



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

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

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

# 2016 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.

## Mayor and Members of City Council

Jerry Fiala, Mayor & President of Council

- Ward 1 Garret Ferrara
- Ward 2 Jack Amrhein
- Ward 3 Robin G. Turner
- Ward 4 John M. Kuhar
- Ward 5 Heidi L. Shaffer
- Ward 6 Tracy Wallach

## Council At Large

- Michael DeLeone
- Melissa Long
- Roger Sidoti

## 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.

City of Kent  
319 South Water Street  
Kent, Ohio 44240

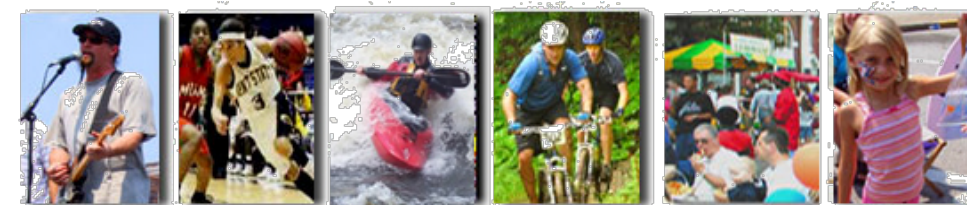
PHONE: 330 676-7500  
FAX: 330 678-8033  
[www.kentohio.org](http://www.kentohio.org)

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

[www.KENT360.com](http://www.KENT360.com)

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

the kent community  
uncommonly good together



## Strategy Matters



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

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

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

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



## Strategy Priorities

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

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

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

## 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

# 2016 Strategic Activity Report Card

## 2015 ACTIONS

- Beatles Fest
- Reggae Fest
- Blues Fest
- Heritage Festival
- International Festival
- Downtown Cider Festival
- Downtown Ghost Walk
- Downtown Kent Sidewalk Sale
- Halloween Family Festival
- Festival of Lights
- Kent Oktoberfest
- St. Pets Day
- Dog Days of Summer Event
- River Day
- Earth Day Event
- Art in the Park Event
- Chocolate Walk
- Sidewalk Cinema
- 2015 Celebrate Kent Grant Awards
- 'Round Town Music Festival
- Main Street Kent Renewal
- Adopt a Spot Flowers Program
- Destination Kent Visitor Centre Opens
- KSU Fashion Store Opens
- Farmers Market with music (and indoors)
- Annual Wine and Art Fest
- City Leased Railroad Parking
- Destination Kent Website Launches
- Pufferbelly 34<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Courthouse Redevelopment Proposal
- Dan Smith Community Park

- Kent Marketing Videos
- Kent Business Expo
- **JEDD's Bring In \$000,000**
- Heritage Ohio Annual Conference
- Downtown Valet Program
- Inventory of Historical Homes
- Main Street Kent Renewal
- Information Kiosks Agreement
- Dan Smith Community Park
- Former Ametek Site Demolition
- Kent Housing Study Completed
- Uber Ride Share Services
- New Rental Licensing Program
- New Economic Development Director
- West River Business Parking Renewal
- Tax Incentive Review Council Report
- EDA Revolving Loan Fund Report
- Community Reinvestment Area Report

- Updated City Fee Schedule
- City Notes Rollover Savings
- Clean Audit from the State
- Worker's Safety Award
- 2015 Capital Plan
- Sale of City Admin Buildings
- Sale of Downtown Courthouse
- Sale of Surplus Fire Truck
- City Bonds, Notes Renewal
- City Property Review
- West Side Fire Station Levy
- AMATS Grant for SR43 Sidewalks
- Debt Issue for New Police Facility
- State ODOT SR43-SR59 Repaving
- On-Line Auction of Surplus
- 2015 Operating Budget
- 2015 County Tax Budget
- Brimfield-Kent JEDD Tax Rates Reaffirmed
- Proposed 2016 City Operating Budget

## 2015 ACTIONS

- Kent Police Goals for 2015
- 2015-16 School Resource Officer Contract
- Ambulance Fee Increase
- Kent PD Annual 'Fill-A-Cruiser' Event
- Emergency Broadcasts
- Citizens Police Academy
- Hydrant Flushing Program
- Police Employees-of-the-week Program
- Annual Sidewalk Program
- Fire Life Saving Training
- Police Training Exercises
- Snow Street & Sidewalk Operations
- SAFERS Funding Grant
- FEMA Flood Design Requirements
- Statewide Tornado Drill
- Kent-Munroe Falls Jail MOU

- Late Night Sales Ordinance
- Citizen Police Academy
- Second Hand Retail Regulations
- **Sex Offender Task Force**
- 911 Dispatch with Kent State

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

- Summit Street Improvement Project
- 2015 CHIP Grant
- ODOT Bridge Repair Project SR261
- Parking Petitions
- AMATS Grant for SR43 Sidewalks

- Inventory of Historical Homes in Kent
- CDBG FY2015 Action Plan Review and Public Hearings
- CDBG 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan and Project Funding

## 2015 ACTIONS

- Green Town Kent Sustainability Conference
- Leaf Collection/Mulching/Tub Grinding
- Kent's Elastomer Wins State Gold Award
- Solid Waste Ordinance Changes

- **Sustain the Great Lakes Grant**
- Cuyahoga River Watershed Fest
- River Clean Up Events
- Crooked Adventures Livery
- River Day

- AMATS Hike and Bike Trail Funds
- Citizen's Volunteer Shovel Efforts
- City Contractor Clear Snow at Intersections
- KSU Flash Fleet Bike Share Program
- Bike & Brainstorm Event
- **AMATS Regional Bike Planning Public Meeting in Kent**

- Trimming Trees
- Turkey Trot Race
- **Bowman Cup Race**
- Heritage Fest Race
- Black Squirrel Triathlon
- Crooked River Adventure Race
- **New Kent is Green Video Clip**

- Kent Public Art Plan
- Portage County Emergency App
- 2015 Catalytic Partnership Award for Kent & KSU
- KSU/Community Kayak Canoe Livery
- International Food Event Downtown
- 2 Bowman Town-Gown Breakfasts
- **KSU and Kent Parks Regional Basketball Tourney**
- Wick Poetry Center's Travelling Stanzas Project
- City-KSU 911 Partnership
- **City-KSU CARE Grant**
- **One Kent, Ride and Walk Event**
- Flash Fleet Bike Share Program
- **Kent State Flags on SR 59 Bridge Gateway**
- Quarterly Franklin/Brimfield/Kent JEDD Meetings
- KSU-City River Clean Up Events

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

- Feral Cat Resolution
- New Regulations on Trash Compliance
- Rooming & Boarding Code Modifications
- **Code Compliance Annual Report**
- Towing Ordinance Storage Fee Change

## 2015 ACTIONS



City of Kent