

planning Kent's future



The eclectic mix of music, arts, natural beauty, historic downtown, Kent State University, and an international business presence is a hallmark of the Kent community.

Community building is a cornerstone of Kent's heritage that is continued through strategic planning and visioning that takes today's dreams and transforms them into the community projects of tomorrow.

Our Mission: In partnership with the community, the City provides public services that strive to make Kent the city of choice in northeast Ohio for residents, businesses and students seeking to connect to their community in a personally meaningful and enriching way.

Mayor and Members of City Council

Jerry Fiala, Mayor & President of Council

- Ward 1 Garret Ferrara
- Ward 2 Jack Amrhein
- Ward 3 Wayne A. Wilson
- Ward 4 John M. Kuhar
- Ward 5 Heidi L. Shaffer
- Ward 6 Tracy Wallach

Council At Large

- Michael Deleone
- Roger Sidoti
- Robin G. Turner

City Service Values

- Quality* matters in everything we do.
- Professional* and courteous service.
- Productive* use of resources.
- Ethical*, honest and fair.
- Innovative* and creative solutions.

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Kent, Ohio 44240

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A web site has been created to make sure everyone has access to information on the City's Strategic Plans.

www.KENT360.com

click on the "City Strategic Plan" under Kent City Management.

2012 City Strategy Update



Great Quality of Life,
Job Growth,
Recreational Sports,
Cultural Programs, and
Community Pride ...
...don't just happen.

They are the product of
good planning, meaningful
citizen input and hard work.

That's what strategic
planning is all about.

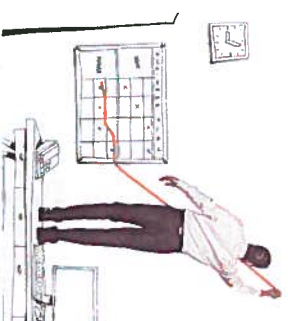
the kent community uncommonly good together



Strategy Matters

Strategic planning is a way for our community to work together to figure out where we want to go, what paths we think can take us there, and how we'll know when we've arrived.

It's a customized process that we use to inventory assets, resources, conditions and opportunities, and integrate them into a winning formula for Kent. There are no right or wrong answers in strategic planning, just different directions unique to our community.



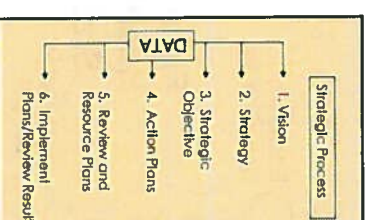
The measure of success is not in the complexity of the plan but in its fit and ability to be put to work. This isn't planning for planning sake; it's **planning with the purpose** of getting something done. Getting things done depends upon rallying local resources and community leadership for the common purpose of the future of our home town. A good strategic plan does that.

Strategic planning starts with our mission, vision and values. From there, as a community we set goals and identify strategies that we think can achieve those goals. The City staff then develops action plans (who will do what and when) to implement those strategies, and lastly the City Council funds those action plans (people and dollars) through the annual budget process.

Strategy Priorities

As a result of hundreds of hours of community meetings, Council meetings and survey data, the community has set the following broad strategic priorities for Kent:

- **Financial Health and Economic Development**
"to be a prosperous and livable city for all citizens"
- **Natural Resources**
"to protect and promote the City's natural resources"
- **Quality of Life**
"to enhance lifestyle choices through physical and social environment"
- **Community Safety**
"to be an exceptionally safe city"
- **Communities within the City**
"to strengthen the quality and enhance the value of neighborhoods"
- **City / University Synergy**
"expand collaborative opportunities that enrich the community experience"
- **Governmental Performance**
"to provide the best services at the lowest cost"



Strategic Intent

Being strategic is as much about choosing what not to do as it is choosing what to do. With so many diverse public services our mission can be a mile wide – which means we have to work extra hard to stay focused, fight against mission creep, and make sure everything we do is aligned with the goals of our community all of the time.

Aiming and sustaining the path towards our true north isn't easy. Not a day goes by where our alignment isn't challenged by unforeseen circumstances. We struggle with learning how to say no to good opportunities that may not be the best fit with our immediate strategic objectives.

Most people understand that trying to do everything for everyone is the fastest way to get nothing done but that level of strategic discipline is tough to muster in public service. Who are you going to say no to? To some extent, everything is important to someone, but we have to use our strategic plan as a filter to keep focused only on what's most important. It's a tool for us to **manage** our way towards progress rather than relying on dreaming and hoping for the best.

Planning Ahead

Someday, Tomorrow, and Eventually are the worst times to start planning – and that's why we make sure planning is a part of what we do everyday.

Everyday planning requires disciplined thought to plan the work and disciplined action to work the plan. Achieving this level of discipline takes practice – it's not a special session at an annual retreat, it's a year-round job.

