<td>$270</td>
<td>$1,041,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beer, Wine &amp; Liquor Stores</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>$275</td>
<td>$200,750</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$211,700</td>
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<td>Book &amp; Music Stores</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>$215</td>
<td>$146,200</td>
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<td>Florists</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>$195</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>$205</td>
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<td>Furniture Stores</td>
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<td>$225</td>
<td>$218,250</td>
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<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>11,360</td>
<td>$295</td>
<td>$3,351,200</td>
<td>$315</td>
<td>$3,578,400</td>
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<td>Grocery Stores</td>
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<td>$305</td>
<td>$4,096,150</td>
<td>$320</td>
<td>$4,364,750</td>
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<td>Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>$235</td>
<td>$246,750</td>
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<td>Jewelry Stores</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<td>Lawn &amp; Garden Supply Stores</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>$205</td>
<td>$157,850</td>
<td>$220</td>
<td>$169,400</td>
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<td>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</td>
<td>1,880</td>
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<td>$460,600</td>
<td>$280</td>
<td>$488,600</td>
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<td>Office Supplies &amp; Gift Stores</td>
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<td>$250</td>
<td>$260,000</td>
<td>$285</td>
<td>$275,600</td>
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<td>Shoe Stores</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$456,000</td>
<td>$275</td>
<td>$577,500</td>
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<td>Sporting Goods &amp; Hobby Stores</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>$225</td>
<td>$272,250</td>
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<td>Retailer Totals</td>
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<td>$250</td>
<td>$12,257,300</td>
<td>$266</td>
<td>$13,046,950</td>
<td>18 - 24</td>
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2015 Supportable Restaurants

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurants</th>
<th>Estimated Supportable SF</th>
<th>2015 Sales/SF</th>
<th>2015 Estimated Retail Sales</th>
<th>2020 Sales/SF</th>
<th>2020 Estimated Retail Sales</th>
<th>No. of Stores</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bars, Breweries &amp; Pubs</td>
<td>5,730</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$1,719,000</td>
<td>$320</td>
<td>$1,833,600</td>
<td>2 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Service Restaurants</td>
<td>7,830</td>
<td>$320</td>
<td>$2,505,600</td>
<td>$340</td>
<td>$2,692,200</td>
<td>2 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited-Service Eating Places</td>
<td>6,010</td>
<td>$310</td>
<td>$1,963,100</td>
<td>$330</td>
<td>$2,183,300</td>
<td>2 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Food Services</td>
<td>2,950</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$882,050</td>
<td>$310</td>
<td>$981,850</td>
<td>2 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Totals</td>
<td>22,560</td>
<td>$306</td>
<td>$6,969,750</td>
<td>$326</td>
<td>$7,420,950</td>
<td>7 - 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Provided by Gibbs Planning Group.

Metered, on-street parking provides convenience and high customer turn-over. In vibrant, pedestrian-oriented town centers, each on-street parking space yields up to $250,000 in local annual retail sales.1

Quality public space, harmonious architecture, and great design attracts people from farther away and can increase retail sales.

Place-making can Drive Demand.

Conventional development only taps into existing markets but doesn’t usually create new ones.

This retail market study finds that the majority of additional supportable retail will be Local & Independent.2

Instead of national chains, this type of retail cultivates local entrepreneurship opportunities.
Residential Productivity

This diagram illustrates how selected neighborhoods in St. Joseph perform in terms of tax productivity, using the tax base on public record and calculated per acre. The most productive properties tend to be small, densely developed urban lots rather than estate lots with large setbacks. This is not to suggest that all lots everywhere should be small and compact, but that tax productivity should be considered when planning future infill areas. Even modestly valuable real estate, when compact and efficient, can yield very productive returns to help offset infrastructure maintenance costs.

Mixed-use building types with residential lofts above commercial ground floors are most productive.

Price Street Cottages
Small and compact residential lots on Elm Street and State Street are very productive.

Edgewater Dunes
Half-acre lots as found at Edgewater Dunes can be productive, but not quite as productive as more densely developed lots.

The Food Shed concept is an opportunity to showcase Berrien County agricultural goods, locally-designed kitchen appliances, and related products in a vibrant space designed for social interaction, education, and agri-tourism.

Intended to be an authentic celebration of the best the county has to offer, it could feature a cafe, boutique market for fine local foods, culinary education, and events for locals and visitors alike.1

1. Photos are of local food “Shed”, Healdsburg, California
2. Tax base per acre is calculated using data from the Berrien County 2015 public tax records, available on the county GIS website
Public Events Plaza
Located at the tip of the Central Dock redevelopment concept is a large plaza that looks out towards the harbor and Lake Michigan. The space would be ideal for holding existing and future community events.

Seasonal events that could make use of high quality waterfront public space:
- Benton Harbor Art Hop
- Krasl Art Fair
- Lighted Boat Parade
- Sail Boat Competition

Variety of Residential Types
Diversity in residential types can be encouraged. Shown below are examples of single-family rowhouses and mixed-use buildings with upper-story loft spaces.

Parking
Parking spaces should be provided on-street and in mid-block areas to support density.

Pedestrian Passage
The passage provides Main Street a view corridor towards the river. It is pedestrian friendly and can also be used by service vehicles.

Food Shed
A large and flexible space that can be used for showcasing the best of Berrien County foods and related goods to draw locals and agri-tourists. See page 36.

Restaurants
Mixed-use buildings with retail and restaurant opportunities on the ground floor.
This study finds that the Benton Harbor-St. Joseph Study Area (BHSA) is a desirable urban infill location.

Gibbs Planning Group (GPG) estimates that over the next five years, the BHSA can support approximately:

280 total new single-family homes and rental multiple-family dwelling units.

“These detached and attached dwellings should be designed to appeal to young professionals without children and active empty nesters and/or seniors. The region’s market demand for larger detached homes geared towards families will be absorbed by the existing inventory of developed lots in subdivisions that collapsed during Michigan’s Great Recession of 2006-2012.”

National research and GPG’s experience has proven that walkable, well-designed urban places are sought by about 50 percent of the millennials and empty nesters in for-sale and rental residential markets. Locations with interesting and historic urban settings combined with exciting restaurants, shops, parks and employment centers, can command significantly higher property values than conventional suburban development. Should the above study site be built as a walkable and attractive urban center, it could potentially become a sought after destination for a wide range of home buyers and renters including: singles, single-parents, young couples, young families, empty nesters, second home owners and retirees.”


