2019
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW
Kent County, Michigan

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April 3, 2019

The Honorable Board of Commissioners
Kent County Administration Building
300 Monroe Avenue NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2221

RE: 2019 Kent County Financial Overview

The following document presents a "Financial Overview" for Kent County. The information contained herein summarizes significant economic, demographic and financial information. It will provide the reader with a comprehensive report demonstrating the financial strength and sustainability of Kent County's governmental organization.

The document is intended to serve the information needs of individuals and organizations with a financial interest in Kent County including:

Retail Bond Holders/Institutional Investors/Rating Agencies;
County Elected Officials;
The Citizens of Kent County; and
Businesses doing business or considering locating new business in Kent County.

This is an annual publication, the preparation of which is a cooperative effort of the County Treasurer, Human Resources and Fiscal Services staff. This document continues to demonstrate the County's adherence to conservative fiscal principles and strong management oversight.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayman P. Britt
County Administrator/Controller

County Administration Building/Calder Plaza

Board of Commissioners

Ted Vonk
District 1

Tom Antor
District 2

Roger Morgan
District 3

Diane Jones
District 4

Mandy Bolter
Chair
District 5

Stan Stek
Vice-Chair
District 6

Stan Ponstein
District 7

Harold Voorhees
District 8

Matt Kallman
District 9

Emily Brieve
District 10

Jim Saalfeld
District 11

Monica Sparks
District 12

Betsy Melton
District 13

Carol Hennessy
District 14

Jim Talen
Minority Party Vice-Chair
District 15

David Bulkowski
District 16

Robert Womack
District 17

Stephen Wooden
District 18

Phil Skaggs
District 19

Elected Officers

Lisa Posthumus Lyons
Clerk/Register of Deeds

Ken Yonker
Drain Commissioner

Chris Becker
Prosecuting Attorney

Kenneth Parrish
Treasurer

Michelle LaJoye-Young
Sheriff

Executive Staff

Wayman Britt
Administrator/Controller

Stephen Duarte
Fiscal Services Director

Marvin Van Nortwick
Deputy Fiscal Services Director

Linda Howell
Corporate Counsel

Professional Services

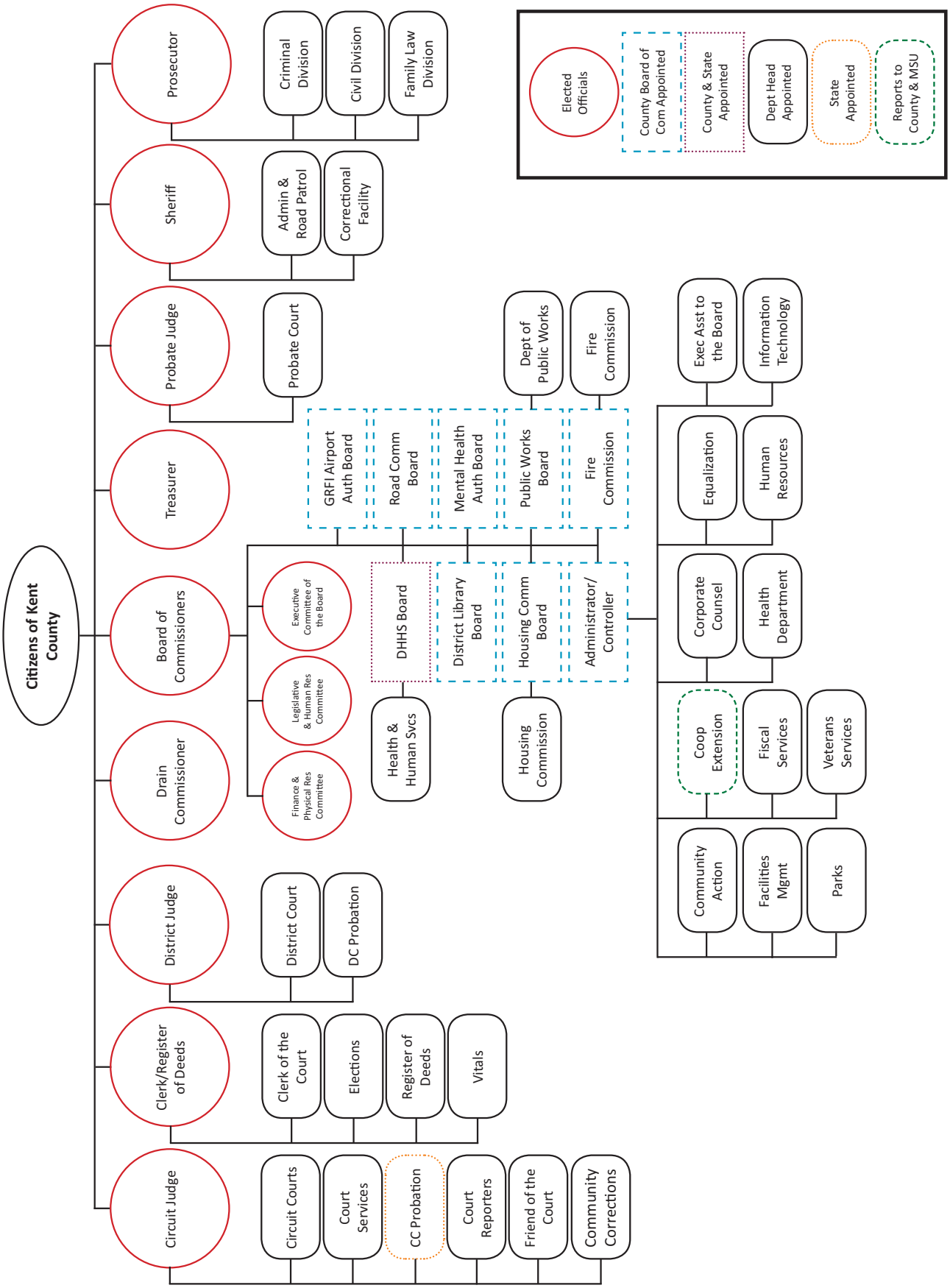
Auditor:

Rehmann Robson & Company
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Note Counsel:

Dickinson Wright PLLC
Detroit and Grand Rapids, Michigan

Organization Chart



Commercial/Industrial Base

The Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), of which Kent County is the hub, has been one of the fastest growing regions of the United States. Numerous expansions, renovations, constructions, modernizations and developments have been completed, are in the process of being completed or are in the planning stages. Among the factors which have encouraged major projects and have attracted numerous firms from outside the area are: a strong but highly diversified base of industries, an excellent work force, educational opportunities, excellent employer/employee relations, good location and transportation facilities, utilities and, possibly the most important, quality of life.

Convention Facilities

The City of Grand Rapids and the County have jointly created the Grand Rapids-Kent County Convention/ Arena Authority. The function of this independent authority is to own and operate DeVos Place Convention Center and the Van Andel Arena. The Van Andel Arena was completed in 1996, has a capacity of 12,000 and is used for professional hockey games, concerts, family shows and other entertainment events. This facility encompasses one million square feet of total gross floor area including a 40,000 square foot ballroom.

Regional Government Coordination

The Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (the "Metro Council") was formed in 1990 and has a membership of 35 local governments including the County. Created by state enabling legislation, the Metro Council is coordinating the efforts of its members to provide services while eliminating duplication. It is also engaged in issues which have no boundaries such as clean air, water and sewers and transportation. The Metro Council also is working with its area legislators to develop a regional presence at the State capital. Its legislative committee has broad community participation, which include the Chamber of Commerce, Kent Intermediate School District and environmental interests. The Metro Council's Water and Sewer Committee has members from Ottawa and Kent Counties, the private and environmental sectors and water and sewer providers. The Metro Council routinely works with a range of partners to accomplish its mission. Key partnerships are with Grand Valley State University's Office for Economic Expansion and Water Resources Institute, the Michigan Municipal League, and the Michigan Departments of Transportation, Environmental Quality and Commerce.

Medical Services

The residents of the County are served by a number of hospitals. The public and nonprofit hospitals in the County have approximately 2,732 licensed beds. In 2000, the Van Andel Institute (VAI) opened, with the stated mission ". . . to become one of the world's preeminent private medical research institutions within the next decade" which has become a reality. The Van Andel Institute has three component parts: the Van Andel Research Institute (VARI), the Van Andel Education Institute (VAEI) and the Van Andel Institute (VAI). The VARI is an independent medical research organization dedicated to preserving, enhancing and expanding the frontiers of medical science. The VAEI is an independent education institute whose mission is to conduct the Van Andel Educational Technology School, and to achieve excellence by embracing and strengthening the fundamental issues of education. The VAI supports the other two organizations. On July 11 1999, legislation was adopted in support of investing $50 million a year over the next 20 years to fund a Life Sciences Corridor—a joint venture between the State, several Michigan universities, and the VARI.

The research being conducted at the VARI is expected to serve as a growth pole, anchoring and propelling growth of a newly developing bioscience industry cluster. It is anticipated that this will draw outside business and related sectors into the region to take advantage of economic opportunities created by the Institute. VARI has constructed a 240,000 square foot eight story building expansion that opened in December 2009. This expansion nearly triples the Institute's laboratory space, allowing for growth of current laboratories and expanded research into neurological diseases. Michigan State University Medical School began construction of a new $90 million, 180,000 square foot medical school in the spring of 2008. The MSU college of Human Medicine began to transition its programming to temporary local facilities in the fall of 2009. In 2012, MSU also purchased the former Grand Rapids Press headquarters along with five parking properties for use as research space and additional parking. The facility is in close proximity to the newly constructed medical facility.

Transportation Infrastructure *(provided by The Right Place, Inc.)*

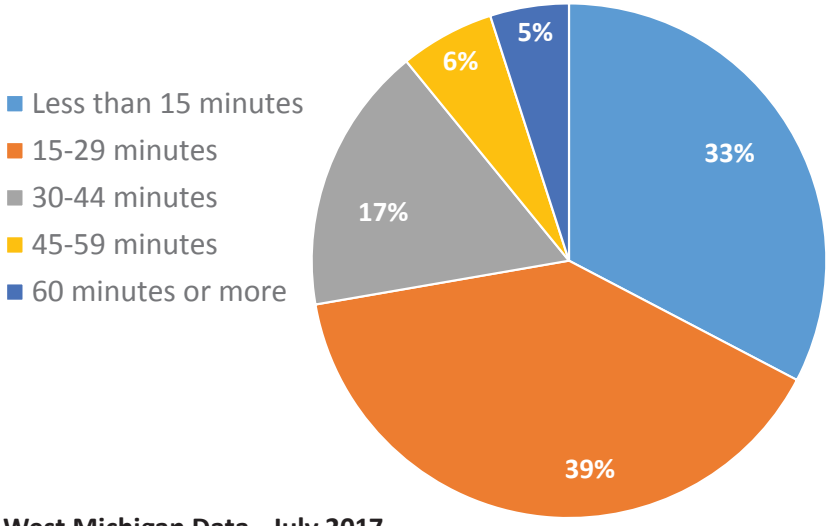
Air Travel

- 2015 - Gerald R. Ford International Airport is ranked #1 airport in North America (by size) by the Airports Council International
- 6 passenger airlines providing nonstop flights
  - Allegiant Airlines
  - American Airlines
  - Delta Air Lines
  - Frontier Airlines
  - Southwest Airlines
  - United Airlines
- 120 daily scheduled nonstop flights to and from 29 major destinations
- Over 7,200 travelers pass through GRR each day
- 3.3M passengers traveled through GRR in 2018
- 79th busiest commercial airport in nation
- 2nd busiest commercial airport in Michigan
- 241,600 lbs of air cargo pass through GRR each day
- 88 million lbs of air cargo in 2017
- 1,500 people work at the airport (most employed by airlines)
- $500M annual economic activity generated by GRR

Major Destinations

Atlanta	Baltimore
Charlotte	Chicago
Dallas	Denver
Denver	Fort Lauderdale
Fort Myers	Houston
Las Vegas	Miami
Minneapolis	Nashville
New York	Orlando
Philadelphia	Phoenix
Punta Gorda	Sarasota
Savannah	St. Petersburg
Tampa	Washington DC

Travel Time To Work



West Michigan Data - July 2017

Unless otherwise stated, data is reflective of the MEDC Region 4 which includes Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa Counties.

RAILROADS

Passenger: Amtrak

Freight: CSX, Grand Elk RR, Grand Rapids Eastern, Marquette Rail, Michigan Shore RR, Mid-Michigan

Data Source:
Economic Modeling Specialist Int'l (EMSI)

Population Statistics

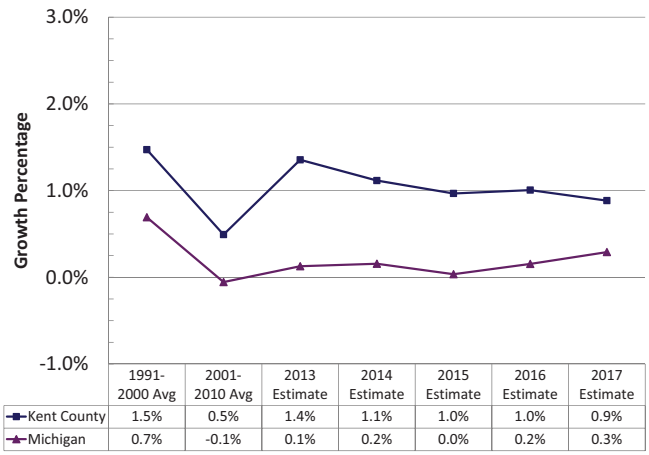
In terms of population, Kent County is the fourth largest county in the State of Michigan, and growing. According to the 2017 Census estimate, the County grew by 5.8% over the five years. The growth for the State of Michigan over the same period was 0.8%. The combination of diverse employment opportunities, cost of living, and a high quality of life has Kent County growing at a faster rate.

Per the 2017 U.S. Census, the County population was spread out with 6.8% under the age of 5, 13.5% from 5 to 14, 13.6% from 15 to 24, 15.7% from 25 to 34, 12.4% from 35 to 44, 12.4% from 45 to 54, 12.4% from 55 to 64, and 13.2% were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 35.3 years.

Year	Kent County	State of Michigan
1990 Census	500,631	9,295,287
2000 Census	574,335	9,938,444
2010 Census	602,622	9,883,640
2012 Estimate	615,122	9,886,610
2013 Estimate	623,457	9,899,219
2014 Estimate	630,413	9,914,675
2015 Estimate	636,508	9,918,170
2016 Estimate	642,909	9,933,445
2017 Estimate	648,594	9,962,311

Source: U.S. Census

Population Growth



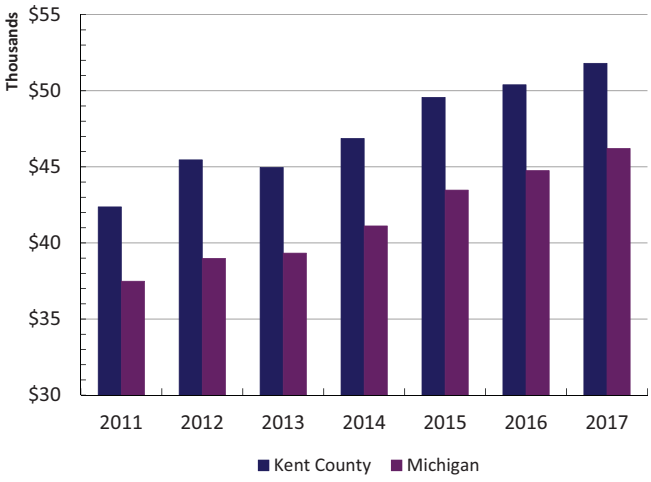
Per Capita Income Growth

Kent County's Per Capita Income grew 62.1% from 2000 to 2017 to $51,801. The growth for the State of Michigan over the same period was 52.0% to $46,201.

Year	Kent County	State of Michigan
2000	$ 31,965	$ 30,391
2011	42,365	37,482
2012	45,457	38,983
2013	44,457	39,328
2014	46,864	41,116
2015	49,565	43,471
2016	50,391	44,751
2017	51,801	46,201
Change 2000-17	62.1%	52.0%

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Per Capita Income Trend

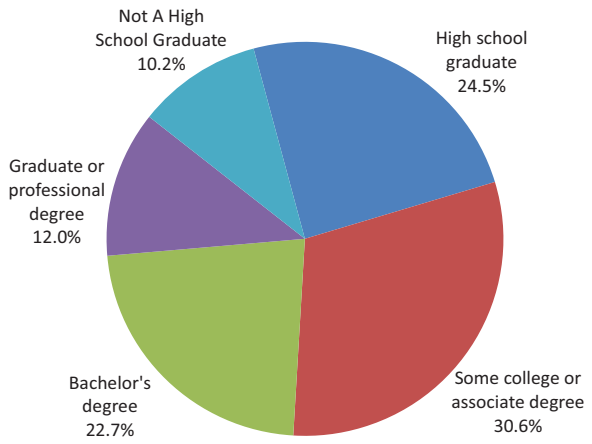


Education

There are 26 school districts and five intermediate school districts located, in whole or in part, in the County. There are numerous non-public schools serving diversified religious denominations and 17 charter schools in the County. Aquinas College, Calvin College, Central Michigan University, Cooley Law School, Cornerstone University, Davenport University, Ferris State University, Grace Bible College, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids Community College, Kuyper College, Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, Kendall College of Art and Design, the University of Phoenix and Western Michigan University have campuses located within the County. The main campuses of Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, Hope College, Michigan State University, and Western Michigan University are located within commuting distance of the County.

- 89.8% of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school.
- 34.7% of Kent County residents, 25 years and over, had a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Among people 25 years and over, 10.2% were not high school graduates.

Educational Attainment Persons 25 years & Over

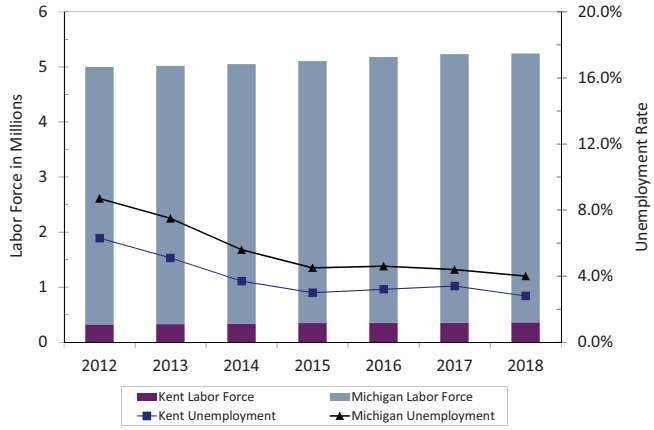


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey

Employment

Major industries that are located within the boundaries of Kent County, or in close proximity, include manufacturers of office equipment and furniture, heating controls, automotive parts, financial institutions, education, health care, retail food/merchandise and leisure and hospitality. This diversified employment base adds to the strength of the local economy. Since 2005 the unemployment rate in Kent County has ranged from 2.1% in April 1998 to 12.6% in July 2009. The unemployment rate as of December 2018, for Kent County, is 2.8% and is expected to remain stable.

Unemployment 2012-2018



Source: Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth

Labor Force Distribution - By Industry

The following table provides a comparative analysis of the Grand Rapids-Wyoming MSA workforce distribution based on average employment in calendar years 2014-2018. Examination of the statistics highlight the rebounding job market in West Michigan, the labor force is up 9.5% since 2014. Jobs in manufacturing; trade, leisure & hospitality; education & health services; and mining, logging, & construction are the industries showing the largest growth.

						2014-18 Change	
Industry	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**#**	**%**
Manufacturing	105,500	110,900	113,600	116,100	118,700	13,200	12.5%
Trade, transportation, and utilities	93,600	97,500	97,900	97,500	97,400	3,800	4.1%
Education and health services	84,900	87,800	89,900	92,300	94,600	9,700	11.4%
Professional and business services	76,500	78,000	79,300	80,900	79,900	3,400	4.4%
Leisure and hospitality	44,900	46,600	47,000	48,200	51,500	6,600	14.7%
Government	47,400	47,700	48,400	48,900	51,000	3,600	7.6%
Mining, Logging and Construction	20,000	20,800	22,200	23,800	26,800	6,800	34.0%
Financial activities	24,900	25,300	25,900	25,900	26,100	1,200	4.8%
Other services	21,300	21,800	22,100	22,400	22,700	1,400	6.6%
Information	5,400	5,200	5,500	5,500	5,400	-	0.0%
Total Nonfarm Employment	524,400	541,600	551,800	561,500	574,100	49,700	9.5%

Largest Employers

The diversity of the largest Kent County employers is highlighted below by industry and the approximate number of employees.

