



For Immediate Release

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City of Kentwood's Economic Growth Continues to Climb with Historic Rates in 2018 and 2019

Kentwood, Michigan, Feb. 12, 2020 – The City of Kentwood's year-end permitted construction values remained strong in 2019, totaling \$107 million with 12 private projects across several different industries exceeding \$1 million.

While Kentwood's strong retail presence continued to grow in 2019, particularly with the redevelopment of Woodland Mall, Kentwood has expanded in other industries. Projects spanning the residential, hospitality, healthcare services, financial, food processing and automobile industries have added to the City's portfolio of diverse trades in the past year, and are estimated to create at least 920 new jobs.

The year-end values come on the heels of Kentwood's record-setting 2018, which saw more than \$125 million in total construction values with 24 private projects exceeding \$1 million in investment. While the number of permits processed has remained steady for the last three years, construction value has grown due to the size of projects that have been coming to Kentwood.

"After a record year in 2018, it is very encouraging to see economic development continue to grow at such robust rates in 2019," said Mayor Stephen Kepley. "Kentwood remains 'Open for Business,' which is our commitment to be a help and not a hindrance for those looking to invest and grow in West Michigan.

"Our corporate culture and commitment to excellent customer service are reasons why the City of Kentwood is one of Michigan's prime destinations for businesses looking to locate or expand."

Larger [private development projects](#) with permitted construction value exceeding \$1 million in 2019 included:

- Roskam Freezer Expansion - \$14.3 million
- Trinity Health Renovations - \$7.3 million
- Bretonfield Phase II - \$5.8 million
- Dermatology Associates of Michigan - \$5.5 million
- Patterson Office Buildout - \$5.5 million

An estimated total of \$83 million was invested in new commercial development, commercial additions/remodels and industrial development.

The City's Economic Development Coordinator, Lisa Golder, who serves as a liaison between the government and business community, attributes growth in part to Kentwood's business-friendly policies, partnerships and financial support opportunities.

"Our streamlined development process focuses on results, not red tape," Golder said. "When coupled with excellent customer service and access to resources and incentives, such as tax abatements and loan programs, I think more companies are seeing that doing business in Kentwood makes sound financial sense."

Last year marked the first time the City of Kentwood surpassed the \$100 million threshold in consecutive years. The City's first time having a year's total permitted construction values exceed \$100 million was in 2018.

Tim Bradshaw, the City's director of Engineering and Inspections, notes the steady increase could be a result of a variety of reasons, including Kentwood's strategic location, diversity in the population, industries and available property, and quality infrastructure.

"Kentwood offers an ease of doing business due to its central location, access to many modes of transportation and one of the highest-rated major street network in Kent County," Bradshaw said. "With close proximity to the Gerald R. Ford International Airport, major highways and public transportation, Kentwood serves as an intersection to many West Michigan communities."

Bradshaw also says the City's in-house engineering and inspection services, including drain maintenance, plan review and business inspections, provides businesses with access to all necessary information and expert support to complete construction projects.

Additionally, the City of Kentwood has an active [Economic Development Corporation](#) comprised of local business owners that provide policy guidance to the City.

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