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Type</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village Single-family Homes</td>
<td>8 Homes</td>
<td>8 Homes</td>
<td>10 Homes</td>
<td>12 Homes</td>
<td>12 Homes</td>
<td>50 Homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Family Single-family Homes</td>
<td>5 Homes</td>
<td>6 Homes</td>
<td>6 Homes</td>
<td>6 Homes</td>
<td>7 homes</td>
<td>30 Homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loft Apartments</td>
<td>10 Lofts</td>
<td>10 Lofts</td>
<td>10 Lofts</td>
<td>10 Lofts</td>
<td>10 Lofts</td>
<td>50 Lofts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden Apartments</td>
<td>30 Apts.</td>
<td>30 Apts.</td>
<td>30 Apts.</td>
<td>30 Apts.</td>
<td>30 Apts.</td>
<td>150 Apts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>53 Units</td>
<td>54 Units</td>
<td>56 Units</td>
<td>58 Units</td>
<td>59 Units</td>
<td>280 Units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Residential Unit Market Demand
Summary table of estimated Benton Harbor-St. Joseph study area residential unit market demand.

2. Gibbs Planning Group
**Residential Development**
Single-family rowhouses, loft condos or apartments with harbor views and within easy walking distance to everything.

**Marina with Transient Slips**
The idea of a county marina at the base of the courthouse has been considered since at least the 1970s, when an officer employed at the jail drew up concept plans for transient slips within easy walking distance to downtown St. Joseph.

**Pedestrian-Friendly Street**
Local streets should be narrow, lined with trees and sidewalks, and feature parallel parking. Operating speeds should be slow by design, including pavers when possible.

**Courthouse Green**
A terraced public park overlooking the inner harbor can be located behind the existing courthouse (see p. 16 and 55), which also enables residential views of the harbor from further inland.
WALKABILITY

Walking

The map roughly summarizes how walkable the study area is today. Although distances are theoretically walkable, in reality the design of the urban environment is often disconnected and unsafe for pedestrians.

Biking

The map roughly summarizes how bikable the study area is today. Distances are very bikable, but the environment is often uncomfortable or unsafe for average cyclists and families.

Amenities Matter

Trails with better conditions and more amenities have higher rates of usage.


Trails

People who live near trails are

50% More likely to meet physical activity guidelines.

Walkable Communities

People who live in walkable neighborhoods are

2 times as likely to get enough physical activity as those who don’t.

For every $1 spent on trails, there was almost $3 in savings in direct medical cost.
Network of Streets and Blocks
Besides continuous public waterfronts, a fine network of streets and pedestrian passages helps to promote walkability. The more routes, the better.

Vehicular Access for all Seasons
Continuous public waterfronts are important, but care should be taken, when possible, to enable slow vehicular traffic to ensure that public spaces, retail, and restaurants are active even in winter.

Ferry Route to Chicago
A 2004 preliminary analysis of feasibility for Lake Michigan Ferry Service identified the Old Ship Canal in Benton Harbor as the preferred location for a ferry terminal.

Amenities
A diverse mix of quality public spaces, restaurants, retail, docks, fishing opportunities, and water-based activities promote walking more than boring landscaped trails.

Concept view of Twin Cities Harbor looking West
Also refer to pages 3 and 66

Continous Public Waterfront Trail
This view illustrates a long-range vision for an interconnected waterfront trail system which connects the Twin Cities with each other.
Trails

Benton Harbor Master Plan

EXCERPTS
“The city will work to maximize the benefit of the rivers as public amenities by improving public access to the riverfront and providing public open space adjacent to waterways.”

“Construct an interconnected trails and sidewalk system throughout the city that links residential neighborhoods to community facilities.”

St. Joseph Master Plan

EXCERPTS
“Promote walkability and pedestrian friendliness within the city.”

“Moving forward, the City will continue to fill gaps in the waterfront trail network and establish connections to link both sides of the St. Joseph River. Establishing these connections will require coordination with private property owners and significant collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions.”

Soft Edge
Wetlands and restored shorelines are good places for quiet boardwalks and trails, but also for education about natural systems.

Closer to residences, tree-lined paths can offer some protection from sun and wind, but even here species habitat can be provided.

In certain places where boating activity is more concentrated, turf grass and docks may be an appropriate solution.

Water Taxi
Seasonal water taxis such as the one shown here in Oklahoma City can help to interconnect dispersed parts of the Twin Cities, especially for the benefit of visitors. The map on page 43 illustrates a concept water taxi route.

Footbridges
Bridges dedicated to pedestrians and bicycles are more affordable and are effective in connecting isolated points along the harbor. Bridges can be designed to enable sailboat and tall motor yacht traffic.

Where many people gather for passive recreation, a mix of paved trails, turf grass, terraces, and native species habitat can be ideal.

Hard Edge
One principle is not to make all trails the same. Urban centers should include urban waterfront paths with minimal landscaping.

An arts trail is proposed to lead between the Krasl Art Center and the Benton Harbor Arts District, with various public spaces in between featuring great public art. Most of the concept views in this document show public art, kindly included by permission of the Krasl Art Center for illustrative purposes only. See page 80.
Walkable Streets

Most Pedestrian Fatalities occur on local streets, and virtually all streets located within the area are not designed for safe or comfortable pedestrian activity. The posted speed limit upon entering Benton Harbor on the Bicentennial Bridge is 40 MPH, and the one-way loop system of Port and Ship Street has pedestrian visitors to the courthouse dashing across traffic moving at similar operating speeds, even though the posted limit is 30 MPH. Wide roads encourage fast driving, but fast driving does not promote safe, vibrant, livable, economically diverse communities. For example, 60 decibels is average conversational noise, but 30 MPH speeds already begin to yield slightly uncomfortable noise levels and impact sidewalk dining and residential opportunities. The following is a brief introduction to why the goal should be average operational speeds below 25 MPH on all streets within the study area.

35 MPH Kills
The impact on an average adult pedestrian of an automobile moving at 35 MPH results in an Accident Injury Severity that is indexed as 6, which is fatal. For elderly people, that index is reached at speeds of 25 MPH.

Wide Streets Injure
The number of injury accidents measurably increases as streets become wider. On average, there is a 485% increase in injury accidents when comparing a 24 ft street width with a 36 ft street width.

Every Foot Matters
The curb-to-curb width of streets has a direct impact on average operational speeds, but even the width of the street space from building face to building face is a significant factor in driving behavior.

Slow Speed
Counter-intuitively, slow operating speeds actually increase traffic capacity — more vehicles per hour per lane. Roundabouts and slow operating speeds can help traffic to flow more smoothly.