Planning is not about predicting the future; it's about preparing for the future. It's having a strategy for all seasons. It's contingencies, options and back-up plans for when the real world doesn't follow the script. It's believing that the best way to survive a crisis is to avoid it altogether. It's imagining a better future and making it happen.

Our Promise

We promise to be ready for the future and to learn from our past. We promise to focus on our core services to meet whatever needs lie ahead. We promise to be flexible and adjust to changing conditions. We promise to do all we can to improve productivity and position ourselves for sustained excellence. That's our **promise to Kent**.

Living up to this promise will not be easy. It means reconciling future and present needs, balancing fiscal pressures, and protecting the public welfare – all the while maintaining the public trust. With nothing short of our future at stake we plan to rise to meet these challenges each and everyday.

Dave Ruller, City Manager

Strategy Schedule	
January	Previous Year End Review and Analysis
March	Strategic Planning Updates
July	Public Priorities and Goal Setting for Annual Budget
Monthly	City Council Activity Reports
On-Line	Strategic Planning Resources and Updates

2011 Strategic Activity Report Card

2011 ACTIONS

2011 ACTIONS

- Who's Your Mama Event
- Heritage Festival
- Downtown Cider Festival
- Downtown Ghost Walk
- Halloween Family Festival
- Festival of Lights
- St. Pels Day
- Earth Day Event Street Permit
- Celebrate Kent Grant Awards
- Main Street Kent Renewal
- Adopt a Spot Flowers Program
- Façade Grants Program
- Farmers Market with music (and indoors)
- Downtown Toy Drive, Art Walk
- Annual Wine and Art Fest (10/3)
- Old Hotel Purchased and Re-sold
- Acorn Alley II Construction and Opening
- Wild Earth Outfitters Opened
- Robin Hood Private Demolition
- Discover Kent KSU Orientation
- City Leased Railroad Parking
- Bent Tree Coffee Shop Opens
- Downtown Project Ground Breaking
- LaZiza's Restaurant Opens
- Soup Works Opens
- Alley 4 Reconstruction Ongoing
- Davey Tree/Ametek Sign 15 Year Leases
- Alumni Foundation \$15 Million Hotel Investment
- Esplanade Agreements Signed

- \$250,000 in Employee Initiated Cuts and Savings
- Kent Twitter Site for Information Sharing
- Kent Facebook Page for Information Sharing
- On-Line Citizen Action Center
- Council Activity Quarterly Reports
- On-Line Capital Projects Status Page
- Pending List Update and Review
- New Kent Police Web Site
- New Destination Kent Marketing Web Site
- Re-bid City Banking Services Contract
- Re-Apparitioned City Wards
- 1st Citizen Police Academy
- Expanded RITA Services For Collections

OBJECTIVES

Customer & Results Focus

Fair Standard of Living

- Promoted Prescription Drug Program for Residents' Savings
- Adopted a Long Term Utility Rate Stabilization Plan

Tech Research & Manufacturing

- Atlantic and Great Western Business Park JRS Grant Preparation
- Supplemented KRBA & Incubation
- RB&W Grant and Sale Agreement
- Ametek Facility Acquisition

Government Performance

Viable Downtown

- New Family Dollar Store Opened
- New Firehouse Restaurant Opened
- New Marital Arts Studio
- City 3rd in State ED Project Awards
- Liquid Crystal Diagnostics Opened
- KRBA \$35,000 Supplement
- Anderson Aerospace Opens
- Destination Kent Web Site
- Purchased Ametek Property
- CRA for Record Courier
- Job Creation Tax Credit for MAC
- Land O' Lakes Enterprise Zone
- RB&W CORF Grant & Land Sale
- Avaaroonics Seminar

Economic Development

- West River Business Parking Renewal
- Tax Incentive Review Council Report
- EDA Revolving Loan Fund Report
- Community Reinvestment Area Report
- Economic Development Team Meetings
- Kent Marketing Videos
- Kent Business Expo
- JEDD's Biring in \$350,000
- Top 5 Finalist for Sierra Nevada Facility
- Kent Healthcare Center Re-Opened
- Revised Tap Fee Payment Schedule
- Grand Opening for MAC Trailer
- Transfer of SR59 from ODOT to City
- New Record Publishing Building
- Entrepreneur in Residence Program

Financial Health & Stability

Sustainable Budget

- Multi-Year Utility Rate Plan
- Re-bid City Bank Services Contract
- Central Maintenance Staff Reorganization
- Considered PLAs for City Contacts
- Union Contract Negotiations, 0% wage
- Absorbed \$500,000 in State Cuts to City
- Adopted Tax liens on unpaid bills
- Engineering Staff Restructuring
- Experimented with steel plow blades
- Hired a new City Controller
- Productivity Savings of \$250,000 in 2011
- City Equipment Lease with Aurora

