



**For Immediate Release**

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## Ford International Airport Celebrates Grand Opening of New Operations Center

**Grand Rapids, Michigan, October 13, 2022** – The Gerald R. Ford International Airport celebrated the completion and opening of its new operations center which will consolidate key teams such as operations and communications; including a new emergency operations center (EOC).

The EOC is activated during an emergency at the Ford International Airport, supporting tenants and mutual aid agencies in Kent County.

The facility is accessible air-side and public-side, making it ideal to provide daily operations support and reachable during an emergency. In a second phase, the Ford International Airport plans to expand the center to include its fire department at the site.

“The Ford International Airport’s new operations center offers state-of-the-art technology to support the Airport, tenants and mutual aid agencies in Kent County,” said Lisa Carr, public safety & operations director for the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority. “Our team is thrilled with the features and security that this space will provide for our operations.”

The user-friendly building is staffed 24/7 and is built to withstand extreme weather conditions, including winds up to 250 miles-per-hour. It is equipped with purposeful redundancies in technologies and communication channels to ensure services continue during an emergency. A heated parking bay ensures that vehicles stay out of the elements and snow-free.

To accommodate increasing passenger demand, this building provides the Ford International Airport Authority team with a larger space to best perform the necessary functions of airport operations. A video wall displays important resources, such as current NOTAMs, flight tracking, flight arrival and departure times, and security cameras.

Special attention has been given to creating a space that is both functional and pleasant to work in. The facility includes a data center, video walls and special document review spaces, as well as an inviting office, conference and break spaces. The operations center is well-equipped for conducting training, working independently during times of shift overlap, and reviewing design plans and construction documents.

With two fully functional consoles, communications specialists can easily dispatch police, fire, maintenance and janitorial teams and utilize color-coded display lights to indicate to other team members when someone has an emergency call in progress.

“Having an Emergency Operations Center at the Airport will improve the quality and timeliness of the response to an emergency and reduce recovery time,” Kent County Emergency Management Coordinator Matt Groesser said. “This Emergency Operations Center plays a critical role by also providing a secure space for other community emergency management functions such as a Joint Information Center (JIC) or a Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) group to plan and lead other components of emergency operations.”

DLZ of Michigan served as the project architect, with Pioneer Construction of Grand Rapids as the general contractor. They were supported by Buist Electric, Burggrabe Masonry Inc., Cripps Fontaine Excavating Inc., CS Erickson, Evans, Forman Glass, Gale Plumbing & Hydronics Inc., Grand Valley Automation Inc., Harder & Warner, Kosters & De Vries Inc., Level 5 Commercial Finishing, Metal Tech Building Specialists, Parkway, Peter Basso Associates, Praise Companies Inc., Prein & Newhof, SecurAlarm, VanLaan Concrete Construction, Van Dyken Mechanical, Van Dellen Steel, Versatile Roofing Systems, Tele-Rad Inc., Total Fire Protection and Westmaas Electric. The building was furnished by Haworth through Interphase.

“Thank you to the many partners who had a hand in this process,” said Tory Richardson, Ford International Airport Authority president and CEO. “Seeing the finished building is an exciting next step in the future advancements at the Ford International Airport so that we can best serve West Michigan and beyond.”