**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**September 12, 2019**

**TOWN OF MOUNT OLIVE REFLECTS ON OVER A DECADE OF INFRASTRUCTURE WORK**

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**Over the past 12 years, the Town of Mount Olive has been committed to working to improve infrastructure conditions in the Southeastern part of the Town. In 2006, the Town completed a $445,000 project funded by the North Carolina Rural Center to replace aging sewer lines on Andrews Circle and on East Main Street from Center Street to Church Street.**

**Also in 2006, the Town completed a Community Development Block Grant project to replace sewer lines on Hillsboro Street and Gordon Street. A dilapidated house at the corner of Hillsboro and Cobb Street was replaced with a new modular home. The Town provided two lots on Hillsboro Street for two new Habitat for Humanity homes. The total cost of this project was $595,000.00.**

**In that same year, the Town was able to obtain a Community Development Block Grant for $75,000 to connect residents who were still on septic tank to Town sewer. This project primarily affected Franklin Street.**

**The Town continued to work on infrastructure in the Southern part of Town when the Phase 4 sewer project was initiated in 2008. This $2,450,500 project replaced sewer lines and manholes on Jefferson, Fleer, South Center and South Church Street. This USDA funded project was satisfactorily completed in 2009.**

**In 2014, a water line and fire hydrant replacement project was undertaken involving Granger Place, Southwest Center Street, County Road, King Drive, Oliver Street and Hillsboro Street. Fifty fire hydrants in that area were replaced with new hydrants to provide better fire protection for residents. This project was funded through the USDA with a total cost of $1,053,375.**

**The engineering firm of WK Dixon was contracted in 2015 to do an assessment of the Town’s sewer system in Southeastern Mount Olive. This $81,000 study was funded by the Town and resulted in a find and fix program that was successful in reducing inflow and infiltration into the Town’s sewer collection system by almost 400,000 gallons per day.**

**Four years later, it became necessary to replace old outdated sewer pump stations. Those pump stations on County Road, Franklin Street, Church Street and Cleveland Drive were replaced with state of the art pump stations with 24/7 telemetry to alert wastewater collection personnel at any time day or night if problems occurred with the stations. This $1,509,818 project was funded by a Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant. This project eliminated potential environmental issues with new equipment and immediate notification to staff of any problems.**

**The County of Wayne deeded the old Carver School site to the Town of Mount Olive in 2017. Recognizing the importance of the Carver site to Southern Mount Olive, the Town formed The Carver Cultural Center Steering Committee and renamed the site as “Carver Cultural Center”. The steering committee included representatives from Carver Alumni, Men of FIC, WAGES, ADLA, Mount Olive Parks and Recreation and Town Management. The Town was able to obtain a $500,000 Community Development Block Grant to do badly needed work on the cafeteria, gym, the former media center and both classroom buildings. Carver Cultural Center now serves the community with a food bank, soup kitchen, parks and recreation center, after school care and education for children in the area. On July 26, 2016, George Sherrill, Director, CDBG Programs for NC Rural Development notified the Town that the grant award had been expended the full amount of the grant award. The Center is also is the location of Danny King’s ADLA (A Lot of Direction, Love and Affection) program, which teaches culinary arts and provides a valuable catering service to the community. A $500,000 Disaster Recovery Community Development Block Grant has been approved to make the gym at this site into a permanent disaster shelter and to do additional improvements at the center.**

**The Town hired a contractor in 2015 at a cost of $50,000 to rework drainage ditches in the area of Nelson and Maple Streets.**

**Continuing infrastructure work to benefit the Southern part of Town, a Community Development Block Grant funded project was undertaken to replace water and sewer lines on Fleer, Williamson, and Kelly Streets. This project cost a total of $1,476,279 and was completed in October 2018.**

**The Town of Mount Olive paid $25,000 for a drainage study of Southeastern Mount Olive by AECOM engineers, one of the world’s largest engineering firms and experts in hydrological engineering. The study made five recommendations. Recommendation number one was to dredge channels parallel to the railroad track and cleanout pipes on South Center Street near Maple and Kornegay Streets. The Town has completed this $44,900 project. The second recommendation was to install a 48-inch culvert under the CSX railroad on South Center near Kornegay Street. The estimated cost of this alternative is $176,000 and requires an encroachment agreement from CSX Railroad. The railroad has been contacted but has not agreed to allow the work to be done. Another recommendation was to reconnect a 24-inch pipe under Southwest Center Street to a structure south of the warehouse on Maple Street. This $56,500 project has been completed by the Town. The study also recommended another 48-inch culvert under the CSX track, but again this $563,000 project will require CSX Railroad permission and they have yet to grant it. The other alternative recommended by this study was to refill drainage ditches in Southeast Mount Olive to provide positive drainage for the channels. The Town has not been able to allocate the $74,300 to fund this project.**

**The Town has completed a $40,000 pedestrian and bike study to facilitate the construction of a sidewalk from the intersection of Franklin and South Church Street along South Church to Nelson Street and on to Hillsboro Street then turning West along Hillsboro Street to South Center Street. The Town is currently in the process of receiving engineering bids for this project, which can be funded by Powell Bill Funds.**

**A $254,000 water and wastewater asset inventory and assessment of all water and wastewater infrastructure has been funded by the Division of Water Infrastructure and was completed this year. This study gives the Town the ability to locate and address any issues with the water or wastewater system anywhere in Town.**

**In summary, the Town of Mount Olive has spent just over $8,600,000 on infrastructure work primarily in the Southeastern area of Town in the past 12 years. This work has included water and wastewater infrastructure as well as drainage work recommended by an engineering study. Much work remains to be done. Many needs are still unmet, the Town’s wastewater treatment plant needs $5,500,000 to fund needed repairs resulting from poor design and construction of a plant expansion in 2002. The Town has managed to get these funds included in the 2019-2020 State budget. This project will benefit the entire town and allow for residential and commercial expansion, which is badly needed for job creation. The Town of Mount Olive will continue to work to secure funding to allow work to continue on infrastructure and drainage systems just as it has done successfully in the past.**