

City of Kent Bicentennial Plan “Building a Sustainable Future”

The City of Kent as a Sustainable Community

Kent Ohio is a unique community that has accepted the challenge of being an early adopter of Sustainable Community ethos. In November 1995, the Kent City Council took action to move the Sustainable Community concept forward by enacting legislation that created the Kent Environmental Commission. This action indicated that living in a sustainable matter was a commitment to be realized. Living in a sustainable matter brings the challenge of a residents and officials defining what the ideal balance is between the economic, social and environmental sectors of the community. A tool that stimulates this discussion is the comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan, when finished also serves as a guide for daily decisions that affect the sensitive balance of living in a sustainable manner. In 2002 this formable task of building a Sustainable Comprehensive Plan for the City of Kent was undertaken by the Kent Department of Community Development with assistance from Kent State University and Ohio State University Extension. The first phase of this effort was the application of thirteen (13) neighborhood visioning session where residents shared what they appreciate most about the City of Kent as well as their individual dreams of what the City of Kent can be for future generations. These neighborhood visioning sessions also explored resident’s ideas concerning three special planning districts: a) A fifty-five acre tract of non-development land at the intersection of State Routes 43 and 261 b) The western entry way to Kent along State Route 59 c) The area between the Central Business District and the western boundary of Kent State University.

This report shares the results of these sessions and serves as a tool to begin a discussion among residents regarding the difficult trade-offs necessary to create a sustainable future for this and future generations that call Kent their home.

Statistics Regarding the City of Kent

Population

According to the 2000 U.S. Census population of the City of Kent is 27,906 persons. 54% of this population is female with 46% being male. The median age is 22.9 years. 84% of the population is 18 years of age and older. 7.5% are 65 years of age and older. 9% of the population is African American or Black with 86% being White.

Education

14,629 youth aged 3 and over are enrolled in schools. 8% of persons 25 years of age and older do not have a high school diploma, 29% are high school graduates, 22% have some college, 4% have an associate degree, 21% have a bachelor's degree and 16% have a graduate or professional degree.

Households

The average household size is 2.27 people and the average family size is 2.89 people. 51% of households are non-family households while 49% of households are classified as family households. 33% of the family households are married couples and 13% are single female headed households. There are 10,435 housing units in the City of Kent. 94% of these units are occupied. Of the 9,772 occupied housing units, 38% are owner occupied and 62% are renter occupied. 45% of housing units are single units, 16% are 2-4 units, 12% are 5-9 units and 27% are 10 units or more. 57.7% of persons age 15 and older have never been married. Median family income is \$44,440 per year. 29% of families earn \$24,999 or less, 26% earn \$25,000 - \$49,999, 21% earn \$50,000 - \$74,999, 12% earn \$75,000 - \$99,999 with 12% earning \$100,000 or more.

Labor force

69.1% of persons 16 years and older are in the labor force. The mean travel time to work is 21.1 minutes. 73% travel by cars alone, 9% carpool, 2% use public transit and 13% walk to work. 2% work at home. Occupational breakdown is 32% managerial and professional, 29% sales and office, 21% service and 13% are production, transportation and, material moving. 78% of workers are employed by the private sector and 20% by the governmental sector.

Compilation of Round One Neighborhood Meeting

The following contains a compilation of resident statements regarding treasures (what residents currently value about the Kent community) and rainbows (what residents hope for future generations in the Kent community) identified at fourteen neighborhood meetings during October and November 2002. Comments are arranged around thirteen categories (identified by italics and underlined) identified by members of the Steering and Design Committees. Within each category the individual resident comments (identified by a ?) were combined to identify a theme.

ENVIRONMENTAL CATEGORIES

Natural Environment:

Natural Resources

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants include:

Waterways are a benefit to the Kent Community

- the historical Cuyahoga river is a focal point that connects us to our future and links our neighborhoods
 - Cuyahoga River (10)
 - dam and river (2)
 - the falls (2)..leave it alone
 - accessibility of the river
 - the river has a greater flow and volume of water (2)
 - return river flow to where it was
 - I like walking my sons dog by the river to because there is so much to see beyond simply the river
- river development and preservation
 - the river is clean and has flows adequate for recreational use
 - City owns and operates the launch to the river in Middlebury
 - extension of river corridor as a green area (extend parkway in both directions)
 - river walk, more green spaces
 - river changes are made including access
 - navigable river for fishing and activities; viewable
 - preservation and expansion of green space with better connection to the park system
- Plum Creek and significant natural areas nearby
- controlled access to Plum Creek, Fishcreek and Breakneck Creek
- riparian and aquifer protection is in place and followed
- excellent water sources
- sustainable manufacturing (cleaning wastewater) would tie into water that runs through the dam
- cleaning water we use (manufacturing) so it is cleaner then when we got it
- compliance with the Clean Water act, especially the dam
- utilize river-access tourism

Preservation of Natural Resources

- controlled access to Plum Creek, Fishcreek and Breakneck Creek
- riparian and aquifer protection is in place and followed
- preservation of wetlands (Summit south side)
 - environmental sensitivity especially towards wetlands
 - leave undeveloped lands alone, protect wetlands

- preservation of green space around KSU
- the Tamarack Bog (7)
 - bog is preserved and made better use of as a park
 - forested areas that are buffers for the bog and Rtes. 261/43
- preserve green space
 - natural environment
 - green space (5)
 - diverse natural areas that are open to all as the backbone of our community
 - green space close by
 - natural area that is fairly clean
 - integrate development with green space
 - countywide green space and conservation
 - rolling hills
- wildlife, squirrels
- lots of wildlife
- keep skunks out of town, better animal control
- not too much green...rural enough
- Brady's Leap
- more areas put aside for wildlife like the wetlands on Tallmadge

Trees are an asset to this community

- trees (5)
- city support of tree planting
- trees, plant new ones
- we are still a Tree City (2)
- quiet tree lined streets
- we are planting more trees
- park like setting along roads with old trees
- planting more trees

Parks and Recreation

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants includes:

The park system is an asset to the community

- the park system...both organized and non
- River Edge park
 - Develop River Edge Park
- Fred Fuller Park
- Kent parks (4)
- Plum Creek Park
- quality of parks
- parks and recreation program (2)
- outdoor park facilities are even greater like Roy smith Shelter and Plum Creek Park
- county park planning system
- nice playgrounds especially Hudson
- accessible parks and development of bike paths
- more parks especially in the Crain neighborhood
- good parks and recreation
- good programs are offered by parks and recreation department
- riverwalk
- amphitheatre and connected redbrick building

- the number of parks (2)
- golf course
- parks, playgrounds, Plum creek Park, Al Lease Pond, walking paths, soccer fields and softball games (2)
- parks like River's Edge

Kent has a number of quality recreational opportunities and facilities

- children's recreational facilities and training
- positive programs for young people
- like 24 hour gym on Waters Street
- recreational facilities and programs are always providing better opportunities on a neighborhood bases
 - better recreation centers for all people (2)
 - several recreation centers in neighborhoods
 - youth and elderly programs
 - ice skating rinks within walking distance for kids that are free of charge (2)
 - rental of canoes and kayaks to be used in the river with more accessible places to put boats in including the downtown (2)
 - more youth activities with recreation centers scattered in the community, more accessible venues, football and other sports, movies, arcades, skating (2)
 - encourage private development of recreational opportunities
 - things for vulnerable youth to do safely and healthy
 - there is a well thought out community center with swimming pool (2)
 - skate board park (2)
 - skating
 - more accessible youth parks and programs (4)
 - youth teen center for rollerskating, music and a hangout (2)
 - basketball
 - increase youth activity venues, K-12
 - a separate facility for youth football/maybe tied in with other family facilities
 - outdoor community swimming pool accessible to everyone
- expand park facilities
- more classes offered by parks and recreation such as swimming, exercises with bus trips for youth and adults

Built Environment:

Preservation

The list of specific rainbows and treasures suggested by participants include:

Existing buildings should be used

- support historic renovation of Kent buildings
 - Kemp (2)
 - Bissler (2)
 - The Hotel (4)
- use existing buildings before building new
- more sensitive regional planning with incentives for preservation of older, single family homes

Value properties that link us to our past

- historic architecture and landmarks should be preserved with good decisions (4)
 - Three old churches
 - Jail
 - Old Hotel
 - Library
 - Theater (2)
 - Old houses in Crain
 - Silk Mill
 - Main street stores
 - Historic Post Office
 - Architectural standards are in place
- Appreciate charm and history of older homes, buildings and features
 - restored building on Gougler Street
 - Cardboard Factory
 - Grain Mill
 - Bridge, railroad tracks
 - Brick streets in Franklin neighborhood (3)
 - Water tower
 - Historic feel like Canal lock, Cuyahoga River, Mill Building and Masonic Temple
- Appreciate older schools like Davey Elementary
- Preserve the historic downtown

Preserve Kent's unique history (4)

- Kent's railroad history
- Kent has a historical museum (2)
- preserve downtown historic district
- promote the Heritage Festival (4)
- preserve Kent's historical character (2)
- Kent celebrates its history

Build greenbelt buffers around Kent

- stop sprawl with green space between towns
- stop retail sprawl

Transportation

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants include:

Kent has a pedestrian orientation

- pedestrian scale of city, easy to walk
- easy walking
- Kent is a walkable community with good public and university transportation
- pedestrian friendly
- small town atmosphere, walk downtown and see people you know
- downtown walkability
- size of community, it is walkable
- walking community
- Kent is a mixed use community that is walkable with shopping close and not automobile orientated
- safer pedestrian amenities
- consider walking paths for current facilities

- mark street crossing better
 - educate drivers about crossing safety
 - increase pedestrian safety & accessibility to community opportunities and downtown library
- more sidewalks for children/school & handicapped, especially at Franklin, Holden and Lincoln
- pedestrian first! Safety and bikes
- pedestrian paradise
- safe pedestrian walkways
- repair sidewalks, especially in older neighborhoods (3)
- improve pedestrian accessibility
- pedestrian friendly access to grocery stores, movies, downtown, restaurants and bowling
- put sidewalks on Summit Street with a crosswalk (bridge) over Summitt
- Crain Avenue as a neighborhood street
- protective fencing on bridges
- red brick roads
- increase safety of pedestrian walkways where they cross vehicle paths

Alternative forms of transportation are used

- KSU/PARTA bus system (4)
- bus system into neighborhoods
- bike trail
- bike lanes adjacent to the roads
- the varies bike paths are connected and have more lanes
- more bike and hike (2)
- bike paths everywhere
- develop/link statewide bike system
- biking accessibility and usage
- more bike and pedestrian pathways with mini parks
- more bikeways with greater safety for bikers from Kent to Ravenna
- pedestrian friendly/bike friendly to get around town
- an Amtrack stop in Kent
- rail system
- commuter rail
- rail system tie in to public transit
- rapid transit
- better bus transportation for school children to and from facilities/programs (ie day school)
- comprehensive public transportation system
- public transportation cooperation on a regional basis
- encouragement and use of alternative traffic modes
- rollerblading/skateboarding are methods of transit and allowed downtown without fines