Physical Safety

- Snow Street & Sidewalk Operations
- Smoke Alarm Program
- Emergency Broadcasts
- SWAT Training in Kent
- Hydrant Flushing Program
- COPS & JAG Safety Grant Funds
- Annual Sidewalk Program
- New Fairchild Bridge Opened
- Snow Street & Sidewalk Operations
- Life Support Equipment Grant
- Nixle Emergency Notification
- SAFER Funding Grant
- Redmond Bridge Closed

2011 ACTIONS

- On-Line Auction of Surplus
- 2012 Operating Budget
- 2012 County Tax Budget
- ODOT Self Contract Savings
- Issue II Grant Applications
- Reduced CDBG Funding
- City Notes Rollover Savings
- NOPEC Gas and Electric Rates
- Citizen Referral \$25,000 Savings
- Buckle Up Program Grant
- Worker's Safety Discount of 2%
- AFLAC Flexible Spending Accounts
- 2012 Capital Plan
- Expanded RITA services
- Prescription discount cards
- SAFER Grant

- New Street Vendor & Solicitation laws
- Citizen Safety Committee & Academy
- Second Hand Retail Regulations
- Sex Offender Task Force
- Hired New Police Chief
- 911 Dispatch with Kent State
- New Police web site

Human & Social Services

- New Veteran Memorial Committee
- Social Service Budget Grants
- Brunch Bunch
- City Employee Donations

Great Neighborhoods

Community Planning

- The Edge & Providence Student Housing Projects Approved
- Zoning Text Changes Completed
- Joint Meeting with Franklin Township
- New Senior Housing Project on SR261
- S. Lincoln Street Overlay Adopted
- Passed a Vacant Property Ordinance

Affordable Housing

- 2 Low Income Homes Re-habbed
- CDBG Action Plan Review and Public Hearings

Redevelopment & Restoration

- Community Liaison Position
- Exterior Maintenance Code
- City Tool Loan Program
- Code Compliance Annual Report

Code Awareness & Compliance

- Monthly Community Dinners
- City Tool Loan Program
- Neighborhood Walk-Arounds
- KSU Student Orientation
- Volunteer Snow Shoveling
- Community Policing
- Police Bike Patrols

Neighborhood Relations

- Monthly Community Dinners
- City Tool Loan Program
- Neighborhood Walk-Arounds
- KSU Student Orientation
- Volunteer Snow Shoveling
- Community Policing
- Police Bike Patrols

City University Synergy

Collaborations

- Portage Development Board Meetings
- Regional Development Team Meetings
- Kent-Aurora Equipment Lease Sharing
- PAFERS Implementation Efforts
- Kent State Fix Up Community Service Day
- KSU/Community Kayak Canoe Livery
- International Food Event Downtown
- 2 Bowman Town-Gown Breakfasts
- KSU and Kent Parks Regional Basketball Tourney
- KSU Sustainability Task Force
- City-KSU 911 Partnership
- City-KSU CARE Grant
- One Kent, Ride and Walk Event
- Flash Fleet Bike Share Program
- Kent State Flags on SR 59 Bridge Gateway
- Quarterly Franklin/Brimfield/Kent JEDD Meeting
- KSU-City River Clean Up Events
- Summit Street Project Public Planning Meetings

High Quality of Life

Parks & Trails

- New Bike Tunnel under Fairchild Ave., Bridge Built
- Turkey Trot Race
- Bowman Cup Race
- Heritage Fest Race
- Black Squirrel Triathlon
- Crooked River Adventure Race
- New Kent is Green Video Clip

Alternative Transportation

- AMATS Hike and Bike Trail Funds
- New Trail/Sidewalk Construction on Summit St.
- Citizen's Volunteer Shovel Efforts
- City Contractor Clear Snow at Intersections
- Comprehensive Citywide Bike Plan
- KSU Flash Fleet Bike Share Program
- Kent Central Gateway Groundbreaking
- AMATS Regional Bike Planning Public Meeting in Kent

Natural Resource Protection

Cuyahoga River Preservation

- Sustain the Great Lakes Grant
- Jerry's Cleaner Soil Remediation
- RB&W Clean Up Funds Awarded
- New Downtown River Portage and Access
- New Riverbend park Canoe/Kayak Put-In
- River Clean Up Events
- Crooked Adventures Livery
- Plum Creek State Stormwater Award

Energy Conservation

- Who's Your Mama Energy Demonstrations
- First Energy Light Bulb Replacement Project
- Leaf Collection/Mulching/Tub Grinding
- Kent State Sustainability Task Force

2011 ACTIONS