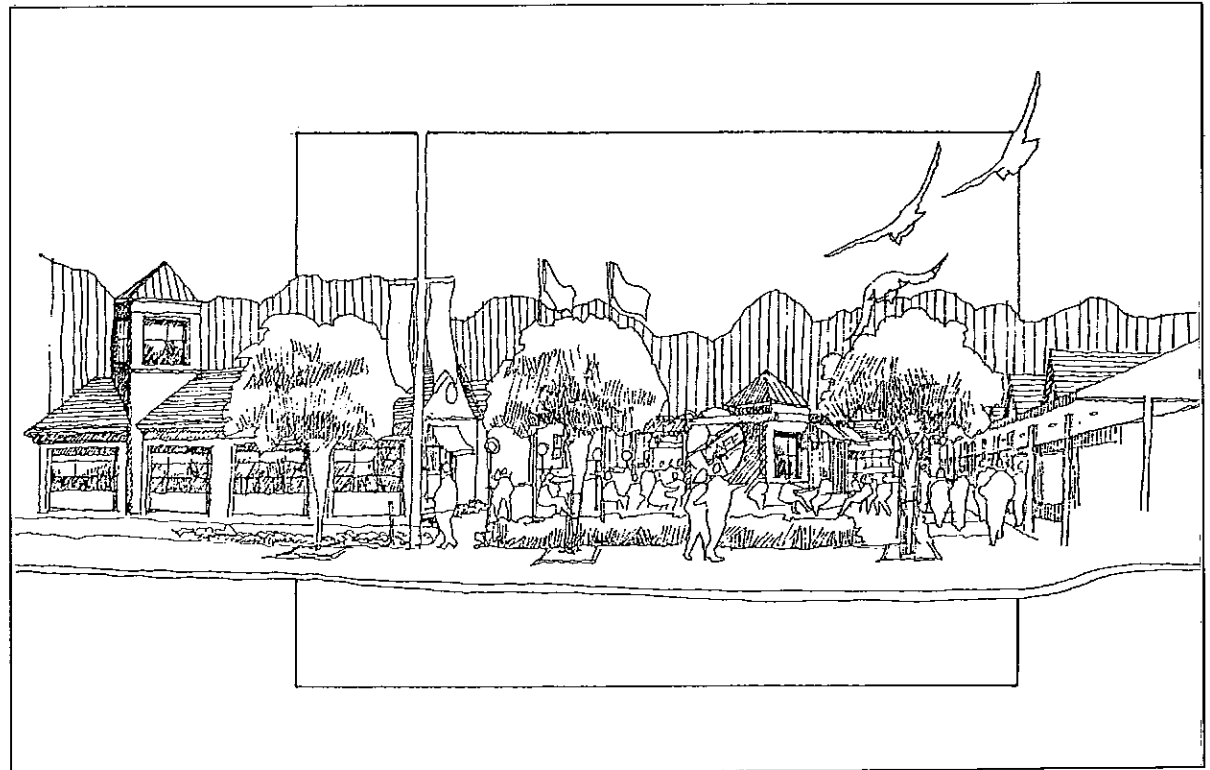


Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Planning for the Future

3



Drawing of proposed improvements to the Campus Center by Seiw-Hong Ong

I. Improve the Economic Vitality of the Area

One of the most essential goals in any revitalization process is to encourage new growth and development, which in turn boost the local economy and allow the city to capture a larger portion of the economic market. The key to accomplishing this goal is to provide reasonable, creative ideas and incentives for attracting new business and visitors by taking advantage of the positive elements already in place in Kent and remaining sympathetic to the existing setting and community.

The following outline provides a variety of ideas for strengthening the local economy. Numbered items are objectives, and the bulleted phrases which follow are suggestions made by townspeople or students as possible strategies for achieving those objectives. The suggestions are not intended as requirements but as ideas for accomplishing the general goal.

