



**For Immediate Release**

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## **City of Kentwood Welcomes New Director of Engineering and Inspections *James Kirkwood, P.E. Brings 31 Years of Civil Engineering Experience to the Role***

**Kentwood, Michigan, Feb. 25, 2021** – The City of Kentwood has welcomed longtime civil engineer James Kirkwood, a state licensed professional engineer, as its new director of engineering and inspections.

In his new role, Kirkwood will oversee the City’s Engineering and Inspections departments, ensuring accurate review of all Kentwood projects and developments and supporting customers with all the information they need to successfully complete their construction project. Kirkwood will start March 1.

“We are pleased to welcome Jim to our Kentwood team,” Mayor Stephen Kepley said. “He brings tremendous experience and knowledge to this role, and his commitment to collaboration and customer service will help us maintain an open for business culture and attract new projects. We look forward to his leadership as we continue to make infrastructure improvements across the city.”

The Engineering Department is responsible for the engineering review of all Kentwood projects and developments. This includes drainage, public utilities, floodplains, sewer and water in streets, stormwater control, sidewalks and public ways.

Kirkwood also will oversee the development of engineering options for City infrastructure improvements, administer professional service contracts for Engineering Department projects and activities and provide technical oversight and inspections to ensure all work follows contract specifications and applicable codes and standards.

A professional engineer, Kirkwood has 31 years of experience as a civil engineering consultant designing municipal public works projects — all with local engineering firm Prein&Newhof. This includes land development, road and highway design, public utility design and stormwater management design.

Prior to joining the City, Kirkwood served as a project manager, project engineer and construction engineer for various types of projects. He most recently oversaw the design and construction of a \$42 million project in Sanilac County on the shores of Lake Huron that included 150,000 feet of sanitary sewer and force main, eight pump stations and a lagoon treatment facility.

Kirkwood partnered with many local architecture firms to design the infrastructure for some of Grand Rapids’ larger and more high-profile projects, including Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital, the Kent County Courthouse, Grand Valley State University’s Richard M. DeVos Center and Cook-

DeVos Center for Health Sciences. He also oversaw the construction design for large drain projects in Kent and Ottawa counties that were successful in alleviating flooding on developed property.

“After three decades of working in private practice as a consultant, I am looking forward to the new challenges I will encounter as a guardian of Kentwood’s public infrastructure,” Kirkwood said. “I will now be able to experience the other side of the owner-consultant relationship.”

Active professionally and in the community, Kirkwood is a member of the Michigan Society of Professional Engineers. He previously served as its treasurer and as president of its Western Chapter. He also is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Notre Dame Club of Grand Rapids, previously serving as its president. He is a former member of the University of Notre Dame Alumni Association’s Board of Directors. He received the Michigan Society of Professional Engineers-Western Chapter’s Young Engineer of the Year award in 2000.

Kirkwood received a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering degree from the University of Notre Dame and a Master of Management degree from Aquinas College.

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