2. Impact Speed and the Pedestrian’s Risk of Sever Injury or Death, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, September 2011
3. Provided by Peter Swift, P.E., Traffic Engineer
4. Improving the Residential Street Environment, Federal Highway Administration, 1981
5. Arterial Average Capacity, Provided by Peter Swift, P.E., Traffic Engineer
6. Map based on data and map provided by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
**Street Trees**
Tree-lined streets provide shade for pedestrians, mitigate the urban heat island effect, protect pedestrians from traffic, and provide a comfortable feeling of enclosure on wider streets.

**Urban Frontage**
Buildings should front onto streets at all times, including frequent entrances. On Main Streets, at least 80% of the ground floor should feature transparent glass, and signage should be geared to pedestrians.

**Slow Operating Speeds on Main Street**
Since 2003, MDOT is charged to incorporate Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) wherever possible, which is intended to help transportation solutions “fit” local community needs. Furthermore, resources such as Complete Streets standards and the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual for Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares are broadly accepted by the engineering profession and can help to shape slower operating speeds and on-street parking even on busy Main Streets. In general, cities that have a vision for their DOT-controlled streets and patiently push towards it are more likely to see implementation in the long run.

**Bike Lanes**
Slow operational speeds are key, as bike lanes are to be comfortable to average cyclists - not just Tour de France participants. Painting the bike lane a solid color visually reduces the drive lanes and further slows traffic.

**On-Street Parking**
Parking in front of Main Street retail is critical, for the reasons described on page 35. But besides sustaining commercial establishments, parked cars also form a safety barrier for pedestrians and help to narrow the street space to naturally slow traffic. A vibrant Main Street environment cannot be sustained without on-street parking. Also, on-street parking reduces the need for off-street lots.

**Urban Frontage**
Buildings should front onto streets at all times, including frequent entrances. On Main Streets, at least 80% of the ground floor should feature transparent glass, and signage should be geared to pedestrians.

**Street Trees**
Tree-lined streets provide shade for pedestrians, mitigate the urban heat island effect, protect pedestrians from traffic, and provide a comfortable feeling of enclosure on wider streets.
ENVIRONMENT

Industrial Legacy
The harbor area’s industrial past has left it with numerous documented contamination sites, the majority of which include old black foundry sand. These sites have been listed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Part 201 remediation program. There are no longer any Superfund sites within the study area, and experts expect remediation costs to be moderate.¹

Shoreline Restoration
The recreational value of waterways often leads to the proliferation of turf lawns down to the water’s edge. This high maintenance, shallow-rooted turf contributes to shoreline erosion problems, the delivery of fertilizers and pesticides to lake water and the loss of habitat. Parts of the study area are very suitable to be returned to a more natural state while enhancing fish and wildlife habitat and preventing erosion and runoff.³

St Joseph River Watershed Management Plan
The St. Joseph River Watershed is the third largest river basin in Michigan, consisting of 4,685 square miles in 15 counties. This watershed is used largely for agriculture (70%), and approximately 1.5 million people live within it. Nearly 100% of the basin’s population relies on groundwater for drinking water.⁵ The redevelopment of the Twin Cities harbor can set a model for watershed stewardship.

Wetland Restoration
Wetlands help to alleviate stormwater issues, improve water quality, and provide species habitat. “The City should look to protect and restore habitat areas within the community. Wooded areas, wetlands, ravines, and waterways are examples of areas that should be protected.”⁴ This map and the concepts within this study illustrate how wetland protection and restoration can be part of a successful urban redevelopment strategy.

Map Key²
- Contamination Site
- Leaky Underground Storage Tanks
- BEA* - Michigan Baseline Environmental Assessment (BEA) allows people to purchase or begin operating at a facility without being held responsible for existing contamination
- Current Wetlands
- Potential Wetlands and Shoreline Restoration Sites
  *Areas which are likely to have conditions suitable for wetland restoration efforts

1. Based on interview with Marc Florian, Environmental Technology Consultants, October 29, 2015
2. Map based on maps provided by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission / May not show all contamination sites
3. Andrew DeGraves, Watershed Coordinator, St Joseph River Watershed Management Plan
Riverview Plaza Redevelopment
The site of the existing Chase building is a good candidate for mixed-use redevelopment due to its waterfront and proximity to activity centers further north. Quality public spaces on the waterfront can include stepped embankments, a plaza, and waterfront dining. See pages 50-51 for additional concepts on how South Riverview Drive can meaningfully connect with other parts of the study area.

Seasonal Structures
If transient boat slips were provided, existing businesses on South Riverview Drive could benefit from seasonal structures for dining, entertainment, vendors, and fishing-related activity. This concept is inspired by a similar arrangement on the Root River in Racine, Wisconsin.

Transient Boat Slips
South Riverview Drive businesses could benefit from easier access by visiting boaters.

Shoreline Restoration
Restored species habitat can help to improve fishing opportunities along an expanded public boardwalk system in Benton Harbor.

Riverview Boardwalk
Boardwalks are a good alternative to hard-edge seawall waterfronts when densities are lower, as on South Riverview Drive. This can help to give the Benton Harbor waterfront distinction and can promote shoreline restoration efforts.
Green Infrastructure

Principles of Green Infrastructure
Berrien County Master Plan1
1. Connectivity is key, and context matters.
2. Green infrastructure should be grounded in science and land-use planning methods and practice.
3. Green infrastructure can and should function as the framework for conservation development patterns, by planning for and protecting it prior to development requests.
4. Green infrastructure is a critical public investment that should be funded up front.
5. Green infrastructure benefits nature and people.
6. Green infrastructure respects the needs and desires of landowners and other stakeholders.
7. Green infrastructure requires connections to activities within and beyond the community.
8. Green infrastructure requires a long-term commitment.

Adding Value through Stormwater Infrastructure
Especially in urban locations where land should be used efficiently, stormwater infrastructure should be meaningfully integrated into public space design. This avoids placeless swales and detention ponds fenced in by chain-link and instead yields usable public spaces that add value to surrounding urban real estate, as shown here using examples in Portland and Toronto. This also means that public space networks should be coordinated with natural drainage paths.