Top Kent County Employers		
Spectrum Health	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	25,000
Meijer	Supermarket Retail & Distribution	10,340
Mercy Health	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	6,200
Amway Corporation	Health, Beauty, Home Product Manufacturing	4,000
Steelcase Inc.	Office Furniture Manufacturing	3,500
Lacks Enterprises	Plastic Manufacturing for Automobile Industry	2,800
Grand Rapids Public Schools	Elementary and Secondary Schools	2,800
Farmers Insurance Group	Direct Property and Casualty Insurance Carrier	2,700
Spartan Nash	Supermarket Retail & Distribution	2,585
Gordon Food Service	Grocery and Related Products Merchant Wholesalers	2,544
Magna International	Glass Product Manufacturing for Auto Industry	2,500
Metro Health Hospital	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	2,384
Fifth Third Bank	Commercial Banking	2,280
Priority Health	Direct Health and Medical Insurance Carriers	2,250

Source: The Right Place Inc - Top Employers (2017)

Property Tax Rates

Prior to 1982 the County's tax rate was determined by a County-wide Allocation Board. In 1982, the County electorate voted a fixed millage allocation of 15 mills for operating purposes of the County and certain other taxing units within the County, as authorized by the State Constitution. Prior to 1995 the millage allocation was equal to $15.00 per $1,000 of the State Equalized Valuation ("SEV") of taxable property in the County and since 1995 has been equal to $15.00 per $1,000 of Taxable Value (defined below). The 15 mills allocation was voted for an indefinite period of time, although State statute permits a maximum levy of 18 mills. Of the 15 voted mills, 4.8 mills were authorized as the maximum levy for the County's operating purposes, including the payment of debt service. The remaining 10.2 mills were allocated among the other taxing units within the County. The allocation of the millage is fixed until such time as the electorate votes to change the allocation or the total authorized millage. The County electorate must approve additional millages of any amount for any general or specific purpose within statutory and constitutional limitations. In addition, the electorate may, at any time in the future, vote to (i) increase the 15 mills limit to 18 mills or (ii) re-establish the Allocation Board, and the County allocation of the total authorized 15 mills tax levy would thereafter be determined by the Allocation Board. The County's operating and additional voted millage for the past five years is shown in the following table. Tax levies are as of December 1st and July 1st of each year shown, are levied against each $1,000 of Taxable Value and exclude taxes levied by underlying taxing units.

Millage Rates

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Millages	**Jul 1**	**Dec 1**	**Jul 1**	**Dec 1**	**Jul 1**	**Dec 1**	**Jul 1**	**Dec 1**	**Jul 1**	**Dec 1**
County Operating (1)	4.2803	-	4.2803	-	4.2803	-	4.2803	-	4.2803	-
Correction Facility (2)	-	0.7893	-	0.7893	-	0.7893	-	0.7859	-	0.7828
Senior Services (2)	-	0.5000	-	0.5000	-	0.5000	-	0.4978	-	0.4958
Veterans Services (2)	-	0.0500	-	0.0500	-	0.0500	-	0.0497	-	0.0495
Zoo & Museum (2)	-	-	-	-	-	0.4400	-	0.4381	-	0.4363
Early Childhood (2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2500
Total Levy	**4.2803**	**1.3393**	**4.2803**	**1.3393**	**4.2803**	**1.7793**	**4.2803**	**1.7715**	**4.2803**	**2.0144**

(1) Maximum authorized millage for 2018 is 4.2846
(2) Voter approved millage

Property Tax Rate History

In addition to the County taxes, property owners in the County are required to pay ad valorem taxes to other taxing units such as cities, townships, school districts, community colleges, and other units within the County. The total tax rate per $1,000 of Taxable Value varies widely depending upon which municipality and school district the property is located. The highest tax rate on property within the County for 2018 was 67.0993 mills (49.0993 mills on homestead property) per $1,000 of Taxable Value for the residents of the City of Wyoming in the Godfrey-Lee School District; the lowest tax rate was 40.3431 mills (22.3431 mills on homestead property) for the residents of Solon Township in the Grant School District.

In addition to the allocated millage, the County electorate from time to time may approve additional millages of any amount for any general or specific purpose within State constitutional and statutory limitations.

Property Tax Rate Limitations

In 1978, the electorate of the State passed an amendment to the State Constitution (the "Amendment") which placed certain limitations on increases of taxes by the State and political subdivisions from currently authorized levels of taxation. The Amendment and the enabling legislation, Act 35, Public Acts of Michigan, 1979, as amended, may have the effect of reducing the maximum authorized tax rate which may be levied by a local taxing unit. Under the Amendment's millage reduction provisions, should the value of taxable property, exclusive of new construction, increase at a percentage greater than the percentage increase in the Consumer

Price Index, as published by the United States Department of Labor, then the maximum authorized tax rate would be reduced by a factor which would result in the same maximum potential tax revenues to the local taxing unit as if the valuation of taxable property (less new construction) had grown only at the national inflation rate instead of the higher actual growth rate. Thus, should taxable property values rise faster than consumer prices, the maximum authorized tax rate would be reduced accordingly. However, should consumer prices subsequently rise faster than taxable property values, the maximum authorized tax rate would not increase over the prior year tax rate, but remain the same. The Amendment does not limit taxes for the payment of principal and interest on bonds or other evidences of indebtedness outstanding at the time the Amendment became effective or which have been approved by the electors of the local taxing unit.

Taxable Valuation of Property

Article IX, Section 3, of the State Constitution provides that the proportion of true cash value at which property shall be assessed shall not exceed 50% of true market value. The State Legislature by statute has provided that property shall be assessed at 50% of its true cash value. The State Legislature or the electorate may at some future time reduce the percentage below 50% of true cash value.

In 1994, the electors of the State approved an amendment to the State Constitution (the "1994 Amendment") permitting the State Legislature to authorize ad valorem taxes on a non-uniform basis. The legislation implementing the 1994 Amendment added a new measure of property value known as "Taxable Value." Since 1995, taxable property has two valuations – State Equalized Value ("SEV") and Taxable Value. Property taxes are levied on Taxable Value. Generally, Taxable Value of property is the lesser of (a) the Taxable Value of the property in the immediately preceding year, adjusted for losses, multiplied by the lesser of the inflation rate, or 5%, plus additions, or (b) the property's current SEV. Under certain circumstances, therefore, the Taxable Value of property may be different from the same property's SEV.

The 1994 Amendment and the implementing legislation based the Taxable Value of existing property for the year 1995 on the SEV of that property in 1994 and for the years 1996 and thereafter on the Taxable Value of the property in the preceding year. Beginning with the taxes levied in 1995, an increase, if any, in Taxable Value of existing property is limited to the lesser of 5% or the inflation rate. When property is sold or transferred, Taxable Value is adjusted to the SEV, which under existing law is 50% of the current true cash value. The Taxable Value of new construction is equal to current SEV. Taxable Value and SEV of existing property are also adjusted annually for additions and losses.

Responsibility for assessing taxable property rests with the local assessing officer of each township and city. Any property owner may appeal the assessment to the local assessor, to the local board of review and, ultimately, to the State Tax Tribunal.

The State Constitution also mandates a system of equalization for assessments. Although the assessors for each local unit of government within a county are responsible for actually assessing at 50% of true cash value, adjusted for Taxable Value purposes, the final SEV and Taxable Value are arrived at through several steps. Assessments are established initially by the local assessor. Assessments are then equalized to the 50% levels as determined by the County's department of equalization. Thereafter, the State equalizes the various counties in relation to each other. SEV is important, aside from its use in determining Taxable Value for the purpose of levying ad valorem property taxes, because of its role in the spreading of taxes between overlapping jurisdictions, the distribution of various State aid programs, State revenue sharing and in the calculation of debt limits. Ad valorem Taxable Value does not include any value of tax-exempt property (e.g., governmental facilities, churches, public schools, etc.) or property granted tax abatement under Act 198, Public Acts of Michigan 1974, as amended ("Act 198") and Act 146, Public Acts of Michigan 2000, as amended ("Act 146"). Property granted tax abatements under Act 198 and Act 146, is recorded on separate tax rolls while subject to tax abatement.

Property taxpayers may appeal their assessments to the State Tax Tribunal. Unless otherwise ordered by the Tax Tribunal, before the Tax Tribunal renders a decision on an assessment appeal, the taxpayer must have paid

the tax bill. County taxpayers have a number of tax appeals pending before the Tax Tribunal, none of which will have a significant impact on the County's SEV, Taxable Value or the resulting taxes.

State Equalized and Taxable Valuation

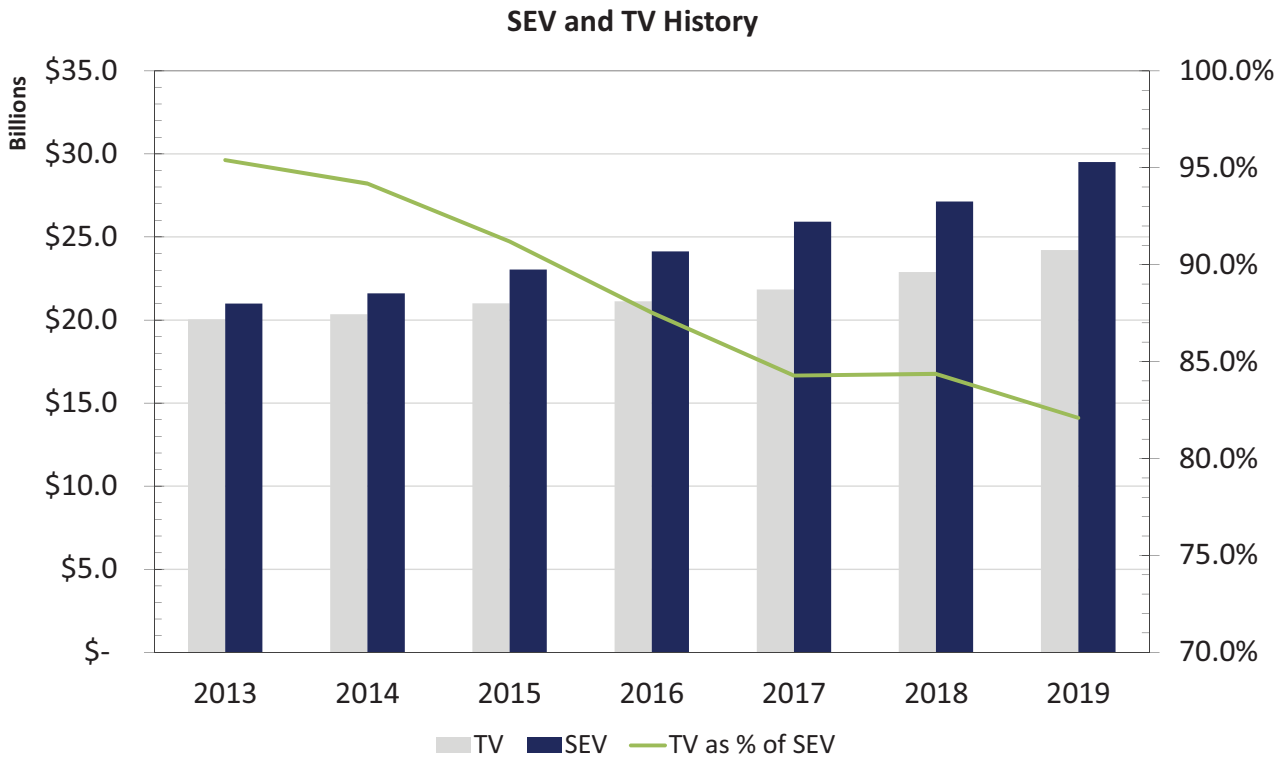
The County's total SEV has increased $6,139,114,615 or 29.24% between 2013 and 2018 and the Taxable Value has increased $2,863,607,565 or 14.30% between 2013 and 2018. Per capita 2018 SEV is $41,832 and the per capita 2018 TV is $35,291, both of which are based on the 2017 estimated Census population of 648,594.

Ad valorem Taxable Value does not include any value of tax-exempt property (e.g., governmental facilities, churches, public schools, etc.) or property granted tax abatement under Act 198 or Act 146. The taxable value of the abatements granted under Act 198 and Act 146 for 2018 is estimated at $309.7 million. (See "County Taxation and Limitations -- Property Tax Abatement" herein).

SEV and Taxable Value History

Year of Valuation	State Equalized Valuation	Taxable Valuation	SEV Change from Prior Year	TV Change from Prior Year
2013	20,992,849,006	20,025,808,959	0.0%	-0.1%
2014	21,611,336,604	20,353,174,066	2.9%	1.6%
2015	23,036,449,123	21,007,679,592	6.6%	3.2%
2016	24,129,416,055	21,119,691,880	4.7%	0.5%
2017	25,914,411,675	21,838,346,564	7.4%	3.4%
2018	27,131,963,621	22,889,416,524	4.7%	4.8%
2019*	29,502,080,572	24,219,497,487	8.7%	5.8%

** Pending State Equalization.*



By Use:		By Class:		By Municipality:	
Residential	66.9%	Real Property	92.9%	Cities	51.4%
Commercial	23.7%	Personal Property	7.1%	Townships	48.6%
Industrial	6.4%				
Utility	2.0%				
Agricultural	1.0%				
Total	100.0%		100.0%		100.0%

Property Tax Abatement

The SEV and Taxable Values do not include valuation of certain facilities which have temporarily been removed from the ad valorem tax roll pursuant to Act 198. Act 198 was designed to provide a stimulus in the form of significant tax incentives to industrial enterprises to renovate and expand aging facilities ("Rehab Properties") and to build new facilities ("New Properties"). Except as indicated below, under the provisions of Act 198, a local governmental unit (i.e., a city, village or township) may establish plant rehabilitation districts and industrial development districts and offer industrial firms certain property tax incentives or abatements to encourage restoration or replacement of obsolete facilities and to attract new facilities to the area.

An industrial facilities exemption certificate granted under Act 198 entitles an eligible facility to exemption from ad valorem taxes for a period of up to 12 years. In lieu of ad valorem taxes, the eligible facility will pay an industrial facilities tax (the "IFT Tax"). For properties granted tax abatement under Act 198, there exists a separate tax roll referred to as the industrial facilities tax roll (the "IFT Tax Roll"). The IFT Tax for an obsolete facility which is being restored or replaced is determined in exactly the same manner as the ad valorem tax; the important difference being that the value of the property remains at the Taxable Value level prior to the improvements even though the restoration or replacement substantially increases the value of the facility. For a new facility, the IFT Tax is also determined the same as the ad valorem tax but instead of using the total mills levied as ad valorem taxes, a lower millage rate is applied. For abatements granted prior to 1994, this millage rate equals 1/2 of all tax rates levied by other than the State and local school district for operating purposes plus 1/2 of the 1993 rate levied by the local school district for operating purposes. For abatements granted after 1993, this millage rate equals 1/2 of all tax rates levied by other than the State plus 0%, 50% or 100% of the State Education Tax (as determined by the State Treasurer).

The County's ad valorem Taxable Value also does not include the value of certain facilities which have been temporarily removed from the ad valorem tax roll pursuant to Act 146. Act 146 was designed to provide a stimulus in the form of significant tax incentives to renovate certain blighted, environmentally contaminated or functionally obsolete commercial property or commercial housing property ("OPRA Properties"). Except as indicated below, under the provisions of Act 146, a local governmental unit (i.e. a city, village or township) may establish obsolete property rehabilitation districts and offer tax incentives or abatements to encourage rehabilitation of OPRA Properties.

An obsolete property rehabilitation certificate granted under Act 146 entitles an eligible facility to an exemption from ad valorem taxes on the building only for a period of up to 12 years. A separate tax roll exists for OPRA Properties abated under Act 146 called the "Obsolete Properties Tax Roll." An "Obsolete Properties Tax" is calculated using current year ad valorem millages times the taxable value of the obsolete building for the tax year immediately prior to the effective date of the obsolete property rehabilitation certificate except for the annual school operating and State Education Tax millages which are charged at the ad valorem tax rate on the current taxable value of the building.

The local units in the County have established goals, objectives and procedures to provide the opportunity for industrial and commercial development and expansion. Since 1974, local units in the County have approved

granted tax abatement under Act 198 and Act 146, removed from the ad valorem tax roll and placed on the IFT Tax Roll. Upon expiration of the industrial facilities exemption and obsolete property rehabilitation certificates, the current equalized valuation of the abated properties will return to the ad valorem tax roll as Taxable Value.

As an additional measure to stimulate private investment, several local units in the County also created Renaissance Zones (the "Zones") pursuant to the provisions of Act 376 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1996, as amended ("Act 376"). Under Act 376 individuals living in and local businesses that conduct business and own qualified property located within the Zones are entitled to, among other things, an exemption from ad valorem taxes on the qualified property. For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018, the Taxable Value of property qualified for the benefits of the Zone program totaled $90,411,939.

Largest Businesses Based On Tax Roll Valuation

Top County Taxpayers	Parcels	Taxable Value
Consumers Energy	575	341,337,948
Amway Corp/Alticor	64	126,187,241
Meijer / Goodwill	68	122,023,739
DTE Energy	81	119,208,177
PR Woodland	9	68,872,846
Holland Home	29	49,472,840
Steelcase, Inc.	22	48,664,057
Hearthside Food Solutions	13	48,023,888
GGP LP	10	47,616,237
Centerpoint Owner LLC	8	31,150,836
Foremost Insurance	25	25,787,270
HP3 LLC	4	25,025,430
Total Top Taxpayers	**908**	**1,053,370,509**
Total County		22,889,416,524
Top Taxpayers/County		4.60%

Source: County of Kent - 2018 Apportionment Report

Tax Increment Authorities. Act 450 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1980, as amended (the "TIFA Act"), Act 197 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1975, as amended (the "DDA Act"), Act 281 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1986, as amended (the "LDFA Act"), Act 530 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 2004, as amended (The "Historic Neighborhood Act"), Act 280 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 2005, as amended (The "CIA Act") Act 61 of the Public Acts of Michigan 2007, as amended and Act 381 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1996, as amended (the "Brownfield Act") (together the "TIF Acts") authorize the designation of specific districts known as Tax Increment Finance Authority ("TIFA) Districts, Downtown Development Authority ("DDA") Districts, Local Development Finance Authority ("LDFA") Districts, Historic Neighborhood Finance Authority ("HNFA") Districts, Corridor Improvement Authority ("CIA") Districts, Neighborhood Improvement Authority ("NIA") Districts or Brownfield Redevelopment Authority ("BRDA") Districts, authorized to formulate tax increment financing plans for public improvements, economic development, neighborhood revitalization, historic preservation and environmental cleanup within the districts.

Tax increment financing permits the TIFA, DDA, LDFA, HNFA, CIA, NIA or BRDA to capture tax revenues attributable to increases in value ("TIF Captured Value") of real and personal property located within an approved development area while any tax increment financing plans by an established district are in place. These captured revenues are used by the tax increment finance authorities and are not passed on to the local taxing jurisdictions.

Personal Property Tax Exemptions and Property Tax Proposals. Act 328, Public Acts of Michigan 1998, as amended, allows certain eligible communities to designate specific existing areas as "eligible distressed areas" in which "new personal property" of "eligible businesses" would be exempt from ad valorem property taxation. The eligible communities could, with the approval of the State Tax Commission, designate one or more areas as eligible distressed areas.

Property Tax Collections

The County's fiscal year is the calendar year. County taxes were historically due and payable on December 1 of each prior year, at which time a lien on taxable property is created. Beginning in 2005 the County, as required by the State, began a shift of its operating millage from December 1 to July 1. Currently all of the operating millage is now billed on July 1. Property taxes billed on December 1 are payable without penalty until February

14. Property taxes billed on July 1 are payable without penalty on various dates, based on the billing cycles of city and township treasurers, but not later than September 14. Unpaid real property taxes become delinquent on the following March 1 and are thereafter collected by the County Treasurer with penalties and interest. Real property returned to the County Treasurer for delinquent taxes is subject to forfeiture, foreclosure and sale as provided in Act 206, Public Acts of Michigan 1893, as amended. In recent years, the County has paid to the respective municipalities within the County, including the County, from the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund (the "Fund"), the delinquent real property taxes of such municipalities; collections of delinquent real property taxes otherwise would be paid to such municipalities by the County Treasurer on a monthly basis following collection. Funding by the County of delinquent real property taxes is dependent upon the ability of the County, annually, to sell its notes for that purpose. There is no assurance the Fund will be continued in future years. Delinquent personal property taxes are less than 1% of the County's total levy. Suit may be brought to collect personal property taxes or personal property may be seized and sold to satisfy the tax lien thereon.

Property Tax Collection History

Year of Levy	Levy as of December 1 (1)	Collections to March 1 of the Year Following Levy		Collections to March 1, 2019	
2012	106,659,819	99,398,868	93.19%	106,658,145	100.00%
2013	107,089,614	100,710,662	94.04%	107,084,160	99.99%
2014	113,079,325	106,850,820	94.49%	113,075,030	100.00%
2015	117,005,336	109,543,141	93.62%	116,991,751	99.99%
2016	127,153,181	118,842,367	93.46%	127,058,381	99.93%
2017	131,664,667	123,510,169	93.81%	131,230,653	99.67%
2018	143,744,229	134,267,071	93.41%	134,267,071	93.41%

(1) The County's fiscal year begins January 1st. Taxes are billed on July 1st and December 1st and recorded as delinquent the following March 1st.

