



**KENT COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC WORKS**

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Kent County Department of Public Works issues RFI for Sustainable Business Park

*Businesses, organizations, developers from across the country
encouraged to submit information for consideration by the county*

Grand Rapids, MI – The **Kent County Department of Public Works** (DPW) announced today it has issued a Request For Information (RFI) for potential future tenants and complementary technologies for the Sustainable Business Park planned on 200 acres adjacent to the South Kent Landfill in Byron Center. The RFI is a key step in identifying companies that want to be part of the Sustainable Business Park and included as part of the master planning process that will determine the necessary improvements, costs, funding sources and implementation schedule for the project.

“We set a bold goal of diverting 90 percent of trash from the South Kent Landfill by 2030, and building the Sustainable Business Park is essential to reaching that goal,” said **Dar Baas**, director of the Kent County DPW. “We are sending a Request for Information to organizations, businesses, technology developers, startups and non-profits across the country to inform our Master Plan and continue progress toward our economic and environmental goals and advance our vision for a Circular Economy.”

The RFI asks companies that may want to develop a project in the Sustainable Business Park to present qualifications and their innovative waste processing and conversion technologies. Any technology or equipment suppliers, project developers, technology developers and end-market users that desire to design, build, finance, own or operate facilities in the Sustainable Business Park should apply.

The deadline for responding to the RFI is April 26. The RFI includes an opportunity for interested parties to participate in a live teleconference on March 28 to ask questions about the process and project, which will be followed by a tour of existing DPW facilities and the site of the future Sustainable Business Park. After the response period closes, a stakeholder review committee made up of local officials, businesses, non-profits, developers and citizens will

review responses and include information from selected respondents in the Park's Master Plan. Waste management consultant **Gershman, Brickner & Bratton, Inc.** is leading the project for the DPW.

"We anticipate responses from a wide variety of businesses, organizations and developers working in waste recovery and related industries and look forward to their input," said **Jennifer Porter**, senior project manager for Gershman, Brickner & Bratton, Inc. "The proximity of the Sustainable Business Park to the South Kent Landfill means it is positioned to host a variety of complementary businesses that could convert waste materials into usable products, like fuel pellets, plastic beads, textiles and more."

According to an annual report by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Kent County had a steady increase in the amount of waste buried in landfills over the past year. Waste buried in landfills increased from 1.8 million cubic yards in 2016 to 2.1 million cubic yards in 2017. Building a Sustainable Business Park to transition away from landfilling is Kent County DPW's solution to decreasing the growing amount of solid waste buried in landfills. Kent County DPW processes over 1 billion pounds of waste each year and estimates 75 percent of that waste could be reused, recycled or converted. Currently, only 6-8 percent of waste is recycled.

"Instead of increasing the amount of trash buried in landfills each year, we should be looking at alternatives to landfilling waste, and the Kent County DPW's Sustainable Business Park is a step in the right direction toward doing just that," said **Rick Chapla**, vice president of strategic initiatives at **The Right Place**. "Rather than sticking with old, outdated practices for waste management, the Kent County DPW is taking a new, innovative approach to economic development in our region and The Right Place looks forward to partnering on this project."

For more information about the Sustainable Business Park visit www.reimagnetrash.org, or to view the RFI, click on "Bid Opportunities" at www.accesskent.com/purchasing.

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