

***KENT COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES  
RELOCATION TO SHELDON COMPLEX – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

**Question: Why is there a need for a new human service building?**

Answer: The current DHS building – 415 Franklin SE – has severe limitations due to age and design. Critical problems include an obsolete waiting area, limited conference areas for meetings with clients, and outdated plumbing, heating and electrical systems – not to mention a lack of infrastructure for today’s technology needs. Additionally, DHS has had to lease a separate building for approximately one-third of its staff which has caused challenges related to communication and integration of services.

The current building at 121 Franklin SE, the Sheldon Complex, is also in need of repair. By replacing the current building with a new facility, DHS, ACSET’s community and employment services, and the Kent County Health Clinic can co-locate to provide better services.

**Question: Why was the Sheldon Complex selected as the new choice for the consolidated human services building?**

Answer: The Sheldon Complex, located four blocks west of 415 Franklin, is in close proximity to the majority of clients that DHS serves – roughly 70% are within a three (3) mile radius. Additionally, the site is 1 block from two major bus lines and large enough to consolidate both DHS offices (415 Franklin & Cascade Commons) as well as allow for the co-location of an updated Public Health Clinic and Michigan Works Service Center.

**Question: Who are the partners in this effort?**

Answer: The relocation of DHS is a collaborative effort between Kent County, the City of Grand Rapids and the State to find a more appropriate “home” for Kent County DHS, ACSET’s community and employment services, and the Health Clinic. At this time, the plan is supported by all parties as well as local area legislators.

**Question: Will the public have a chance to comment on the building design?**

Answer: Several opportunities for community input have been built into the tentative timeframe prior to designing the building. Also, the final plan must be approved by the Kent County Board of Commissioners as well as comply with the City’s Master Plan and zoning requirements. Between the scheduled meetings in the neighborhood and the public approval process, the community will be provided with significant opportunity for input on the project’s design and impact.

Future meetings are scheduled for May 1, 2007 and June 5, 2007. These meetings are held at the Sheldon Complex and begin at 6:00 p.m..

**Question: How much will this cost? And who is paying for it?**

Answer: The State of Michigan is leasing the majority of the building for the DHS offices. The county is leasing space for the Health Department. Grand Rapids and Kent County are leasing space together for ACSET. The total investment in the community for the facility is estimated to be \$27 million.

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**Question: Is my tax rate going to increase in order to finance this project?**

Answer: No. The new building will be primarily financed through lease payments by the State of Michigan over the next 20 years. The City and County will pay their share for the ACSET and Health Clinic portion of the project.

**Question: Will the value of my home decrease?**

Answer: In recent years, Grand Rapids has seen many large building projects including the Van Andel Arena, Grand Valley University's Pew Campus, The Van Andel Institute, and several Grand Rapids school buildings. Each has led to a revitalization of its surrounding neighborhood and increased property values. There is no reason to believe that the effect will be different with this project.

**Question: I am concerned about the impact on security and crime in the neighborhood, what is being done about this?**

Answer: The County is concerned about safety as well! The County does not believe that a crime problem will develop as the result of this new facility. Safety concerns are a key element in the design process.

**Question: Will the current Sheldon Health Clinic be open during construction?**

Answer: Unfortunately this is not possible. Operations of the Sheldon Health Clinic will be absorbed by the other clinics throughout the County.

**Question: What will happen to ACSET's community and employment services now located at the Sheldon Complex?**

Answer: ACSET is currently looking for temporary offices to operate from during construction. Information as to where these are will be made available as soon as it is known. Once construction is complete, ACSET will move into the new building at 121 Franklin SE.

**Question: What will happen to the old DHS site?**

Answer: Planning for the reuse of 415 Franklin will not take place until all financing and approvals have been received for the new DHS building and construction begins. This planning will likely not begin until the summer of 2008. Any redevelopment of the 415 Franklin site will include community involvement. It will also need to comply with City planning and zoning requirements.

**Question: What is the County's policy regarding minority contractors?**

Answer: The County seeks to utilize contractors from all areas of the community including those that are owned by minorities and women. The County's purchasing policy can be found at [www.accesskent.com/PurchasingPolicy/](http://www.accesskent.com/PurchasingPolicy/)

**Question: Where can I find more information?**

Answer: The County has set up a website to post updates and allow neighborhood residents to contact us easier. The site can be accessed at <http://www.accesskent.com/newHHS>.