State Revenue Sharing

The County receives revenue sharing payments from the State of Michigan under the State Revenue Sharing Act of 1971, as amended (the "Revenue Sharing Act"). Under the Revenue Sharing Act the County receives its pro rata share of State revenue sharing distributions on a per capita basis. The County's receipts could vary depending on the population of the County compared to the population of the State as a whole. In addition to payments of revenue sharing moneys, the State pays the County to support judges' salaries, as well as other miscellaneous State grants.

Michigan State Capitol

The State continues the distribution of 80% of county revenue sharing payments pursuant to the Revenue Sharing Act, but distributes 20% of county revenue sharing payments through an incentive-based program. The program is known as the County Incentive Program ("CIP"), under which eligible counties must meet all of the requirements of Accountability and Transparency in order to receive the full CIP payment. For purposes of accountability and transparency, each eligible county shall certify by December 1, or the first day of a payment month, that it has produced a citizen's guide of its most recent local finances, including a recognition of its unfunded liabilities; a performance dashboard; a debt service report containing a detailed listing of its debt service requirements, including, at a minimum, the issuance date, issuance amount, type of debt instrument, a listing of all revenues pledged to finance debt service by debt instrument, and a listing of the annual payment amounts until maturity; and a projected budget report, including, at a minimum, the current fiscal year and a projection for the immediately following fiscal year. The projected budget report shall include revenues and expenditures and an explanation of the assumptions used for the projections.

The County has met the requirements for all clauses in the past and anticipates meeting the requirements going forward.

General Fund Revenue from the State of Michigan

					December 31,
Category	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018 (1)**	**2019 (2)**
State Revenue Sharing	$ 12,027,403	$ 12,083,871	$ 12,202,620	$ 12,306,846	$ 12,167,323
Local Community Stabilization Share	-	3,331,846	3,734,847	2,341,122	2,000,000
Court Equity Funding	2,814,458	2,823,471	2,880,749	3,083,430	2,881,000
Liquor Tax	3,764,527	2,992,747	3,300,055	3,378,810	3,471,623
Grants and Other	1,492,523	1,391,962	1,448,877	1,464,698	1,433,000
Total	**$ 20,098,910**	**$ 22,623,897**	**$ 23,567,148**	**$ 22,574,906**	**$ 21,952,946**

(1) Preliminary, subject to audit

(2) Budget as adopted by the County Board of Commissioners

Constitutional Debt Limitation

Article VII, Section 6 of the State Constitution states "No county shall incur any indebtedness which shall increase its total debt beyond 10%, of its assessed valuation." The Notes pending are not included within this debt limitation.

Statement of Legal Debt

2019 State Equalized Value (SEV) [1]	$ 29,502,080,572
Legal Debt Limit (10% of SEV)	2,950,208,057
Debt Outstanding [2] [3]	333,350,551
Margin of Additional Debt That Can Be Legally Incurred	$ 2,616,857,507
Debt Outstanding as a percentage of SEV	1.1%

(1) Pending State Equalization
(2) As of March 31, 2019
(3) Includes $16,100,000 principal payment made on April 1, 2019. Does not include the pending notes.

Debt Statement

The following table reflects a breakdown of the County's direct and overlapping debt as of March 31, 2019. Bonds or notes designated LTGO, are limited tax pledge bonds or notes.

Debt Type	Gross	Self-supporting or Portion Paid Directly By Benefited Municipalities	Net	Net Debt Per Capita [1]	Net Debt % of SEV [2]
Direct Debt					
General Obligation Limited Tax Notes [3]	$ 20,100,000	$ 20,100,000	$ -		
Airport Bonds (L.T.G.O.)	138,510,000	138,510,000	-		
County Building Authority (L.T.G.O.)	53,000,000	-	53,000,000		
County/City Building Authority Bonds (L.T.G.O.)	34,075,551	-	34,075,551		
Capital Improvement Bonds (L.T.G.O.)	65,185,000	13,292,920	51,892,080		
Capital Improvement Bonds	3,000,000	-	3,000,000		
Refuse and Solid Waste Bonds (L.T.G.O.)	7,165,000	7,165,000	-		
Drain Bonds (L.T.G.O.)	12,315,000	12,315,000	-		
Total Direct Debt	**$ 333,350,551**	**$ 191,382,920**	**$ 141,967,631**	**$ 218.89**	**0.5%**
Overlapping Debt [4]					
Cities, Villages and Townships			$ 241,040,646		
School Districts			1,333,003,453		
Community Colleges and Intermediate School Districts			37,954,847		
Total Overlapping Debt			**$ 1,611,998,946**	**2,485.37**	**5.5%**
Total Direct and Overlapping			**$ 1,753,966,577**	**$ 2,704.26**	**5.9%**

(1) Based on 2017 US Census population estimate of 648,594.
(2) Based on 2019 State Equalized Value (SEV) of $29,502,080,572 pending State Equalization.
(3) Includes $16,100,000 principal payment made on April 1, 2019. Does not include the pending notes.
(4) Overlapping debt is the portion of other public debt for which a County taxpayer is liable in addition to the Direct Debt of the County.

Source: Municipal Advisory Council of Michigan and County of Kent

Debt Amortization Schedule as of March 31, 2019

Year	Tax Notes [1][2]	Refuse & Solid Waste Bonds	Airport Bonds	Drain Bonds	City/County Building Authority Bonds	County Building Authority Bonds	Capital Improvement Bonds	Total
2019	16,100,000	565,000	-	775,000	3,253,950	5,200,000	6,465,000	32,358,950
2020	4,000,000	540,000	7,795,000	805,000	3,200,176	5,430,000	3,595,000	25,365,176
2021	-	560,000	8,265,000	515,000	3,152,569	5,685,000	3,750,000	21,927,569
2022	-	585,000	8,680,000	530,000	3,129,531	5,170,000	3,925,000	22,019,531
2023	-	610,000	9,110,000	555,000	3,101,469	5,315,000	4,115,000	22,806,469
2024	-	635,000	9,570,000	580,000	2,433,499	5,575,000	4,305,000	23,098,499
2025	-	670,000	10,045,000	600,000	2,385,378	5,830,000	3,975,000	23,505,378
2026	-	700,000	8,010,000	625,000	2,344,096	6,100,000	4,170,000	21,949,096
2027	-	735,000	8,380,000	650,000	2,298,194	2,065,000	4,360,000	18,488,194
2028	-	765,000	8,765,000	680,000	2,257,832	2,135,000	4,580,000	19,182,832
2029	-	800,000	5,750,000	705,000	2,211,380	2,210,000	3,950,000	15,626,380
2030	-	-	6,035,000	740,000	2,172,718	2,285,000	2,380,000	13,612,718
2031	-	-	6,335,000	775,000	2,134,758	-	2,500,000	11,744,758
2032	-	-	6,635,000	810,000	-	-	2,630,000	10,075,000
2033	-	-	6,895,000	840,000	-	-	2,760,000	10,495,000
2034	-	-	7,165,000	880,000	-	-	2,890,000	10,935,000
2035	-	-	7,460,000	610,000	-	-	3,020,000	11,090,000
2036	-	-	6,640,000	640,000	-	-	3,165,000	10,445,000
2037	-	-	6,975,000	-	-	-	1,650,000	8,625,000
Total	$20,100,000	$7,165,000	$138,510,000	$12,315,000	$34,075,551	$53,000,000	$68,185,000	$333,350,551

(1) Does not include the pending notes.

(2) $16,100,000 principal payment made on April 1, 2019.

Debt History

There is no record of default on any obligation of the County.

Short-Term Financing

The County does not issue short-term obligations for cash flow purposes. The County has in the years 1974 through 2018 issued short-term notes in order to establish a Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund. Notes issued in each of these years have been in a face amount, which has been less than the actual real property tax delinquency. The primary security for these notes is the collection of the delinquent taxes pledged to the payment of principal of and interest on the notes issued. The County has pledged its full faith and credit and limited taxing power to the payment of the principal and interest on notes issued. The County may or may not issue notes to fund the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund in future years. The amount of notes issued in 2010 through 2018 and their outstanding balance as of March 31, 2019, are as follows:

Outstanding Notes

Tax Year	Year Issued	Notes Issued	Amount Outstanding [1]
2010	2011	32,000,000	$ -
2011	2012	28,500,000	-
2012	2013	24,000,000	-
2013	2014	20,400,000	-
2014	2015	19,200,000	-
2015	2016	18,100,000	-
2016	2017	17,100,000	4,300,000 [2]
2017	2018	15,800,000	15,800,000 [3]

[1] *Does not include the pending notes.*

[2] *$4,300,000 principal payment made on April 1, 2019.*

[3] *$11,800,000 principal payment made on April 1, 2019.*

Future Financing

Subject to the sale of a County owned parcel, the County may issue approximately $20 million of general obligation limited tax bonds to finance a new multi-purpose building located in the Fuller Complex for use by various County departments and/or for other governmental purposes and to renovate a building at 320 Ottawa Avenue, NW. In addition, Kent County is evaluating refunding the Kent County Building Authority Bonds, Series 2009A.

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority is currently considering issuing an estimated $80 million in bonds in late 2019 or early 2020. The proceeds will be used to finance the extension of Concourse A (adding eight gates and widening the existing concourse) and a new parking structure in the north lot.

The Department of Public Works is exploring a few projects that they may need to issue revenue bonds for over the next 18 to 48 months. Projects under consideration include the development of a Sustainable Business Park, adding a third combustion train to the Waste to Energy facility and construction of new administrative offices. The amount of any issues is yet to be determined.

Vacation and Sick Leave Liabilities

As of December 31, 2018, the County had an estimated unfunded vacation liability of $8.3 million and no unfunded sick leave liabilities.

Pension Benefits

The County sponsors and administers the Kent County Employees' Retirement Plan (the "Plan"), a single-employer, defined benefit pension plan, which covers all employees of Kent County, except employees of the Road Commission, Land Bank Authority, and Airport Authority. The Plan was established by the Kent County Board of Commissioners and is administered by a seven member Board called the Kent County Employees' Retirement Plan Pension Board (referred to herein as the "Board of Trustees"). The Board is comprised of the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Commissioners, one other Commissioner appointed by the Board of Commissioners, three employees covered by the Plan, and two residents of the County that are independent of the County and the Plan. Employee contribution requirements were established and may be amended subject to collective bargaining agreements and approval by the Kent County Board of Commissioners. The Plan provides retirement, disability and death benefits to plan members and their beneficiaries. It is accounted for as a separate pension trust fund. Stand-alone financial reports are issued that include financial statements and required supplementary information for the Plan, which may be obtained from the County of Kent Human Resources Department, 300 Monroe Ave. N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2222.

Plan members hired through December 31, 2010 are eligible to receive pension benefits upon retirement at age 60 with 5 years of service or at any age with 25 years of service. Members hired on or after January 1, 2011 (January 1, 2012 for the Teamsters-Parks, Circuit Court Referees, and Teamsters-Public Health Nurses) are eligible at age 62 with 5 years of service or at age 60 (55 for captains and lieutenants) with 25 years of service. Members of the KCDSA bargaining unit hired on or after January 1, 2013 are eligible to receive this benefit at age 60 with 5 years of service or age 50 with 25 years of service. An early retirement option is offered for retirement at age 55 with 15 or more years of service. Members of the POAM bargaining unit hired on or after January 1, 2015 are eligible to receive this benefit at age 60 with 5 or more years of service or age 50 with 25 years of service.

Cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) vary based on bargaining unit and hire date and range from 1%-3%.

Benefits Provided. Employees who retire with minimum age and years of service requirements are entitled to annual retirement benefits, payable in monthly installments for life, in an amount equal to a percentage of their final average compensation times years of credited service.

Employees Covered by Benefit Terms. At December 31, 2017, plan membership consisted of the following:

Retirees and beneficiaries currently receiving benefits	1,434
Terminated employees entitled to but not yet receiving benefits	253
Vested and non-vested active participants	1,500
Total Membership	**3,187**

Contributions. The contribution requirements of Plan members are established and may be amended by the Board of Commissioners in accordance with County policies, union contracts, and Plan provisions. After meeting eligibility requirements, active Plan members are required to contribute to the Plan based on their bargaining unit or management group contribution rate. The variable rate was 8.75% for the year ended December 31, 2017. The additional amounts paid for COLAs by the members of the three unions covering public safety officers are a fixed amount added to the variable rate and ranged from 1.75%-3.50%. The County is required to contribute at actuarially determined rates that are expressed as a percentage of covered payroll and are designed to accumulate sufficient assets to pay benefits when due. The County's contribution rate for the year ended December 31, 2017 was 9.57% of projected valuation payroll. The normal cost and amortization payment were determined using an entry age actuarial funding method. Unfunded actuarial accrued liabilities are being amortized as a level percent of payroll over a closed period of 21 years.

Investment Policy. The plan's policy in regard to the allocation of invested assets is established and may be amended by the Board of Trustees. The investment policy has been formulated based on consideration of a wide range of policies and describes the prudent investment process that the Board deems appropriate. The Plan's asset allocation policy is detailed below.

Rate of Return. For the year ended December 31, 2017, the annual money-weighted rate of return on pension plan investments,net of pension plan investment expense, was 16.68%. The money-weighted rate of return expresses investment performance, net of investment expense, adjusted for the changing amounts actually invested.

Concentrations. Information on the Plan's concentration of credit risk policy and compliance with that policy at December 31, 2017 is disclosed in Note 3 to the separately issued financial statements.

Net Pension Asset. The components of the net pension asset of the Plan at December 31, 2017, were as follows:

Total pension liability	$ 859,986,247
Plan fiduciary net position	896,919,895
County's net pension asset	$ (36,933,648)
Plan fiduciary net position as percentage of total pension liability	104.29%

Actuarial Assumptions. The total pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of December 31, 2016 (rolled forward to December 31, 2017), using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement:

Mortality rates were based on the RP-2014 Mortality Tables with 2-dimensional, fully generational improvements projected with the MP-2015 Mortality Improvement Scales.

The actuarial assumptions used in the December 31, 2016 valuation were based on the results of an actuarial experience study for the period January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2012.

The long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return (expected returns, net of pension plan investment expense and inflation) are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation. Best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class included in the pension plan's target asset allocation as of December 31, 2017 (see the discussion of the pension plan's investment policy in Note 3) are summarized in the following table:

Asset Class	Target Allocation	Long-term Expected Real Rate of Return	Expected Money-weighted Rate of Return
Core bonds	18.00%	2.74%	0.49%
Multi-sector fixed income	10.00%	3.60%	0.36%
Absolute return	5.00%	3.82%	0.19%
U.S. large cap equity	30.00%	7.53%	2.26%
U.S. small cap equity	10.00%	8.79%	0.88%
International developed equity	15.00%	8.51%	1.28%
Emerging market equity	5.00%	9.80%	0.49%
Core real estate	5.00%	5.91%	0.30%
Infrastructure	2.00%	9.00%	1.80%
	100.00%		6.43%
Inflation			2.50%
Risk adjustment			-1.93%
Investment rate of return			**7.00%**

Discount Rate. The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.0%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that plan member contributions will be made at the current contribution rate and that Plan contributions will be made at rates equal to the difference between actuarially determined contribution rates and the member rate. Based on those assumptions, the pension plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

Changes in the Net Pension Liability (Asset). The components of the change in the net pension liability (asset) are summarized as follows:

	Total Pension Liability (a)	Plan Fiduciary Net Position (b)	Net Pension Liability (a) - (b)
Balances at December 31, 2016	**$ 832,554,668**	**$ 788,089,260**	**$ 44,465,408**
Changes for the year:			
Service cost	16,899,725	-	16,899,725
Interest on total pension liability	57,510,730	-	57,510,730
Differences between expected and actuarial experience	(8,133,524)	-	(8,133,524)
Employer contributions	-	8,965,098	(8,965,098)
Employee contributions	-	9,275,253	(9,275,253)
Net investment income	-	130,100,983	(130,100,983)
Benefit payments	(38,366,716)	(38,366,716)	-
Administrative expenses	-	(665,347)	665,347
Refund of contributions	(478,636)	(478,636)	-
Net changes	**27,431,579**	**108,830,635**	**(81,399,056)**
Balances at December 31, 2017	**$ 859,986,247**	**$ 896,919,895**	**$ (36,933,648)**

Sensitivity of the Net Pension Liability (Asset) to Changes in the Discount Rate. The following presents the net pension liability (asset) of the Plan, calculated using the discount rate of 7.0%, as well as what the Plan's

net pension liability (asset) would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1-percentage-point lower (6.0%) or 1-percentage point higher (8.0%) than the current rate:

	One Percent Decrease (6.0%)	Current Discount Rate (7.0%)	One Percent Increase (8.0%)
County's net pension liability (asset)	$ 81,039,999	$ (36,933,648)	$ (134,034,290)

Pension Plan Fiduciary Net Position. Detailed information about the pension plan's fiduciary net position is available in the combining statements of fiduciary net position and changes in fiduciary net position in the supplementary information section of this report.

Pension Expense and Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions. For the year ended December 31, 2017, the County recognized pension expense of $11,717,322. The pension liability attributable to the governmental activities will be liquidated by the General Fund and substantially all the special revenue funds. At December 31, 2017, the County reported pension-related deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources from the following sources:

	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources	Net Deferred Outflows (Inflows) of Resources
Difference between expected and actual experience	$ 7,060,984	$ 9,431,068	$ (2,370,084)
Changes in assumptions	9,800,156	-	9,800,156
Net difference btwn projected and actual earnings on plan investments	22,569,592	62,455,260	(39,885,668)
Changes in proportion and share of contributions	278,247	278,247	-
Total	**$ 39,708,979**	**$ 72,164,575**	**$ (32,455,596)**

Amounts reported as pension-related deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources will be recognized in pension expense as follows:

Year Ended December 31,	Amount
2018	$ 338,562
2019	(994,853)
2020	(15,916,835)
2021	(15,882,470)
Total	**$ (32,455,596)**

Payable to the Pension Plan. At December 31, 2017, the County reported a payable of $344,633 to the pension plan.

Other Post-retirement Employee Benefits (OPEB)

Plan Description. The County administers a single-employer defined benefit healthcare plan (the "Plan") accounted for in the VEBA Trust Fund. In addition to the retirement benefits described in Note 15, the Plan provides health insurance benefits to certain retirees, which are advance funded on an actuarial basis. Stand-alone financial reports are issued that include financial statements and required supplementary information for the Plan, which may be obtained from the County of Kent Fiscal Services Department, 300 Monroe Ave. N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2221.

Benefits Provided. The County pays a monthly fixed subsidy for retirees of up to $350 per month. In addition, the County provides an implicit subsidy due to having one premium based on a blended rate that treats current employees, retirees, eligible beneficiaries and dependents as one homogeneous group. The implicit subsidy is factored into the actuarial computation of the OPEB liability.

Membership of the Plan consisted of the following at December 31, 2016, the date of the latest actuarial valuation:

Retirees and beneficiaries receiving benefits	634
Active plan members	1,503
Total membership	**2,137**

Contributions. The contribution requirements of the Plan members and the County are established and may be amended by the County Board of Commissioners, in accordance with County policies, union contracts, and Plan provisions. The Plan covers the Management Pay Plan, both exempt and non-exempt, elected officials, including judges, and ten collective bargaining units. Retirees and their beneficiaries are eligible for post employment healthcare benefits if they are receiving a pension from the Kent County Employees' Retirement Plan. The County's funding policy provides for periodic employer contributions at actuarially determined rates that are expressed as percentages of annual covered payroll, and are designed to accumulate sufficient assets to pay benefits when due. The County's required cash contribution rate for the year ended December 31, 2016 was 1.69% of projected valuation payroll. For the year ended December 31, 2017, the County contributed $5,271,289, including cash contributions of $3,641,812 and an implicit rate subsidy (which did not require cash) of $1,629,477. Cash payments included $1,516,295 for current premiums and an additional $2,125,517 to pre fund benefits.

Retirees are responsible for reimbursing the County for the cost of premiums for the selected level of coverage in excess of the subsidy. The retiree's share of premiums can be deducted automatically from his or her monthly pension distribution, or paid directly to the County Treasurer. Since retirees must participate in one of the County's health insurance plans in order to receive the benefit, the entire cost of retiree health care premiums is accounted for in the County's health insurance internal service fund. Retiree reimbursements are reported as operating revenue in the internal service fund. On a quarterly basis, the total amount of retiree subsidies for the previous period is billed to the VEBA. This portion of premium costs, which includes the County subsidy only, comprises the entire amount of benefit payments in the statement of changes in fiduciary net position.

