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U-M Regents OK projects
At its meeting last month the University of Michigan Board of Regents made decisions affecting four projects involving approximately \$75.4 million in construction, including a \$52 million expansion of Crisler Arena.

The additions to the arena are to total about 63,000 square feet. There are to be new entrances built, a private club area, new ticketing spaces, and new retail space.

In addition to the expansion, 54,000-square-foot of existing space is to be renovated to accommodate accessible seats, improve visitor circulation, and increase the number of concessions areas and restrooms. Construction is slated for completion in the winter of 2014. The regents approved the project's schematic designs.

Other decisions made by the regents included:

- Voting an approval to proceed with a \$13.7 million renovation of North Campus Research Complex Building 16 for Health Services Research. The project involves improvements to five above grade floors totaling 120,000 square feet, as well as three below grade conference rooms and a fitness center.
- An approval to proceed with a \$4.9 million replacement of the Radiation Oncology Simulator at the University of Michigan Hospital.
- An approval to proceed with a \$4.5 million computed tomography angiography (CTA) project at the University of Michigan hospital. Placement of the new equipment will require the renovation of two existing radiology rooms totaling approximately 1,400 square feet.

GM mulls new paint plant
Plans for a new General Motors Corp. paint plant have been disclosed in Flint. The estimated \$418 million facility is to be built next to the Flint Truck Assembly Plant and be fully operational in late 2013 or early 2014.

The Flint City Council was slated to consider a resolution to hold a June 13 public hearing on GM's request to changes to a brownfield plan to back the development. The brownfield plan originally was for an engine plant the firm had planned for the Chevrolet Volt, but abandoned.

According to documents obtained from the city of Flint, the new paint plant is to encompass 80,000 square feet. Plans envision \$112 million to be spent on construction and \$293.3 million for machinery and equipment.

GM has acknowledged its request for changes to its brownfield plan but, in a statement, said it was still weighing the business case for the plant and had yet to reach a decision.

Onesida parts plant eyed
Last month the Onesida Township Board of Trustees approved the establishment of an Industrial Development District in support of a plan to convert an empty warehouse into an industrial building.

L&W Inc., Belleville, wants to use the former Montgomery Wards distribution center building on Onesida Road to convert it into a manufacturing plant that could begin operation after January 2012. According to the company an investment of \$10.5 million in building renovations and adaptations, as well as for machinery, will be required.

When operational the plant is expected to employ up to 100 workers make automotive dashboards, cowl, and related parts for GM. Reportedly they are to be used in Cadillacs produced by GM's Lansing Assembly Plant.

Carpenter named to airport panel
Last month, Robert Ficano, the Wayne County executive, announced the appointment of Mike Jackson, head of the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters & Millwrights, to serve on the Wayne County Airport Authority.

The seven member board operates Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport and Willow Run Airport. Jackson was appointed to a six-year term.

Jackson represents more than 20,000 carpenters and millwrights in Michigan. He was elected to the position of executive secretary-treasurer — the union's highest state office — in 2009.

With more than 30 million passengers each year, the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport is one of the busiest airports in the U.S.

Livingston Co. to start EMS work
According to a Livingston County official, a July groundbreaking may be possible for a proposed \$5.5 million headquarters facility for the county's Emergency Medical Services.

Jeff Boyd, director of Livingston County EMS, said the 80,000-square-foot structure may be ready for occupancy in the fall of 2012. In addition to the EMS space is to be provided for a University of Michigan Survival Flight medical helicopter.

The structure is to be built on a 10-acre site on Jolley Road, north of M-59 and adjacent to the Spencer J. Hardy Airport.

Keweenaw building surveyed
Preliminary studies are underway regarding the current condition and possible renovation of the historic Keweenaw County Courthouse in Eagle River.

Last month the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners received a report from representatives from the Hancock office of OHM Architects, Engineers, Planners, who had recently toured the structure. The building was original erected in 1866 and remodeled to its current appearance in 1925.

Deterioration has been noticed on the west side of the building along with some roofing problems. The building sits on 4th Street in Eagle River and is considered the oldest county courthouse in Michigan. It's noteworthy for a portico of Doric columns with fillets and bases, pedimented side dormers, and a gambrel roof line with a modillioned cornice and bracketed eaves.

The building's first floor is used for county offices although the courtroom is rarely used. Next to it stands the Keweenaw County Sheriff's Residence.

Freemont digester ready
Last month, Novi Energy LLC announced it had closed on financing for the \$22 million Freemont Community Digester (PCD) power project and had appointed a contractor. Construction is to get under way soon with commercial operation slated for the summer of 2012.

Hired as engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contractor was DeMaria Building Company of Novi. The complete mix anaerobic digester is being designed to process approximately 100,000 tons per year of organic waste and agricultural waste into methane which will be used to generate approximately three megawatts of renewable electricity. The power will be sold to Consumers Energy under a long-term contract. The plant will also produce dilute liquid fertilizer and compost for purchase.

To supply the digester the project has signed feedstock supply contracts with Fremont-based Gerber Products Company and several other major regional food processors and agricultural operations.

Wyandotte eyes pollution work
Responding to action by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the city of Wyandotte last week disclosed plans for a \$10 million bag house to be added to its coal fired power plant within the next three years.

The facility, located near Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital, is operated by Wyandotte Municipal Services and has been receiving notices of air quality violations from the EPA since 2007. Todd Drysdale, city administrator for Wyandotte, said the city is expecting to sell bonds to finance the bag house, which is used to collect particulates from the plant's exhaust.