1. Berrien County Master Plan, 2015, p. 13
2. Image source: Philadelphia Water Department, Watersheds Blog, Sep 22, 2011
Open Space Network
for Stormwater and Value Access

Connectivity is key for effective stormwater management. It can also help to spread the value of waterfronts deep into neighborhoods. A common mistake is to build a continuous “wall” of development, which hinders easy access from inland properties to the public waterfront. Human scale and walkability are important considerations: the most successful waterfront communities have very porous networks of blocks and pedestrian passages, with streets leading from the waterfront every 300-500 feet. By contrast, South Riverview Drive has streets spaced 1320 feet from each other - a five-minute walk just to access the next route opportunity.

- Benton Harbor: 1320 ft
- St. Joseph, MI: 330 ft
- Saugatuck, MI: 330 ft
- Wequetonsing, MI: 250 ft
- Harbor Springs, MI: 450 ft
- Holland, MI (Historic District): 330 ft
- South Haven, MI: 500 ft
- Kenosha, WI: 330 ft

New green streets and/or public pedestrian passages can help to spread value more effectively.

Existing Network
The existing network is the result of past landfill efforts, industrial land use, and automobile-oriented development patterns. Only a few public streets currently connect the river with inland properties on 11th Street, where some parcels are owned by the City of Benton Harbor and the non-profit Cornerstone Alliance.¹

Concept Network
This map illustrates how future green streets and/or public pedestrian passages could help to connect inland real estate with the St. Joseph River. For example, if an agreement with private property owners could be made, part of the existing Bread & Bar parking lot could be replaced by a public street with diagonal on-street parking.

¹ Source: Berrien County public records, GIS website
Connectivity

There currently exists a temptation to disconnect streets in favor of employee parking in Benton Harbor. This should remind of the work to vacate Court Street in St. Joseph during the 20th century – a move that helped shape a local real estate landscape which is not very productive today when compared to the well-connected blocks of downtown St. Joseph.

Instead of eliminating them, this study finds additional opportunities for connections are possible. These can benefit pedestrian and vehicular routes, but also help to implement green infrastructure solutions for improved urban stormwater management and attractive public space design.

“A” and “B” Streets

A useful strategy for preserving good street connectivity within the context of large parking needs is to employ a system of A and B streets.2 Downtown Holland, Michigan is an instructive local example of this. Here the main street (8th Street) would be considered an “A Street” featuring continuous building fronts and excellent pedestrian environments. Some connecting side streets, however, are treated strategically as “B Streets” with reasonable walkability despite the absence of buildings. Landscaped parking screening and street trees are key here.

An existing 70 ft-wide utility line easement1 leads from 12th Street to the river and is therefore not available for buildings. However, a public stormwater park with a possible “shared space” street could be implemented to increase the number of high quality connections to the river in this part of Benton Harbor.

---

1. Based on survey provided by Peter Colovos, Prairie Real Estate Group
3. Based on map provided by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
Stormwater Park
This concept takes advantage of the existing utility easement and drainage paths to establish a public stormwater park with a "shared space" street for pedestrians, cyclists, and slow-moving vehicles. New mixed-use residential loft buildings face this amenity and even gain views to the river.

12th Street - "A" Street
This street, which leads to Main Street, the Old Ship Canal, and the Arts District, is presented here as a high-quality pedestrian environment.

Wall Street - "B" Street
This street preserves connectivity but can also serve to park many vehicles - perhaps leased as dedicated parking for local businesses.

Riverview Plaza
The stormwater park can lead to a pedestrian amenity at the St. Joseph River, as also illustrated on page 47.

Riverview Drive - "B" Street
This part of Riverview Drive can be developed as a "B Street", which can improve the pedestrian experience both for people crossing through, but also for parking lot users. Also, shallow 25 ft deep "liner buildings" can be used as leasable space and still preserve most surface parking.
Canal Studies: A Partial History
The Importance of Political Will

The City of Benton Harbor owns most of the Old Ship Canal, which has been filled in over the decades. Its industrial past has left it contaminated, but the contamination is considered to be manageable. Many past studies have been completed and almost led to implementation - a humbling historical fact. Not all plans considered infrastructure investment as effective leverage for adjacent profitable redevelopment. But the overarching lesson is that no plan can be implemented without consistent political will.1

1979
Multi-modal Transportation Facility
A plan to establish a commercial port for bulk freight west of Whirlpool’s Tech Center. Included a mechanical conveyance system and railroad spurs.

1987
The 150 Boat Slip Canal
A plan to reestablish a canal ending at Colfax Ave, for recreational boat slips. Included a linear park, parking, and no bridge at North Riverview Drive.

1990
The Water Feature and Marina
A plan for a suburban-style park and water feature. The east end included a fountain pond and amphitheater, the west ended at a new marina.

2009
The Canal With a Turning Basin
A plan for a recreational boat canal with a turning basin for yachts at 10th Street. Included pedestrian bridge at Riverview Drive and rerouting traffic via Hinkley Street.

$6-8 MILLION
$5.5 MILLION
$7.2 MILLION*
$5.2 MILLION

3. The Abonmarche Group, “The Old Ship Canal Plan, 1990” provided by Marc Florian of ETC
4. Benton Harbor Cities of Promise Signature Project Plan provided by Marc Florian of ETC
5. Cost is only for the water feature park, not the marina.
6. Cost does not include environmental remediation of contaminants discovered later in the study.
7. Historical records and general contamination and political assessment provided by Marc Florian, ETC.
Limited Commercial
The woonerf could support a limited number of commercial establishments, such as a cafe, to help activate the space throughout the day. Frequent pedestrian connections to Main Street, which should feature on-street parking, creates an armature of two parallel corridors that compliment each other.

Shared Space “Woonerf”
Woonerfs are living streets, as originally implemented in the Netherlands. They emphasize shared space for cars and pedestrians, traffic calming, and very low speed limits. Woonerfs keep traffic extremely calm but still enable access for limited commerce and residential activities.

Terraced Stormwater Infiltration
The Old Ship Canal has been reimagined as a linear stormwater park to encourage sustainable local infiltration and enable high residential densities. The non-navigable retention canal would be lined and positioned above isolated contamination that exists in the ground below.

Primarily Residential
Investment in infrastructure here should be coupled closely with maximized redevelopment of adjacent land. A pedestrian-oriented stormwater park can cultivate a livable spine within a gritty urban center. Multi-family loft units catering to young professionals are ideally positioned near the Arts District, the harbor, and employment opportunities.

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Terraced Stormwater Infiltration
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Since 2009, Berrien County has been implementing a plan to centralize County services in order to “maximize returns on future infrastructure investments.” In the long run, this plan includes moving the jail and courthouse out of St. Joseph to a campus located in Benton Township.¹

This is the approximate area of land controlled by Berrien County at Port Street, not including the jail and courthouse. This land is currently dominated by surface parking lots, lawn, and residual space, but could be creatively redeveloped to be economically productive.

