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Kent County Website Gets Redesigned for Easier Use

GRAND RAPIDS - Kent County's website accessKent.com had more than 2.2 million visits recorded in 2016, logging nearly 300,000 online transactions (a 21 percent increase from 2015). Today, accessKent has a new look and more convenient design. The new homepage features images promoting various parts of Kent County – from city to suburban to rural communities – and highlights some of the great lists where the County has landed in top spots. The redesign simplifies site navigation, providing a search bar where users can immediately request the page they need. Designers added Google Translate to assist Spanish-speaking residents and enhancements for users who are visually-impaired.

The site continues to use technology that reacts to the size of the device being used, adjusting content to fit on smart phones and tablets. "People are accessing services on devices such as smart phones more and more, so our goal is to be user-friendly anywhere, anytime," said Daryl Delabbio, Kent County Administrator/ Controller. "I personally compared our site to other websites in Michigan counties and cities, and while accessKent has always been one of the best, this redesign is impressive and intuitive, providing excellent customer service in a timely manner."

The vendor for accessKent.com devoted a great deal of time and research into the redesign. "My staff looked at the top governmental and institutional websites in the country for influence and inspiration," said JoAnn Arcand, President of WebTecs, Inc. "We wanted to create a model based on what has proven to be successful and simple in communities like ours. I'm proud of our work to re-create accessKent." Some of the services offered include:

- Court Records Searches & Payments
- Deeds and Property Look-up
- Friend of the Court
- Certified Vital Records and Marriage License Requests
- Inmate Look-up
- Dog Licensing
- Restaurant Inspection Reports
- Human Resources/Applications for Employment

"This website is the forward face of Kent County to those looking to locate their businesses here as well as companies already located here in the County," said Rick Chapla, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives at The Right Place and member of the Enhanced Access Board which provides direction and recommendations for the accessKent.com site. "In an era of instant access to information and commerce, this new redesign will make it easier, quicker, and more convenient for businesses to engage with Kent County. It will be a business-friendly tool that will provide the information a business wants, when they want it."

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