



**A local group plans to host a workshop about plants and how to properly grow them, visit [lansinglowdown.com](http://lansinglowdown.com) for more.**

**Medical students teach children basics of health**  
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STATE

## Reps. discuss 250 mph rail lines for Mich.

By Meredith Skrzypczak  
THE STATE NEWS

Living like the futuristic Jetsons family might become a reality for Michigan residents if travel is moved from roads and highways to high-speed, hydrogen-powered rail lines.

The first of four Interstate Traveler Company task force meetings was held Monday at the Kellogg Center to hear public testimony on the high-speed rail proposal. The Interstate Traveler Company LLC proposed the Detroit-to-Lansing rail line, which would be located along Michigan highway right-of-ways. The Traveler would be elevated above the ground alongside highways and travel up to 250 mph, said Jim Griffin, partner with the Interstate Traveler Company.

"I liken it to the Flintstones meeting the Jetsons," said state Rep. Bill Rogers, R-Brighton. "It's a newer generation... we want to vet this process to see if it's viable."

The proposed rail's high-speed potential makes it different than other commuter trains already in the state.

"Most people don't want to go any faster than 250 miles per hour," Griffin said. "Unlike a bullet train in suburban areas... it can accelerate."

The Traveler would not act like a train but would instead be made up of individual cars to hold passengers. The proposed line would provide various stops for passengers between Detroit and Lansing.

Legislators hope the line, fueled by solar power-generated hydrogen, will be privately funded. The construction cost for the Traveler is \$50 million to \$15 million per mile. That amounts to up to \$2 billion in total.

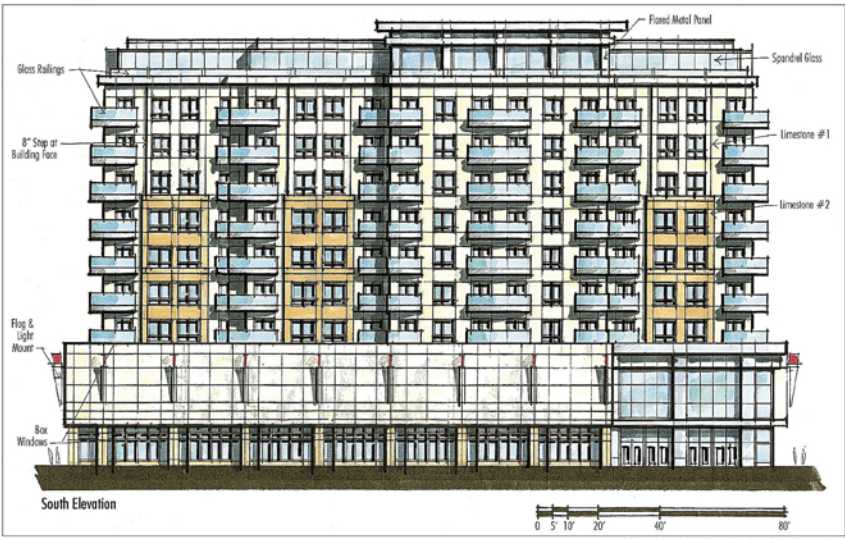
"We have to make sure that no public taxpayer dollars are used," said state Rep. Wayne Schmidt, R-Traverse City, who also is a task force member.

The task force will give its recommendation to Gov. Jennifer Granholm on whether the project is a viable option after the remaining three meetings are held.

At Monday's meeting, testimonials were given by state residents, such as James Anderson, an MSU history professor. He said transportation innovation is critical to the state and country's future.

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# City Center II could advance by fall



The proposed \$116 million City Center II project is slated to replace the buildings bounded by Abbot Road, Grand River Avenue and Valley Court Park.

By Kate Jacobson  
THE STATE NEWS

Tonight's East Lansing City Council agenda includes one item that is familiar to the council and the residents of East Lansing: a request from the City Center II developer for a fourth 90-day extension to finish securing funds for the project.