Estimated total cost of moving the jail and courthouse to a new campus on Napier Avenue in Benton Township.²

Estimated inmate transportation cost given a scenario where the courthouse remains downtown but the jail moves to Napier Ave.² A scenario that builds a second jail dedicated only to long-term inmates has not be studied.⁶

1. Berrien County Master Plan, 2015, p. 40
3. Constitution of Michigan, 1963
5. Provided by Berrien County via John Hodgson, Manager, City of St. Joseph
6. Provided by Dan Fette, Berrien County Community Development Department
Civic Terraced Park
Provides a beautiful public space as a “front door” to the community, with a possible arboretum expansion and spectacular views over the inner harbor. An operable or tall pedestrian bridge connects to Marina Island and Benton Harbor.

County Buildings
FEMA requirements restrict private development near jails, so this concept creatively sites future County facilities in strategic locations.

Parking Structure
A new 5-level parking structure with limited office liners can replace existing surface lots and increase County parking capacity. Certain floors can be secured and dedicated to County staff, while others can be paid public parking. A similar size parking structure in Portsmouth, NH charges $1.25/hour and brings in $3 million per year for the city.

Marine Division Dock
Concept for a Sheriff Department Marine Division dock, offices, and yard. The division currently keeps its boats on trailers, and increased harbor development increases the need for emergency services.

Mixed-Use Redevelopment
The former County parking lot can now be redeveloped as profitable and taxable private redevelopment with harbor views and easy access to Downtown St. Joseph.

Concept View of County Courthouse Area redevelopment
Also refer to pages 12 and 78

Marina Island

Future County Annex

County Annex

Marine Division

Art; “Standing Arch Five”

Art; “Young Flight”

Downtown St. Joseph

Downtown St. Joseph

Marina Island

Marina Island

Roundabouts calm traffic speeds, increase intersection capacity, and provide opportunities for monuments; in this case, an iconic column at Main St and Port St welcomes people on M-63.

Transient Slip Marina
Within easy walking distance to downtown, this marina could provide transient slips for boaters who visit the Twin Cities from other parts of the Great Lakes.

Concept View of County Courthouse Area redevelopment
Also refer to pages 12 and 78
1. Based on discussion with Lt. Martin Kurtz, Commander of the Berrien County Sheriff Department’s Marine Division
**Wide Sidewalks**
Important streets in mixed-use neighborhoods require wide sidewalks, which can promote outdoor seating and other profitable activity.

**Landscape**
The most important civic building in the County can be enhanced through landscaping, including a strong tree line that shelters and helps to define the site.

**Roundabout Monuments**
This concept reconfigures the one-way loop system of Port and Ship Street into two-way streets with slow operational speeds and increased capacity. This is partly accomplished by placing roundabouts at each end of Port Street to help traffic flow slowly but smoothly, and to provide opportunities for civic monuments that terminate the vistas and help visitors to navigate.

**Metered On-Street Parking**
Free parking encourages slow customer turn-over, and at a busy place such as the courthouse it presents a conflict between County and business users. Metered parking is a proven way to manage parking effectively to sustain business.

**Two-Way Street**
Port Street is reimagined as a two-way street with slow operating speeds and improved crosswalks.
Implementation

Preliminary Zoning Analysis

Zoning enables cities to regulate land uses and the physical form of private development in accordance with a zoning map and its respective ordinances. Conventionally, most zoning ordinances tend to emphasize the separation of land uses and prioritize limits on development through minimum setbacks and similar dimensional restrictions. Such zoning assumes that development is likely to threaten the value of nearby real estate, and therefore works hard to separate things from each other. This tends to result in inflexible conditions that can’t easily respond to changes in the market.

Furthermore, such ordinances are typically not based on a clear vision of how development should take place, zoning typically enables a great range of possibilities, as long as minimum buffers are not violated. For communities that have no particular vision for city form, this works well. However, if a community aspires to enable the private sector to build places in a certain way, conventional zoning usually falls short because it was not written to yield specific outcomes or ranges of outcomes. Both Benton Harbor and St. Joseph currently have this kind of zoning.

This can be frustrating to cities, which is one reason the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process is sometimes seen as a solution in which all design decisions are negotiated, which in turn can frustrate developers due to its uncertain outcome. St. Joseph’s Water Recreation District forces the PUD process and Benton Harbor forces a similar PD process on any property within 100 ft of its shoreline.

Approx. 50% of Harbor Study Area must use PUD

1. Benton Harbor Zoning Ordinance
2. St. Joseph Zoning Ordinance
3. Any property within 100 ft of water must use the PD process

Reference from St. Joseph Zoning Ordinance
1. Side Setbacks Table 5.1
2. Parking 18.5
3. Lot Line Table 5.1

Scenario A: Pedestrian-friendly
- Min. Side Setback: 0’
- (Min. Side Setback: 7’ when adjacent to residential)
- Parking in rear: Retail 1 space/250 GFA

Scenario B: Automobile-friendly
- Min. Side Setback on street: 0’
- Parking in front: Retail 1 space/250 GFA
- Max. 90% Lot Coverage
2. Light Industrial

**I-1** St. Joseph

Intended for wholesale and warehouse activities including manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging, treatment and assembly of various kinds. The nature of activities here should not be hazardous to surrounding districts, but are to be separated regardless. While industrial uses and parking facilities are permitted, retail, food and drink establishments, mixed use and residential uses are not permitted in this district - illustrated on Marina Island.

**Scenario A: Light Industrial**

- Min. Rear Setback: 15’
- Max. Height: 50’
- Min. Front Setback: 15’
- Max. 75% Lot Coverage

**Scenario B: Indoor Theme Park**

- Min. Side Setback: 7’ (Min. Side Setback: 30’ if adjacent to residential)
- Parking for Indoor Theme Park: 20 spaces per ride
- Min. Front Yard: 15’ (Parking in front)

Reference from St. Joseph Zoning Ordinance Table 5.1

3. General Business

**G-B** Benton Harbor

Intended for major commercial uses for the service of local residents, workers and visitors. Commercial uses, offices, food and drink establishments, and some public building uses are permitted in this district. While single family residential is not permitted, multi-family residential is permissible when placed above ground floor. Scenarios A and B illustrate how widely divergent outcomes could result from the same unpredictable zoning on Main Street.