Investment Policy. The plan's policy in regard to the allocation of invested assets is established and may be amended by the Board of Trustees. The investment policy has been formulated based on consideration of a wide range of policies and describes the prudent investment process that the Board deems appropriate. The Plan's asset allocation policy is detailed below.

Rate of Return. For the year ended December 31, 2017, the annual money-weighted rate of return on investments, net of investment expense, was 17.76%. The money-weighted rate of return expresses investment performance, net of investment expense, adjusted for the changing amounts actually invested.

Concentrations. Information on the Plan's concentration of credit risk policy and compliance with that policy at December 31, 2017 is disclosed in Note 3 to the separately issued financial statements.

Net OPEB Liability. The components of the net OPEB liability of the Plan at December 31, 2017, were as follows:

Total OPEB liability	$ 58,712,816
Plan fiduciary net position	25,315,572
Net OPEB liability	$ 33,397,244
Plan fiduciary net position as percentage of total OPEB liability	43.12%

Actuarial Assumptions. The total OPEB liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of December 31, 2016, rolled forward to December 31, 2017, using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement:

Actuarial cost method	Entry-age normal
Amortization method	Level percentage of payroll, Open
Remaining amortization period	23 years
Asset valuation method	Market value of assets
Price inflation	2.5%
Salary increases	4.0% to 11.0%, including inflation
Investment rate of return	7.0%, net of OPEB plan investment expense, including inflation
Retirement age	Experience-based table of rates that are specific to the type of eligibility condition. Last updated for the 2013 valuation pursuant to the January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2012 Experience Study for the Retirement Plan and Trust
Mortality	The RP-2014 Mortality Tables with 2-dimensional, fully generational improvements projected with the MP-2015 Mortality Improvement Scales. These tables were first used for the December 31, 2015 valuation
Health care trend rates	Trend starting at 9.0% gradually decreasing to an ultimate trend rate of 4.0%.
Aging factors	The tables used in developing the retiree premium are based on a recent Society of Actuaries study of health costs.

The long-term expected rate of return on VEBA plan investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return (expected returns, net of VEBA plan investment expense and inflation) are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation. Best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class included in the VEBA plan's target asset allocation as of December 31, 2017 (see the discussion of the VEBA plan's investment policy in Note 3) are summarized in the following table:

Asset Class	Target Allocation	Long-term Expected Real Rate of Return	Expected Money-weighted Rate of Return
Core bonds	20.00%	2.74%	0.55%
Multi-sector fixed income	15.00%	3.60%	0.54%
Liquid absolute return	5.00%	3.42%	0.17%
U.S. large cap equity	30.00%	7.53%	2.26%
U.S. small cap equity	10.00%	8.79%	0.88%
Non U.S. equity	20.00%	8.73%	1.75%
	100.00%		6.15%
Inflation			2.50%
Risk adjustment			-1.65%
Investment rate of return			**7.00%**

Discount Rate. The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability was 7.0%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that plan member contributions will be made at the current contribution rate and that Plan contributions will be made at rates equal to the difference between actuarially determined contribution rates and the member rate. Based on those assumptions, the VEBA plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on VEBA plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total VEBA liability.

Changes in the Net OPEB Liability. The components of the change in the net OPEB liability are summarized as follows:

	Total OPEB Liability	Plan Fiduciary Net Position	Net OPEB Liability
	(a)	(b)	(a) - (b)
Balances at December 31, 2016	**$ 53,997,661**	**$ 19,665,737**	**$ 34,331,924**
Changes for the year:			
Service cost	1,127,286	-	1,127,286
Interest on total OPEB liability	3,974,131	-	3,974,131
Changes of assumptions	2,759,510	-	2,759,510
Employer contributions	-	5,271,289	(5,271,289)
Net investment income	-	3,554,463	(3,554,463)
Benefit payments, including refunds of employee contributions	(3,145,772)	(3,145,772)	-
Administrative expenses	-	(34,479)	34,479
Other	-	4,334	(4,334)
Net changes	**4,715,155**	**5,649,835**	**(934,680)**
Balances at December 31, 2017	**$58,712,816**	**$ 25,315,572**	**$ 33,397,244**

Sensitivity of the Net OPEB Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate. The following presents the net OPEB liability of the County, calculated using the discount rate of 7.00%, as well as what the County's net OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1% lower (6.00%) or 1% higher (8.00%) than the current rate:

	One Percent Decrease (6.0%)	Current Discount Rate (7.0%)	One Percent Increase (8.0%)
County's net OPEB Liability	$ 39,695,669	$ 33,397,244	$ 27,986,354

Sensitivity of the Net OPEB Liability to Changes in the Healthcare Cost Trend Rate Assumption. The following presents the net OPEB liability of the County, as well as what the County's net OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using healthcare cost trend rates that are 1% lower (8.0% decreasing to 3.0%) or 1% higher (10.0% decreasing to 5.0%) than the current healthcare cost trend rates:

	One percent Decrease (8.0% to 3.0%)	Healthcare Cost Trend Rates (9.0% to 4.0%)	One Percent Increase (10.0% to 5.0%)
County's net OPEB Liability	$ 30,480,409	$ 33,397,244	$ 36,779,756

OPEB Plan Fiduciary Net Position. Detailed information about the OPEB plan's fiduciary net position is available in the combining statements of fiduciary net position and changes in fiduciary net position in the supplementary information section of this report.

OPEB Expense and Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Other Postemployment Benefit Obligations. For the year ended December 31, 2017, the County recognized OPEB expense of $3,572,741. The OPEB liability attributable to the governmental activities will be liquidated by the General Fund and substantially all the special revenue funds. At December 31, 2017, the County reported OPEB-related deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources from the following sources:

	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources	Net Deferred Outflows (Inflows) of Resources
Changes in assumptions	$ 2,339,672	$ -	$ 2,339,672
Net difference btwn projected and actual earnings on OPEB plan investments	-	1,577,146	(1,577,146)
Total	**$ 2,339,672**	**$ 1,577,146**	**$ 762,526**

Amounts reported as OPEB-related deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources will be recognized in OPEB expense as follows:

Year Ended December 31,	Amount
2018	$ 25,551
2019	25,551
2020	25,551
2021	25,553
2022	419,838
Thereafter	240,482
Total	**$ 762,526**

Payable to the OPEB Plan. At December 31, 2017, the County reported a payable of $142,671 to the VEBA plan.

Cash Balances and Net Change in Balances

Fund		2017	2018	December 31, Net Change Inc/(Dec)
101	County General	$ 82,411,273	$ 82,402,463	$ (8,810)
201	County Roads	14,816,266	22,789,656	7,973,390
215	Friend of the Court	(974,386)	(1,427,895)	(453,509)
221	Public Health	(1,391,378)	(1,137,273)	254,105
229	Hotel/Motel Tax	6,122,837	6,093,983	(28,854)
256	Register of Deeds	1,503,813	1,527,032	23,219
259	Senior Millage	2,472,319	1,856,941	(615,378)
260	Correction and Detention Facility	10,032,682	13,107,081	3,074,399
292	Child Care	(6,435,848)	(3,970,436)	2,465,412
445	Public Improvement	13,776,868	25,465,534	11,688,666
469	Building Authority Construction	150,700	153,087	2,387
516	100% Tax Payment Fund	21,549,917	19,808,199	(1,741,718)
517	DPW Solid Waste	78,245,153	84,217,185	5,972,032
677	Risk Management	15,418,753	14,073,620	(1,345,133)
701	Spectrum Health-KCC Oper		691,177	691,177
721	Library Penal Fines	698,746	24,876,525	24,177,779
751	Trust and Agency	75,715,844	44,665,909	(31,049,935)
800	Drains and Lake Level	8,329,748	7,147,479	(1,182,269)
	Various Other Funds	34,157,538	13,302,073	(20,855,465)
Total		**$ 356,600,845**	**$ 355,642,341**	**$ (958,504)**

Cash Activity Summary and Analysis

Cash Equity

	December 31,	
	2017	**2018**
Cash balance - January 1	$ 333,584,049	$ 356,600,845
Receipts	1,056,905,191	973,377,861
Less: Disbursements	1,033,888,395	974,336,365
Cash balance - December 31	**$ 356,600,845**	**$ 355,642,341**

Analysis of Cash Balances

	December 31,	
	2017	**2018**
Pooled investments	$ 347,907,393	$ 349,419,202
Demand deposits	1,873,044	4,551,190
Imprest cash	7,829,335	61,635
Accrued interest on pooled investments	61,635	3,105,271
Less: Outstanding disbursement checks	1,070,562	1,494,957
Cash balance - December 31	**$ 356,600,845**	**$ 355,642,341**

Pooled Investments Summary of Investments

December 31, 2018

Broker Name	Book Value: Municipal Tax Note	Money Market / GIC	Government Agency	Certificates of Deposit	Total
Brokered Securities:					
UBS Paine Webber	$ -	$ -	$ 14,972,107	$ -	$ 14,972,107
Wells Fargo	-	-	17,043,657	-	17,043,657
Suntrust	-	-	11,663,611	-	11,663,611
Cantella Co	-	-	2,959,079	-	2,959,079
CitiGroup	-	-	8,972,499	-	8,972,499
U.S. Treasury Strips Subtotal	**-**	**-**	**55,610,953**	**-**	**55,610,953**
Certificates of Deposit (CD):					
Huntington Bank MM	-	1,901,909	-	-	1,901,909
Macatawa Bank	-	12,268,446	-	-	12,268,446
MBIA Class	-	20,888,996	-	-	20,888,996
Michigan Liquid Asset Fund (MILAF)	-	19,376,356	-	-	19,376,356
PNC NOW	-	6,875,291	-	-	6,875,291
Bank of America	-	-	-	31,808,431	31,808,431
Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce	-	-	-	18,027,935	18,027,935
Chemical Bank West	-	-	-	26,136,165	26,136,165
Choice One Bank	-	-	-	6,146,938	6,146,938
Comerica	-	-	-	21,489,846	21,489,846
Consumers Credit Union	-	-	-	509,426	509,426
Fifth Third Bank	-	-	-	16,039,542	16,039,542
First Community Bank	-	-	-	1,212,720	1,212,720
First National Bank of America	-	-	-	1,074,617	1,074,617
First National Bank of Michigan	-	-	-	1,544,542	1,544,542
Flagstar Bank	-	-	-	19,397,663	19,397,663
Horizon Bank	-	-	-	11,026,506	11,026,506
Huntington Bank	-	-	-	14,889,826	14,889,826
Independent Bank	-	-	-	8,683,768	8,683,768
Level One Bank	-	-	-	9,089,701	9,089,701
Macatawa Bank	-	-	-	5,143,753	5,143,753
Mercantile Bank of W MI	-	-	-	13,504,120	13,504,120
Old National Bank	-	-	-	8,950,402	8,950,402
Private Bank	-	-	-	9,574,134	9,574,134
Union Bank	-	-	-	1,000,000	1,000,000
United Bank of Michigan	-	-	-	3,337,608	3,337,608
West Michigan Comm Bank	-	-	-	3,909,607	3,909,607
CD Subtotal	**-**	**61,310,998**	**-**	**232,497,251**	**293,808,249**
Total	**$ -**	**$ 61,310,998**	**$ 55,610,953**	**$ 232,497,251**	**$ 349,419,202**

Pooled Investment Fund [1]

Investments By Type	Par Value	Book Value	Percent
			December 31, 2018
Certificates of Deposit	$ 232,497,251	$ 232,497,251	66.5%
Passbook & Money Market	61,310,998	61,310,998	17.5%
Federal Home Loan Banks	31,045,000	31,253,489	8.9%
Federal National Mortgage Assoc.	6,000,000	5,949,369	1.7%
Federal Home Loan Mortgage Cor.	7,000,000	6,986,510	2.0%
Federal Farm Credit Bank	11,425,000	11,421,586	3.3%
Municipal Bonds	-	-	0.0%
Total	**$ 349,278,249**	**$ 349,419,202**	**100.0%**

Investment Yield	Book Value	Percent
		December 31, 2018
0.00% to 0.25%	$ -	0.0%
0.25% to 0.50%	-	0.0%
0.50% to 0.75%	3,120,429	0.9%
0.75% to 1.00%	10,358,945	3.0%
1.00% to 1.25%	30,133,537	8.6%
1.25% to 1.50%	33,688,443	9.6%
1.50% to 1.75%	37,820,519	10.8%
1.75% to 2.00%	29,638,245	8.5%
2.00% to 2.25%	47,753,162	13.7%
2.25% to 2.50%	82,934,949	23.7%
2.50% to 2.75%	61,071,881	17.5%
2.75% to 3.00%	8,411,157	2.4%
3.00% to 3.25%	4,487,936	1.3%
Total	**$ 349,419,202**	**100.0%**

Investment Maturity	Date Range	Book Value	Percent
			December 31, 2018
0 to 1 Month	01/01/19 - 01/31/19	$ 37,685,164	10.8%
1 to 2 Months	02/01/19 - 02/28/19	41,006,553	11.7%
2 to 3 Months	03/01/19 - 03/31/19	23,532,837	6.7%
3 to 6 Months	04/01/19 - 06/30/19	50,295,066	14.4%
6 to 12 Months	07/01/19 - 12/31/19	91,596,729	26.2%
12 to 18 Months	01/01/20 - 06/30/20	32,904,556	9.4%
18 to 24 Months	07/01/20 - 12/31/20	38,674,219	11.1%
24 to 36 Months	01/01/21 - 12/31/21	14,347,722	4.1%
36 to 48 Months	01/01/22 - 12/31/22	19,376,356	5.5%
Total		**$ 349,419,202**	**100.0%**

(1) The Investment Pool has an open-ended maturity date.

Pooled Investments Earnings Performance

December 31,

	2017			2018		
Month	Average Daily Balance	Interest Earned Accrual Basis	Earned Interest Yield	Average Daily Balance	Interest Earned Accrual Basis	Earned Interest Yield
Jan	$ 328,741,211	$ 232,567	0.822	$ 348,348,298	$ 357,533	1.217
Feb	353,137,022	232,142	0.845	349,815,856	341,892	1.257
Mar	362,985,881	271,401	0.868	350,061,055	401,160	1.331
Apr	347,448,208	259,271	0.895	335,226,117	390,647	1.398
May	342,853,023	269,010	0.911	343,137,834	428,731	1.451
Jun	322,926,139	252,231	0.937	320,311,405	404,130	1.514
Jul	308,250,894	256,060	0.965	309,672,592	418,207	1.568
Aug	329,551,684	279,749	0.986	331,090,930	472,699	1.658
Sep	366,664,801	311,232	1.019	371,898,489	552,377	1.782
Oct	393,553,869	366,207	1.081	400,441,544	675,404	1.959
Nov	363,022,276	336,966	1.114	372,819,908	617,596	1.988
Dec	348,206,139	343,850	1.147	350,271,388	608,860	2.019
Annual	**$ 347,278,429**	**$ 3,410,686**		**$ 348,591,285**	**$ 5,669,237**	

Investment Fund Balance - 1/1/18 *$ 347,907,393*

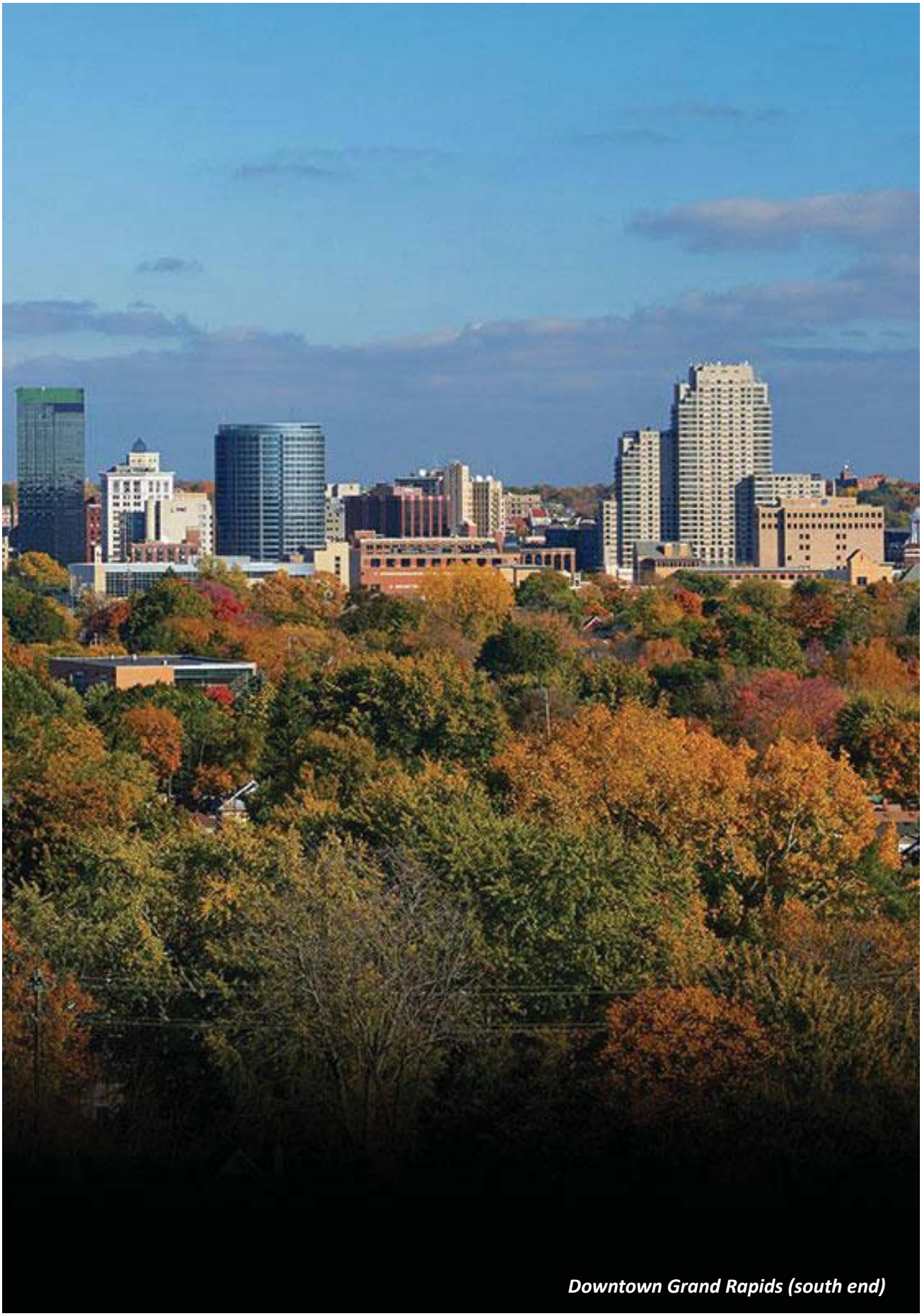
Investment Fund Balance - 12/31/18 *$ 349,419,202*

The following table illustrates the various labor organizations that represent the County of Kent's employees, the number of members and the expiration dates of the present contracts. The County considers its relations with its employees to be excellent and there are no labor problems at the present time and anticipates no strikes or work stoppages.

March 21, 2019

Bargaining Unit	Number of Positions [1]	Contract Expiration Date
United Auto Workers (General)	392	12/31/2023
Technical, Professional & Office Workers of Michigan -- TPOAM	369	12/31/2023
Kent County Deputy Sheriff's Association	240	12/31/2023
Kent County Law Enforcement Association - FOP	253	12/31/2023
Lieutenants-Captains – POLC	21	12/31/2023
Prosecuting Attorneys Assoc.	34	12/31/2022
Circuit Court Referee Assoc.	8	12/31/2022
Teamsters (Public Health)	57	12/31/2023
Teamsters (Parks Employees)	17	12/31/2022
Elected Officials	5	NA
Judges	17	NA
Board of Commissioners	19	NA
Management Pay Plan Group	281	NA
Total	**1,713**	

(1) Includes vacant positions - does not include employees on extended leave or temporary employees.