The \$116.4-million project, which has been in the works for almost a year, is scheduled to begin in the fall, city officials said.

Because of a bleak economy, Strathmore Development Company, the developer, has experienced difficulties obtaining funds to finance the project. To the dismay of some residents, the plan is moving forward, as city officials hope the final pieces of the project fall into place.

City Center II is supposed to modernize the vacat-

ed Citizens Bank building and the 5.5 acres that sit at the corner of Abbot Road and Grand River Avenue.

Originally planned to be a counterpart to City Center I — located on the corner of M.A.C. and Grand River avenues — the project has transformed into a multi-building, mixed-use facility, complete with a performing arts theater, parking garage and space for residential and retail space, among others.

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Phil Bellfy, professor of writing, rhetoric and American culture, stands near the site of the City Center II project. Bellfy lives near the proposed development and opposes it.

To see a presentation of what the area looks like and the proposed changes, visit [statenews.com/multimedia](http://statenews.com/multimedia).

BUSINESS

# Former MSU basketball star Cleaves plans E.L. restaurant

By Zack Colman  
THE STATE NEWS

It's perfectly legitimate to question whether Mateen Cleaves has ever truly left East Lansing and MSU.

The 2000 men's basketball national champion plays for the Bakersfield Jam of the NBA's D-League, yet he often makes East Lansing trips to participate in basketball camps, visit the Spartans men's basketball team and meet with head coach Tom Izzo.

But Cleaves is trying to make his stay in East Lansing more permanent, as he plans to open a restaurant in East Lansing with the help of former Michigan Wolverine and NBA star Chris Webber, who owns and

"We could have done it in Detroit or in Flint, but I wanted my first one in East Lansing, where it all started for me."

Mateen Cleaves, former MSU basketball player

operates Center Court with C-Webb in Sacramento, Calif.

"We could have done it in Detroit or in Flint, but I wanted my first one in East Lansing, where it all started for me," Cleaves said. "I'm excited about putting it in East Lansing. I told Chris before he comes he better put in a reservation."



Cleaves

Although Cleaves hasn't picked a location or filed any paperwork with the city, he and Webber said the restaurant will be established in the near future.

Cleaves plans on making the restaurant an homage to MSU past, present and future. There will be as much MSU memorabilia from hockey and baseball as from football and basketball.

"There were some nice places (when I was at MSU). I don't want to say there was a lack of places; we just thought it would

be a good idea to put one there," he said. "We want to bring some new, young energy back to East Lansing. I'm tried and true with Michigan State. I want to be in that area for the rest of my life."

Picking East Lansing

Cleaves said when he drives down Grand River Avenue, he is saddened when he sees empty storefronts. But he also sees opportunity.

"You really feel bad because when you see a building closed you know jobs were lost," he said. "But with me, I'm not really worried about that because if you're scared to take chances you'll never win. Just like in basketball, if you're scared to take the shot, you'll never make it."

Andy Deloney, vice president of public affairs for the Michigan Restaurant Association, said it's never been more difficult to operate a restaurant, which means more restaurants are closing. Given Cleaves at one point earned an NBA salary, he doesn't need to attract as many investors as other independent restaurateurs. Also, many failed restaurants are trying to sell equipment at low prices, real estate is cheaper and restaurants need to get out of their liquor licenses by offering them at low prices, he added.

Cleaves said he plans on adding a liquor license to his restaurant. The city of East Lansing has one liquor license available, according to the Liquor Control Commission.

East Lansing Mayor Vic Loomis, however, said there is a "sufficient" number of restaurants with liquor licenses in downtown East Lansing, which could make it difficult for Cleaves to gain the city's approval.

"My attitude has been if we can get different venues and get something in downtown we don't currently have, then it's something worth taking a look at," Loomis said. "But if the applicant has a proposal and brings it to us, we judge it upon its merits or lack thereof."

But Michael Rogers, vice president of communications with the Small Business Association of Michigan, said a liquor license

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