**Scenario A: Pedestrian-friendly**

- Parking in rear: 1 Space/400 GFA (Upper Story Residential: 2 spaces/2 bedroom units)
- Min. Side Yard Setback: 30’ (Min. Side yard setback: 10’ If height less than 24’)
- Min. Front Yard: 15’ (multi family residential)

**Scenario B: Automobile-friendly**

- Min. Front Yard Setback: 15’ (Parking in front)
- Min. Front Yard: 15’ (multi family residential)
- Max. Front Yard: 25’ (commercial or office)

References from Benton Harbor Zoning Ordinance

1. Setbacks: 2.6.2D
2. Parking: 4.2.3

4. Mixed Use

**M-U** Benton Harbor

Intended to combine commercial, retail, residential, office and recreational uses in a functional manner and at a limited scale to serve locals of varying income and lifestyle. Multi-family is only permitted above the ground floor and rowhouses are not permitted. Scenarios A and B illustrate how widely divergent outcomes could result from the same unpredictable zoning. Efforts to minimum window areas are minimal and could easily be abused.

**Scenario A: Pedestrian-friendly**

- Max Height: 45’ (except Hotels)
- Parking in rear: Retail Sales - 1 Space 400 GFA (Upper Story Residential- 2 spaces/2+ bedroom units)
- Min. 30% transparent openings (upper floors)
- Min. 60% transparent openings (ground floor)
- No entrances required on main building fronts

**Scenario B: Alternate**

- Max. Height: 45’
- Parking in rear: Retail Sales - 1 Space 400 GFA (Upper Story Residential- 2 spaces/2+ bedroom units)
- Min. Front Yard: 15’
- Max. Front Yard: 25’ (commercial or office)
**PUD**

Planned Unit Development

The Planned Unit Development (PUD) process is intended to enable creative implementation without strict adherence to established zoning regulations, usually through staff negotiations and extensive public hearings. The outcome can be fraught with uncertainty, depending on how closely aligned a developer’s vision is with the undeclared vision of individual neighbors and city representatives. This process can be especially frustrating for out-of-town investors, and the unpredictability can cost the developer the economic advantage of their project.

**Summary of Method**
1. Developer must submit an application for review. Submittal includes fees, plans and elevations, and a business plan.
2. Committee accepts or rejects application.
3. Public hearing is held. (In St. Joseph, at least two hearings. ¹)
4. Upon Decline: Developer may apply again in one year.
5. Upon Acceptance: Developer may commence construction.
6. Repeated for every PUD application thereafter.

**Considerations**
- Often used for mixed-use and compact developments.
- Outcome can be very unpredictable for the developer and the city. Even though the city often perceives itself to have control over the process, legally binding review criteria often end up yielding unsatisfactory compromises.
- Based on the financial goals of the developer
- Although intended to facilitate master planned approaches, negotiated compromise often produces stand-alone buildings with no coherent relation to a whole.

“I won’t go into specific numbers, but let’s just say the apt and thorough due diligence accomplished by the citizens and governing bodies of St. Joseph resulted in our long term holding of the asset being rendered non-viable. The result is we must switch to plan ‘B’.”

-Jim Koch
Developer of CVS, St. Joseph, commenting on the sale of the property²

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### Heavy Initial Investment of Time

Majority of research, time, funds, and decision-making is invested at an initiating point for the City.

### Zoning Replacement or Improvement

Form-based code is designed to supplement if not entirely replace the current zoning.

### Public Vision Based Development

A development plan is constructed around specific criteria that the public wishes to see upheld in all incoming projects.

### City Controls First Entry

All incoming New Development must fulfill the criteria set by the City in order to build. If criteria is met, projects cannot be denied.

### Explicit Architectural Vision

Architectural characteristics are decided and regulated to protect the quality of the public realm.

### Ease of Adjustment after Approval

Adjusting any part of the project is allowed, as long as the project still keeps to the code.

### Predictable Expectations

The approval for a project is dependent on the developer's ability to abide by the code, therefore they have control over the influential factors.

### Image-Oriented Project Requirements

Creates rules about the size, positioning and density of the development, as well as it representation in the community.

### Quality of Public Realm Defined

The public experience is considered holistically for the entire neighborhood, one project at a time.

### Public Involvement

Public decides the long-term vision of the town through the initial participatory process.

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1. Form-based Codes in 7-Steps: The Michigan Guidebook to Livability, Michigan Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism, 2010

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**FBC**

**Form-Based Code**

Form-Based Codes (FBCs) represent an alternative to conventional zoning and the PUD process. Instead of prioritizing land use, FBCs prioritize the form of new development, making them more flexible to respond to changing market conditions. Typically, FBCs enable a specific range of forms in mapped areas, with the intent of yielding a final outcome that resembles the vision set by the city. Developers tend to appreciate FBCs because the reasonably flexible rules can be known up front.

**Method**

1. The city, in conjunction with architectural and planning professionals, as well as the public, work to create an achievable vision for their community. This vision should be based on market research and building industry input.
2. Regulations are passed and applied thereafter.
3. No public hearings for every project. Developers must keep to agreed regulations.

**Considerations**

- Focus is on placement, scale and form of the building
- Intense consideration of quality of public realm, street walkability and connectiveness
- Can help to preserves historical fabric
- Based on a detailed community vision
- Can help to incorporates “missing middle” densities e.g. townhouses, live/work units.

> “Form-based Codes create a defacto master developer context across multiple ownerships to enable incremental, open-source economic development.”

-Scott Polikov

*Form-based Economic Development on Main Street*
Funding Opportunities

A Partial Summary of Embedded Opportunities

This series of maps introduces where the potential for funding opportunities is embedded within the study area. Based on the site analysis and the concepts presented within this document, one can map out areas which may be most likely to attracting grant funding available through state, federal, and trust programs. The maps break this down into different types of funding and summarize the types of grants, some rough criteria, and typical funding caps.

By comparing the different maps, one can quickly see which areas have the highest potential for pooling diverse grants. For example, a revitalization of the Old Ship Canal in Benton Harbor, conceptually illustrated on pages 52-53, brings together many criteria that can help to attract existing grants.

This is not an exhaustive list of possible grants, but only serves to introduce some commonly available opportunities. Also, funding always relies in part on local political will and consensus.

