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City unveils Lakeshore plan

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CHRISTIE BLECK - Journal Staff Writer (cbleck@miningjournal.net) , Mining Journal

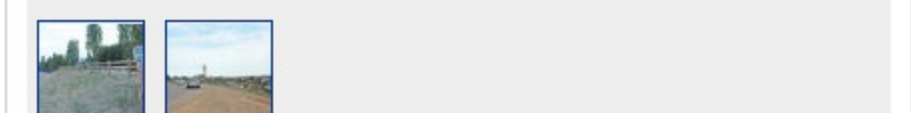
MARQUETTE - Travelers frustrated by the lack of a view of Lake Superior on Lakeshore Boulevard, roughly between Wright and Hawley streets, at some point in the future might see that problem alleviated.

Plans have been refined for the Lakeshore Boulevard Relocation and Shoreline Restoration Project.

The Marquette City Commission held a Tuesday work session to hear a presentation on the final draft of plans, which were created by a project team consisting of the city of Marquette Community Development Department and the Superior Watershed Partnership. Baird, a coastal-consulting company, provided oversight.



The Superior Watershed Partnership has planted beach g...



Plans in part call for realigning and elevating the road as well as removing the riprap, which would be replaced by engineered stone armor.

The project is a grant-funded project provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality-Coastal Zone Management.

Phase I involved public meetings, an engineering study, selecting options and the SWP undertaking dune restoration activity. Phase II involved shoreline restoration and creating two dune-restoration demonstration areas and more public community engagement.

Dennis Stachewicz, city director of planning and community development, told the commission adding stone armor along the lake would be used along with dune/swale restoration.

He said what is being proposed is combining manmade mechanical features to break the wave action, and then disguising it with shoreline restoration, while at the same time relocating Lakeshore Boulevard.

"We wanted to recapture the view of Lake Superior, so in other words, if we're going to use stone armor, it had to look different than it does now," Stachewicz said. "We don't want to be looking at unaesthetic or ugly rock piles."

Also proposed are creating a multiple-use pathway separate from the road, boardwalks, lookout spots with parking and a roundabout at Lakeshore and Wright that would provide a terminal vista of the lake, he said.

The dune/swale complex, according to Stachewicz, will double as overflow areas.

The SWP also has removed invasive species on one site and planted beach grasses on another in the project area, SWP Executive Director Carl Lindquist said.

"It'll really be next spring when it'll be thriving," Lindquist said.

The estimated cost of the project, Stachewicz said, is \$8 million, plus a 10 percent contingency cost, with \$4.5 million of that price tag going toward the stone armor.

Stachewicz said the city now has "shovel-ready plans" it can use when it seeks funding, which could involve federal grants through NOAA and other options.

Stachewicz cautioned if no work is performed on Lakeshore, it could degrade within 10 years at an approximate cost of \$10 million.

"I am telling you, we are going to aggressively pursue funding opportunities as best as we can," he said.

Stachewicz said he has received little negative feedback from the public regarding the project.

Commissioner Don Ryan said, "To me, other than the money issue, I don't see what could be wrong. We have a situation now where the road is constantly exposed to damage. You ride around, you're looking at rocks, you're not really seeing the lake. I mean, this seems to have so many great features to me."

Christie Bleck can be reached at 906-228-2500, ext. 250.

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