

# Memphis Business Journal

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## Tunica County developing 2,221-acre Super Site to attract major industrial users

Memphis Business Journal - by [Michael Sheffield](#)

Having made a name for itself in the gaming industry, Tunica is now focusing on attracting major industrial companies by developing a 2,221-acre Super Site between U.S. Highway 61, State Highway 304 and I-69 in Tunica County.

Highway 61 will be the site's western boundary, while Highway 304 and I-69 will be the northern and southern borders, respectively.

Lyn Arnold, executive director of the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce, says the site, which will be developed this spring, will fit the need of large industrial clients with a "shovel ready" area.

"A lot of the big companies are interested in speed to market, so we'll have all of the utilities either adjacent or on the site, as well as plans available for financing," Arnold says.

The site is being prepared by engineering firm **Allen & Hoshall**, which has offices in Tunica and designed Tunica's water and sewage systems. Arnold says the property for the project is privately owned, but the county has an option on it. The project will be jointly financed by the county and landowner, even though budget figures haven't been finalized.

"This is part of an economic development program the county is trying to do," she says. "The county also has 5,000 acres by the airport and another 900 acres near I-69 that we want to use for a distribution park."

Arnold says the possibility of a speculative building on the property hasn't been ruled out, but Allen & Hoshall is working on a 3-D graphics package that will show any prospects what their facilities could look like.

Michael Young, senior vice president of Allen & Hoshall, says Tunica's residential development, along with Toyota's decision to build a new plant outside of Tupelo, could signal the beginning of an industrial shift in the area.

"The inevitable result of growth in Tunica is the growth of residential development, which is coming along with Tunica National Properties because we're seeing rooftops go up," Young says. "It is only a matter of time before companies like Toyota begin to look here as well."

Arnold says Tunica is also taking some cues from Memphis' reputation and strength as a distribution center.

"Along I-69, you're 20 minutes from the airport, even though it seems much further away," she says. "You'll have interstate access on both sides, which makes the drive shorter."

Webster Franklin, CEO of the **Tunica Convention and Visitors' Bureau**, says Tunica is trying to take advantage of the recognition the gaming industry has brought to the area. The site has already gotten a lot of attention, he says, and Toyota's move into Blue Springs, Miss., outside of Tupelo makes Mississippi a viable location for other plants.

"In order to be a successful community, we have to diversify our economy," Franklin says. "Gaming has been great for us, but we have to make sure that isn't the only revenue stream we depend on. We want people to understand what's going on here."

Arnold says Tunica is slowly making quality-of-life improvements for existing and future residents. The city has zoned areas specifically for residential, distribution or industrial construction to ensure a consistent model.

"We're small enough to be nimble, but we want things done properly," she says. "We've done the planning, so we know where we want things to be. We've actually turned down projects because you get one chance to build something the way you want it built."

### **Tunica 'Super Site'**

Location: Southeast of U.S. Highway 61 and State Highway 304 in Tunica County  
Engineers: Allen & Hoshall

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