### Grant Caps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Grant</th>
<th>Name of Grant Providers</th>
<th>$ Grant Caps</th>
<th>Partial List of Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Zone Management Grant</td>
<td>NOAA Funds Administered by Michigan DEQ</td>
<td>Typically $100,000</td>
<td>Public Access, Environmental Development, Fishing &amp; Recreation, Water Trails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes Restoration Initiative</td>
<td>U.S. Fish &amp; Wildlife Service</td>
<td>Several $100,000</td>
<td>Public Access, Fishing &amp; Recreation, Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes Fishery Trust</td>
<td>Michigan Based Non-Profit Program</td>
<td>Several $100,000</td>
<td>Ecosystem Health &amp; Sustainable Fish Population/Education, Public Access/Fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustain our Great Lakes Program</td>
<td>National Wildlife Federation</td>
<td>Several $100,000</td>
<td>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem Health, Wetlands &amp; Shoreline Habitat Restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund</td>
<td>Michigan Department of Natural Resources</td>
<td>Up to $300,000</td>
<td>Trails &amp; Greenways, Wildlife/Ecological Corridors, Urban Area Projects, Wetland Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program</td>
<td>U.S. Fish &amp; Wildlife Service</td>
<td>Up to $100,000</td>
<td>Wetland Improvement &amp; Restoration, Economic &amp; Recreational Benefits for Anglers/Boaters, Flood Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Waters Small Grant</td>
<td>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</td>
<td>Up to $60,000</td>
<td>Underserved Communities, Restoration of Urban Centers, Runoff Pollution, Diverse Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NonPoint Source Pollution Control Grants</td>
<td>Michigan DEQ (Federal Clean Water Act Section 9)</td>
<td>Typically $100,000</td>
<td>Water Quality Improvement &amp; Protection, Ability of Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stormwater, Asset Management &amp; Wastewater</td>
<td>Michigan DEQ (SAW Grant)</td>
<td>Up to $200,000</td>
<td>Construction &amp; Design, Stormwater Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. “You Are HereDNR Grants Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.” DNR. Michigan Department of Natural Resources.
8. “You Are HereDEQ Water Onsite Wastewater Surface Water.” DEQ.
9. “You Are HereDEQ Grants and Loans.” DEQ.
Transportation & Economic Development

1. **Transportation Alternatives Program**
   - Michigan Department of Transportation
   - Replacing Automobile Trips, Streetscaping, Stormwater/Green Infrastructure
   
2. **Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund**
   - Michigan DNR
   - Trails/Greenways, Pedestrian Bridges, Recreation
   
3. **Transportation Economic Development Fund**
   - Michigan Department of Transportation
   - Transportation need, Economic Development, Increase of Tax Base, Local Streets, On-Street Parking & MDOT Streets

4. **Surface Transportation Program**
   - U.S. Department of Transportation
   - Administered through SWMPAC
   - Transportation alternatives, Recreational Trails, Operational Improvements for Highways, Bridges, Highways
   
5. **TIGER Discretionary Grants**
   - U.S. Department of Transportation
   - Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery
   - Transportation Needs: Safety, Innovation, & Opportunity
   
6. **EDA Grants**
   - U.S. Economic Development Administration
   - Economic Development, Ranges up to $500,000
   - Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Facilitate Low Paying Jobs in Growing Clusters

7. **Brownfield Redevelopment Grants**
   - Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
   - Brownfield Incentives through Tax Increment Financing
   - Private parties will initially pay the costs of the eligible activities or sources other than BHBRA, with repayment resulting from tax increment revenues generated from the site.
   
8. **Benton Harbor Flats Area**
   - Benton Harbor Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
   - Up to $12.5 MIL

9. **Tobias Tank Farm**
   - Benton Harbor Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
   - Up to $100,000

10. **Performance Auto**
    - Benton Harbor Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
    - Up to $1.8 MIL

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1. *MDOT Projects and Programs Grant Programs.* Transportation Alternatives Program : Competitiveness & Eligibility Details.
The Harbor as a Community-wide Project

The harbor area includes a complex weave of jurisdictions at the local, county, state, and federal levels. These maps introduce the most significant authorities and how they are distributed across both cities. While significant transportation and environmental issues must be coordinated with non-local agencies, local government in Benton Harbor and St. Joseph sets the vision for implementation.

The two cities have separate planning and zoning powers, and their efforts are not always aligned. Because of this, both cities’ master plans recognize the necessity to work collaboratively to accomplish certain goals. This study has approached the harbor as one that can benefit greatly from a common vision, shared by both cities. A common vision, however, requires coordinated implementation, for which a joint-municipal planning area can be recommended for the reasons introduced here.

Michigan Communities pursue Cooperative Community-Wide Planning as a result of Michigan’s Joint Municipal Planning Act. This act was adopted by the state in 2003 for the benefit of communities such as the Twin Cities. Under this act, Benton Harbor and St. Joseph can establish a Joint Planning Commission (JPC) to serve a defined Joint Planning Area - with or without zoning powers.\(^1\)

There are many possible benefits and many possible scenarios for joint municipal planning. In west Michigan, Saugatuck, Douglas, and Saugatuck Township pursue joint planning. Here are a few other examples of joint municipal planning communities in Michigan, and some lessons learned.

### Communities Involved
- City of Marshall and Marshall Township
- City of Fremont, Sheridan Charter Township, and Dayton Township
- Village of Bellevue, Bellevue Township
- Village of Kalkaska and Kalkaska Township
- Village of Chelsea, Dexter, Lima, Lyndon, and Sylvan Townships

### Key Process Element
- Created a Joint Master Plan and a Joint Zoning Ordinance for a Joint Planning Area that includes a campus of significant historic buildings.
- Local officials and citizens engaged in a cooperative effort to build a thorough database and map set documenting community assets.
- Created a Joint Planning Commission, a Joint Master Plan, and a single Zoning Ordinance in recognition of shared cultural & natural features.
- Each community hired its own facilitator/advocate who jointly facilitated the process.
- Washtenaw County planning staff invested extensive staff time in helping citizens and public officials through a lengthy cooperative process.

### Summary of Outcomes
- JPC, formed to address a limited area, is focused on managing the redevelopment of a former hospital campus, new development and historical resources.
- Joint Master Plan has smoothed the way for a number of development decisions. Advisory Joint Planning Commission appears to have little real effect.
- Joint Planning Commission is still shared by both jurisdictions. Two separate zoning ordinances are now administered separately.
- Village prepared and adopted a Joint Plan, and some areas with problematic septic systems came into the Village.
- Process helped build relationships and supported a community-wide discussion on the direction of growth.