Downtown Grand Rapids (south end)

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance

	Year ended December 31,			
	2017	2018		2019
	Actual	Budget	Actual [1]	Budget [2]
Revenues:				
Taxes	$ 91,127,600	$ 94,813,600	$ 95,594,567	$ 98,158,010
Intergovernmental	25,572,734	23,833,035	24,107,015	23,438,312
Charges for services	28,205,182	27,465,329	28,285,035	28,719,080
Investments, Rents & Royalties	4,390,134	4,085,428	5,258,234	4,407,458
Other Revenue	5,962,852	10,687,641	10,759,358	7,299,100
Transfers In	14,602,622	17,500,000	12,279,119	18,603,000
Total Revenues	**169,861,124**	**178,385,033**	**176,283,328**	**180,624,960**
Expenditures:				
Sheriff	60,838,946	62,998,586	60,538,898	65,046,293
Circuit Court	16,788,722	17,761,180	16,005,101	16,656,669
Facilities Management	13,964,240	12,842,198	12,163,834	13,320,525
Prosecuting Attorney	4,490,387	4,673,226	4,603,522	4,834,688
Information Technology	6,305,170	6,758,920	5,927,113	6,935,796
Policy/Administration	2,460,439	2,855,211	2,676,620	3,474,317
Parks Department	5,340,993	5,826,767	5,464,492	5,995,796
Zoo	20,924	24,361	20,924	27,141
Fiscal Services	3,758,907	3,953,319	3,542,435	4,298,447
Clerk/Register of Deeds	3,245,027	3,712,003	3,206,540	3,508,886
District Court	3,030,242	3,222,528	3,042,366	3,233,900
Human Resources	1,842,741	1,930,588	1,823,014	1,990,760
Bureau of Equalization	1,521,892	1,498,914	1,396,878	1,547,776
Treasurer's Office	1,189,296	1,234,387	1,185,164	1,270,267
Drain Commission	685,529	701,494	664,910	730,513
Other Social Services	1,489,167	1,510,000	1,452,500	1,525,000
Other	7,873,306	9,542,912	7,701,402	8,428,375
Transfers Out-Childcare	14,660,470	16,193,718	13,992,511	15,531,891
Transfers Out-Health	5,888,203	7,071,208	5,428,573	7,416,254
Transfers Out-CIP	6,136,282	12,090,947	12,090,947	7,658,415
Transfers Out-FOC	1,720,770	1,919,410	1,680,845	2,136,854
Transfers Out-Debt Svc	1,808,023	3,359,210	3,440,568	3,360,560
Transfers Out-Special Proj	3,294,631	3,447,926	3,175,974	6,405,837
Transfers Out-Other	278,359	854,000	1,362,873	860,000
Appropriation lapse	-	(6,500,000)	-	(6,500,000)
Total Expenditures	**168,632,666**	**179,483,013**	**172,588,004**	**179,694,960**
Net Revenues/(Expenditures)	**1,228,458**	**(1,097,980)**	**3,695,324**	**930,000**
Fund Balance, beginning of year	69,563,355	70,791,813	70,791,813	74,487,137
Fund Balance, end of year	**$ 70,791,813**	**$ 69,693,833**	**$ 74,487,137**	**$ 75,417,137**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

(2) As adopted

Components of Fund Balance

	Year ended December 31,	
	2017 Actual	2018 [1] Actual
Inventory	$ 97,510	$ 58,675
Prepaids	630,841	186,782
Long-term advances	467,200	599,511
Total Nonspendable	**1,195,551**	**844,969**
Economic stabilization [2]	25,524,542	26,635,550
Total Committed	**25,524,542**	**26,635,550**
Cash flow [3]	37,125,440	39,263,204
Encumbrances	-	2,220,558
Total Assigned	**37,125,440**	**41,483,762**
Unassigned [4]	**6,946,281**	**5,522,856**
Total Fund Balance [5]	**$ 70,791,813**	**$ 74,487,137**

(1) Preliminary, subject to audit.

(2) 10% of the subsequent year's adopted General Fund and subsidized governmental fund budgets

(3) 40% of the subsequent year's budget estimate for property tax revenue

(4) Fund balance that has not been assigned to other funds and that has not been restricted, committed, or assigned to specific purposes within the General Fund

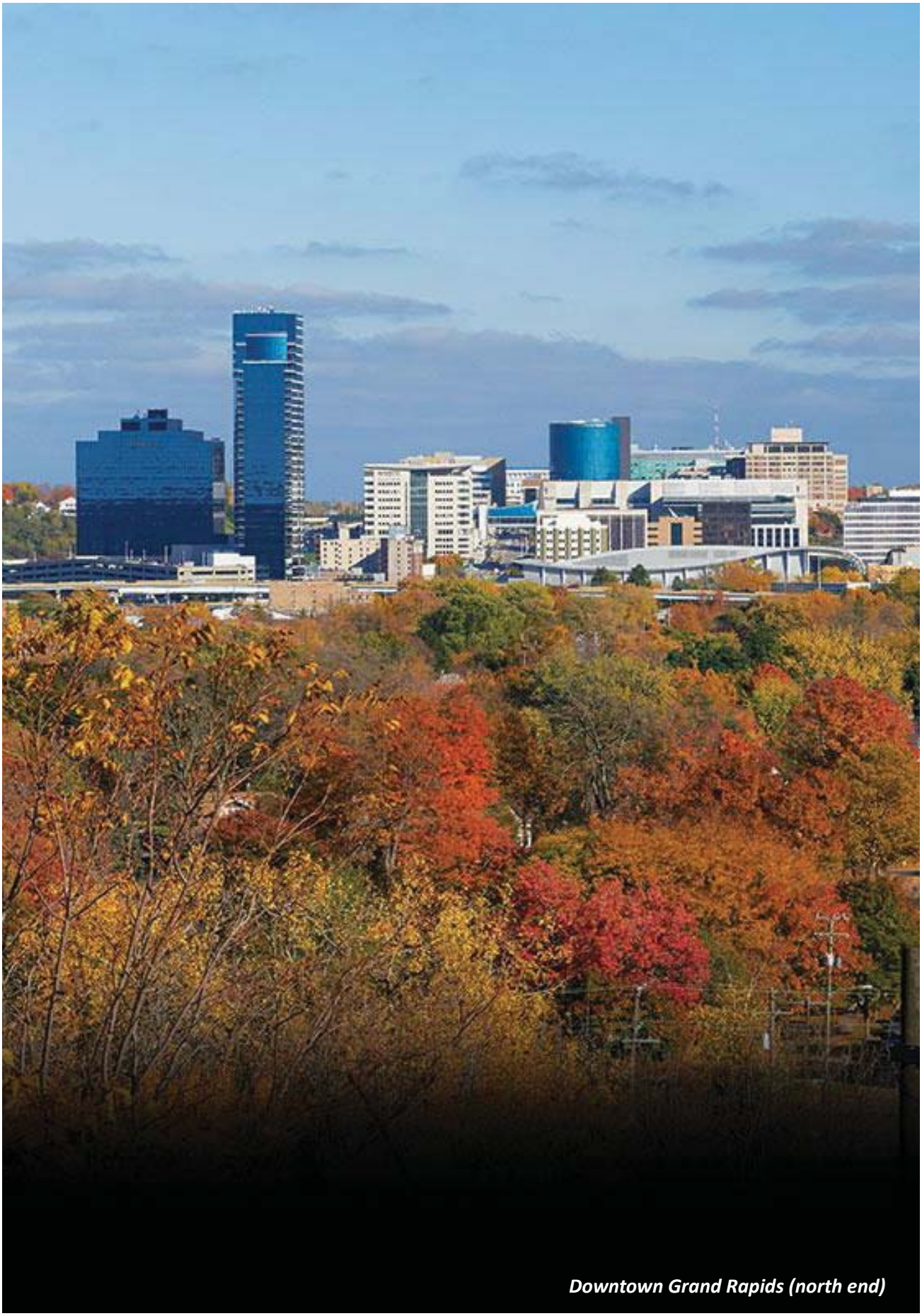
(5) The County will maintain a minimum fund balance equal to at least 40% of the subsequent year's adopted General Fund budgeted expenditures and transfers out

Debt Service As a Percentage of General Fund Expenditures [1]

	2017	2018	2019
Debt Outstanding			
Series 2005 - Courthouse	$ 30,535,000	$ 27,785,000	$ 24,890,000
Series 2007 - DHHS	18,670,000	-	-
Series 2008 - CIP	8,205,000	7,410,000	-
Series 2010 - Sheriff Administration	2,840,000	2,170,000	1,475,000
Series 2014 - Park Meadows	3,000,000	3,000,000	-
Series 2014A - 82 Ionia/Courthouse Land	3,265,000	2,850,000	2,420,000
Series 2017B - DHHS	-	21,680,000	20,030,000
Total Debt Outstanding	**$ 66,515,000**	**$ 64,895,000**	**$ 48,815,000**
Debt Service			
Series 2005 - Courthouse	$ 4,343,825	$ 4,343,125	$ 4,339,944
Series 2007 - DHHS	2,064,269	-	-
Series 2008 - CIP	1,129,719	810,900	-
Series 2010 - Sheriff Administration	763,994	766,788	767,031
Series 2014 - Park Meadows	60,600	60,600	3,060,600
Series 2014A - 82 Ionia/Courthouse Land	543,600	541,450	544,000
Series 2017B - DHHS	-	1,810,850	2,633,300
Total Debt Service	**$ 8,906,006**	**$ 8,333,713**	**$ 11,344,875**
General Fund Expenditures/Transfers [2]	**$ 168,632,666**	**$ 172,588,004**	**$ 179,694,960**
Debt Services as a % of General Fund Expenditures	**5.3%**	**4.8%**	**6.3%**

(1) Does not include capital leases.

(2) 2019 budget as adopted.



Downtown Grand Rapids (north end)

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Net Assets

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Operating Revenues:		
Charges for services	$ 581,916	$ 585,805
Interest and penalties	1,760,738	1,857,256
Collection fees	669,909	624,655
Auction proceeds, net	689,707	369,929
Other	53,907	45,204
Total Operating Revenues	**3,756,176**	**3,482,849**
Operating Expenses:		
Contractual services	400,929	384,367
Other expense	124,456	127,554
Total Operating Expenses	**525,384**	**511,921**
Operating Income (Loss)	**3,230,791**	**2,970,928**
Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses)		
Investment earnings	181,142	373,162
Interest expense	(157,685)	(351,637)
Total Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses)	**23,457**	**21,525**
Income (Loss) Before Contributions and Transfers	3,254,249	2,992,453
Transfers out	(4,100,000)	(4,115,800)
Change in Net Assets	**(845,751)**	**(1,123,347)**
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	12,638,939	11,793,188
Net Assets, End of Year	**$ 11,793,188**	**$ 10,669,841**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Revenues:		
Intergovernmental	$ 1,261,237	$ 212,156
Contributions and reimbursements	136,200	625,000
Other	217,567	91,000
Total Revenues	**1,615,003**	**928,156**
Expenditures:		
Capital outlay	8,221,363	4,099,616
Total Expenditures	**8,221,363**	**4,099,616**
Revenues over (under) expenditures	**(6,606,360)**	**(3,171,460)**
Other Financing Sources (Uses)		
Transfers in	10,063,018	16,017,430
Transfers out	(4,849,075)	(2,281,302)
Proceeds from sale of capital assets	-	1,647,020
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	**5,213,944**	**15,383,148**
Net change in fund balance	**(1,392,417)**	**12,211,688**
Fund Balance, beginning of year	14,572,075	13,179,658
Fund Balance, end of year	**$ 13,179,658**	**$ 25,391,346**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Net Assets

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Operating Revenues:		
Charges for Services	$ 41,831,316	$ 49,175,215
Total Operating Revenues	**41,831,316**	**49,175,215**
Operating Expenses:		
Personnel Service	9,590,573	10,538,786
Materials and Supplies	1,022,374	1,212,091
Other	12,421,445	13,983,182
Total Operating Expenses	**23,034,392**	**25,734,059**
Operating Income (Loss)	**18,796,924**	**23,441,156**
Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses):		
Investment Earnings	125,884	241,089
Passenger Facilities Charges	5,785,974	6,886,079
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Fixed Assets	1,000	77,416
Customer Facility Charges	2,152,497	2,383,246
Depreciation	(18,906,755)	(19,608,256)
Interest Expense and Charges	(6,505,053)	(6,013,212)
Total Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses)	**(17,346,453)**	**(16,033,638)**
Income (Loss) Before Contributions	1,450,471	7,407,518
Special Item - Land Retained by County	-	-
Capital Contributions	7,211,558	20,644,145
Change in Net Assets	**8,662,029**	**28,051,663**
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	207,374,719	216,036,748
Net Assets, End of Year	**$ 216,036,748**	**$ 244,088,411**

Debt Service Coverage

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Operating Revenues	$ 41,831,316	$ 49,175,215
Investment Earnings	125,884	241,089
Customer Facility Charges	2,152,497	2,383,246
Passenger Facility Charges	5,785,974	6,886,079
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Fixed Assets	1,000	77,416
Operating Expenses	(23,034,392)	(25,734,059)
Net Revenues (as defined in the resolution)	**$ 26,862,279**	**$ 33,028,986**
Debt Service Requirements	**$ 14,685,756**	**$ 14,352,266**
Debt Service Coverage	**1.83x**	**2.30x**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

Gerald R. Ford International Airport

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Operating Revenues:		
Charges for Services	$ 37,267,654	$ 37,717,484
Total Operating Revenues	**37,267,654**	**37,717,484**
Operating Expenses:		
Personnel, Materials, Contractual, Other	30,432,738	29,924,762
Depreciation and Amortization	5,373,332	5,345,343
Total Operating Expenses	**35,806,070**	**35,270,105**
Operating Income (Loss)	**1,461,584**	**2,447,379**
Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses)		
Investment Earnings	712,662	1,550,932
Interest Expense and Charges	(467,005)	(270,276)
Gain (Loss) on Capital Assets	(217,678)	15,157
Total Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses)	**27,979**	**1,295,813**
Change in Net Assets	**1,489,563**	**3,743,192**
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	90,207,653	91,697,216
Net Assets, End of Year	**$ 91,697,216**	**$ 95,440,408**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

Debt Service Coverage

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Operating Revenues	$ 37,267,654	$ 37,717,484
Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses)	27,979	1,295,813
Operating Expenses Before Depreciation	(30,432,738)	(29,924,762)
Net Revenues	**$ 6,862,895**	**$ 9,088,535**
Debt Service Requirements	**$ 942,882**	**$ 837,103**
Debt Service Coverage	**7.28x**	**10.86x**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Revenues:		
Taxes	$ 16,456,091	$ 17,033,166
Investment Earnings	178,901	313,852
Total Revenues	**16,634,993**	**17,347,017**
Operating Transfers:		
Facility Operations	10,502,833	8,175,000
Building Rent	2,412,559	2,405,535
Debt Service	1,633,875	1,637,250
Facility Improvements	-	770,370
Total Operating Transfers	**14,549,267**	**12,988,155**
Net Change in Fund Balance	**2,085,726**	**4,358,862**
Fund Balance, Beginning of Year	7,027,949	9,113,675
Fund Balance, End of Year	**$ 9,113,675**	**$ 13,472,537**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

Debt Service Coverage

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Property Tax Revenues	$ 16,456,091	$ 17,033,166
Debt Service/Building Rent Requirements	4,046,434	4,042,785
Debt Service Coverage	**4.07x**	**4.21x**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Revenues:		
Hotel/Motel Taxes	$ 10,205,658	$ 10,807,009
Investment Earnings	69,646	170,598
Fines and Forfeitures	9,007	12,212
Total Revenues	**10,284,311**	**10,989,819**
Expenditures:		
Administration	120,026	120,809
Experience Grand Rapids CVB	1,760,476	1,891,227
Arts Festival	10,000	10,000
DeVos Place Debt Service	6,921,750	7,169,350
Total Expenditures	**8,812,252**	**9,191,386**
Revenues over (under) expenditures	**1,472,059**	**1,798,434**
Other Financing Sources (Uses)		
Transfers in	-	-
Transfers out	-	(1,800,000)
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	**-**	**(1,800,000)**
Net change in fund balance	**1,472,059**	**(1,566)**
Fund Balance, Beginning of Year	5,001,416	6,473,475
Fund Balance, End of Year	**$ 6,473,475**	**$ 6,471,909**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

Debt Service Coverage

	Year Ended December 31,	
	2017	**2018** [1]
Hotel/Motel Tax Revenues	$ 10,205,658	$ 10,807,009
Debt Service Requirements	6,921,750	7,169,350
Debt Service Coverage	**1.47x**	**1.51x**

(1) Pending audit adjustments

County of Kent

FISCAL POLICY - DEBT

I. POLICY

1. **Policy:** Kent County shall endeavor to maintain the highest possible credit ratings so borrowing costs are minimized and access to credit is preserved.

2. **Financial Planning and Overview:** Kent County shall demonstrate to rating agencies, investment bankers, creditors, and taxpayers that a prescribed financial plan is being followed. As part of this commitment, the Fiscal Services Department will annually prepare an overview of the County's General Fund financial condition for distribution to rating agencies and other interested parties.

II. PRINCIPLES

1. **Statutory References:** The Kent County Board of Commissioners may establish rules and regulations in reference to managing the interests and business of the County under of Public Act 156 of 1851 [MCLA 46.11(m)].

   1.a. **Financing:** Various statutes, including but not limited to Public Act 34 of 2001, (The Revised Municipal Finance Act) [MCLA 141.2101 to 141.2821], as amended, Public Act 327 of 1945 (The Aeronautics Code) [MCLA 259 et seq.], as amended, and Public Act 94 of 1933 (The Revenue Bond Act) [MCLA 141.101-138], as amended, and PA 185 of 1957 [MCLA 123.731-786], as amended, enable the County to issue bonds, notes, and other certificates of indebtedness for specific purposes.

   1.b. **Debt Limit:** Section 6 of Article 7 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963 states "No County shall incur any indebtedness which shall increase its total debt beyond 10 percent of its assessed value."

   1.c. **Disclosures:** Effective July 3, 1995, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) enacted amendments to Rule 15c2-12 requiring underwriters of municipal bonds to obtain certain representations from municipal bond issuers regarding disclosure of information after the issuance of bonds. The Rule also contains requirements for immediate disclosure of certain events by borrowers..

2. **County Legislative or Historical References:** Resolution 6-26-97-89, adopted by the Board of Commissioners on June 26, 1997, established rules and guidelines for managing the financial interests of the County. Such a resolution has been adopted annually since 1987.

   2.a. **Conflicts:** This document restates, clarifies, expands or alters the rules set forth in the Resolution 6-26-97-89. This Policy and the procedures promulgated under it supersede all previous regulations regarding County debt practices.

3. **Operational Guidelines -** Short-term borrowing to finance operating needs will not be used. Interim financing in anticipation of a definite, fixed source of revenue, such as property taxes, an authorized but unsold bond issue, or an awarded grant, is acceptable. Such tax, bond, or grant anticipation notes should not have maturities greater than three years.

4. **Operational Guidelines - Additional:** The County Administrator/Controller shall evaluate each proposed financing package and its impact on the County's credit worthiness, and report the evaluation to the Finance and Physical Resources Committee.

   4.a. **Evaluation Requirements:** As part of the review process, the Finance and Physical Resources Committee shall review all aspects of the project and recommend to the Board of Commissioners the most appropriate structure of the debt. Options available include notes, installment contracts, industrial development bonds, general obligation bonds, limited tax general obligation bonds, and revenue bonds.

5. **Exceptions:** The Board of Commissioners, upon recommendation of the Finance and Physical Resources Committee, may consider requests to waive any requirement or guideline contained in this policy.

6. **Implementation Authority:** Upon adoption of this Statement of Policy and Principles, the Kent County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Administrator/Controller to establish any standards and procedures which may be necessary for implementation.

7. **Periodic Review:** The County Administrator/Controller shall review this policy at least every two years and make any recommendations for changes to the Finance and Physical Resources Committee.

Board of Commissioners Resolution No. 05-14-09-50
Name and Revision Number: Debt Policy, Revision 4
Date of Last Review: 7/11/2017
Related Policies: Fiscal Policy on Accounting and Auditing
Approved as to form: Not applicable

County of Kent

FISCAL POLICY - FUND BALANCE/FUND EQUITY

I. POLICY

1. **Policy:** The Board of Commissioners, by adoption of an annual budget, shall maintain adequate General Fund equity (classifications) to provide for contingent liabilities not covered by the County's insurance programs and to provide reasonable coverage for long-term Limited Tax General Obligation debt service.

II. PRINCIPLES

1. **Statutory References:** The Kent County Board of Commissioners may establish rules and regulations in reference to managing the interests and business of the County under Public Act 156 of 1851 [MCLA 46.11(m)].

2. **County Legislative or Historical References:** Resolution 6-26-97-89, adopted by the Board of Commissioners on June 26, 1997, established rules and guidelines for managing the financial interests of the County. Such a resolution has been adopted annually since 1987.

   2.a. **Lodging Excise (Hotel/Motel) Tax:** Resolution 9-11-97-118 approved the use of the Lodging Excise (Hotel/Motel) tax proceeds and established levels of project funding.

   2.b. **Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB):** This document clarifies and expands on pronouncements of the GASB as applicable to local governmental entities and the fund balance for Kent County.

   2.c. **Conflicts:** This document restates, clarifies, expands or alters the rules set forth in resolutions 6-26-97-89 and 9-11-97-118. This Policy and the procedures promulgated under it supersede all previous regulations regarding the County's fund balance and reserve policies.

