
ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 17, 2015

For additional information contact:

Lisa LaPlante at (616) 632-7567 or Lisa.LaPlante@kentcountymi.gov

Major Donations, Collaborations Help Expand and Develop Parks

GRAND RAPIDS – Several donations and grants will help Kent County Parks expand and develop in the coming year. Ambassador and Kent County Parks supporter Peter Secchia pledged an additional \$500,000 to the Meadows at Millennium Park. The pledge illustrates Ambassador Secchia's long history of support, dedication and philanthropy for Kent County Parks.

In August 2015, the Board approved an agreement with the Secchia Family Limited Partnership to finance approximately \$3 million in improvements to the Meadows area of Millennium Park. Subsequently, the high demand for construction projects led to higher-than-expected bids that exceeded the estimated budget for the project. Over the past several months County staff has worked to redesign and re-bid certain elements. In addition, Mr. Secchia agreed to contribute an additional \$500,000 to the project to maintain the scope of the project and design standards of the Park. "This project exemplifies the spirit of collaboration and philanthropy, and is yet another model of the private-public partnerships that make Kent County great," said Board Chair Dan Koorndyk. "We have a true gem in the County because of the Secchia Family. We can't thank them enough for all they've done to make Millennium Park a wonderful place for future generations to enjoy."

The Board also approved \$200,000 for The Meadows project in the 2016 CIP budget. "This Board is appreciative of the generosity of the Secchia Family," added Daryl Delabbio, Kent County Administrator/Controller. "Their commitment to our community keeps our County a great place to live, work and play."

Also this morning, the Board approved the purchase of 170 acres to expand the future Two Rivers Park in Caledonia Township, where the Thornapple and Coldwater Rivers meet. The purchase, which totals just under \$1.3 million, was done in collaboration with the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, which was awarded in 2014, and several local partners including the Kent County Parks Foundation, Caledonia Township, the Wege Foundation and the Peter C. and Emajean Cook Foundation.

The Board also approved an agreement with Paul and Mary Jo Drueke for a permanent easement of land alongside of the future park. This 20-foot wide strip of land approximately 2,200 feet long lies between current County-owned land and the new acquisition. This easement allows Parks Department staff and park users to cross the property.

"These sites allow us to expand and diversify recreational opportunities and is consistent with the Kent County Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas Master Plan," said Chair Koorndyk. "It also shows the great collaborative relationship we have between the County, Caledonia Township, the State and Kent County Parks Foundation."

###