

# Todd Drive Renewal Advances

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Mike Ivey The Capital Times

After a series of delays, the redevelopment of the Todd Drive/Beltline interchange is moving forward rather quickly.

The Madison Plan Commission Monday night approved without objection plans for a pair of six-story, mixed use buildings at 2501 W. Beltline Hwy.

The project from Arbor Gate Development involves seven different parcels of land on the east side of Todd Drive south of the Beltline.

The site is currently occupied by a variety of commercial tenants including Verlo Mattress Factory and Allen Kitchen & Bath, which are relocating to a new design center on the other side of Todd Drive.

The project is part of a wider \$41 million development backed with \$3.6 million in city financing that includes Mortenson Investment Group and the Baxter family, which owns Kayser Ford. It is aimed at curbing blight and redeveloping the high-profile site along the busy corridor.

"The miracle mile continues," said Ald. Tim Bruer, who represents the district.

Earlier this year, a boarded-up apartment complex was demolished to make room for the new locations for Allen Kitchen & Bath and Verlo Mattress. A 52,000 square-foot building housing both businesses is being built next to the existing Sergenian's Floor Covering at 2805 W. Beltline Hwy.

Mortenson Investment Group and the Baxter group had initially pursued separate projects but decided to team up after Mortenson's plans for the "Landmark Gate" project were scuttled. That project died last year following a change in state law that made it more difficult for municipalities to use their power of eminent domain to acquire properties for economic development purposes.

Arbor Gate as initially proposed by the Baxters featured a pair of three-story buildings with retail stores on the ground floor and offices above. A hotel also has been discussed for the site but appears to be on hold. The city has supported the projects in the central Beltline area, which has seen some violent crime and is home to the Selective Video adult store, long a sore spot for many neighbors.

Ice Age clinic: The commission Monday night also approved plans from Meriter Health Systems for a new medical clinic at 8001 Raymond Road on the city's far southwest side near the intersection of County M and County PD. The clinic would serve six doctors and provide 76 surface parking spaces.

The new clinic is slated for a 63-acre parcel of land the hospital acquired in 1985. The land is currently vacant except for a Meriter juvenile treatment facility off Raymond Road.

As part of the approval, Meriter is to provide an updated land use plan for the remainder of the property, which abuts the national Ice Age Trail scenic corridor. Long range plans call for closing Raymond Road to traffic and creating a parkway.

The new clinic would be accessed off County PD and requires an encroachment into a 300-foot buffer strip designed to protect the trail area.

"This is a crucial junction for the Ice Age Trail and care needs to be taken," said longtime trail advocate Gary Werner.

Ald. Zach Brandon supported the project, saying the fast-growing area is in need of a medical clinic.

In other action the commission:

\* Approved a 30-unit condo project at 2425 Jeffy Trail on the far west side from developers Rick McKy and Rick North.

\* Approved plans for an outdoor seating/smoking area for the South Bay Lounge at 5404 Raywood Road.

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<http://www.madison.com/archives/read.php?ref=/tct/2007/07/10/0707100228.php>