3. **Operational Guidelines – General:** Classification and use of fund balance amounts.

   3.a. **Classifying Fund Balance Amounts** – Fund balance classifications depict the nature of the net resources that are reported in a governmental fund. An individual governmental fund may include nonspendable resources and amounts that are restricted, committed, or assigned, or any combination of those classifications. The General Fund may also include an unassigned amount.

      3.a.1. **Encumbrance Reporting** – – Encumbering amounts for specific purposes for which resources have already been restricted, committed or assigned should not result in separate display of encumbered amounts. Encumbered amounts for specific purposes for which amounts have not been previously restricted, committed or assigned will be classified as committed or assigned, as appropriate, based on the definitions and criteria set forth in Statement No. 54 of the GASB.

      3.a.2. **Prioritization of Fund Balance Use** – When an expenditure is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted (committed, assigned, or unassigned) amounts are available, it shall be the policy of Kent County to consider restricted amounts to have been reduced first.

         3.a.2.a. When an expenditure is incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of those unrestricted fund balance classifications could be used, it shall be the policy of Kent County that committed amounts would be reduced first,followed by assigned amounts and then unassigned amounts.

4. **Operational Guidelines – Additional:** The County will establish "commitments" for the purpose of maintaining constraints regarding the utilization of fund balance noting the Board of Commissioner's intent regarding the utilization of spendable fund balance.

4.a. Nonspendable – The nonspendable fund balance classification includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are either (a) not in spendable form or (b) legally or contractually required to be maintained intact. These amounts will be determined before all other classifications.

4.a.1. Long Term Advances – The County will maintain a fund balance equal to the balance of any long-term outstanding balances due from other County funds which exist at year-end.

4.a.2. Inventory/Prepaids/Other – The County will maintain a provision of fund balance equal to the value of inventory balances and prepaid expenses.

4.a.3. Corpus of a Permanent Fund – The County will maintain a provision equal to the corpus (principal) of any permanent funds that are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.

4.b. Restricted – Fund balance will be reported as restricted when constraints placed on the use of resources are either (a) externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments; or (b) imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

4.c. Committed – This classification can only be used for specific purposes pursuant to formal action of the Board of Commissioners. A majority vote of the members elect is required to approve a commitment and a two-thirds majority vote of the members elect is required to remove a commitment.

4.c.1. Budget Stabilization – Kent County commits General Fund fund balance in an amount equal to 10% of the subsequent year's adopted General Fund and subsidized governmental fund budgets to insulate County programs and current service levels from large ($1 million or more) and unanticipated one-time General Fund expenditure requirements, reductions in budgeted General Fund revenues due to a change in state or federal requirements, adverse litigation, catastrophic loss, or any similar swift unforeseen event. This commitment may be used if one of the qualifying events listed below occurs, and the County Administrator/ Controller estimates the qualifying event will cost $1 million or more and the Board of Commissioners by majority vote of the members present affirms the qualifying event.

4.c.1.a. Qualifying Events

- A flood, tornado or other catastrophic event that results in a declared state of emergency by an appropriate authority, which would require cash up front for response and/or match for disaster relief funds for such an event.
- Loss of an individual revenue source, such as state revenue sharing, for which official notification was not received until after the budget for the affected year was adopted.
- Unanticipated public health or public safety events such as a pandemic or civil unrest requiring cash flow until and if sustaining, replacement, or reimbursement funding is available.
- A Self-Insured Retention (SIR) for an insured claim for which the loss fund has an inadequate reserve.

4.d. Assigned – Amounts that are constrained by the government's intent to be used for specific purposes, but are neither restricted nor committed, should be reported as assigned fund balance. This would include all remaining amounts (except negative balances) reported in governmental funds, other than the General Fund, that are not classified as nonspendable, restricted or committed. The Board of Commissioners delegates to the County Administrator/Controller or his/her designee the authority to assign amounts to be used for other specific purposes.

4.e. Unassigned – Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the General Fund. This classification represents fund balance that has not been assigned to other funds and that has not been restricted, committed, or assigned to specific purposes within the General Fund. Unassigned fund balance can never be negative.

4.f. Minimum Fund Balance – The County will maintain a minimum fund balance equal to at least 40% of the subsequent year's adopted General Fund budgeted expenditures and transfers out, to protect against cash flow shortfalls related to timing of projected revenue receipts and to maintain a budget stabilization commitment. Cash flow shortfalls are related to property tax revenues, in anticipation of a July 1 (Mid Year) property tax billing.

4.f.1. Replenishing deficiencies – When fund balance falls below the minimum 40% range, the County will replenish shortages or deficiencies using the budget strategies and timeframes delineated below.

4.f.1.a. The following budgetary strategies shall be utilized by the County to replenish funding deficiencies:

- The County will reduce recurring expenditures to eliminate any structural deficit: or,
- The County will increase taxes, fees for services or pursue other funding sources, or
- Some combination of the two options above.

4.f.1.b. Minimum fund balance deficiencies shall be replenished within the following time periods:

- Deficiency resulting in a minimum fund balance between 39% and 40% shall be replenished over a period not to exceed one year.
- Deficiency resulting in a minimum fund balance between 37% and 39% shall be replenished over a period not to exceed three years.
- Deficiency resulting in a minimum fund balance of less than 37% shall be replenished over a period not to exceed five years.

5. **Exceptions:** None.

6. **Implementation Authority:** Upon adoption of this Statement of Policy and Principles, the Kent County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Administrator/Controller to establish any standards and procedures which may be necessary for implementation.

7. **Periodic Review:** The County Administrator/Controller shall review this policy at least every two years and make any recommendations for changes to the Finance and Physical Resources Committee.

Board of Commissioners Resolution No. 03-24-11-18
Name and Revision Number: Fund Balance/Fund Equity Policy, Revision 7
Date of Last Review: 7/11/2017
Related Policies: None
Approved as to form: Not applicable

County of Kent

FISCAL POLICY - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

I. POLICY

1. **Policy:** The Kent County Board of Commissioners requires all County capital improvement/replacement projects to be evaluated for funding within a framework of priorities and the financial capabilities of the County, and as part of a comprehensive budget process.

2. **Capital Improvement Program:** The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a primary tool for evaluating the physical improvement, tangible personal property or real property improvements to successfully implement the County budget process. The CIP outlines the schedule of County needs over a five-year period, and contains funding recommendations on an annual basis.

II. PRINCIPLES

1. **Statutory References:** Public Act 2 of 1968 as amended (The Uniform Budget and Accounting Act) [MCLA 141.435] sets forth the minimum requirements for items to be contained in the proposed budget submitted to the Board by the County Administrator/Controller, including the amount of proposed capital outlay expenditures, the estimated total cost and proposed method of financing each capital project.

2. **County Legislative or Historical References:** Resolution 3-28-96-38, adopted by the Board of Commissioners on March 28, 1996, established policies and set forth procedures for project submittal and evaluation for the Capital Improvement Program.

   2.a. Conflicts: This document codifies and amends the policies and procedures set forth in the Resolution 3-28-96-38. Any previous policies or procedures, insofar as they conflict with this policy, are hereby repealed.

3. **Operational Guidelines - General:** The County will establish and maintain a Capital Improvement Fund to account for the acquisition or construction of major capital items not otherwise provided for in enterprise or trust funds. The County will annually deposit, to this fund, a not-less-than sum of monies equivalent to the revenues to be generated from 0.2 mills of the general property tax levy.

   3.a. Project Initiation: Each department, office and agency of the County will annually submit a proposed list of its capital improvement needs for the next five fiscal years to the County Administrator/ Controller's Office, according to a format and schedule developed by the County Administrator/ Controller.

   3.b. CIP Inclusion Required: Any physical improvement or tangible personal and/or real property costing $25,000 or more and having expected useful life of three years or greater must be included in the CIP in order to be considered for funding.

4. **Operational Guidelines - Additional:** Items submitted for consideration will be evaluated by a Capital Improvement Review Team which shall include, at a minimum, representatives of the Administrator's Office, Fiscal Services, Purchasing, Information Technology and Facilities Management.

   4.a. Evaluation: Items submitted for consideration will be rated according to established criteria. Items rated by the Review Team will be included in the proposed capital budget submitted to the Finance and Physical Resources Committee.

   4.b. Annual Programming: It is recognized that the County has limited resources and only a certain number of projects can be funded in any given year. Those projects that are not funded for a fiscal year, as determined by the Board of Commissioners, may be resubmitted for consideration in future years' CIP process.

4.c. Purchasing Procedures: Projects included in the CIP must be acquired through the Purchasing Division and follow established County purchasing procedures.

4.d. Project Extension and Carry Forward of Funding: The County Administrator/ Controller may approve the carry forward of unspent funds from one budget year to a subsequent year.

4.e. Approval of Transfers Between and Substitutions of Projects: The Controller/Administrator can transfer up to and including $25,000 from any one project to another with the approval of the affected department(s). Transfers of more than $25,000 must be approved by the Finance and Physical Resources Committee.

5. **Exceptions:** The Board of Commissioners, upon recommendation of the Finance and Physical Resources Committee, may consider requests to waive any requirement or guideline contained in this policy that is not in conflict with state law.

5.a. Project Substitution: Recognizing that some projects may be tied to grant funding or needs may arise due to emergency situations, a department director or a member of the judiciary may submit a written request to substitute a project for an approved project of equal or greater cost. The County Administrator/Controller shall be responsible for approving the substitute project.

5.b. Emergent Projects: Recognizing that some projects may arise, due to emergencies or other unforeseen events, between the annual CIP budget cycles, the Board of Commissioners may, by two-thirds majority of the members elect, consider adding and funding projects, including those necessary to implement a decision or priority of the Board. Any project presented for consideration must include information delineating the reason(s) why the project cannot wait until the next CIP budget cycle.

6. **Implementation Authority:** Upon adoption of this Statement of Policy and Principles, the Kent County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Administrator/Controller to establish any standards and procedures which may be necessary for implementation.

7. **Periodic Review:** The County Administrator/Controller will review this policy at least every two years and make any recommendations for changes to the Finance and Physical Resources Committee.

Board of Commissioners Resolution No. 07-24-03-92
Name and Revision Number: Capital Improvement Program Policy, Revision 4
Date of Last Review: 7/11/2017
Related Policies: None.
Approved as to form: Not applicable

County of Kent

FISCAL POLICY – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION

I. POLICY - To correct and prevent deterioration in neighborhood and business districts within the local units of the County, the County may participate with the local units of government in the establishment of tax abatement or capture programs as authorized by State enabling legislation.

II. PRINCIPLES

1. Statutory References (as may be amended by the State of Michigan periodically):

Tax Capture
Public Act 197 of 1975 – Downtown Development Authority Act
Public Act 281 of 1986 – Local Development Financing Act
Public Act 530 if 2004 – Historic Neighborhood Tax Increment Finance Authority Act
Public Act 280 of 2005 – Corridor Improvement Authority Act
Public Act 450 of 1980 – Tax Increment Finance Authority Act
Public Act 381 of 1996 – Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act
Public Act 101 of 2005 – Brownfield Redevelop. Fin. Act – Infrastructure Improvements
Public Act 61 of 2007 – Neighborhood Improvement Authority Act
Public Act 94 of 2008 – Water Improvement Authority Act
Public Act 481 of 2008 – Nonprofit Street Railway Act
Public Act 250 of 2010 – Private Investment Infrastructure Funding Act

Tax Abatement
Public Act 198 of 1974 – Industrial Facilities Property Tax Abatement Act
Public Act 147 of 1992 – Neighborhood Enterprise Zone Act
Public Act 376 of 1996 – Renaissance Zone Act
Public Act 328 of 1998 – Personal Property Tax Abatement Act
Public Act 146 of 2000 – Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act
Public Act 210 of 2005 – Commercial Rehabilitation Act
Public Act 255 of 1978 – Commercial Redevelopment Act

Tax Capture/Abatement
Public Act 275 of 2010 – Next Michigan Development Act

Economic Development Tax Exemption
Public Act 274 of 2014 – General Property Tax act

2. County Legislative or Historical References: None

3. Operational Guidelines - General:

3.a. The County pledges up to 7 percent of its general operating property tax levy in support of economic development activities undertaken by local governmental units through local tax abatement/capture programs as authorized by State enabling legislation.

3.b. Participation is contingent upon exclusion of capture or abatement of "dedicated" millage levies (e.g. Correctional and Senior Services). To the extent that these dedicated millages are already captured or abated by a local governmental unit under an existing program, the County will not voluntarily participate in any new or expanded districts.

4. Operational Guidelines - Additional:

4.a. As allowed by law, the County may "opt out" of participation in any new or expanded district, and enter into a contractual agreement with the sponsoring local units according to the following general terms and conditions:

4.a.1. Participation in any capture or abatement district will be limited to 10-year renewable terms. Twenty-year terms may be considered if specific project requests would require debt financing.

4.a.2. Local government unit will pledge 100% of its own operating tax levy for capture or abatement.

4.a.3. County participation in tax capture districts will be on a "match" basis. The County will pledge $1 of its operating tax levy to match $1 of city/township tax levy generated for deposit to the Tax Increment Authority.

4.b. County participation will be suspended for any calendar year, if the total County General Revenues and Transfers-In do not increase by at least 3 percent over the prior year's General Revenues/Transfers In.

4.c. County participation will be suspended if the local governmental unit's total of all tax abatements' or captures' taxable values exceed 10 percent of the combined equivalent taxable value of the local unit.

5. Exceptions:

5.a. County participation with individual local government units will be limited to the capture/exemption of tax levy on up to 10 percent of the combined equivalent taxable value in any individual local governmental unit. (See Attachment A).

5.b. In the event that the total of all tax abatement/captures taxable values exceed 10 percent of the combined equivalent taxable value in a specified local government unit, the County will decline participation in the program. In the case of existing programs, County participation will be suspended in the calendar year following determination of the capture/abatement reaching the limit.

5.c. In the event the local governmental unit tax abatement/tax capture exceeds 10 percent of the combined equivalent taxable value, but the local governmental unit enters into an agreement with the County to reimburse lost annual property tax revenues until such time as the percentage of capture is determined to fall below the 10 percent cap, then the County may consent (renaissance zone extension application) to the approval of additional tax abatements.

5.d. Notwithstanding Section 4 above, in the event that a tax capture district provides for "gainsharing" of tax increment proceeds of at least 10 percent, the County may determine if it is in its best interest to not "opt out" of any existing, new, or expanded district to participate in "gainsharing" of tax increment proceeds.

6. Implementation Authority: Upon adoption of this Statement of Policy and Principles, the Kent County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Administrator/Controller to establish any standards and procedures which may be necessary for implementation.

7. Periodic Review: The County Administrator/Controller shall review this policy at least every two years and make any recommendations for changes to the Finance and Physical Resources Committee.

Board of Commissioners Resolution No. 1-26-17-6
Name and Revision Number: Economic Development Participation Policy, Revision 1
Date of Last Review: 3/13/2019
Related Policies: Fiscal Policy – Economic Development Participation
Approved as to form: Not applicable

County of Kent

FISCAL POLICY - INVESTMENTS

I. POLICY

1. **Policy:** Kent County will invest funds in a manner which will ensure the preservation of capital while providing the highest investment return with maximum security, meeting the daily cash flow demands of the County and conforming to all state statutes governing the investment of public funds.

II. PRINCIPLES

1. **Statutory References:** Public Act 20 of 1943 [MCLA 129.91], as amended, requires the County to have a written investment policy which, at a minimum, includes the purpose, scope and objectives of the policy, including safety, diversification and return on investment; a delegation of authority to make investments; a list of authorized investment instruments; and statements addressing safekeeping, custody and prudence.

2. **County Legislative or Historical References:** Resolution 6-26-97-89, adopted by the Board of Commissioners on June 26, 1997, established rules and guidelines for managing the financial interests of the County. Such a resolution has been adopted annually since 1987.

   2.a. Conflicts: This document restates, clarifies, expands or alters the rules set forth in the Resolution 6-26-97-89. This Policy and the procedures promulgated under it supersede all previous regulations regarding County investments.

3. **Scope:** This policy applies to the investment of all funds, excluding the investment of employees' retirement funds.

   3.a. **Pooling of Funds:** Except for cash in certain restricted and special funds, the County will consolidate cash and reserve balances from all funds to maximize investment earnings and to increase efficiencies with regard to investment pricing, safekeeping and administration. Investment income will be allocated to the various funds based on their respective participation and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

4. **General Objectives:** The primary objectives, in priority order, of investment activities shall be safety, liquidity, and yield:

   4.a. Safety: Safety of principal is the foremost objective of the investment program. Investments shall be undertaken in a manner that seeks to ensure the preservation of capital in the overall portfolio. The objective will be to mitigate credit risk and interest rate risk.

   4.a.1 Credit Risk: The County will minimize credit risk, which is the risk of loss due to the failure of the security issuer or backer, by:

   4.a.1.a. Limiting investments to the types of securities authorized by PA 20 of 1943 (MC: 129.91), as amended, except commercial paper investments must have a rating of not less than P1 from Moody's or A1 from Standard & Poor's and mutual fund investments must have a par share value intended to maintain a net asset value of at least $1.00 per share. For purposes of this policy, such investments are referred to as securities.

   4.a.1.b. Diversifying the investment portfolio so that the impact of potential losses from any one type of security or from any one individual issuer will be minimized. With the exception of U.S. Treasury Securities and authorized pools, no more than 25 percent of the total investment portfolio will be invested in a single security type or with a single financial institution.

4.a.2. **Interest Rate Risk:** The County will minimize interest rate risk, which is the risk that the market value of securities in the portfolio will fall due to changes in market interest rates, by:

4.a.2.a. Structuring the investment portfolio so that securities mature to meet cash requirements for ongoing operations, thereby avoiding the need to sell securities on the open market prior to maturity.

4.a.2.b. Investing operating funds primarily in shorter-term securities, money market mutual funds, or similar investment pools and limiting the average maturity of the portfolio in accordance with this policy.

4.a.2.c. The County stratifies its pooled investments by maturity (less than one year, 1-2 years, 2-3 years and 3-5 years). Investments maturing in less than one year shall represent at least 40% of the total value of the portfolio. No other maturity band may represent more than 30% of the portfolio and the total of all investments greater than one year shall represent no more than 60 percent of the total portfolio.

4.b. Liquidity: The investment portfolio shall remain sufficiently liquid to meet all operating requirements that may be reasonably anticipated. This is accomplished by structuring the portfolio so that securities mature concurrent with cash needs to meet anticipated demands. To that end, a portion of the portfolio may be placed in money market mutual funds or local government investment pools which offer same-day liquidity for short-term funds.

4.c. Yield: The investment portfolio shall be designed with the objective of attaining a market rate of return throughout budgetary and economic cycles, taking into account the investment risk constraints and liquidity needs. Return on investment is of secondary importance compared to the safety and liquidity objectives described above. The core of investments are limited to relatively low risk securities in anticipation of earning a fair return relative to the risk being assumed. Securities shall generally be held until maturity with the following exceptions:

4.c.1. A security with declining credit may be sold early to minimize loss of principal
4.c.2. A security swap would improve the quality, yield, or target duration in the portfolio.
4.c.3. Liquidity needs of the portfolio require that the security be sold.

5. Standards of Care:

5.a. Prudence: The standard of prudence to be used by the Treasurer shall be the "prudent person" standard and shall be applied in the context of managing an overall portfolio. Investment officers acting in accordance with written procedures and this investment policy and exercising due diligence shall be relieved of personal responsibility for an individual security's credit risk or market price changes, provided deviations from expectations are reported in a timely fashion and the liquidity and the sale of securities are carried out in accordance with the terms of this policy.

The "prudent person" standard states that, "Investments shall be made with judgment and care, under circumstances then prevailing, which persons of prudence, discretion and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the probable safety of their capital as well as the probable income to be derived."

5.b. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest: The Treasurer and other employees involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with the proper execution and management of the investment program, or that could impair their ability to make impartial decisions.

6. **Safekeeping and Custody**

   6.a. **Delivery vs. Payment:** All trades of marketable securities will be executed by delivery vs. payment (DVP) to ensure that securities are deposited in an eligible financial institution prior to the release of funds.

   6.b. **Safekeeping:** Marketable securities will be held by an independent third-party custodian selected by the Treasurer as evidenced by safekeeping receipts in the County's name. The safekeeping institution shall annually provide a copy of their most recent report on internal controls (Statement of Auditing Standards No. 70, or SAS 70).

   6.c. **Internal Controls:** The Treasurer is responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure designed to ensure that the assets of the County are protected from loss, theft or misuse. The internal control structure shall be designed to provide reasonable assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that (1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived and (2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

7. **Reporting Methods:** The Treasurer shall prepare quarterly investment reports, including a certification regarding compliance with all applicable laws and policies. These reports shall be filed with the Board of Commissioners not later than sixty days following the end of each calendar quarter.

8. **Implementation Authority:** Upon adoption of this Statement of Policy and Principles, the Kent County Board of Commissioners delegates to the County Treasurer the management responsibility for the investment program as required by state statute.

9. **Periodic Review:** The County Administrator/Controller shall review this policy at least every two years and make any recommendations for changes to the Finance and Physical Resources Committee.

Board of Commissioners Resolution No. 05-14-09-50
Name and Revision Number: Investments Policy, Revision 7
Date of Last Review: 07/11/2017
Related Policies: None
Approved as to form: Not applicable

March 8, 2019

Kent County enlists The Right Place to help develop Sustainable Business Park

By Michael Kransz | mkransz@mlive.com

GRAND RAPIDS, MI -- Kent County waste officials have enlisted The Right Place to help bring firms and funding to its proposed business park centered around waste recovery and reuse.

The Kent County Department of Public Works announced the three-year, $180,000 agreement with the Grand Rapids-based economic development group on Thursday, March 7.

The department aims to attract businesses specializing in diverting and reusing waste to set up shop on about 250 acres of vacant land straddling the Kent-Allegan county line just south of its South Kent Landfill.

The goal is to have these businesses recycle, reuse and convert county waste that would otherwise be thrown away. The project is called the Sustainable Business Park.

The Sustainable Business Park is a critical component of the Kent County Department of Public Works' goal to divert 90 percent of the county's trash from landfills by 2030. Currently, only about six to eight percent of the roughly 1 billion pounds of garbage processed by the county each year is recycled.

Waste officials envision the business park filled with companies that, among others roles, process construction and demolition debris, compost organic material and convert organic waste into usable fuel.

The Right Place's role in this process, according to the agreement, would be to aid the department in finding viable businesses and funding sources, as well as engaging with Allegan County on the project.

"The Sustainable Business Park will significantly reduce the amount of trash going into landfills and attract investment from companies that can convert waste into usable products," Dar Baas, director of the Kent County Department of Public Works, said in a statement. "The Sustainable Business Park is part of our community's vision for a circular economy, and our partnership with The Right Place will help attract businesses, technology developers, startups and nonprofits from across the country that align with the Sustainable Business Park's goals."

According to the public works department, waste processing and sorting facilities alone at the park **could generate $500 million in direct private sector investments and 150 jobs**.

"The Sustainable Business Park has the potential to generate investment and create jobs in West Michigan, while serving as a national model of what communities can achieve with a practical, innovative approach towards recycling and upcycling," Birgit Klohs, president and CEO of The Right Place, said in a statement. "We look forward to partnering with Kent County Department of Public Works to bring the Sustainable Business Park to life."

The next steps for the business park, according to Kent County Department of Public Works spokesperson Kristen Wieland, is to vet businesses that responded last year to the county's request for information about how they would utilize the space.

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March 7, 2019

Bissell expanding HQ and adding 100 jobs

By Justin Dawes

Bissell's headquarters is in Walker. Courtesy The Right Place

A maker of cleaning products is investing **$10 million to expand its headquarters in the area and create 100 jobs**.

Bissell plans to add 25,000 square feet for office space at its base operations in Walker, at 2320 Walker Ave. NW, according to The Right Place yesterday.

Bissell has seen consistent growth globally over the past several years and has run out of room at its headquarters, the company said.

Construction on a manufacturing line has begun and will be completed in the next several months. Renovation of the main offices is underway and expected for completion in 2020.

Hiring has started and will be ongoing. Available positions can be found on the company's website. The company is not disclosing salary information.

Among several alternatives, the company considered dispersing the additional jobs among its other operations, primarily in Illinois and North Carolina.

The Right Place, a Grand Rapids-based economic development nonprofit, worked to ensure the company chose to add those jobs in West Michigan, including connecting Bissell with West Michigan Works! for assistance with worker training.

The MEDC approved a $500,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant for the project. The city of Walker has offered a 50-percent property tax abatement for the expansion, the MEDC said.

Bissell

Bissell was established in 1876 as a family-owned business and now has operations all over the world.

The company produces a portfolio of vacuums, carpet cleaners, hard floor cleaners, pet grooming products and cleaning solutions. It has more 1,300 active patents worldwide.

Bissell employs 490 people in West Michigan.

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Febraury 27, 2019

Company plans suburban HQ with 670 employees

By Ehren Wynder

A pair of partners are looking to bring a big employer to a Grand Rapids suburb.

Glenwood Development Partners submitted a request to the Cascade Township Planning Commission to redevelop a vacant seven-acre property at 5526 Glenwood Pkwy SE, which is part of Glenwood Hills Office Park.

Glenwood Development is a partnership between Portage-based Hinman and Grand Rapids-based Rockford Construction.

Both firms engaged with the unnamed global corporation, which is interested in building its new headquarters on the site.

Glenwood Development did not disclose the name of the company because of the sensitivity of negotiations. The client is rated among the top 10 in its industry worldwide and promises to bring an estimated 670 employees to the new site, according to Glenwood Development Partners. The company would enter a long-term lease with Glenwood.

Glenwood's plans call for the construction of a 136,000-square-foot office building with 670 parking spaces. To help spur development, Glenwood submitted a request to the Planning Commission in January for a basic plan review and to amend the planned unit development, or PUD, zoning for the site. Currently, the PUD zoning limits building height to three stories.

Before the project can proceed to a public hearing, the Planning Commission requested the applicant submit additional information.

A construction date is unclear as of press time.

Blue Cross Blue Shield had planned to develop a new office building on the site, but the plans never came to fruition, according to the township PUD ordinance.

Rockford Construction entered an agreement with Blue Cross Blue Shield to purchase the property in 2004.

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Febraury 22, 2019

Bank expanding HQ on West Side

By Rachel Watson

A local bank is expanding its corporate headquarters on the West Side of Grand Rapids.

Mercantile Bank of Michigan is adding 25,000 square feet to its existing 60,000-square-foot main office at 310 Leonard St. NW.

The project cost was not disclosed.

A construction completion date has not been set, but Mercantile estimates it could be ready to move in by late summer.

Raymond Reitsma, president of Mercantile, said the expansion was necessary because the bank had reached capacity in the old space, and the tight quarters were hindering teamwork.

“We are completely out of space in the building,” Reitsma said. “We have groups of employees that will be better able to serve customers if they are better able to collaborate together. The new space will allow that to happen.”

Reitsma added: “We’re happy to be in a position to expand, because we’ve been growing, and we need more people to serve the market.”

The addition is adjacent to the current building on the property the bank already owned.

The current headquarters has 152 employees working in it, and with the expansion, that capacity will be increased to 230, he said.

Reitsma said the bank is “hiring quality employees on a consistent basis” and will continue to do so.

Grand Rapids-based Ghafari Associations/Concept Design is the architect and designer on the project.

The project’s contractor is Grand Rapids-based Rockford Construction.

Mercantile Bank

Mercantile Bank of Michigan — a subsidiary of Mercantile Bank Corporation (Nasdaq: MBWM) — provides banking services to businesses, individuals and governmental units.

The bank operates 47 banking offices throughout central and West Michigan.

As of Dec. 31, 2018, its total assets were $3.36 billion.

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Febraury 21, 2019

Manufacturer moving subsidiary to West Michigan

By Justin Dawes | @dawes_justin

A manufacturer is relocating an out-of-state subsidiary to the area and creating 64 jobs.

Kentwood-based Andronaco Industries is investing $3.3 million to relocate Tulsa, Oklahoma-based Conley Composite — which specializes in fiberglass pipe, fittings and valve manufacturing — and expand to a fourth Kent County location, at 4544 Broadmoor Ave. SE in Kentwood, according to The Right Place yesterday.

For the expansion, Andronaco plans to purchase and rehabilitate an existing 30,000-square-foot building. Conley Composite will moving all its equipment to the new space, according to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, or MEDC.

Andronaco recently acquired Conley Composite and was considering expanding the business in Oklahoma, the MEDC said.

“The decision to relocate Conley Composites to the same area as our other manufacturing subsidiaries made logistical sense for our company,” said Ron Andronaco, president and CEO, Andronaco Industries.

MEDC approved a $320,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant for the project, which it said will be dispersed over a three-year period as the **64 jobs are added**.

The city of Kentwood is considering a tax abatement for the project, The Right Place said.

Andronaco Industries

Andronaco Industries was founded in 1994 and has since grown organically and through acquisitions, now owning facilities in Michigan, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma and France.

The company specializes in composites, valve systems, engineered products and specialty systems for the pharmaceutical, chemical, steel, wastewater and energy markets.

The headquarters facility in Kentwood employs 195 people.

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Febraury 21, 2019

Tech company expands into market

By Ehren Wynder

A Lansing tech company has moved into a newly renovated office in downtown Grand Rapids.

The IT firm Dewpoint has set up its new Grand Rapids office in a 4,500-square-foot suite on the fifth floor of Bridgewater Place, at 333 Bridge St. NW, after an extensive renovation.

With the expansion to Grand Rapids, **Dewpoint intends to bring 21 new employees to the area**.

Dewpoint, founded in 1996, develops strategic technology plans to maximize clients' current resources and better position organizations for the future.

It works with enterprise clients across numerous industries, including state and local government, health care, financial services, biotechnology, manufacturing, insurance and more.

The renovation project

Prior to the renovation, executive offices from the previous tenant blocked the river views and nearly all natural light to the space.

Dewpoint's service delivery team lead, Scott Rosenbrook collaborated with Ghafari/Concept Design on the re-imagining of the space.

Grand Rapids-based Orion Construction, the general contractor for the build out, removed all interior walls and interruptions to natural light and relocated the executive offices.

"Creating our new office as a team has been a rewarding experience," Rosenbrook said. "We wanted to do more than just business in this space. We wanted to express Dewpoint's company culture and offer our employees and clients an environment that fosters collaboration and fun.

"Now our employees feel a connection to the community and bring inspiration that we can channel toward creating innovative solutions. We feel at home at Bridgewater Place and are excited to see what the future holds in our new space."

Additionally, Bridgewater Place property manager Hertz Group accommodated Dewpoint's phased transition into the suite by creating an interim office space within the building prior to completion of renovations.

Orion Construction has completed eight tenant build-outs throughout the last five years at Bridgewater Place, totaling more than 55,000 square feet.

"This build out called for a detailed logistics plan and a lot of coordination with Hertz Group and our subcontractors," said Roger Rehkopf, president, Orion Construction. "Our crews had to perform certain tasks before and after normal business hours. Our focus in these occupied renovations is to minimize disruption to the other tenants in the building."

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Febraury 20, 2019

Ford airport reports best-ever January

By Justin Dawes

Gerald R. Ford International Airport is served by six passenger airlines with more than 120 daily non-stop flights to and from 26 major market destinations. Photo via fb.com

Despite the polar vortex, last month was the busiest January ever for Gerald R. Ford International Airport.

The airport served 257,194 passengers last month, a 7-increase from January 2018.

"The continued growth of the Ford airport is a testament to the growth of West Michigan," said Brian Picardat, interim president and CEO, Ford airport. "The decision to fly through Grand Rapids also has a huge impact in attracting additional air service to meet increased passenger demand."

Ford airport is preparing for more routes this year, with three new non-stop destinations by Allegiant Airlines: Sarasota-Bradenton, beginning in April; and Nashville and Savannah-Hilton Head, beginning in June.

As passenger numbers continue to grow, airport officials encourage travelers to arrive at least two hours before their flights.

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Febraury 7, 2019

Firm plans $20M suburban hotel project

By Justin Dawes | @dawes_justin

A new hotel may be coming to a Grand Rapids suburb.

CWD Real Estate Investment's initial concepts for a $20.3-development in Wyoming include a hotel, restaurant and retail space, according to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, or MDEQ.

The project would reportedly be at Ramblewood Plaza, at 2757 44th St. SW.

The Grand Rapids-based firm has not submitted a final plan, and the project has not yet been approved by the city, according to Megan Sall, Wyoming assistant city manager.

The project is expected to create 50 full-time jobs and 50 part-time jobs, the MDEQ said.

Since the project is planned for abandoned land contaminated by a former dry cleaning business, the state awarded the city of Wyoming Brownfield Redevelopment Authority a $202,000 grant and a $433,000 loan for the development.

February 6, 2019

Kent County hotel revenue hits record high, occupancy rate flat

By Brian McVicar | bmcvicar@mlive.com

GRAND RAPIDS, MI — Kent County hotels generated $216 million in room revenue last year, but the occupancy rate dipped slightly, according to figures from Experience Grand Rapids, the county's convention and visitors marketing agency.

Doug Small, the organization's president and CEO, said the decline of less than 1 percent in the occupancy rate, which totaled 66.8 percent, isn't the result of fewer people booking hotel reservations. Rather, it's because new hotels that opened last year brought an additional 600 rooms online.

He said there were 1.8 million room nights booked in Kent County last year, up by more than 12,000 from 2017. There are roughly 8,100 hotel rooms in the county.

"We have all these new rooms that have come into the market," Small said. "Your occupancy can stay flat, but you're still booking more rooms."

On the financial side, hotels generated $216 million in room revenue last year, a record high for the county and an increase of 2.1 percent from 2017. Last year was the ninth consecutive year of growth in the county's hotel room revenue, Small said.

The increased revenue is the result of two things: hotel room rates increased in price, and more rooms were booked, Small said.

Countywide, the average hotel rate last year was $119.62, Small said. That's up from $117.66 in 2017. Some hotel room rates, especially those in downtown Grand Rapids, exceed the countywide average.

The rising room revenue and additional hotels opening in Grand Rapids are evidence of the area's strong tourism market, Small said. While the city doesn't have a professional sports franchise, such as an NFL team, or a Division 1 college football team that draws national attention, the city's craft beer and restaurant scenes continue to draw visitors.

"We work very hard with our partners and stakeholders out there to elevate the image and brand of Grand Rapids to the world," he said.

The growth in hotel room revenue is good news for Experience Grand Rapids. Hotel room guests in Kent County pay a 4 percent fee that Experience Grand Rapids uses to fund marketing and promotional efforts.

Kent County also charges a 5 percent lodging and excise tax, the majority of which is used to pay down the debt taken out to build DeVos Place convention center, Small said. A portion funds Experience GR.

January 23, 2019

Grand Rapids airport continues record growth with 3.26M passengers in 2018

By Michael Kransz | mkransz@mlive.com

Gerald R. Ford International Airport in Grand Rapids had a record year in 2018. (Cory Morse | MLive.com)

GRAND RAPIDS, MI -- Michigan's second busiest airport closed out 2018 with a fifth straight year of record-setting passenger numbers.

About 3.26 million passengers flew in and out of Gerald R. Ford International Airport in 2018 -- the most ever in a year, according to the airport. The passenger totals trump the previous record set last year of 2.8 million.

"We had initially projected to hit the three million mark in 2020," said Ford Airport Interim President Brian Picardat in a statement. "To have that much growth in 2018 was a tremendous accomplishment. We couldn't have done it without our outstanding staff, our loyal passengers and all of our airline partners and airport tenants."

For the past five years in a row, passenger numbers at Ford Airport have continued break records.

The record-setting streak began in 2014, when the airport recorded roughly 2.4 million passengers. The previous high was recorded in 2011 at 2.27 million.

Birgit Klohs, president and CEO of The Right Place, Inc., which promotes job growth and investment in West Michigan, said there's a symbiotic relationship between the airport and the area's economy.

"They're an economic driver, but they're also driven by our overall healthy economy," Klohs said, adding that a busy airport "allows us to continue to grow the local economy and attract talent."

Klohs, who also serves on the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority Board, said continual growth at the airport additionally attracts tourists.

Last week Las Vegas-based air carrier Allegiant Air announced they would open a base of operations at Ford Airport. The base, set to open in June, will be their 16th nationwide. Allegiant officials said having a base at Ford Airport will open up more non-stop routes and flight times.

The first new routes from Ford Airport that Allegiant is opening up are direct flights to Nashville and Savannah, Georgia.

The two routes will bring Ford Airport's overall non-stop flight portfolio to 29 destinations, Picardat said.

"On average, airports our size have non-stop service to 17 cities. We are now serving 29," he said in a statement. "We are increasing our capacity and working to accomodate more routes for our passengers."

Ford Airport is currently undergoing the second phase of its Gateway Transformation Project.

The second phase, billed at $18 million, is designed to improve airline ticket counters and baggage service offices, as well as baggage claim, curbside and "front-of-house" areas, airport officials previously said.

The construction will add restrooms and food and beverage vendors near the baggage claim area. The construction began in November and will continue through summer 2020.

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January 18, 2019

$140 million hotel would tip scales

Community leaders stress another convention-style hotel downtown would help GR compete for bigger conventions.

By Justin Dawes

A rendering of the 24-story hotel at the DeVos Place property. ***Courtesy CAA***

(As seen on WZZM TV 13) An underutilized section of the DeVos Place building may be the future home to a 26-story, 400-room hotel that could cost upward of $140 million.

Community leaders believe the time has come for another convention-style hotel downtown, and the Grand Rapids-Kent County Convention/Arena Authority is taking steps toward determining costs and project details.

A recent study by Chicago-based HVS determined the best place for the hotel would be on top of the DeVos Place building section containing the Monroe Meeting Rooms, located along Monroe Avenue NW in between DeVos Performance Hall and the Windquest Building, at 201 Monroe Ave. NW, which is anchored by Reserve Wine & Food.

The hotel would contain a restaurant, lounge, coffee shop, 40,000 square feet of meeting space — including a 20,000-square-foot grand ballroom — pool, whirlpool, exercise room, business center, gift shop, guest laundry room and back-of-the-house space.

A third downtown convention-style hotel — besides the Amway Grand and the JW Marriott — is one of the projects outlined in the 2016 Grand Rapids Destination Asset Study.

This would be one of the “game changers” that would allow Grand Rapids to grow competitively as a top tourist destination, according to Rich MacKeigan, regional manager of SMG, which oversees the Van Andel Arena, DeVos Performance Hall and DeVos Place, and is governed by the CAA.

"We, as a staff here at Experience Grand Rapids, have felt that there was a whole other group of business that we could go after if we had an additional 400 rooms in one hotel,” said Doug Small, president of Experience Grand Rapids, Kent County’s tourism marketing arm. He added that convention organizers tend to prefer booking in as few hotels as possible.

“Just as important as the hotel rooms in a 400-room hotel is the meeting space,” Small said.

With three convention hotels all connected to the convention center and the proposed one containing at least 40,000 square feet of meeting space, Small said Grand Rapids would then be able to attract larger conventions

and would be able to book more than one convention during the same timeframe.

MacKeigan said there are groups, depending on the time of the year, that are not able to book in Grand Rapids because of limited space.

Over this next year, Small said his staff will identify some groups opting for other destinations because they are too large for Grand Rapids.

If Small's staff can land a large convention or two simultaneous conventions in the future, he said that would push single travelers further into the suburbs, benefitting those hotels, and would contribute to increased rates.

The proposed hotel also could have a brand not in the market today, which would spark a new marketing campaign by that brand's company, the CAA said.

Time to act

Ideally, according to Steve Heacock, CAA board chair, a private entity would take care of this need.

"But that's not likely to happen," Heacock said. "In fact, it's not happening anywhere in the country."

That's because with the level of amenities the full-service hotel requires, the construction cost is estimated at $350,000 per room, compared to the $150,000-per-room cost for many of the other hotels being built around town — that's too expensive for many private entities, Heacock said.

"We can't wait for this to just happen if we're going to continue to be competitive with other cities for convention business," Heacock said.

Therefore, the proposed hotel likely would be publicly owned but privately operated. The HVS study cited several other cities with publicly financed hotels, including Austin, Texas; Birmingham, Alabama; Omaha, Nebraska; Baltimore; Chicago; Cleveland; Dallas; Denver; Houston; and Phoenix. Houston later sold its hotel and incentivized another hotel based on the sale of the first one.

Heacock said the hotel itself would create the revenue stream needed to pay for it, but the first need is for upfront funding.

Since the CAA can only utilize revenue bonds, which probably are not adequate to cover the project, Heacock said the city or county — or both — may need to help. He added those discussions have yet to happen, though the top leaders from both entities are on the CAA operations committee and are aware of the project.

The CAA said funding through bonds would be the lowest cost of financing. Another form of financing could be through a more expensive public-private partnership, using public funding to close the gap in a privately financed hotel project.

"You don't get very far into this work before realizing what a sense of gratitude we should have for Amway and the DeVos and Van Andel families for building convention center hotels in the private sector, which really was an incredible gift to this community that keeps on giving," Heacock said.

MacKeigan said SMG staff is in the process of enlisting an architect to conduct an in-depth analysis of hotel construction, enlisting an investment analyst to assess funding options available for financing and beginning discussion with the city and county about potential support of the project, according to direction from the CAA.

MacKeigan said he believes the CAA could have enough information to clarify the next steps by the end of June.

