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Kent County Board of Commissioners Approve Three Strategic Capital Improvement Projects *Nearly \$18.7 million Appropriated to Enhance Access to County Services and Address Operational Needs*

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (Jan. 23, 2020) – The Kent County Board of Commissioners today approved nearly \$18.7 million for three strategic capital funding projects to address the growing needs of the community. The projects include:

- \$12.5 million for the development of a North County Campus,
- \$2.68 million for a Parks Department office, and
- \$3.5 million for a fleet facility

The funding for these projects was allocated from the County’s Capital Improvement Program Fund. The fund was established in 2015 to reserve funding for future capital needs and to reduce the size of debt associated with large capital projects.

“I am very proud we were able to address the needs of the community and offer better, more efficient services without the need to issue bonds.” said Kent County Board of Commissioners Chair Mandy Bolter. “Our fiscal team has been very responsible with taxpayer dollars over the years so we could make that possible. These projects wisely invest taxpayer dollars in areas that will not only improve access to County services but prepare our infrastructure for the future.”

The new North County Campus will be located on 14 acres of County-owned property at 17 Mile Road NE near US-131. The site’s conceptual master site plan includes a full-service sub-station for the Sheriff’s Office, a clinic for the Health Department, and additional space for other County services as needed. This new shared facility will improve response times by the Sheriff’s Office and increase access to services in northern Kent County.

“By consolidating and upgrading our facilities and operations, we are focusing on the County’s quality of life and addressing long-awaited projects to better serve our residents now and into the future,” said Kent County Administrator Wayman Britt.

The Board also addressed another essential operational project by appropriating funding for a new office for the Parks Department. Currently, the offices are located in modular facilities near Millennium Park. Initial design challenges and the economic recession delayed the development of a permanent Parks Department office; however, the Board felt it was important to create a new, permanent setting for employees and for residents to access park services. The new office will be located in the same vicinity as the current facility.

“Our parks system is a true gem for the region, and we are committed to making it more accessible for families and visitors and more functional for our employees,” said Bolter.

Last, the Board addressed a crucial business need by funding a larger and more modern fleet facility for the repair and maintenance of County vehicles. When the original facility was constructed, it serviced 35 vehicles, and today it maintains more than 290. The location for the new 16,100 square foot facility will be located on the County’s Fuller Campus and will increase the efficiency of maintenance operations and address the physical limitations and safety issues associated with the current facility.

The Kent County Building Authority will assume project management responsibility for these initiatives. All projects are scheduled to immediately commence with architectural and engineering services and the projected timeline for the North County Campus is twenty-four months; fifteen months for the Parks Department office; and eighteen months for the fleet facility. Design renderings are currently unavailable for these projects.

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