There is traffic management

- pedestrian islands
- wide main streets
- traffic not a problem...traffic does not interfere
- new streets...improvements
- enforcement of speed limit on Monroe Falls Road
- more traffic calming citywide like E. Main Street
 - need some on Haymaker and Franklin Township
 - planters on streets...see Portland and Seattle
 - better traffic calming techniques

- a safe intersection at 261 and 43..also at Elno and Emich
- keep Middlebury Road as is with bridge to slow traffic and no straight shot to 261
- better traffic management flow on Fairchild (traffic lights around subdivisions)
- 43 & 59; 261 & 43, improve control....flow...possible bypass for Kent State traffic (3)
- traffic planning on Route 43
- curbs in Franklin neighborhood...every road needs curbs
- better traffic control but not a trees expense
- traffic planning
- neighborhoods valued over traffic flow...connect 261 to 14
- direct traffic into the downtown
- a comprehensive traffic plan leading to better traffic management and control
- multi-modal transportation along with parking issues
- better road system from better communication between the city and county
- improving surfaces of roads
- two level parking garage to fix parking issues
- unified maintenance plan for roads with increased budgets and unified way to access funds
- reduction of street signage with better signage
- improved entryways into town

SOCIAL CATEGORIES

Ordinance Application

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants include:

Kent is a quiet, clean community maintained through effective code ordinance enforcement

- peaceful and quiet (2)
- quiet town in the summer
- pleasant atmosphere in the Middlebury neighborhood
- clean streets and parks
- code enforcement
- improved enforcement of health and building codes
- better coordination between health and building codes
- clean-up overall look of the city including alleys in downtown (2)
- enforcement of ordinances
- reduce light pollution from car dealerships and parks
- enforcement of maintenance codes
- zoning laws
 - re-enforce zoning laws (3)
 - zoning code changes to control growth
 - zoning code enforcement in CBD with noise ordinance
 - zoning works/enforcement
- to much litter near businesses, cigarettes and intersections, need more control (3)
- enforcement of noise ordinances (5) (includes vehicles, parties, more respect for quiet, sound issues on 261
- education regarding noise issues
- people taking better advantage of recycling programs
- community compost site
- outlaw dangerous animals and better enforcement of existing animal regulations
- good building codes lead to greater neighborhood stability
- the cemetery on Stow is cleaned up

- need to deal with blight and dilapidated structures
- renovation of boarded up buildings
- stronger code protection for family orientated neighborhoods
- yard restrictions especially for boats and trailers
- better response from Planning Commission on these issues
- handicap accessibility is important to the community
- control the growth of signage (3)

Integrity of Neighborhoods

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants include:

Neighborhoods are protected

- older neighborhoods are well maintained
- diversity of neighborhoods (5)
- sense of community from strong neighborhoods
- the presence of neighborhoods
- vibrant, quality neighborhoods
- neighborhoods are city style, not suburbia
- little neighborhoods
- diversity in housing stock
- increase in availability of upscale housing
- more retirement communities
- preservation of neighborhoods (2)
- more affordable housing all over Kent, not in one particular area
- architectural style of neighborhoods showing diversity in community
- guidelines to protect existing quality of neighborhoods
- duplicate downtown amenities in neighborhoods by providing benches and wide sidewalks particularly around retail areas
- reconsideration and redevelopment of older neighborhoods (west main)
- there are public play areas for children in walking distance within neighborhoods with play equipment
- preservation of neighborhoods with varies height restrictions
- likes range of housing in price and character
- more incentives to return student housing to family housing
- more affordable housing
- maintain integrity of community
- there is a community garden space where families can plant and have social connections
- Standing Rock community
- renovated neighborhoods
- student housing and family housing mix maintained at least at the current level
- diversity of housing stock

City Services and Structure

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants includes:

Kent provides quality fire and police Services

- neighborhood watch & police patrols leads to increased sense of community (3)
- feeling of safety and security (3)
- city provides a wide variety of services

- bring bike patrols back to neighborhoods (Fairchild)
- more interaction between youth and police
- safe community (3)
- safe place to raise children (3)
- fire and police protection are of a high quality (3)
- safe living, learning and working environment
- an effective and helpful fire department
- safe neighborhoods
- I can leave my house with the front door unlocked

Recycling

- recycling, (3)
- brush and leaf pick-up (3)
- mulch program
- spring cleanup (2)

City of Kent officials and offices are approachable and encourage citizen involvement

- small town – easy to dialogue with government
- local government – opportunities – Citizen input in local government, large number of opportunities for volunteering (8)
- community input is encouraged early in the planning process (3)
- availability of both educators and elected official (2)
- community meetings are held in neighborhoods
- information is available on voter issues/candidates
- accessible government in the comprehensive plan, health department, street maintenance, leaf collection, friendly street department, and web site (2)
- greater participation and understanding of local government and the political process has resulted in less apathy
- a political environment that respects proposals present in plans
- the City has a good government newsletter
- Kent's City Council really listens to resident's choices
- City government has increased their credibility
- Kent has progressive political leadership
- City government is responsive to homeowners
- Council and city services are above average
- City communication system that provides public information and meeting notification
 - Tree City Bulletin (3)
 - City web page has a citizen bulleting board with a chat page sharing daily activities and conversations
 - Notification of public meetings/representatives
- City manager form of government that allows citizen input and is more representative
- remove city management form of government so residents have direct influence on administrative leadership
- maintain city staff levels

Street/sidewalk maintenance

- every road has curbs in Franklin neighborhood
- City street services and snowplowing (2)
- better snow removal in the future
- improving surfaces of roads
- street maintenance and upkeep

City planning

- commitment to unique non-sprawl no cookie cutter community
- change to sustainability planning
- we appreciate the opportunity to participate through this process (5)
- do long range plan to accommodate the future
- future vision
- bury utility lines; nicer street lights
- strive for regional planning with neighboring communities

Residents in the City of Kent benefit from a wide variety of social and public services

- library (5)
- organizations in community care
- those people who serve Kent residents are of high quality
- Kent has universal health care
- social services meet a complete range of needs
- someday a bigger library/multimedia options

Very good water system with good tasting water (4)

Mary, and Charley too

University/Community Relations

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants include:

KSU's presence in Kent provides a wide range of opportunities and amenities for city residents

- KSU bus system (2)
- KSU speakers in Kiva
- KSU adds a liberal tone that is inclusive
- The University attracts people from both inside and outside of Kent
- KSU is utilized for academic, planning/internships
- KSU provides access to different ideas (3)
- sled riding at the University
- access to University activities and events (2)
- diverse population with high literacy levels contributed by University
- presence of KSU (2)
- resources of University make Kent a cosmopolitan community with things to do like theatre, music, lectures, museums, liquid crystal research, faculty expertise and sports
- opportunities for seniors from community and University (3)
- educational opportunities from KSU
- KSU provides energy to the community through ideas and culture
- KSU supports the local arts
- KSU wellness center
- athletics
- cultural opportunities provided to the community by the University
- better advertising/marketing of social activities would provide great access for non-university residents

Town-Gown interaction

- Town/Gown relationships are fostered and valued (4)
- connection between local schools & university (computers)
- loyalty in community exists to each other and to KSU

- more pride in university by city community (Oxford, Ann Arbor ex.); more respect between the two
- the overall atmosphere of the University is valued
- better relations between University and Kent City officials with a working relationship with police
- the Kent community embraces KSU
- Town/gown participation increases
- struggles regarding rental housing have been resolved
- University is encouraged to place fraternities and sororities on campus and out of residential neighborhoods
- sense of invitation, welcoming students, the University community in general
- residents are more aware of what KSU has to offer
- more interaction between the University and the City, and public officials take the lead on helping this to happen
- University town with community strength too
- KSU adds to quality of life without overwhelming (2)
- greater town/gown interface with a more frequent and direct publication of events and opportunities (2)
- increased geographical linkage between campus and downtown acting as one unit
- appropriate size of Kent State University population has been reached

University housing needs are less invasive into neighborhoods

- all Greek houses are on campus
- limit freshman cars
- reduction in party town image
- better maintenance of student homes by landlords
- Main street fraternity row cleans up beer cans and garbage
- structured fraternity district
- parking deck garages at KSU
- better cooperation between City and University regarding parking lots
- renovate and clean up student housing
- keep building heights below five stories
- reasonable student housing prices are available

Coming to terms with May 4th

- there is an increase in KSU May 4th Memorial awareness
- value the effort to come to terms with May 4th (2)

Uniqueness of Community

The list of specific rainbows and treasures suggested by participants include:

Small town atmosphere

- small town feel (6)
- still a "human-scale" place with no haphazard development
- modest scale; not overwhelmed by commercialism
- good mix of urban, suburban and rural areas
- value community size – small, but with lots of large town amenities (2)
- small town and urban mix
- a unique small town atmosphere with family neighborhoods, heritage festival and a quality plan for development (2)
- medium-small size of city

- there is a retained small town feel with a diverse economy
- small town feel with diversity
- city lifestyle with small town appeal
- character – grassroots flavor
- live within limits to keep small town feel
- ability to meet and get to know people because of Kent's small size
- enjoy comfortable atmosphere of Kent
- hometown atmosphere

Presence of Kent State University

- Kent State University is here (2)
- capitalize on college town flavor

Convenient geographic location

- close to big cities, but not too close (2)
- rural character; close to farms (2)
- geographic location open to surrounding areas
- proximity to Cleveland, Akron, Canton (4)
- Kent is off the path of the freeway
- small town with access to big cities amenities
- strategic location within one hour of major cities

Friendly community

- community spirit of friendliness (9)
- community accepts new people quickly (3)
- the unique character of some area people

Kent has a true downtown district

Kent is unique

- Kent has a unique history (2)
- Kent has a unique character

Good place to raise a family

- Family oriented

We have to grow, it's a great city

The City of Kent is a Very Diverse Community

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants include:

We appreciate Social diversity

- diversity (social)
- social and cultural diversity
- diversity of neighborhoods
- enjoy diversity in Kent (2)
- diverse opinions but stay friendly with our neighbors

We appreciate Architectural diversity

We appreciate Population diversity

- racial diversity
- heterogeneity of Kent
- diversity of race, age and economic
- population diversity
- diversities: cultural, race, politics all leads to tolerance
- spiritual diversity and richness (2)
- ethnic diversity (2)
- diversity of age with a vocal older generation and input from various generations on everything
- community attracts all ages
- every public facility to accessible to physically challenged

The Kent community is constantly working at appreciating diversity while narrowing inequalities

- create a smaller "index of dissimilarity" in the city regarding housing, jobs and politics
- more integration of ideas
- similar social opportunities
- keep Kent real with diversity and a place to live and work

Culture and the Arts

The list of specific rainbows and treasures suggested by participants include:

Arts and cultural events are available through Kent State University

- musical events
- KSU provides accessible cultural opportunities
- Kent has a wide variety of cultural activities
- there are cultural and social draws to the community
- Cultural Arts Centers, University education and lectures
- University students present drama, arts and music to area kids
- Kevin Coleman Center

Kent appreciates the arts

- Kent is a funky arts community
- Kent values live performing arts (2)
- Kent has a vital art scene with many activities (2)
- Kent has a free stage for more art and cultural activities
- Art in the Park (2)
- Kent has a strong arts community
- Kent supports public art through murals, sculptures and fountains
- Kent has many arts festivals and programs
- Kent has many art galleries
- citizens are committed to the arts
- Kent Stage is a springboard to cultural events
- cultural opportunities
- potential of a new Kent Stage (2)

Kent has a great history of a variety of entertainment

- community events
- folk Festival (2)
- Porthouse Theater

- unique cultural opportunities
- outdoor eating and gathering
- Art in the Park
- the Halloween celebration
- nightlife and entertainment

Kent's size allows residents to take part in arts and musical programs

Kent has a Strong Academic Tradition

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants includes:

The City of Kent has a strong public educational system

- strong schools with excellent teachers
- good public schools
- schools are first rate
- good educational facilities
- elementary and secondary educational system
- school system, K-12, good overall system
- private school quality at public price
- like the educational system (2)
- schools with mix of old and new buildings like historic David elementary
- accessible school system at all levels
- overall commitment to education

Kent Schools continue to be academic leaders

- the community supports school levies
- there is controlled growth at the high school
- school system maintains or achieves standards
- no more standardized testing
- smaller schools
- return to more neighborhood center elementary and junior high schools
- schools stay on course
- improved educational achievement and stopping the brain drain
- incentive to increase numbers for graduation measures like graduation rate, etc.

There are opportunities for life-long learning

- continuing education opportunities
- educational opportunities from Kent public schools
- Kent State University provides learning opportunities for residents (non-traditional student) (5)
- decentralized schools

ECONOMIC CATEGORIES

Economic Vitality

The list of specific treasures and rainbows suggested by participants includes:

Kent's downtown is an economic focal point

- core downtown area (3)

- downtown is a gathering place
- established downtown square
- traditional downtown feel
- a grocery store in the downtown
- a look around the downtown that invites students to stay the weekend with theatres, museums and stores
- develop reasons for students to go downtown such as convenience goods, services, day/night activities for under 21 years of age and some exciting variety
- downtown is a place where there is a street life with people mingling, talking and eating
- places like Bed & Breakfasts in downtown where parents can stay while visiting
- downtown is walkable
- use existing downtown resources
- redevelopment of old buildings downtown
- lots of small stores/"hang outs" in downtown
 - theatre
 - Kent Hardware
 - Woodsy's music
 - more quality restaurants
 - river Walk development with restaurants
 - Mike's Place
 - Kent Natural Food Store/Farmer's Market (3)
 - Pufferbelly
 - Brady's Café
 - diners
 - cool bar scene
 - bookstore
 - Taco Tony's
- develop college friendly downtown (2)
- depth of shopping opportunities/activities in downtown (2)
- small town atmosphere, walk downtown and see people you know
- more retail downtown
- cultural arts center in downtown
- additional shops in downtown for clothing, food, general items that you can walk to
- architectural style of downtown
- downtown still alive with shopping, activities and festivals (2)
- create a living downtown with increased pedestrian and vehicle traffic following the State College and Niagara on the Lake examples
- a theme for the downtown
- preserve the historic downtown (3)
- great downtown, pedestrian and bike friendly (2)
- our downtown is only two lanes wide
- main section of downtown is closed off to vehicle traffic making it a pedestrian walk
- keep downtown as it is by encouraging incentives for small business development
- railroad feel to downtown
- Mayberry feel to downtown
- update the downtown area but keep the small town feel
- downtown beautification/gazebo/park (2)
- unique restaurants, retail...the Pufferbelly (2)
- growing towards a University/downtown that are together so we can experience the downtown more
- tourist/train depot
- bigger and better downtown library
- more public gathering places near the downtown

- an in town hotel

Kent is home to many locally owned, independent small businesses

- local businesses, locally owned (6)
- independent (home grown) businesses (2)
- support for local hometown, non-chain businesses
- more support of small family owned businesses
- town as an attraction with small businesses (6)
- programs to help entrepreneurs – financial incentives
- slow down loss of small businesses
- absence of large national retail establishments
- the daily newspaper (3)
- more professional newspapers with more news and less gossip
- a great value on supporting local businesses
- lovely Chamber of Commerce
- attract good restaurants that aren't franchises (8)
- Haymaker farm market

Sprawl is stopped

- think regionally but don't promote sprawl
- Kent City take lead in joint planning with neighboring communities
- JEDD that does not encourage sprawl
- enhance economics without draining downtown/sprawl
- refurbishing of old buildings for business opportunities
- Kent has a good mix of residential and industrial land
- less strip malls
- avoid subdivision sprawl

Kent's retail and service sectors are vibrant

- Kent is home to viable suburban retail centers on East Main and South Water streets
- auto dealerships provide convenience for residents and add vibrancy to the local economy
- Fairchild from Majors to Newcome has experienced positive development
- the local Farmer's Market provides an outlet for local growers as well as a resource for local residents (2) and blueberry farm
- Kent's economy offers a variety of services that are near to City residents and convenient to walk to
- increased capturing of local retail dollars
- shops offer a greater diversity of consumer items
- greater amount of retail space for lease
- more independent retail and galleries
- suburban retail centers (E. Main, S. Water)
- all store fronts are filled
- Kent offers a wide variety of restaurants
- convenient shopping
- Kent is a retail center with a variety of retailers
- West Side Market

Economic opportunities exist for all of Kent's diverse residents

- employment opportunities exist for Kent's young people (2)
- social entrepreneur opportunities for youth/businesses that work with youth to keep youth here in Kent
- neighborhood job training programs

- a diverse economic base for employment opportunities – jobs for all education levels
- increased economic independence for residents
- Kent has improved job opportunities
- more educational opportunities of school (interview preparation/job readiness)
- community supports sustainable/living wage businesses
- people living and working in the same area
- higher wages/living wages
- higher pay scale more competitive with surrounding areas
- a higher median income level

Kent State University contributes to the local economy

- expansion of high tech/knowledge based industry (low impact) related to KSU(2)
- SR 261 & 43 area used for high tech professional park similar to Penn State & Univ. of Utah
- stable economic base from Kent State University
- incentives between the University and City that encourage small businesses that support student needs
- encourage university classes to participate in community business projects
- University is a catalyst for economic growth
- KSU as an economic indicator
- Kent has a business incubator especially for high tech development
- activities to encourage students to stay on weekends and for parents to visit and spend dollars locally (2)
- university and town work together with mutual respect in economic development

Kent's residents support appropriate economic development

- the Kent community and local industry have a cooperative and supportive relationship
- Kent's strong economic and tax base has provided the support for amenities that residents desire (3)
- modest scale; not overwhelmed by commercialism
- population willing to work for economic development

Kent's economy is strengthened and diversified by the arts and related businesses

- artistic/musical areas with "coffee houses" in quiet corners
- more cultural arts development leads to restaurants and coffee shops
- Steinert Glass
- live theatre and movie theatres
- debate, political discussions and democracy

Kent has a diverse economy built with a social and environmental conscious

- a diverse economy
- keep development opportunities open for businesses
- businesses meet accessibility standards
- put conditions on tax breaks to benefit community
- economic diversity (2)
- develop industrial base with real jobs paying a living wage and higher paying; possibilities include industrial parks, electric companies, manufacturing and design, involvement with University technology and long term viability
- employment diversity
- set clear directions for developers
- use friendly development process
- income and property tax to provide public services
- a property tax base for the retirement community

- revenues growth sources to support all public hopes
- business retention by controlling cost of doing business, particularly government participation; storm water and recycling fees
- negate impact of vacancies
- continue economic growth
- development that is not just for development sake
- I am all for change, just make sure it is good for the community and not just to gain funding
- an improved economic base
- economic develop results from city land purchases
- development should happen on vacant and underused area particularly buildings and some land
- small quiet businesses are brought in to help the tax base
- a diversified economic base
- a developed tourism industry through planning, marketing, local attractions and parks
- annexation of land into the city

Bicentennial Plan Round Two Results

Environment

Total votes total dots placed: 341

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. There is traffic management | 49 |
| 2. Kent has quality rec opportunities & facilities | 40 |
| 3. Kent has a pedestrian orientation | 37 |
| 4. Existing buildings should be used | 35 |
| 5. Preservation of natural resources | 33 |
| 6. Preserve Kent's unique history | 31 |
| 7. The park system is an asset to the community | 25 |
| 8. Alternative forms of transportation are used | 24 |
| 9. Waterways are a benefit to the Kent community | 22 |
| 10. Value properties that link us to our past | 17 |
| 11. Trees are an asset to this community | 16 |
| 12. Build greenbelt buffers around Kent | 12 |

Number of sessions mentioned possible score:12

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. There is traffic management | 11 |
| 2. Kent has a pedestrian orientation | 10 |
| 3. Existing buildings should be used | 9 |
| 4. Preservation of natural resources | 9 |
| 5. The park system is an asset to the community | 9 |
| 6. Trees are an asset to this community | 12 |
| 7. Kent has quality rec opportunities & facilities | 8 |
| 8. Waterways are a benefit to the Kent community | 8 |
| 9. Preserve Kent's unique history | 7 |
| 10. Alternative forms of transportation are used | 7 |
| 11. Value properties that link us to our past | 7 |
| 12. Build greenbelt buffers around Kent | 7 |

Number of sessions ranked #1 possible score:12

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Kent has a pedestrian orientation | 4 |
| 2. Preservation of natural resources | 3 |
| 3. There is traffic management | 2 |
| 4. Existing buildings should be used | 1 |
| 5. Kent has quality rec opportunities & facilities | 1 |
| 6. Preserve Kent's unique history | 1 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| <u>Number of sessions ranked #1 or #2</u> | <u>24</u> |
| 1. There is traffic management | 7 |
| 2. Kent has a pedestrian orientation | 4 |
| 3. Preservation of natural resources | 4 |
| 4. Kent has quality rec opportunities & facilities | 4 |
| 5. Preserve Kent's unique history | 2 |
| 6. Existing buildings should be used | 1 |
| 7. Waterways are a benefit to the Kent community | 1 |
| 8. Alternative forms of transportation are used | 1 |
| 9. Value properties that link us to our past | 1 |

Ranked #1,#2 or #3 by neighborhood

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Standing Rock: | 15 participants given total of three dots | |
| 1. Preserve Kent's unique history | | 6 |
| 2. There is traffic management | | 3 |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Crain: | 16 participants given three dots per sector | |
| 1. Kent has a pedestrian orientation | | 8 |
| 2. There is traffic management | | 7 |
| 2. Kent has quality rec opportunities & facilities | | 7 |

| | | |
|--|-----------------|---|
| Business: | 13 participants | |
| 1. Preservation of natural resources | | 6 |
| 2. There is traffic management | | 5 |
| 2. Kent has quality rec opportunities & facilities | | 5 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---|
| KSU Faculty: | 4 participants | |
| 1. Kent has a pedestrian orientation | | 4 |
| 1. There is traffic management | | 4 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---|
| KSU Students | 5 participants | |
| 1. There is traffic management | | 3 |
| 1. Preservation of natural resources | | 3 |

Chamber: 19 participants

1. Existing buildings should be used 14
2. Preserve Kent's unique history 12
3. The park system is an asset to the community 7

Franklin: 11 participants

1. Preservation of natural resources 6
2. Alternative forms of transportation are used 4
3. Value properties that link us to our past 4

Middlebury: 16 participants

1. Kent has a pedestrian orientation 8
2. Kent has quality rec opportunities & facilities 6
2. Preservation of natural resources 6
2. Waterways are a benefit to the Kent community 6

Fairchild: 16 participants

1. Kent has quality rec opportunities & facilities 12
2. There is traffic management 9
3. Existing buildings should be used 7

University: 3 participants

1. Insufficient breakdown

Central Business District: 10 participants

1. Kent has a pedestrian orientation 7
2. There is traffic management 6
3. Existing buildings should be used 4

Plum Creek: 3 persons

1. Insufficient breakdown

Social

| Total votes | total dots placed: | 381 |
|---|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Neighborhoods are protected | | 35 |
| 2. The City of Kent has a strong public educational system | | 34 |
| 3. Small town atmosphere | | 33 |
| 4. Street/sidewalk maintenance | | 30 |
| 5. University housing needs are less invasive into neighborhoods | | 23 |
| 6. Kent provides quality fire & police services | | 22 |
| 7. Kent is a very diverse community | | 21 |
| 8. City of Kent officials & offices are approachable & encourage citizen involvement | | 19 |
| 9. Kent is a quiet, clean community maintained through effective code ordinance enforcement | | 19 |
| 10. Town/gown interaction | | 17 |
| 11. Good place to raise a family | | 17 |
| 12. Residents in Kent benefit from a wide variety of social & public services | | 16 |
| 13. Recycling | | 14 |
| 14. Arts & cultural events are available through KSU | | 10 |
| 15. City planning | | 10 |
| 16. KSU presence provides a wide range of opportunities & amenities for city residents | | 9 |
| 17. Kent appreciates the arts | | 9 |
| 18. Kent schools continue to be academic leaders | | 9 |
| 19. Very good water system with good tasting water | | 8 |
| 20. There are opportunities for life long learning | | 7 |
| 21. Friendly community | | 5 |
| 22. Coming to terms with May 4 | | 4 |
| 23. Kent is unique | | 4 |
| 24. Convenient geographic location | | 3 |
| 25. Kent has a great history of a variety of entertainment | | 3 |
| 26. Presence of Kent State University | | 0 |
| 27. Kent has a true downtown district | | 0 |
| 28. Kent's size allows residents to take part in arts and musical programs | | 0 |
| 29. We have to grow, it's a great city | | 0 |

| <u>Number of sessions mentioned</u> | <u>possible score:12</u> |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Small town atmosphere | 10 |
| 2. Street/sidewalk maintenance | 9 |
| 3. Neighborhoods are protected | 8 |
| 4. University housing needs are less invasive into neighborhoods | 8 |
| 5. Kent is a very diverse community | 8 |
| 6. The City of Kent has a strong public educational system | 8 |
| 7. Kent is a quiet, clean community maintained through effective code ordinance enforcement | 8 |
| 8. City of Kent officials & offices are approachable & encourage citizen involvement | 8 |
| 9. Kent provides quality fire & police services | 7 |
| 10. Residents in Kent benefit from a wide variety of social & public services | 7 |
| 11. Recycling | 7 |
| 12. Arts & cultural events are available through KSU | 7 |
| 13. Town/gown interaction | 6 |
| 14. City planning | 6 |
| 15. Kent appreciates the arts | 6 |
| 16. KSU presence provides a wide range of opportunities & amenities for city residents | 6 |
| 17. Good place to raise a family | 5 |
| 18. Very good water system with good tasting water | 4 |
| 19. Friendly community | 4 |
| 20. Kent is unique | 4 |
| 21. There are opportunities for life long learning | 4 |
| 22. Coming to terms with May 4 | 3 |
| 23. Convenient geographic location | 2 |
| 24. Kent has a great history of a variety of entertainment | 2 |
| 25. Kent schools continue to be academic leaders | 2 |
| 26. Presence of Kent State University | 0 |
| 27. Kent has a true downtown district | 0 |
| 28. Kent's size allows residents to take part in arts and musical programs | 0 |
| 29. We have to grow, it's a great city | |

Number of sessions ranked #1 possible score: 12

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Small town atmosphere | 2 |
| 1. University housing needs are less invasive into neighborhoods | 2 |
| 3. Neighborhoods are protected | 1 |
| 3. Street/sidewalk maintenance | 1 |
| 3. Kent is a quiet, clean community maintained through effective code ordinance enforcement | 1 |
| 3. Kent is a very diverse community | 1 |
| 3. City of Kent officials & offices are approachable & encourage citizen involvement | 1 |
| 3. Good place to raise a family | 1 |

Number of sessions ranked #1 or #2 possible score: 24

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Neighborhoods are protected | 4 |
| 2. Small town atmosphere | 3 |
| 2. Street/sidewalk maintenance | 3 |
| 4. University housing needs are less invasive into neighborhoods | 2 |
| 4. City of Kent officials & offices are approachable & encourage citizen involvement | 2 |
| 4. The City of Kent has a strong public educational system | 2 |
| 7. Kent is a quiet, clean community maintained through effective code ordinance enforcement | 1 |
| 7. Kent is a very diverse community | 1 |
| 7. Good place to raise a family | 1 |

Ranked #1,#2 or #3 by neighborhood

- Standing Rock: 15 participants given total of three dots
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Kent is a very diverse community | 5 |
| 2. City of Kent officials & offices are approachable & encourage citizen involvement | 3 |
| 3. Coming to terms with May 4 | 2 |

- Crain: 16 participants given three dots per sector
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. University housing needs are less invasive into neighborhoods | 9 |
| 2. Small town atmosphere | 7 |
| 3. Neighborhoods are protected | 5 |

- Business: 13 participants
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Street/sidewalk maintenance | 7 |
| 1. The City of Kent has a strong public educational system | 7 |
| 3. Kent provides quality fire & police services | 5 |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|-----------------|----|
| KSU Faculty: | | 4 participants | |
| 1. | Kent is a quiet, clean community maintained through effective code ordinance enforcement | | 4 |
| KSU Students | | 5 participants | |
| 1. | Insufficient breakdown | | |
| Chamber: | | 19 participants | |
| 1. | Small town atmosphere | | 11 |
| 2. | Town/gown interaction | | 10 |
| 2. | The City of Kent has a strong public educational system | | 7 |
| Franklin: | | 11 participants | |
| 1. | University housing needs are less invasive into neighborhoods | | 5 |
| 2. | Neighborhoods are protected | | 4 |
| 2. | Kent is a quiet, clean community maintained through effective code ordinance enforcement | | 4 |
| Middlebury: | | 16 participants | |
| 1. | City of Kent officials & offices are approachable & encourage citizen involvement | | 6 |
| 2. | Neighborhoods are protected | | 5 |
| 3. | Kent provides quality fire & police services | | 5 |
| Fairchild: | | 16 participants | |
| 1. | Good place to raise a family | | 10 |
| 2. | Street/sidewalk maintenance | | 9 |
| 3. | Residents in Kent benefit from a wide variety of social & public services | | 8 |
| 3. | Kent schools continue to be academic leaders | | 8 |
| University: | | 3 participants | |
| 1. | Small town atmosphere | | 4 |
| 2. | Neighborhoods are protected | | 3 |
| 2. | Kent is a very diverse community | | 3 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Central Business District: 10 participants | |
| 1. Neighborhoods are protected | 5 |
| 2. Street/sidewalk maintenance | 4 |
| 3. 3. Kent is a quiet, clean community maintained through effective code ordinance enforcement | 4 |
| 3. Town/gown interaction | 4 |
| Plum Creek: 3 persons | |
| 1. Small town atmosphere | 3 |

Economic

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| <u>Total votes</u> | <u>total dots placed:</u> | <u>309</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|------------|

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses | 59 |
| 2. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness | 56 |
| 3. Kent's downtown is an economic focal point | 49 |
| 4. KSU contributes to the local economy | 44 |
| 5. Economic opportunities exist for all of Kent's diverse residents | 36 |
| 6. Kent's retail & service sectors are vibrant | 33 |
| 7. Kent's residents support appropriate economic development | 31 |
| 8. Sprawl is stopped | 23 |
| 9. Kent's economy is strengthened by and diversified by the arts and related businesses | 20 |
| 10. Incubator opportunities | 2 |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| <u>Number of sessions mentioned</u> | <u>possible score:</u> | <u>12</u> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness | 12 |
| 2. Kent's downtown is an economic focal point | 11 |
| 2. Kent's residents support appropriate economic development | 11 |
| 4. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses | 9 |
| 4. Kent's retail & service sectors are vibrant | 9 |
| 6. KSU contributes to the local economy | 8 |
| 7. Economic opportunities exist for all of Kent's diverse residents | 7 |
| 7. Sprawl is stopped | 7 |
| 7. Kent's economy is strengthened by and diversified by the arts and related businesses | 7 |

10. Incubator opportunities 1

Number of sessions ranked #1 possible score: 12

1. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses 4
2. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness 3
3. Kent's residents support appropriate economic development 3
4. Kent's downtown is an economic focal point 1
4. KSU contributes to the local economy 1

Number of sessions ranked #1 or #2 possible score: 24

1. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses 5
1. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness 5
1. Kent's downtown is an economic focal point 5
4. Kent's residents support appropriate economic development 4
4. KSU contributes to the local economy 4
6. Economic opportunities exist for all of Kent's diverse residents 3
6. Kent's retail & service sectors are vibrant 3
8. Sprawl is stopped 1
8. Kent's economy is strengthened by and diversified by the arts and related businesses 1
10. Incubator opportunities 0

Ranked #1,#2 or #3 by neighborhood

Standing Rock: 15 participants given total of three dots

1. Kent's residents support appropriate economic development 3

Crain: 16 participants given three dots per sector

1. KSU contributes to the local economy 8
2. Kent's downtown is an economic focal point 7
2. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness 7
2. Kent's economy is strengthened by and diversified by the arts and related businesses 7

| | | |
|---|-----------------|----|
| Business: | 13 participants | |
| 1. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses | | 10 |
| 2. Kent's retail & service sectors are vibrant | | 7 |
| 2. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness | | 7 |
| 2. Kent's residents support appropriate economic development | | 7 |
| | | |
| KSU Faculty: | 4 participants | |
| 1. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness | | 5 |
| 2. KSU contributes to the local economy | | 4 |
| | | |
| KSU Students | 5 participants | |
| 1. Kent's residents support appropriate economic development | | 5 |
| 2. KSU contributes to the local economy | | 4 |
| | | |
| Chamber: | 19 participants | |
| 1. Kent's downtown is an economic focal point | | 18 |
| 2. Kent's retail & service sectors are vibrant | | 11 |
| 3. KSU contributes to the local economy | | 10 |
| | | |
| Franklin: | 11 participants | |
| 1. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness | | 10 |
| 2. Economic opportunities exist for all of Kent's diverse residents | | 8 |
| 3. Sprawl is stopped | | 7 |
| | | |
| Middlebury: | 16 participants | |
| 1. Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness | | 10 |
| 2. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses | | 7 |
| 2. Economic opportunities exist for all of Kent's diverse residents | | 7 |
| 2. KSU contributes to the local economy | | 7 |
| | | |
| Fairchild: | 16 participants | |
| 1. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses | | 10 |
| 2. Kent's downtown is an economic focal point | | 7 |
| 3. Kent's retail & service sectors are vibrant | | 7 |

- University: 3 participants
1. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses 4
 2. Kent's downtown is an economic focal point 3
 2. Economic opportunities exist for all of Kent's diverse residents 3

- Central Business District: 10 participants
1. Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses 10
 2. Sprawl is stopped 6
 3. Economic opportunities exist for all of Kent's diverse residents 5
 3. KSU contributes to the local economy 5

- Plum Creek: 3 persons
1. Kent's residents support appropriate economic development 5

Linkages Identified by Residents

I. Standing Rock Neighborhood:

II. Crain Neighborhood:

Social Framework:

Feature: University housing is less invasive into neighborhoods

- ? Traffic management (environmental)
- ? KSU supports local economy (economic)
- ? Sprawl stopping (economic)

Feature: Small town atmosphere

- ? downtown as a focal point (economic)
- ? Preserve Kent's unique history (environmental)
- ? Use existing buildings (environmental)
- ? Value properties that link to the past (environmental)

Feature: Pedestrian orientation

- ? Easy access to businesses (economic), library, schools, parks and friends (social)
- ? clean and repaired sidewalks (social)

Feature: Effective code enforcement

- ? Use existing buildings (environmental)
- ? Value properties that link to the past (environment)
- ? Many locally owned small businesses (economic)
- ? Economy is strengthened by the arts (economy)

Environmental Framework:

Feature: Traffic management

- ? Remove business traffic from residential areas (economic)
- ? Safe for walkers to use street (social)
- ? KSU traffic improves (economic)

Feature: Pedestrian orientation

- ? Easy access to businesses (economic), library, schools, parks and friends (social)
- ? clean and repaired sidewalks (social)

Economic Framework:

Feature: Kent's downtown is an economic focal point

- ? Downtown is bike and pedestrian friendly (environmental)
- ? city and residents shovel the sidewalks (social)
- ? better maintained of Columbus (social)
- ? Appease downtown businesses by providing a skateboard park to remove from downtown streets (social & economy)

III. Business Community:

Economic Framework:

Feature: Kent is home to many locally owned independent small businesses

- ? Vibrant retail and service sector (economic)
- ? A strong public educational system (social)
- ? Street/sidewalk maintenance (social)
- ? Quality recreational opportunities (environmental)
- ? Traffic management (environmental)

IV. Kent State University Faculty:

Social Framework:

Feature: Effective code enforcement (social)

? Downtown as a focal point (economic)

? Traffic management (environmental)

? Pedestrian orientation (environmental)

V. Kent State University Students:

Environmental Framework:

Feature: There is traffic management

? Kent's residents support appropriate economic development (economic)

? KSU contributes to the local economy (economic)

? Sidewalk/street maintenance (social)

? Recycling (social)

VI. Chamber of Commerce:

Economic Framework:

Feature: Downtown as a focal point

? Kent is home to many locally owned, independent small businesses (economic)

? Kent's retail and service sectors are vibrant (economic)

? Existing buildings should be used (environmental)

? Preserve Kent's unique history (environmental)

? Small town atmosphere (social)

? Town-gown interaction (social)

? Kent has a strong public educational system (social)

VII. Middlebury Neighborhood

Economic Framework:

Feature: Kent has a diverse economy built with a social and environmental conscious

- ? Preservation of natural resources (environmental)
 - ? Residents benefit from a wide variety of social and public services (social)

Environmental Framework:

Feature: Kent has a pedestrian orientation

- ? community will be healthy (social)
 - ? small town atmosphere (social)
 - ? Kent is home to many locally owned, independent small businesses (economic)
 - ? Kent's downtown is an economic focus (economic)
 - ? Sprawl is stopped (economic)

Social Framework:

Feature: City of Kent officials and offices are approachable and encourage citizen involvement

- ? Preservation of natural resources (environmental)
 - ? Kent residents support appropriate economic development (economic)

VIII. City Building (3/6/03)

Economic Framework:

Feature: Many locally owned independent small businesses

- ? Pedestrian orientation (environmental)
- ? Traffic management (environmental)
- ? Street/sidewalk maintenance (social)

Environmental Framework:

Feature: Use existing buildings

- ? Sprawl is stopped (environmental)
- ? Residents support appropriate Economic Development (economic)
- ? Effective code enforcement ordinance (social)

Social Framework:

Feature: Neighborhoods are protected

- ? Preserve Kent's unique history (environmental)
- ? Kent's downtown is an economic focal point (economic)

IX. Franklin

Feature: Kent has a diverse economy built with a social & environmental consciousness (economic)

- ? Preservation of natural resources (environmental)
- ? University housing needs are less invasive into neighborhoods (social)

X. Fairchild

Feature: Kent has a number of quality recreational opportunities and facilities (social)

- ? good place to raise a family (social)
- ? Kent is home to many locally owned, independent small businesses (economic)

X. University

Feature: Coming to terms with May 4th (social)

? Kent is home to many locally owned, independent small businesses (economic)

XI. Plum Creek

Feature: Kent's residents support appropriate economic development (economy)

? Preservation of natural resources (environmental)

? Small town atmosphere (social)

**City of Kent Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan
Round Four Focus Groups
Standing Rock Meeting**

October 2, 2003

- Signifies a participant's comment

Question #1: How well do the citywide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- Previous discussion we had in this location – with graphics, helped to provide understanding. Easy to visualize.
- I think they (tables) are really good. Very little problem with Environmental goals and what City sees as its priorities. One question – what is a riparian corridor and what are its implications? Given that we are 85% built out as a City, is there much land to protect? Be clearer about the term “riparian corridor.” Explain so people understand what it is and its implications.
- Using Green building codes where appropriate – make it incentive based, not demand based. Put LEADS program into effect. Want to encourage builders to do really good things.
- This approach (see above) will link the environment and economic considerations...incentives can help this to happen. Example of project that is creative with environment and building.
- Obvious that a lot of energy put into plan. Very thoughtfully put together for a nice future for Kent. What is Portage? Charley part of Portage County bike and hike trail. Connects Portage, thru city along Cuyahoga, with destination Ravenna, Warren, eventually Pittsburgh and Washington D.C.
- Add definition of what Portage is so everyone reading plan will know.
- City of Tomorrow represents a desire to return to the past. There is a certain amount of nostalgia built into this. Given external pressures, how feasible is this?
- Emphasis on small entrepreneurial businesses. Major employer is KSU. Yet footprint is small in the plan. Univ. does not come up as a major topic. (shouldn't it be recognized as major player in the local economy)?
- Implementation level – has any information been presented to organizations who will be expected to help pull this off. Awesome plan – great vision for the City. Will be hard to pull off on “work level.” So, how far has this gone? Do implementation Team partners understand their role?
- Charley: in 20 years, hope most of this will be checked off. This is a long-term plan. Historic Society, Parks & Rec. – some things already

- starting to be worked on Parks and Recs. – Great ideas on Cuyahoga River...canoeing, kayaking, etc. Will river (with dam) be too low for these activities?
- One-half of dm now opened. Will take out concrete wall – will have more water – especially in spring.
 - River is an asset to the City...is a nice river.
 - (In this plan) Seeing activities vs. attitudes. Do these things capture underlying attitude? Yes. Now how do we build in incentives for development? An attitude that reflects walking versus riding in cars, etc. How can we develop Gateways to City that say who we are and what do we hope to be? How do we build in incentives to fulfill our goals? Economic – work needs to be used a lot. Residents need to shop in Kent.
 - Guts of what are here and ideas very much reflect our town. But, how do we interpret so others understand>
 - Thing that misses the mark is the economy. All of goals in Social and Environmental come with a price tag, and economic area needs to address this. We need to be specific about jobs we want to attract/create.
 - What do we do to find people in companies that we are willing to buy from. Need a balance between local business and non-local. Balance between encouraging local buying and having the kinds of businesses that will attract people to the downtown and make Kent's economy more sustainable.
 - Talk about what is unique about our community – nice that Kent is a pedestrian city. Big stores (national chains) can help to support other small, locally owned stores.
 - I ride my bike around town. My Doctor moved downtown. Problem...businesses close at 5:00. Local stores not open so you have to go out of town to shop. Starbucks, Abercrombie & Fitch have expanded hours – influences other small businesses in town. Hope having businesses downtown that stay open longer will influence other (locally owned) businesses to do the same.

Question #2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide tables?

- Three pillars interrelate – social, Environmental, Economic. Need to increase population density – Campus Link, denser housing – 2nd floor Downtown development. Use push rather than pull model by having more population downtown or close to it. Develop incentives to encourage this. Fragmenting things will make this fail.
- Other downtowns, Northampton, Mass. Medina – many shoppers downtown – keep things happening. Bring international student housing and married student housing closer to town.
- How do we get students to shop downtown?

- Implications of economic tables – nothing talks about ways of encouraging establishment of locally owned small business. Plan doesn't address ways City can help small business get off the ground.
- Linkages off of city's website – small business help, information about Kent, Info. Students would need.
- Zoning & codes – how do these fold into this process?
- Tradeoffs/implications of some of these goals need to be accomplished: we need to look at pros and cons. City is 85-90% built out. There will have to be some places/stores lost. If we are to become something else, some existing business is bound to be hurt.
- Social and environmental conscious – not feasible to expect business to focus on this. Shouldn't hurt them because they don't have this consciousness.
- Living wage – will lose some business if we include this. Change "living wage" comment.
- Cuyahoga as it relates to private property as well as public. As kayak travel increases, what are implications for private property owners along the riverbanks? i.e. noise from the kayakers?
- Parking – want to increase shoppers downtown, so need to improve parking.
- Does city have parking management plan starting? Answer: yes.
- We should make our City accommodate us, not accommodate cars. Attitude shift or physical change

Question #3: How well do the recommendations for the Standing Rock District match your perception of local resident's goals for this district?

- Arts and coffee shops – didn't think residents would want this. Citywide and down near triangle area – yes. There are a few studios down there.
- Wonder – how much commercial real estate is there? Isn't much there available for commercial usage.
- Standing Rock – need a historic preservation organization to help with historic issues – such as building facades, historic designation, etc. KEC could be involved

**Kent Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan
Round Four Focus Groups
University Meeting
Student Center
November 6, 2003**

Group B

- Signifies a participant's comment

Question #1: How well do the citywide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- Good; focus on walk able; bike paths; KSU to mane traffic
- Same green design
- Fresno, California transplant – just starting walking, bicycling
- Pedestrians; boulevards; traffic management; downtown building along river; increase the size of the dorms; student housing closer to businesses
- Visual entrances to parks/neighborhoods. Cohesive signage – aesthetics – create a font – train systems in Switzerland
- Doable for KSU to participate

Question #2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide tables?

- Kent transit – does it go to 76/43; MG (?) – PARTA
- Historical list; history of area, not just buildings
- Bike routes?
- Kent residents shopping in Kent; attraction of other retail (chain)
- Salem – won't let chain stores downtown
- Mix chain stores & locally owned businesses
- Fresno – replaced downtown street into pedestrian walkway has gone up and down thinking about putting street back in
- Spokane, Washington; has aerial walkways
- Downtown; No problem walking around; seems far to get there
- Will frat row stay?
- Will Summit Street develop like 59? Different elements of development on opposite ends of Summit Street
- Aesthetics of campus on Summit Street needs to be beautiful
- Ideas for development and events at Home Saving Plaza?
- How to deal with activities downtown and shut down
- Farmer's Market? (yes) Next to Fresno
 - *Arts and Crafts, bands, etc.
 - *Same as Reno

Question #3: How well do the recommendations for the University District match your perception of local resident's goals for this district?

- Kent City schools give support to city; river clean; ups, etc.
- High School kids riding the bus might want to provide PARTA route for early dismissal
- Charge for parking at High School
- Status of parking garages

Additional Suggestions:

- Central places for information; community calendar
- Early Halloween program for children/families in downtown (usually Saturday of time change)
- Halloween contest in Downtown
- Off-campus housing: many terrible to look at
Found cheapest place to live – outside getting worse (Celeron?)
No alternate transportation @ 76/43
- Vacant land at Dubois?

Group C

- Signifies a participant's comment

Question #1: How well do the citywide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- Connect the University to the downtown
 - More to do downtown
 - Not just bars; more shopping
- Downtown is Chipotle's, Papa Johns, with the bars down the hill
- Created pedestrian orientation
- Needs: movies, music, restaurants/cafes
- Convenience is a factor
- Hard to get across 59
- The gap is lack of destination, not just distance and Haymaker
- Increase in long distance trails and non-paved trails
- More education and awareness about history of Kent
- Better signage to identify parks
- Link business opportunity to KSU programs, Ex: architecture – all media
- Parking and transportation
- Better transportation to downtown and to campus
- N/S 43 connections to campus are bad
- Analyze traffic signals and signage for better movement
- Campus link
- Glad to see emphasis on housing maintenance
- Rentals: high rents/low maintenance
- Overfilled houses
- Hold owners accountable

Question #2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide tables?

- Interest in revolving loans – need more information
- Incentives
- Revolving loans and programs for maintenance
- Plan seems to shift focus more
 - Campus center drive
 - Where is front of campus?
 - Campus must connect to downtown
- Other towns:
 - Granville – Denison; always something going on; programmed activities
- More bohemian – Thrift Shop

- Bad interactions with City
 - Where is the stuff downtown?
 - Police, police, police – back off
 - Adversarial relationship
 - Students perceived as negative

Group D

- Signifies a participant's comment

Question #1: How well do the citywide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- Neighbors protected – pushing rental housing out of the community – pushing student back on campus. But using student money for economy and using campus facilities by residents
- Where can university build residence halls – unfair message, stay on campus but come downtown and spend your money
- Students will not move back on campus – they'll go to other towns
- To encourage economic growth need to enhance faculty and staff into the community
- Need more businesses geared toward students – can get to Ravenna Wal-Mart as fast as get downtown
- Concern is the quality of off campus housing – best dealt with by enforcing ordinances with landlord
- Where does city council stand on supporting the plan – will the implementation team be organized to carry out implementation steps
- Relationship of university to the plan - are they supportive and involved?
- Expand student housing areas – city should take action to identify individual housing units as student housing by zoning as building becomes available – best for students to walk rather than get into car
 - a. Students identify neighborhood as their neighborhood
- How will you get people to car pool or ride the bus?
 - Enforce parking spaces, by increasing number to increase bus riding
 - University planned as esplanade
 - Bus needs to increase places, routes, and stops to where people want to go

Question #2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide table?

- Cost is a huge issue – economic plan needs to generate dollars for funding goals of plan
- University needs to consider needs of students to live off-campus a few years – leads to retention of students
- Possibility for economic development downtown but plan is too vague. Too much surface parking, what could go there? Big draw for students is a key increment.

- Plan could lead to a better campus-town business area, depends on types of businesses and east to get downtown
- Not much about Main Street, connection to downtown
College Avenue is a possible link

**City of Kent Bicentennial Plan
Community Meetings – Round Four
Crain to Main District
Faith Lutheran Church
October 9, 2003**

- Indicates participant's comments

Question #1: How well do the city-wide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- Good 50 year plan...awfully ambitious in the short term, but good for the long term.
- What will happen with Crain Avenue Bridge? Anything in? How will planning effect traffic flow? Will there be more interaction between plan and those working on bridge
- In 27 yrs., traffic speeding on Crain has become real issue. Other one...improving street maintenance. Put in plan as good a piece as possible on street maintenance.. Main Street...bad shape. Bumps. Been like that for years. Instead of land banking land, should put money into street maintenance. Main St. is focal point of town. The rest of the plan is good...but we need to get street maintenance going, otherwise we are a broken city.
- Sidewalks and trash addressed in plan also...gets a lot of support.
- If we wait too long to fix streets, costs a lot and residents are assessed a lot.
- Whole large plan is pretty good for over a long period of time.

Question #2: As we have looked over all of these items, what implications do you see?

- Suggest a survey to see how many people use bike paths and how many use sidewalks. All of this needs a lot of information. Delphi technique. There are an infinite # of projects and limited money
- A lot of wonderful projects here, but how much money do we have?

- Older folks, neighborhoods with more elderly residents more concerned about sidewalks, not bike paths.
- What are the plans for the downtown area? There is a strong flavor of keeping what we have, preserving historical buildings.
- Old hotel brought up. Differences of opinion as to what should happen to it.
- Are there still plans about a big motel downtown?
- Some will be hard to implement. Like getting High School kids to ride bus instead of driving. Even though some of these sound like a great idea, they will be hard to implement.
- Would cut back on traffic if freshman, sophomores and juniors could not drive to school.

Question #3: How well do the recommendations for the Crain to Main district match your perception of the resident's goals for this district?

- I 'm afraid of traffic calming term. It seems like a lot of money is spent to slow traffic down. People doing 40 – 60 mph. Police don't enforce traffic limits. We will spend \$1 million in taxpayer's funds to do what the police are supposed to do...enforce speed limits.
- Speeding on Crain Avenue...should not even be a through street. Only need to put up a few more stop signs and enforce speed limits. We are understaffed for comparable cities of our size as to police.
- How have the islands on East Main Street worked? Seems they have accomplished what they were supposed to. Students are not crossing where they aren't supposed to.
- Sidewalks...on East Main Street. Some parts not side walked; need to be.
- Does JEDD have an impact on anything we are talking about here?
- Student housing has lowered property values. Landlords allow properties to deteriorate. Boarding houses...are not legal. Eyesores. Safety issues. Overcrowded.
- Top concern...student housing/ housing maintenance issues.

- Car parking...can't be safe situation with that many cars.
- City should find out how many people live in boardinghouses.
- Supportive of city wide goal to enforce housing codes.
- I've e never had problems with reporting things to health department...trash cans, etc. They act pretty fast.
- When house changes hands, then enforce property codes.
- Obstruction of sidewalks by shrubs...creates a problem. Residents can take responsibility for this, but they often don't. Need pride in property.
- We need more citizen responsibility...put educational program on the list (in the plan).
- Concerned about tax abatements...same people getting them over and over. Green building codes good idea, but sometimes features do not fit with rest of neighborhood (i.e. Solar panels on house) . I know too many people who are getting away with rental units because they are still single family. Same people can do same thing, but don't want it to be student housing. Doesn't want one person to own many units of student housing and get tax abatements.
- Parents could commit on lease and understand requirements and expectations.
- A lot of this...get resident's involved. Residents need to get to know students. Does not have to be adversarial relationship.
- Need to be careful. This will take a long time.

**City of Kent Bicentennial Plan
University District
Church of the Nazarene
October 16, 2003**

- Indicates participant's comments

Question #1: How well do the citywide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- The Portage – question asked about this and what it was. Mary explained that it was a bikeway. Person said this made sense...rather than routes for cars.
- Under environment...inventory wetlands and creating maps and conserve maps and easements...can see this is a good thing. Item below I have a question about. But now, so many people want to build on wetlands...this plan would have the city ask for conservation rights from property owners so that they would not build on wetland. Encouraging university to build more on campus housing...but nothing about off campus housing. We are missing a lot if we do all building on campus. But does city of Kent want to go on record saying they don't want student housing off campus? But, they have social, economic impact on community - a positive impact. We don't want to say that we only want to see them on campus. Segregating them would ignore their positive impact upon the community.
- Participant called for more balance in report. ...Watch this statement about student housing closely.
- My thoughts on the first question-I would go more toward concerns of environment I'm a student. Economic side of things; I am not attached to those yet. Social...students need to become adults first. But we are all interested in the environment. There are sound environmental pieces in this plan. Things in there that really work.
- I see there are a lot of goals here...all are important...all need to have equal importance.
- I am impressed. Think overall it looks good
- Going back to first meeting...I am impressed with the wording...think it came back well. Only one area I am concerned with...water...something needs to be included in here about flooding...don't want to end up like Kokosing did this year. This report is not what I expected...but is

- something that I am very comfortable with. Every 7 – 10 years... we have a situation with heavy rainfall that creates problems. Hudson had problems with neighboring communities...water issues must consider neighboring communities; who is feeding into wetlands, who wants to build on wetlands...don't see a lot of thinking outside of Kent.
- Much more than I expected.
 - Very good summary...good capturing of the feelings of residents. But I don't see a uniqueness of community...don't see it in these statements. I want to see the arts and economic development (Someone pointed out where this was in plan). I see certain exclusionary statements...about student housing, about people having to shop in Kent. People want to both live and work in Kent...doesn't see this feeling captured in plan. Major point...doesn't see Uniqueness of Kent coming through in plan.

Question #2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide tables?

- Is this a negative? What we have to give up? Exchanging something for something else. If you choose to be this, you may need to give up that.
- Example: Small business emphasis...means no industrial users.
- Will we still want to attract national chain companies like Starbucks? A lot of emphasis on locally owned business...have we lost sight of national chains that could be here (Borders, Starbucks) Chains could still fit into downtown. One implication...we were too hard on national retailers.
- Need money coming in...otherwise you can't do the things you want to do.
- Establish criteria for national retailers...like building standards, architectural standards, etc. Make national retailers meet these standards.
- Will this drive the cost of real estate up? Will people not be able to afford to live in Kent? This is a tradeoff. People will go somewhere else to live.
- Somebody down the road will say you are telling us what to do. Example: Buy local. What kinds of incentives will it take to develop this kind of economy?
- Housing...go back to owners of housing units and ask them to improve property.
- What is the best balance?

- There need to be incentives in this plan to make it happen...to encourage private investment.
- There is a tradeoff with the preservation of historic structures...it keeps you from being able to change who you are. Can't destroy buildings and do something different with them anytime in the future if you want to change them.

Question #3: How well do the recommendations for University District match your perception of local resident's Goals?

- "Kent" is quiet is a good goal. I think this represents what people said they wanted for this district.
- These are goals, not necessarily existing? Yes, this is how it will look when we get there.
- Students' perspective? I think this represents how the students feel. You get a different experience off campus than on...depends on what you really want. Concerns I see in here. I said before that I am concerned with environment...and the concerns stated in here (this report) match up with how I feel and how I think other students feel also. I have thought about it before, and I share these goals.
- Shopping in Akron...go there for grocery shopping. There was a discussion about where people shop. Do they stay in Kent? No, many go to Akron.

**City of Kent Bicentennial Plan
Community Meetings – Round Four
Business Community
City Council Chambers
October 29, 2003**

- Indicates participant's comments

Question #1: How well do the citywide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- Very comprehensive and expansive...good start. The question is in the implementation.
- The plan covers a lot of ground...concern is time frame over which this will happen
- Ambitious plan, comprehensive. How do you maintain momentum once this is started? Really neat.
- In the environmental section: you should include the park commission...we are involved in the Portage Trail. It will provide a circuit with the cooperation of Kent. The overall proposal is not specific. Portage County Commissioners should be part of implementation team...provide overall consideration of grant applications, involve the planning commission, they are also involved with planning and architectural advisory board. Bit much to digest...first time I've seen the plan.
- This is my first planning mtg. There appears to be large aggressive projects. Purpose is development. Will take a lot of teamwork...it's a big job.
- My concern is that I see a lot about the University in this plan, but I also see the plan pushing students back onto campus so we are not longer a city problem. But you still want to keep our money (spending dollars in downtown).
- I am delighted to see the natural environment is a key part of this plan. I am a member of the Kent Environmental Council. This needs to be a regional plan...so make sure to keep regional focus.
- There is a lot to digest and this is my first time seeing the plan. I would ask that you consider promotion of linear parks concepts, i.e. bike paths,

river way, as a strategy to promote economic development. Tie in the river and linear park...as a catalyst...centerpiece. Would be nice to see students down there. Can they be brought in as interns?

Question #2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide tables?

- Someone needs to put together survey of what students want to see. A lot of students go home certain times of the year. Can business be brought in to provide something for these students to do so they stay here? Would help change Kent from its current status as a commuter school.
- Let's look at students as an asset rather than a problem. The University makes this town go; let's face it.
- Housing and enforcing codes...as a manager for owners of rental housing in town, I know there are big hurdles when trying to enforce the codes, and it upsets some of them...Somehow have to get good dialogue going between renters and students and city. A lot of things to work out to satisfy everybody. Students are an asset, but also leave after 4 years. Need to find a balance between incentives and enforcement. Incentives could include low interest money to fix up homes; Tax breaks for rehabilitation.
- The problem is the illegal frat houses... and problems with behavior on College Street. Do we need one street for the frat houses? They would live under a higher standard (housing quality) and this would help to clean up the area. Could also help businesses in area. Have a fraternity district...zoned as such. National fraternities give money for rehabilitation of frat houses. Others would move there...most students want a frat row. Problem is not frat houses...is with boarding houses.
- University started a circle off of Summit St., but was not feasible because you would have to have houses with 40 people...can't get that many.
- Could you get private investors to build frat? Houses? Residents would take more pride in them. Wouldn't be thorn in City side to birddog year after year. I know rental owners who would build houses.
- If regulations could be liberalized so that there was control more than prohibitions. University can step in and tell them (frats) to leave.

- Having a private owner could be a problem because they would lose all of their residents.
- Got to encourage business. Students and older residents are good customers. Start a "Shop Kent" program. Anyone who lives in Kent gets a card with discount...expand on Keys to Kent.
- Problem with people shopping here...can't compete with malls. Not a lot of variety.
- Get a chain that is locally community friendly. Big chain can extort from community. There have to be standards for tax abatement.
- National chains downtown? Fit in with architecture?
- Starbucks is coming in.
- Problems with businesses downtown...competition with malls, parking, weather, same problems as other small towns
- Students would shop downtown if there were a store that offered what they want and need. They can use PARTA busses to get around.
- Accessibility to downtown is important. Parking is an issue – must be free and easy.
- Concern from students...no place to park in Kent.
- Utilizing the river area will require change to existing structures tied into triangle area and along river. Some existing structures will have to be acquired or go.
- Crain Avenue bridge proposal has a bike path along the railroad corridor. Is not even close to happening.
- Latest on Bridge? Design 2 years, construction after. Big issue, acquiring prop. Best projection...end of 2007 for start of construction.

Question #3: How well do the recommendations for the Business Community District match your perception of local resident's goals for this district?

- Comment...existing buildings should be used...it is fine if they are usable space or historical. Kent should analyze future use of older buildings in light of overall plan.
- Some are eyesores...need to be rehabbed or torn down.
- Historic nature...still is something that has character if it represents the overall character of houses down Main Street at that time period.
- Must find a balance between the cost of rehab and the value of building.
- Herbert West building is an example of an improved older building. Will take time to rent.
- I think if we focus on recreation and the river, the businesses will be taken care of as a result. This focus will have a tremendous benefit. Will attract types of businesses, the arts, recreation, that will benefit from these plans.
- Towpath has been very successful...near Peninsula...get more of that through here. Linear parks. At first local property owners there opposed the plans, but then they saw the impact and went 180 degrees. Peninsula is a destination. Kent could be. Specific businesses would grow up around these plans...like bike shops.
- Parks...students need to know more about these so they can use them.
- Used to be a program to get students downtown and show them around. This program comes and goes. We need to do it consistently.
- Have a lot on table. Need to take three things to focus on and others will fall into place automatically. Ricochet effect...choose 2 or 3 things that will have ricochet effect.
- Problem...infrastructure problems and costs. Tax dollars will help to fund infrastructure. Biggest problem...what if we build garage and no one shops downtown?

**City of Kent Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan
Franklin District
Recreation Center
October 30, 2003**

- Indicates participant's comments

Question #1: How do the citywide plans capture your vision of Kent of tomorrow?

- Sounds good...leaves out a lot of detail as to how you will go about doing this and pay for it. Some of this is vague...sidewalks 5 to 10 year plan. Will they do anything with sidewalks now? This is the priority.
- I think it hits real needs of city. Interconnecting parks by 2015...but traffic lights, sidewalks, no target dates. We need a higher priority on those things that need to be taken care of right now.
- I disagree...green space disappearing so need to deal with this now.
- Infrastructure has higher priority. And immediate need. Road resurfacing for example.
- Sidewalks on Lincoln street need to be done now. On 43 – sidewalks slant. Big trucks come by. Lincoln has no sidewalks..
- General Consensus - SIDEWALKS SHOULD BE A TOP PRIORITY!!!!
- Another high priority...town needs an outdoor swimming pool. Ridiculous that a town this size does not have one.
- I don't have anything specific. These things are idealistic and we have talked about a number of them for sometime. Remember when we all talked about sidewalks. Now I live on Ivan Drive and we have no sidewalks. As I look at this report, it is same old same old and situation remains the same. Talked about these issues 25 years ago and nothing has happened. Interconnecting community. Park can't be done. Tax abatements for new homeowners...I would have to put more money into pot if we do this.
- Overall a good plan...a beginning. Can see how it would take 20 years to implement. Has a lot of things I want to see. Biggest concern...how will we pay for this? I am opposed to new taxes to support this. This captures what I would like to see city of Kent for tomorrow. Built

environment...like enforcement of property maintenance codes and rooming house licensing...also need to watch zoning to make sure we aren't too lax in zoning and enforcement.

- I think overall it is a good plan. Something to shoot for. Don't expect to get everything done, but it is worthwhile. Environment...built...housing rehab and new construction...wouldn't we want to keep these vacant lots as green space instead of building new housing on them?
- Couple points I agree with...something needs to be done with south Lincoln Street .The road is deteriorating. Safety of children and joggers is in jeopardy. This neighborhood changing over..I am seeing new generation of homeowners with small children. So if goal is more pedestrian traffic, we need to work on sidewalks. Zoning...city can do small things. I know we are a college town...but vehicles are on front lawns with for sale signs are an eyesore. We need to enforce codes that prohibit front yard parking. I like the idea of developing the historic part of downtown. City should declare entire block...library, box building, Episcopal Church, Christian Science Center...this block could be a district. Expand westward from downtown. Emphasis on library. Our main livelihood is the university, so I believe there are certain things we have to put up with as a result.
- I have seen some of these things taking place. Police and rental units...they are taking a different approach (less confrontational) and I was impressed with this. Overall, I think it (the plan) looks pretty good. Don't remember seeing anything with train line through Kent...from Cleveland on down to Kent. Dog Park? What happened with this? There were some areas already fenced. Where is this? Try to get the University more involved downtown. Would be nice to see more restaurants...there is still so little down there. I like this plan.
- (A lot of discussion ensued around the recreational amenities in the city, particularly those available through Kent State. One participant claimed they were reasonable cost and open to the public; other participants said that they were expensive and discouraged city residents from using. No conclusion or consensus was reached).
- We have 23 (?) pools in City...but nothing outside.
- But university pool is not public. Could this be changed...lower cost for residents.?
- Something for kids all summer?

- Some question as to whether or not the university pool is accessible to the public and the cost.
- Talked about recreation complex near soccer fields. Think about complex at Cuyahoga Falls. Should have something like a recreation complex that tells youth that they can come out and play and provide exercise opportunities. for older people in the Kent Community. Hope Council looks at more comprehensive approach to recreation complex...all ages, all weather...get in shape and stay in shape...and affordable.

Question 2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide tables?

- Implications...higher taxes.
- Think it is a nice plan but think it will be tabled. Exercise in futility.
- Don't waste your energy cause its not going to happen. Where will the money come from? Can't keep asking property owners and voters to continue to pay.
- Need to have a mix of businesses downtown...locally owned and also attract franchises. Have seen locally owned stores disappear. We need to recruit other local businesses to downtown.
- When I first came here there were shops downtown. Where did they go?
- Economy...in other university towns the university and town are inter-tied. When I look at this plan, I don't see as much connection between the university and town. Examples...Woodworking program students could revitalize buildings.. Culinary arts...students could work downtown in restaurants. These efforts would form connections between university and town. University could provide support. The town can provide the applied way of doing things and learning things. University can be the answer to a lot of our problems. Utilize them as much as possible. Apprenticing, interning, etc. City can get free services from University This happens in other communities. Interesting and unique stores could be as a result of students/artists. University is critical to local economy.
- They do run culinary arts restaurant on campus. As for looking to university as an economic generator, they are strapped for money...laid off 80 people.

- Conference center...if on campus does not impact town. Impact on Kent depends on location and philosophy.
- Wellness center is not friendly to non-students. Affordability is an issue.
- Should we have had city put in money (to conference center) and make this a joint city/university facility.
- There used to be shops downtown. Trade off is trying to want to have downtown have a renaissance and be like it was a century ago. Now development is happening more on a neighborhood/district basis...with small shop centers in neighborhoods...examples include the triangle, and strip mall.
- We want to maintain downtown as a home to small specialty shops, medical, professional offices. But, will the downtown succeed at the expense of the small retail/commercial areas that exist now in neighborhoods? We should focus on these small shopping centers and keep them healthy. This is the Tradeoff...do we want to develop or sustain retail neighborhoods, or do we want to focus on bringing back downtown. I think we have to sustain what we have in downtown...concerts, etc., then save areas outside CBD. Neighborhood-based small retail areas. Don't bring back downtown to the point of destroying the neighborhood commercial areas. Instead, develop the neighborhood commercial areas.
- I don't see that as an either/or. I think central areas could still be developed. Just need to get students downtown. Don't think they are mutually exclusive.
- I don't think there is enough venture capital in this time to have it both ways. Its neighborhood retail/commercial areas or downtown redevelopment, not both.
- There are two competing theories on economic development. Planners can't have it both ways. Economic Practicalities have dictated that we don't have those kind of investment assets coming into town.
- People have to have a reason to go downtown. No one goes there now.
- I think change in shopping habits happened because downtown changed. I grew up in another college town and downtown is vibrant. Students come downtown.

- No place to go downtown now to shop. Students or us.
- Students have cars...more capable of going out of Kent to go shopping. More mobile. This is a commuter school.
- **Question #3: How well do the recommendations for the Franklin District match your perception of resident's goals for this district?**
- I think, going to bottom, student housing. Enforcement is an issue. Reducing student housing is an issue, and enforcement.
- The discussion concluded due to time constraints.

**City of Kent Kent Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan
Round Four Focus Groups
Fairchild District
November 13, 2003**

- Signifies a participant's comments

Question #1: How well do the citywide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- I noticed first thing...bike trails and connecting parks...praise this. This is my first priority.
- A lot of things I see I like but the most important thing is the promotion of small business and preservation and improvement of downtown...go hand in hand. Downtown has seen stronger days...more foot traffic, vibrant business. That encourages people to go downtown. Locally owned bus. Import to encourage. Combine with focusing business to locate downtown. Making downtown more vibrant. More people using business downtown...more variety.
- People leave Kent to shop...encourage business downtown that will bring people in to shop.
- More eating places downtown.
- Charley...hearing there is a lack of student traffic because there is less to buy. Students oriented toward chain stores...how do you feel about?
- Wouldn't be good.
- Look at Hudson...how has this worked for them?
- Realize you need to have bus that would succeed downtown...chains are last choice, but if locally owned may be ok.
- Main concern this area more than downtown. Will there be a light going up? Second concern...sidewalks. Can't walk to church cause have to go through grass. Another concern...the park. Take along kids there (Al Lease Park). Need more playground equip. appreciate walkway. Plum Creek is good playground...this one sucks. There is not much playground equipment.
- Kent is a place where a lot of people want stability,,,raise kids,,,have fun. Not just a college town. Keep this in mind. A lot of people want to raise kids in Kent. But, there is nothing here for the kids to do. Gabriel Bros. – an entertainment center for families..restaurant, ski ball, entertainment. Focus on families, what families can do. Look at Univ. and what kids can do with Univ. Look at stores downtown...what would you like to see downtown. Senior Complexes...kids...families. People who live here need things to do...bring more to package. Activities for kids. How will people be drawn in...involved in community. More places to eat downtown.

Building on library good for community. Main thing...things for kids to do. Want people to stay here...provide something to keep people living here.

- Like how tables itemize sections and relate back to original goals. I want more information on how.
- Jack- next step of action team

Question #2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide tables?

- If we had some big name brands downtown, it would be ok. Don't want downtown to be strip mall...Gap, etc.
- Traffic patterns...how do plans affect this? There are heavy traffic areas in Kent already. I live near S. Water St. and that is a heavily trafficked area already. If something is going on downtown, how will this affect already heavy traffic?
- Proposed bike trail...sections where it crosses road. Will this be a problem?
- On 59...trees...improves quality of life with plantings and medians. Like this.
- We chose to live here (compared with Stow) because it is easier to walk around and ride a bike in. Kent is a really nice community to walk around.
- Alternate transportation resources (walk, bike, bus). would greatly take down traffic. I don't think freshman should have cars at all. Glad PARTA did not discontinue routes.
- Charley- pedestrian orientation. Does this discourage people from coming into Kent to shop?
- Hard balance...if keep downtown retail/commercial...need to keep this accessible to cars. Kent winters are nasty. Want to encourage people to get downtown.
- Why don't we slow traffic down more? Here it is 25 and on campus is 35. People won't be so scared to cross streets.
- On Fairchild, can barely get from silver meadows into here.
- I like Kent because I can get around by walking. Can ride bike easily. Few nasty intersections...haymaker. If we want people to get downtown we have to allow them to be able to be able to get there. Enhance with bike path. Pretty good now. Slow down traffic.
- Traffic slower...like the islands. Easier to cross street. About car dealerships...scary to walk this street. Is dangerous to walk some places.
- We bought a house here and my only concern is, how realistic, agree with traffic calming, but when you look at where people bought houses...many work in Akron and Cleveland...focus is not on Kent. Only way to get to rt. 8 is to go thru residential areas. How will you balance this? How will you slow traffic and still get people to work? Create jobs here (economic development) to keep people from having to drive out of town?

- Think of other cities that slow down traffic...this has to be done. Have no choice.

Question #3: How well do the recommendations for the Fairchild District match your perception of local resident's goals for this district?

- Sounds like a lot of the stuff we talked about.
- Have heard the same things throughout City.
- Sidewalks is in the plan...recreation...transportation...need to improve in this neighborhood. All of these items have been brought up.
- Did they talk about a new recreation center in this area? Charley - Parks & rec is talking about.
- Fairchild and Silver Meadows...difficult to cross street. Need light.
- This is pretty much as we said before...what we said we wanted.
- Appreciative that PARTA stops within Silver Meadows...this is great!
- A lot of students in Silver Meadows...they rely on bus to get to school.

**Kent Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan
Report of Focus Group
Central Business District
Council Chambers
November 25, 2003**

- Indicates participant's response

Question #1: How well do the citywide tables capture your image of the Kent of tomorrow?

- You are working toward goals. There are still vast amount of land on Cuyahoga River that still need to be developed. Historic preserve...try to bring in High School reunion classes and bring in historical information on their houses. Gave good data base on housing..picture of area. Don't think neighborhoods are protected well enough yet. Redoing houses...rehabbing...don't make it incompatible with neighborhoods. Protect neighborhoods.
- City Laws...how many unrelated people can live in a house...this can deteriorate a neighborhood (overcrowding).
- I want to see more working between University and downtown...encourage student shopping in downtown area.
- Key thing...pedestrian orientation. Bought a house here cause you can walk around town. Only have one car. Can walk to where we go...this is what is appealing about town. Keep this in the fore. Crain Ave. bridge must maintain pedestrian access. How can we maintain and improve pedestrian Access? This is a neat thing about this community.
- Town-gown – a lot of this is about geography. Make it easier to traverse distance (campus to town).

Question #2: What implications do you see present in various choices in the citywide tables?

- This whole idea of destination...have to examine from position of vehicles and trucks...and pedestrians... and type of destination. State of Vermont...buildings built around greens – city building, Was nice for pedestrians...but not great for trucks. Have to think in terms of both pedestrian destinations and transportation destinations.

- With city getting larger...I can walk downtown...but out in Fairchild you can't.
- Peoples perception...if you can walk there in 15 min they will walk it...if longer, won't.
- Some places people don't walk even if it is close because it is hard to walk to...traffic presents a problem and barrier.
- Built environment - A...increase PARTA rider ship...This is a very good goal. But there has to be a radical change in people's behavior in order to get to this goal.
- Plan is based on extremely integral relationship with city, participation with city...and university. What I hear is animosity between the two. Will they cooperate? I went to Hiram college...the college was the community...they were an integral part of the community. Here...seeing some cooperation that enhances city and University. Kent Stage a major venue for entertainment. I see many possibilities for further cooperation.
- Promote more understanding between students and residents. Create a better mutual image of each other.
- Town-gown rough relationship. Kent is a mobile population, and this town is dominated by one industry (KSU). There is always the opportunity in my department for town-gown relationship (Design School). But, others in my department do not live in town so the local concerns do not touch them. A lot of it is due to lack of awareness...my peers are unaware of what is happening locally. Issue is not animosity...it is flat out unawareness.
- When I came here, students were being killed on Main Street. We finally got pedestrian islands...but we need more. We don't want to be divided by streets coming through community.

Question #3: How well do the recommendations for the Central Business District match your perception of local resident's goals for this district?

- I was looking for home based businesses and use of accessory buildings (example - Garages). Artists are interested in using these buildings for their offices/studios. Would like the current codes changed to allow this.

- I think it is possible, example - New shopping center on Fairchild Ave., survey needs of surrounding residents...ex. Grocery store could open a mini post office. Serve the needs of the people inside the area.
- Utilize Cuyahoga River...does this relate to the dam? Refers to entire river as it goes through Kent.
- In Youngstown, there is a lot of interest in the restoration of the Mahoning River and use it as a focal point for community enhancement.
- Cleveland did Lakefront Challenge event...Design Teams competed with each other in use of lakefront. A lot of communities are realizing that their river valley is an asset. Kent is ahead of game ...recognizing built environment.
- Implementation Plan...appreciate rehab/replacement of old structures. Sometimes they need to be retired. Other time, rehabilitation is an option. Don't want to see downtown freeze in 1890's – want it to remain vital. So rehab and revitalize. Keep vibrant as well as preserving history.
- Downtown area could be denser...with setbacks...encourage more people downtown. Two story streetscape. Build in more density without sacrificing look.
- Look at the students on campus...almost all of them have cars. They don't walk downtown...they drive to Akron or someplace else.
- I had a bicycle as a student. It was hard to go shopping...nothing here in Kent. So, my generation said lets go to the mall. What came first? Lack of shopping, or the car?
- I would like to see bike-hike trail system connect with downtown. That would be a big shot in the arm. Look at Peninsula.
- Be grateful that the railroad was brought to town...too bad he didn't put it on the other side of the river.