The HVS carried out its study, assuming the hotel would open Jan. 1, 2022.

Activating underutilized space

A task force — including MacKeigan, Heacock and CAA board members Charlie Secchia and Richard Winn — was formed in 2017 to explore ways to convert the Monroe Meeting Rooms space into one with higher utilization, which is when it commissioned Progressive AE to explore solutions.

The CAA then commissioned the HVS hotel study for three areas: the one under consideration, the Van Andel Arena area and the site that now contains 20 Monroe Live.

The 20 Monroe site then was sold, and the analysis indicated the Van Andel site would not meet the project's needs, even though the DeVos site requires vertical construction, which may add to project costs.

Through an analysis of the market and a projection of how it will look in the next 10 years — including taking into account five hotel projects in the pipeline and the proposed project — HVS agreed the convention hotel is needed to help the city grow as a destination for regional and national conventions.

Based on the study's estimates, the proposed hotel would have higher occupancy than competitive hotels, except during the busy period, and would have a higher average daily rate.

Grand Rapids City Manager Mark Washington said he hopes project considerations can include additional parking that would benefit the community.

Parking could not be included in the building footprint, though Secchia said the existing underground parking is underutilized at times, according to CAA board minutes.

MacKeigan and others agree that much of the community does not realize the importance of an additional convention center for growth.

"I think there needs to be continued education on the fact that a full-service convention hotel is what's needed, and with that awareness, it should be supported by many," MacKeigan said.

Birgit Klohs, president and CEO of the Grand Rapids-based economic development organization The Right Place, agreed.

When new companies are considering moving to the area, besides a number of other factors, she said they are concerned about quality of life, and projects like a new hotel show there is active growth and plenty of activities.

"I like to say when we do things like this, it improves my product," Klohs said.

January 16, 2019

Grand Rapids-area manufacturer to add 52 jobs in $3.8M expansion

By Brian McVicar | bmcvicar@mlive.com

WYOMING, MI — A Wyoming-based company that makes industrial-grade grinding and finishing products, used in everything from furniture manufacturing to home construction, expects to create **52 new jobs as part of a $3.76 million expansion project.**

The expansion comes after Stone Fox Ventures, 3890 Buchanan Ave. SW, purchased Cleveland-based company Even Cut Abrasive.

Stone Fox has received a $400,000 performance-based grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to pay for recruiting, hiring and training costs to relocate some of Even Cut Abrasive's operations to a new location in Wyoming, 4050 Roger B. Chaffee Memorial Blvd.

"We believe the City of Wyoming is a great place to build a company and a community. Not only is the area full of talented individuals who will make fantastic team members, but it also provides a quality of life we believe is important to our business culture," said Robert Shindorf, Managing Member, Stone Fox Ventures.

Stone Fox is a private equity investment firm that acquires, structures, manages and grows middle-market manufacturing, distribution and services companies, according to a news release from The Right Place, a Grand Rapids-based economic development firm.

The Right Place is helping Stone Fox — which focuses on industrial-grade grinding and finishing products — find applicants for the new positions.

Shindorf said Stone Fox purchased Even Cut Abrasive about a year ago. He said his company is not shutting down Even Cut's Cleveland operation, but does plan to move some positions to the new Wyoming location. As of now, that could total 10 to 15 positions – primarily machine operators, programmers and quality inspectors.

There's no scheduled layoffs as part of the acquisition, he said.

The $400,000 MEDC grant will be paid out over a four-year period and is tied to three job creation benchmarks – the first provides $75,000 for 10 jobs; the second consists of$115,000 for 15 jobs; and the third gives $210,00 for 27 jobs.

"Stone Fox Ventures' decision to expand Even Cut Abrasive's operations into Wyoming is a testament to the economic strength of our region," Eric Icard, senior business development manager and project lead at The Right Place, said in a statement. "West Michigan has always been exceptionally well-suited to support manufacturers, and the addition of Stone Fox Venture's recent acquisition only strengthens our reputation as a place where manufacturers thrive."

BUSINESS INSIDER

January 2, 2019

The top 10 cities for buying a house in 2019, where jobs are plentiful, construction is booming, and young people are moving in

By Tanza Loudenback

Housing affordability is in the dumps.

In the final quarter of 2018, the average American's ability to afford a home hit a 10-year low, according to a report from Attom Data Solutions cited by Realtor.com.

But not all hope is lost. While first-time homebuyers may struggle in 2019, older homeowners looking for a new place will have more options.

Daren Blomquist, a senior vice president at Attom, said, according to Realtor.com: "We're going to hit an affordability tipping point in 2019, where it becomes more affordable to buy. Buyers will have more inventory to choose from and they will be running against fewer multiple-offer situations."

Realtor.com's team of economists analyzed housing markets across the US to find the best places to buy a home in 2019, where new home construction is booming, job growth is strong, public schools are highly rated, and millennials are moving in.

Keep in mind that the best places to buy a home in 2019 aren't just the cheapest. The list includes a few pricey cities, like Boston and Miami, as well as up-and-coming cities, like Boise, Idaho, and Chattanooga, Tennessee. The key is that wage growth and new-home construction in these cities are keeping up with home price increases, stabilizing affordability.

Here are the best markets for homebuyers in 2019, along with Realtor.com's price growth forecast.

City	Forecasted median home price	Forecasted price growth from 2018 to 2019
10. Boston, Massachusetts	$496,710	4.6%
9. Miami, Florida	$266,586	5.0%
8. Boise, Idaho	$258,303	6.9%
7. Las Vegas, Nevada	$277,574	7.9%
6. Bridgeport, Connecticut	$385,790	4.0%
5. Phoenix, Arizona	$267,318	5.6%
4. Chattanooga, Tennessee	$161,595	4.3%
3. El Paso, Texas	$149,643	2.5%
2. Grand Rapids, Michigan	**$187,319**	**8.2%**
1. Lakeland, Florida	$161,757	7.4%

Metro Grand Rapids housing market 'poised for takeoff,' study says

By Brian McVicar | bmcvicar@mlive.com

GRAND RAPIDS, MI -- The Grand Rapids metro area ranked second on a list of 10 housing markets nationwide that are "poised for takeoff," according to a new study by Trulia, a real estate research group.

The study examined year-to-year job growth, vacancy rates, share of income needed to afford a median priced starter home, the ratio of inbound-to-outbound home searches on Trulia and the share of the population under 35.

Cheryl Young, a senior economist at Trulia, says the Grand Rapids metro area did well on the study because "affordability is still relatively good" in the region. The study also pointed to employment growth and low vacancy rates.

"It's very positive to be on this list and going into 2019 knowing that there is a lot of potential growth," she said.

The Grand Rapids-Wyoming metro area includes Kent County, Barry County, Montcalm County and Ottawa County. It was ranked as the top housing market nationwide by Trulia in the same study in 2017.

The average estimated home value (a different figure than average sales price) in the Grand Rapids metro was $187,900 in October 2018, up 8.9 percent from the same time last year, according to Trulia.

Another study released this week, by Realtor.com, shows that out of the 100 largest metro areas in the U.S., the Grand Rapids metro area is projected to have the biggest percentage increase - 8.2 percent - in price growth in 2019.

Young said that projection supports what her study found.

"It's poised to still attract people and have strong demand for housing in the market, and that will manifest in things like prices and strong sales," she said.

The Trulia study highlighted Grand Rapids' Alger Heights neighborhood as the "hottest" neighborhood in the Grand Rapids metro area.

It pointed to the fact that, when compared to the same period last year, homes there spent 8.5 fewer days on the market, and that median home values in the neighborhood reached $159,300 in 2018, up 16 percent from 2017.

Here's the 10 metro areas whose housing markets were highlighted in the study:

1: Colorado Springs, Colorado
2: Grand Rapids
3: Jacksonville, Florida
4: Bakersfield, California
5: Austin, Texas
6: Fresno, California
7: Phoenix, Arizona
8: Columbia, South Carolina
9: El Paso, Texas
10: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

THE RIGHT PLACE
Advancing the West Michigan Economy

October 23, 2018

The Right Place assists contract manufacturer with local expansion

Today The Right Place, Inc., in collaboration with the City of Kentwood, announced that **Amphenol Borisch Technologies (ABT) is investing $3.7 million to expand its operations** in Kentwood. As a result, the company, based at 4511 East Paris Avenue in Kentwood, **will add 82 jobs at its headquarters campus.**

ABT builds complex electromechanical assemblies, cable harnesses, circuit cards and discrete mechanicals for the aerospace and defense industries. The company employs more than 400 people at five North American locations. The Kentwood headquarters campus, which includes two buildings, employs nearly 200 people in manufacturing and administrative positions.

The company plans to renovate portions of its existing facility and purchase new machinery and equipment that will assist with its diversified growth.

“Amphenol is proud to be reinvesting in West Michigan with this expansion,” said Bob Brunetz, General Manager, Amphenol Borisch Technologies. “With the support of The Right Place and the MEDC, we were able to make this project happen right here in Kentwood.”

The Right Place worked in collaboration with the company, Kentwood and the MEDC to ensure ABT continues to expand its headquarters operations in the city. The MEDC is supporting the project with the approval of a $410,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant.

“The Right Place is very pleased to have partnered with Kentwood and the MEDC to ensure ABT’s growth in the region,” said Eric Icard, senior business development manager, and project lead. “This investment is another win for West Michigan’s robust aerospace and defense industries.”

“The City of Kentwood is delighted for ABT’s expansion and further investment in the community,” Kentwood Mayor Stephen Kepley said. “We look forward to ABT’s continued success in the market.”

October 23, 2018

The Right Place assists Grand River Aseptic Manufacturing with local expansion

Today The Right Place, Inc., in collaboration with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the City of Grand Rapids, announced that Grand Rapids-based Grand River Aseptic Manufacturing, Inc. (GRAM) will be expanding to a new location at 524 Butterworth St. SW in Grand Rapids. **This expansion will result in the creation of 107 new jobs and a capital investment of $60 million.**

GRAM was founded in 2010 and purchased the assets of its predecessor company, a joint venture between the Van Andel Institute and Grand Valley State University. As a privately held company, GRAM provides high-quality, outsourced sterile parenteral manufacturing for the life sciences industry. Its services include pharmaceutical development and manufacturing, analytical testing, and regulatory filing support.

Now surpassing well over 100 full-time employees, GRAM initially started with a team of 16 in 2011. The company has seen substantial growth over the years, largely due to the rapidly growing aseptic manufacturing market and GRAM's commitment to quality. In 2017 and 2018, GRAM was named as one of the fastest growing private companies in the U.S., and the seventh fastest growing company in Mich. by Inc. 5000.

GRAM has two Grand Rapids locations at 140 Front Ave SW and 837 Godfrey Ave SW. Both of its current facilities are near capacity, and with projected continued growth and the possibility of expanding the scope of its operations. The new 62,400 square foot building on Butterworth St. will house additional production space, with state-of-the-art pharmaceutical manufacturing and packaging and allow GRAM to increase its automation capabilities.

"Since 2010, Grand River Aseptic Manufacturing has been closely linked to the Grand Rapids community," said Thomas Ross, President and CEO, Grand River Aseptic Manufacturing, Inc., "We have been able to put together a team of highly-skilled, dedicated individuals, which has been critical to maintaining our reputation of providing excellent quality and service to our clients. We are thankful The Right Place and their partners at the MEDC and City of Grand Rapids made it possible for us to continue growing in West Michigan."

The company considered several other facilities in surrounding states before deciding on a third Grand Rapids location. The Right Place worked in collaboration with GRAM and the MEDC to ensure the company continued its growth in the region. The Right Place also connected GRAM to workforce development resources at West Michigan Works! to assist with worker training.

The MEDC is supporting the expansion effort with the approval of a $1,000,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant. The expansion will also be supported locally by a P.A. 198 tax abatement from the City of Grand Rapids.

"Grand River Aseptic Manufacturing serves as a high-quality option for clients with a growing need for these services," said Eric Icard, Senior Business Development Manager and project lead, "We continue to see the important role pharmaceutical manufacturing plays in the West Michigan economy, and this is a perfect example of the kind of growth opportunities this industry brings to our region."

City of Grand Rapids Managing Director of Economic Development Services, Kara Wood, is also thrilled with the company's choice to continue expanding in the City, "Grand River Aseptic Manufacturing's decision to develop a third facility in the City of Grand Rapids is a nod to the capabilities of our workforce, and the strong business environment that allows pharmaceutical manufacturing to thrive in our community," said Wood.

THE RIGHT PLACE
Advancing the West Michigan Economy

October 23, 2018

The Right Place assists local tech company with expansion

Today The Right Place, Inc., in collaboration with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the City of Grand Rapids, announced that DealerOn, Inc. will be expanding in the City of Grand Rapids. **This will result in the creation of at least 44 new jobs and a capital investment of $1.6 million over the next three years.**

DealerOn provides web platforms, managed social media services, SEO & SEM, lead generation tools, call tracking, and internet lead management for auto dealers. The company is headquartered in Maryland and has more than 200 employees nationwide, serves over 1900 dealerships, and has three office locations. DealerOn's Grand Rapids office is located at 601 5th St NW Suite 303 Grand Rapids, MI 49504, and currently has 25 employees.

DealerOn has recently experienced increased demand for its services, including a new contract with Ford Motor Company. This growth led them to choose Grand Rapids for the company's next phase of development.

"When we started exploring options for expanding our offices in Grand Rapids, Michigan, we were immediately impressed with the community's commitment and partnership with DealerOn," said Amir Amirrezvani, Co-Founder and Executive Vice President, DealerOn. "CopperRock Construction, The Right Place, and the MEDC were instrumental in bringing our ideas to fruition, and we are thrilled to be working with such excellent partners!"

The Right Place worked in collaboration with the company and MEDC to ensure DealerOn chose to expand in West Michigan. The Right Place also connected DealerOn with workforce development resources at West Michigan Works! to assist with recruitment and training.

The MEDC is supporting the expansion with the approval of a $300,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant.

"Automotive sales are increasingly moving into the ecommerce realm, and DealerOn's growth reflects this shift," said Jen Wangler, Business Development Manager, The Right Place, Inc. "DealerOn's decision to grow in Grand Rapids is indictive of the region's tech and automotive strength."

The City of Grand Rapids is supportive of DealerOn's plans to expand in the city. "We are pleased DealerOn has chosen the City of Grand Rapids for its next expansion," said Kara Wood, Managing Director of Economic Development Services, City of Grand Rapids. "We look forward to their continued success as they create jobs and tap into our community's growing technology workforce."

October 3, 2018

The Right Place attracts alloy development company to West Michigan

Today The Right Place, Inc., in collaboration with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the City of Kentwood, announced that Arcanum Alloys will be relocating from Silicon Valley to the City of Kentwood. **This will result in the creation of 25 new high-tech jobs and a capital investment of $693,000.**

Arcanum Alloys' patented technology generates revolutionary function and value by utilizing the most common metallurgical elements to create alloys whose properties at the surface and bulk are spatially segregated. The company produces 20-ton coils for some of the world's most well-known manufacturing companies.

Arcanum Alloys chose West Michigan over other competing locations to be closer to its production partner, suppliers, and manufacturing customers. This location will function as both a new headquarters and R&D center. The company will be locating at 4460 44th St. SE, Kentwood, MI 49512.

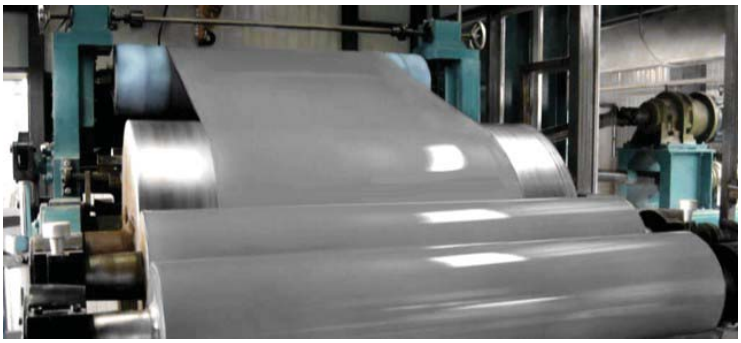
"Arcanum Alloys is looking forward to starting the next chapter of its growth story in the City of Kentwood," said Dan Bullard, CEO of Arcanum Alloys. "We're grateful for the support provided by The Right Place and their partners at the MEDC and City of Kentwood as we moved through this decision process."

The Right Place worked in collaboration with the company and MEDC to ensure Arcanum Alloys chose West Michigan. The Right Place also connected the company to workforce development resources at West Michigan Works! to assist with workforce recruitment and training.

The MEDC is supporting the relocation with the approval of a $162,500 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant.

"Arcanum Alloys' decision to move their headquarters from Silicon Valley to West Michigan reflects the strength of our region's high-tech talent pool and manufacturing supply chain," said Eric Icard, Senior Business Development Manager, The Right Place, Inc. "Our region's talented workforce combined with its strong advanced manufacturing base have made it a destination for innovative companies like Arcanum Alloys."

The City of Kentwood is supportive of Arcanum Alloys' plans to locate in the city.



"We are delighted Arcanum Alloys has chosen the City of Kentwood for their new headquarters," said Mayor Stephen Kepley, City of Kentwood. "We look forward to working with them as they grow and create high-tech jobs in our community."

THE RIGHT PLACE
Advancing the West Michigan Economy

Grand Rapids Rankings

We think Grand Rapids is one of the best places in the world to live and work. Thankfully, many unbiased sources agree with our opinion. Browse through the rankings below to learn more.

2019

- Top 10 Cities to Buy Affordable Homes on a $60k Salary - Grand Rapids, CNBC
- #5 - Top U.S. Growth Cities for 2018 - Grand Rapids/Wyoming, U-Haul
- #1 - Best City in Michigan - East Grand Rapids, USA Today
- #51 - Best Metro for STEM Professionals - Grand Rapids, WalletHub
- Top Up and Coming Cities in the U.S. in 2019 - Grand Rapids, Thrillist
- #10 - Annual International Housing Affordability Survey - Grand Rapids, Demographia

2018

- #26 - Best Metro in the U.S. for STEM Professionals - Grand Rapids, WalletHub
- #1 - Region for End-of-Life Care Quality - Grand Rapids, Washington Post
- #4 - Top Counties in Michigan for Manufacturing Jobs - Kent County, U.S Census Bureau
- #1 - Metro for Living a Balanced Lifestyle - Grand Rapids, MagnifyMoney
- #3 - Best Cities for First-Time Home Buyers - Grand Rapids, LendingTree
- #7 - Fastest Growing Economy in the U.S. - Grand Rapids, Forbes and Headlight Data
- #2 - Most Improved Metros for Percentage Growth in GRP - Grand Rapids, Headlight Data
- #2 - City for New Small Businesses - Grand Rapids, Lending Tree
- #5 - Best Places to Live in Michigan - East Grand Rapids, Niche
- #54 - Best Places to Live in the U.S. - East Grand Rapids, Niche
- #28 - Most Hipster City in the World - Grand Rapids, MoveHub
- #1 - Small City to Start a Business in the U.S. - Holland, WalletHub
- High-Performing City - Grand Rapids, Governing and Living Cities
- #13 - Best Large City to Start a Business - Grand Rapids, WalletHub
- #2 - Best Place to Make the Most of a Tight Budget - Grand Rapids, MagnifyMoney
- #6 - Smaller City Poised to Skyrocket - Grand Rapids, Realtor.com
- #10 - Best Cities to Start a Career - Grand Rapids, WalletHub
- #27 - America's Biggest Boomtowns - Grand Rapids, MagnifyMoney
- #1 - America's Hottest ZIP Code - Kentwood, 49508, Realtor.com
- #14 - Top 50 Best Destinations for Millennials in 2019, hometogo.com
- #2 - Top 10 Markets and Neighborhoods to watch in 2019, Trulia.com
- #49 - Comeback Cities: Declining Crime Across the U.S., SecurityChoice.com

2017

- #2 - Aerospace Manufacturing Attractiveness - Michigan, PricewaterhouseCoopers
- #1 - Fastest Growing U.S. Economy - Grand Rapids, HeadlightData.com
- #19 - Best Cities in the U.S. - Grand Rapids, US News.com
- #2 - Best Place to be a Millennial - Grand Rapids, Trulia.com
- #3 - Big Cities with the Healthiest Housing Markets - Grand Rapids, SmartAsset.com
- #4 - Housing Market to Watch - Grand Rapids, Trulia
- #5 - Best Large Cities to Start a Business - Grand Rapids, WalletHub
- #9 - Hottest Hipster Markets in the U.S. - Grand Rapids, Realtor.com and Yelp
- #3 - Hottest Housing Markets in the U.S. - Kentwood, Realtor.com
- #5 - America's Most Underrated Cities - Grand Rapids, Travel + Leisure
- #1 - Housing Market in the Nation - Grand Rapids, Trulia

DeVos Place Convention Center