### Lessons Learned
- JPC is now nearing the completion of the Joint Master Plan which will support the development of a joint form-based zoning ordinance, historic building work, and other development.
- The development of a shared community-asset database can be very helpful. Cooperative planning also benefits from efforts to build relationships and communication linkages.
- Some original administrative intentions were not realized, but other intentions such as the JPC have had a lasting positive impact.
- Lack of regular communication spawned several erroneous assumptions on the part of each side.
- Multi-jurisdictional planning process can be an important learning process and offers a good framework for local planning and zoning.

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Existing View of Twin Cities Harbor looking West
Refer to pages 16 and 55
Existing View of Outer Harbor from M.63 Blossomland Bridge

Refer to pages 4, 5, 24 and 30
Existing view of Marina Island looking East
Refer to pages 6 and 27
Existing view of Central Dock
Refer to pages 8 and 37
Existing View of Main Street Benton Harbor looking West
Refer to pages 9 and 45
Existing View of Main Street and Riverview Drive
Refer to pages 10 and 33
Existing view of revitalized Benton Harbor Canal looking West
Refer to pages 11 and 53
Existing view of Riverview Drive from 12th Street
Refer to pages 12 and 51
Existing view looking North along Riverview Drive
Refer to pages 13 and 47
Existing view of County Courthouse Area and Port Street
Refer to pages 14 and 57
Existing view of Inner Harbor from Courthouse Bluff
Refer to pages 15 and 39
Existing view of County Courthouse Area
Refer to pages 16 and 55
Sense of Place

The existing Twin Cities harbor area has the power to inspire.

The design team worked hard to craft visionary illustrations that reflect an existing identity and spirit of place, even through redevelopment. Deeply embedded in the rusty seawalls, aged concrete, and historic buildings lies a DNA that is gritty, strong, and authentic. The reflective surface of the turning basin and the color of the earth create a certain light that belongs only here. If one were to lose these, to replace them with a cartoon of another place, the Twin Cities would in a way lose part of its soul. It would certainly lose some currency, as people increasingly seek communities that celebrate distinction.

The photos of existing places are included here to help compare and inform. But the sweeping panoramas also speak of character and potential that is uniquely Twin Cities. The authors of this study humbly aspired for the illustrated architecture, urban design, and landscape to be worthy of the place, and hope for future builders and decision-makers to be even better stewards of it.
This study was commissioned by the City of Benton Harbor and prepared by the 2015 Andrews University School of Architecture & Interior Design for the benefit of the Twin Cities community, and for God’s glory.

STAKEHOLDER STEERING COMMITTEE
Members representing the City of Benton Harbor, the City of St. Joseph, the County of Berrien, and various private and non-profit entities are listed on page 19.

Committee organized and chaired by Marja Winters, Assistant City Manager and Director, Community and Economic Development Department, City of Benton Harbor

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY
The graduate Urban Design Studio, led by Professor Andrew von Maur, has been recognized with six national awards for excellence in the field of urban design and town planning. Assistant Professor Troy Homenchuck provided digital illustration consulting. The team’s international group of graduate students:

- Cecelia Cameron (NY), Christian Campos (CA),
- Steven Davidovas (MD), Ryan Jacobson (MD),
- Orean Joseph (Antigua and Barbuda), YoungEun Young (Korea),
- Neo Lehoko (South Africa), Jimmy Owino (Kenya),
- Gian Penaredondo (Philippines), Cesar Rojas (Colombia),
- Britney Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago), and
- Roxanna Torres-Colón (Puerto Rico)

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSION
This study was prepared in collaboration with the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, which prepared base maps, data, meeting facilitation, and surveys. A detailed record of this information, as well as additional resource material, is available online at:

www.swmpc.org/bhsjharbor.asp

John Egelhaaf Executive Director
Marcy Colclough Senior Planner
Jill Plescher GIS Specialist
Gautam Mani Associate Planner

CONSULTING EXPERT PROFESSIONALS
Marcus de la Fleur, MLA, ASLA, RLA - Stormwater de la fleur LLC, Chicago, Illinois
Peter Swift P.E. - Traffic Engineering
Swift & Associates, Gold Hill, Colorado

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS
Captain Russ Sea Hawk Charters
Jesse Hibler Drone Photography
Hibler Design Studio
Mark Moreno Professor, Andrews University
Tami Miller Krasl Art Center
Thomas O’Bryan P.E., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Michael Wychers, Architect, The Prairie Real Estate Group

This study features images of works of art owned by the Krasl Art Center, used by permission.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS
Berrien County Sheriff Department Marine Division
Oct 29, 2015 - Andrews University
Lt Martin Kurtz Marine Division Commander

Environmental Consulting & Technology
Oct 29, 2015 - ETC Offices
Marc D. Florian CPG, RG, CUSTP

Concerned Residents of Old Edgewater
Oct 30, 2015 - St. Joseph Yacht Club
Ginny Antonson
Bill Chickering 5th District County Commissioner
Brent Glendening
Liz Glendening President, Old Edgewater Association
Lois Goldrick
Charles and Lorraine Jesperson
Jim Kodos
Ann Kech
Steve Winkler Chairman, Edgewater Dunes HOA

Dock 63 Commercial Port
Nov 4, 2015 - Dock 63
Peter Berghoff, Operator, Dock 63
Ben Marvin, Controller, Dock 63

Boating Focus Group
Nov 18, 2015 - Andrews University
Tom Armon The Freedom Boat Club
Jeff Alisch St. Joseph Junior Foundation
Dave Gould President, St Joe Isle Yacht Club
Captain Jerry Link Fishing Charter Captain
Eric Johnstone Owner, Anchors Way Marina
Laura Lynn Boating Enthusiast
Cheryl Morris Anchors Way Marina
James McGee Local Boater
Gary Sisson St. Joseph Junior Foundation
Dave Topping Classic Boat Owner

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
Index Map

Key
A. Vacant Site west of M-63
B. County Courthouse Area
C. Marina Island
D. Central Dock
E. Old Ship Canal
F. Main Street and Riverview Drive
G. 12th Street to River
H. Riverview Drive at Britain Avenue
I. South Riverview Drive

A “Menu of Concepts”
- Not a Master Plan
This document is not a master plan intended for implementation. It presents a collection of individual but inter-related concepts, principles, and data sets that are intended to inform decision-making and lead to formal planning and implementation. For some parts of the study area, the study presents multiple and divergent concepts. The reader can use this map to find site-specific concepts.
This study was commissioned by the City of Benton Harbor, led by a stakeholder steering committee representing: The City of Benton Harbor, The City of St. Joseph, Berrien County, and the private sector.

Prepared by Andrews University in collaboration with the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission.