



The eclectic mix of music, arts, natural beauty, historic downtown, Kent State University, and an international business presence is Kent's community signature.

Community building never stops and it continues through visioning and strategic planning that takes today's dreams and transforms them into the community projects of tomorrow.

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

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

Mayor and Members of City Council

- John Fender, Mayor (330) 673-6499
- Ward 1 Garret Ferrara (330) 678-0069
- Ward 2 Jack Amrhein (330) 678-9749
- Ward 3 Wayne A. Wilson (330) 673-0769
- Ward 4 John M. Kuhar (330) 678-5897
- Ward 5 Heidi L. Shaffer (330) 677-8169
- Ward 6 Tracy Wallach (330)678-0540

Council At Large

- Michael DeLeone (330) 678-0032
- Rick Hawksley (330) 673-8631
- Robin G. Turner (330) 673-2912

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

www.KENT360.com

click on the "City Strategic Plan" in upper right corner.

2008 City Strategy Update



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

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

That's what strategic
planning is all about.

the **kent** community
uncommonly good together



Strategy Matters



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

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

Strategy Priorities

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

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



Strategic Intent

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

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

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

Planning Ahead

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

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

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

Our Promise

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

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

Dave Ruller, City Manager

2008 Strategy Sessions	
January	New Council Training and Orientation Program
April	Strategic Planning Workshop With Expert Facilitators
July	Public Priorities and Goal Setting Workshop
Monthly	City Council Activity Reports
On-Line	New Community Strategic Planning Web Site

A summary of 2008 Strategy Action Items is listed on the inside pages of this brochure.

2008 Strategic Activity Report Card*

*highlights above and beyond routine City services

2008 ACTIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Bagpiper Tour Downtown
- Who's Your Mama Event
- Heritage Festival
- Downtown Cider Festival
- Downtown Ghost Walk
- Halloween Family Festival
- Festival of Lights
- St. Pets Day at Kent Stage
- KSU NCAA Game Broadcast at Kent Stage
- Downtown Kent Corporation Agreement
- Bid Downtown Redevelopment RFQ
- Kent Whitewater Park Study
- Earth Day Event Street Permit
- Celebrate Kent Grant Awards
- Main Street Kent 2-Year Renewal
- Downtown Design Guideline Funding
- Downtown Blight Study Updated
- Downtown Master Plan Project
- Land Banking
- Adopt a Spot Flowers Program
- Façade Grants Program
- Phoenix Project Presentation
- Rockin' in West River 6/3
- Farmers Market with music (and indoors)
- Downtown Toy Drive, Art Walk
- Old Red Diner Removed (10/15)
- 2nd Annual Wine and Art Fest (10/3)
- Phoenix Redevelopment Underway
- Black Squirrel Gallery Relocates 8/5
- Downtown Parking Study Completed
- Gallery Saggio Opens 5/20
- Water Street Tavern Loan

- \$200,000 in Employee Initiated Cuts and Savings
- Council / Manager Orientation Workshop
- Ohio Excellence Program Preview for City Operations
- Strategic Planning Work Sessions
- New Council Activity Quarterly Reports
- New On-Line City Strategic Planning Web Page
- Pending List Update and Review
- New Citizen Action Center Web Site 4/7
- New On-Line Capital Projects Information Site
- Mentoring Day with Roosevelt High School Student

- Citywide Trash Hauling Study and Bid seeking to lower costs for residents
- Comparative Income, Property and Sales Tax Staff Report 2007

- Atlantic and Great Western Business Park Presentation, JRS Grant Application
- Centennial Research Park 1 Completion
- Centennial Research Park 2 Discussion

- Trash Cans Project Finished
- Home Savings Summer Concert Series
- July 4th Events
- Independent Film Movie Shoot 6/08
- NFL Pro Bowlers in Water St. Tavern 2/08
- Black Squirrel Projection Art

- Tallmadge/Kent/Brimfield JEDD Agreement
- West River Business Parking Evaluation
- Economic State of Readiness Assessment
- Economic Opportunities Map
- Normal Illinois Redevelopment Presentation
- Kent Retail Trade Area Study
- Summa Robinson Devon Project Presentation
- Summit Street Incubator Policy Update
- Economic Development Incentives Policy
- Tax Incentive Review Council Report
- Don Joseph Toyota Tax Abatement
- Spicer Village Site Visit and Discussion
- University Park Alliance Presentation
- City Relocation Policy Changes
- JEDD Revolving Loan Fund Expanded
- City Loan Subordination Policy Changes
- Revolving Loan Fund for Alpha Micron
- EDA Revolving Loan Fund Report
- Community Reinvestment Area Report
- Economic Development Team Meetings
- Host Fall Brawl Lacrosse Tournament
- Kent Marketing Videos
- AWP Traffic Control Expands
- Don Joseph Expands
- Cambria Opens in Kent 8/29
- Alpha Micron \$5 Million Grant
- Diptech Systems Opens in Kent 7/11
- Kent Whitewater Grant & Web Site
- Ohio Rugby Tournament in Kent 5/9
- Purdue Incubator Trip 5/8
- ACME Grocery Renovation 5/1
- Kent Business Expo 4/9
- Riverside Wines Expansion
- JEDD's Bring In \$350,000
- Akron Canton Airport \$115 million Investment
- Pathogen Detection Systems \$3 Million Grant
- Video E-mail Marketing Technology
- Go 2 Go Van Service Business Doubles
- Catalyst Church Opening on S. Water Street
- Empire Grand Opening 11/08
- Water St. Tavern Expansion
- Loca-Lingual Incubator Tenant

2008 ACTIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Cell Tower Lease
- 2009 City Budget
- New Cable Franchise Fees
- NOPEC Savings Refund
- RITA Tax Service Change
- Financial Status Reports
- Issue II Grant Applications
- Blue Ribbon Panel
- City Notes Rollover
- Natural Gas Well Proposal
- Union Contract Negotiations
- AMATS Funds for Summit Street
- Fire/Police Equipment Grants
- Retiree Health Care Savings
- Street Paving With Township
- NOPEC Gas and Electric Rates
- City Cuts and Savings Report
- City Budget Forecasting
- Worker's Safety Discount of 2%
- AFLAC Flexible Spending Accounts
- Solicited Wellness Proposals
- Explored 4 Day Work Weeks
- Reduced Engineering Position

- Crain/Fairchild Bridge Project
- Reallocation for More Paving Funding
- Spaulding Road Bridge Agreement
- City/ODOT Salt Purchase Agreement
- Funding for Sidarm Replacements
- Plum Creek Bridge Repair Agreement
- Snow operations
- CSX Train Derailment
- Middlebury Road Bridge Repair
- Smoke Alarm Program
- Hurricane Ike Response
- New Traffic Engineer Hired
- Hydrant Flushing Program
- Raw Water Transmission Line Repair
- Annual Sidewalk Program
- Fire Response to Chlorine Gas Leak

- Shop With A Cop
- Anti-Graffiti Campaign
- Kent Police Awards
- CEDAP Chemical Detection Grant
- Rescued Lost Kids Near Riverbend
- Arrests Made in Serial Burglary Cases
- Justice Center Study

- Ohio Vietnam Veteran's Memorial
- Social Service Budget Grants
- Brunch Bunch
- City Employee Donations

- Sheetz Project
- Thoroughfare Plan Revisions
- Parking Changes (Portage Street, Erie, Gougler, College Court)
- Crain/Fairchild Citizens Committee Meeting
- Zoning Text Changes
- Joint Meeting with Franklin Township
- White Oaks Subdivision Changes

2008 ACTIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Green Building Design Guidelines
- City Building Green Standards 12/5
- Portage Solid Waste District Appointment
- Leaf Collection/Mulching/Tub Grinding
- Adopt a Spot
- Kent State Sustainability Task Force
- TV recycling with KSU Sept 20
- Set Conservation Reduction Goals

- Whitewater Park Study
- Stormwater BMP Regulations Update
- New NEFCO Watershed Coordinator
- Ohio EPA River Quality Report 10/6
- KSU Kayak Training
- Cuyahoga River PBS Movie

- AMATS Hike and Bike Trail Funds
- City/KSU Joint Transportation Seminar
- Walk-N-Roll Presentation
- New Bike Trail Construction
- Citizen's Sidewalk Snow Removal Committee
- Comprehensive Citywide Bike Plan
- KSU-City Bike Share Research 10/28
- Kent Central Gateway Transit Study

- Horning Road KSU/City/Township Trail Agreement
- New Bike Trail Construction Middlebury/Lake Street
- Comprehensive Citywide Bike Plan
- Turkey Trot Race
- Heritage Fest Race
- Brady's Leap Adventure Race
- Horning Road Trail Construction

- City/KSU Joint Transportation Seminar
- Horning Road KSU/City/Township Agreement
- Horning Road paving with the Township
- City/County/KSU Justice Center Study
- Centennial Research Park Project
- Regional Development Team Meetings
- Tallmadge Regional Opportunities Study
- Kent State Fix Up Community Service Day
- Flash Fixers 100 Hours of Power
- KSU/Community Kayak Training
- Retention, Global downtown
- Shared Electronic Bulletin Board Research
- Kent Central Gateway Transit Study
- Kent State-City Turkish Justice Partnership
- Dave Dix Speech at the Bowman Breakfast

- City/University Budget Modeling Project
- Regional Collaboration Grant Applications
- Kent State Flags on SR 59 Bridge Gateway
- Kent State Sustainability Task Force
- TV recycling with KSU Sept 20
- University Speaker on Service Learning Projects
- University - Community Tailgate Parties
- Quarterly Franklin/Brimfield/Kent JEDD Meetings

- Community Dinner Presentation
- New City Tool Loan Program
- Neighborhood Walk Around
- Citywide Trash Hauling Study
- KSU Student Orientation
- Police Great Dane Incident
- DECA Welcome To Kent Project

- Upgraded Code Officer to full time position
- Exterior Maintenance Code Revisions
- New City Tool Loan Program
- Code Compliance Annual Report

- Joint Zoning Review
- CDBG Action Plan Review and Public Hearings

2008 ACTIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



OBJECTIVES

Customer & Results Focus

Energy Conservation

Cuyahoga River Preservation

Alternative Transportation

High Quality of Life

Parks & Trails

Collaborations

City University Synergy

Neighborhood Relations

Code Awareness & Compliance

Redevelopment & Restoration

Great Neighborhoods

Community Planning

Affordable Housing

Human & Social Services

Safe City

Financial Health & Stability

Economic Development

Viable Downtown

Tech Research & Manufacturing

Fair Standard of Living

Government Performance

GOALS

Natural Resource Protection