1. Invite customers and visitors from outside the Kent area

- Provide a unique experience to capture 1 percent of the regional tourism market
- Develop a hotel and conference center
- Maintain a level of high-quality retail
- Develop a strong Central Business District

- Promote local cultural and entertainment events
- Invite parents of Kent State University students

2. Create anchors at critical points in order to draw people through the area

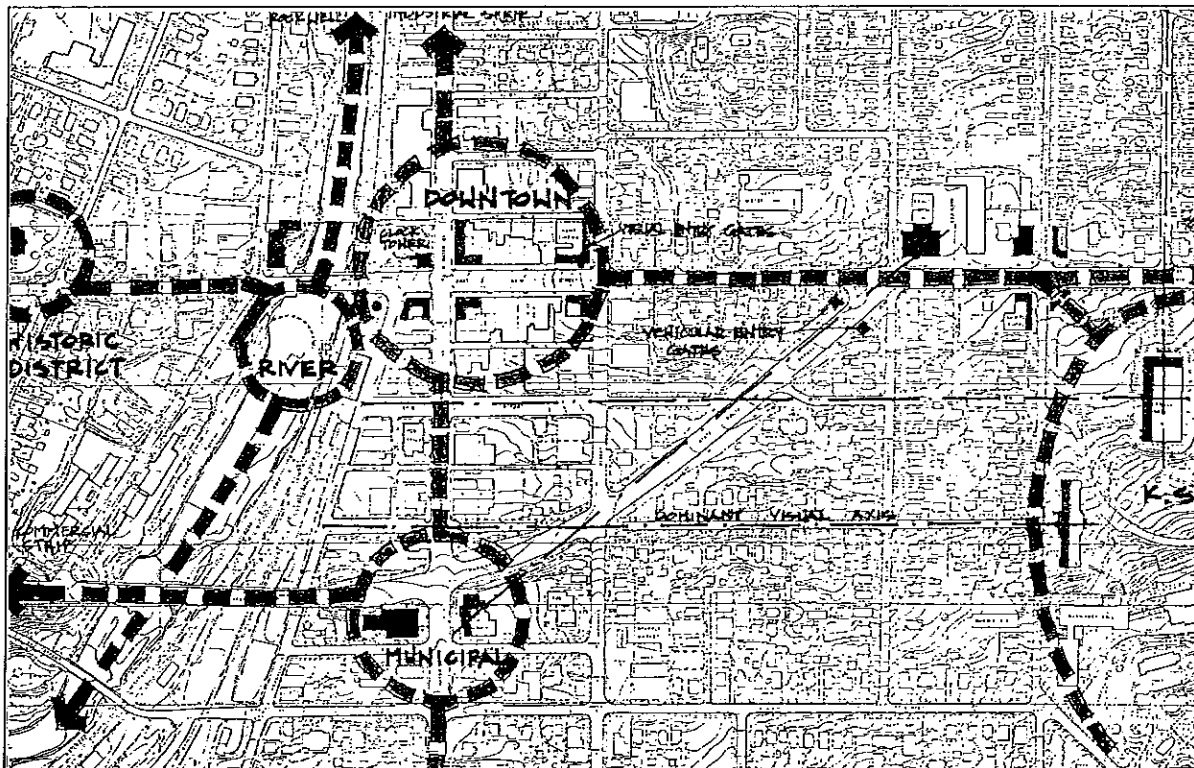
- Enhance shopping activities to draw people into the downtown area
- Encourage riverfront development along Gougler Avenue, use as a "gateway"
- Promote the historical aspects of Kent and promote new uses for existing landmarks
- Encourage development of park activities along the river banks
- Increase visibility of University offerings such as the Kent State University Museum

3. Utilize vacant sites more effectively and infill under-utilized spaces

- Develop hotel and conference center
- Encourage more high-density developments and mixed use areas
- Centralize parking areas, freeing up land for other uses
- Improve rear entrances to businesses and make upper levels more accessible
- Infill sites along Gougler Avenue to extend the business district

4. Encourage uses that extend activity period

- Encourage a variety of daytime and night time uses
- Increase residential density in the downtown area which extends market activity
- Promote a greater diversity of mixed uses

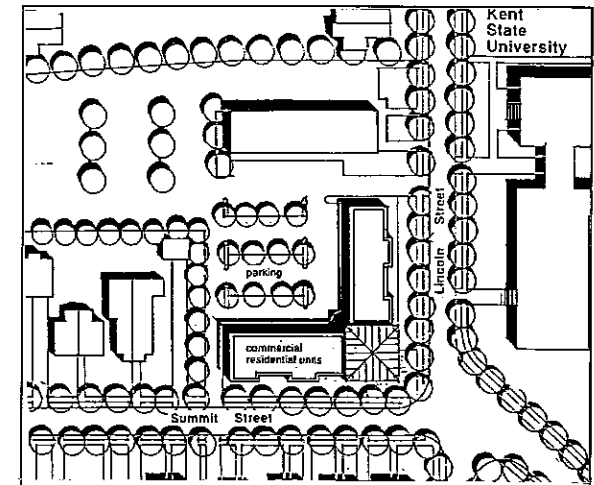
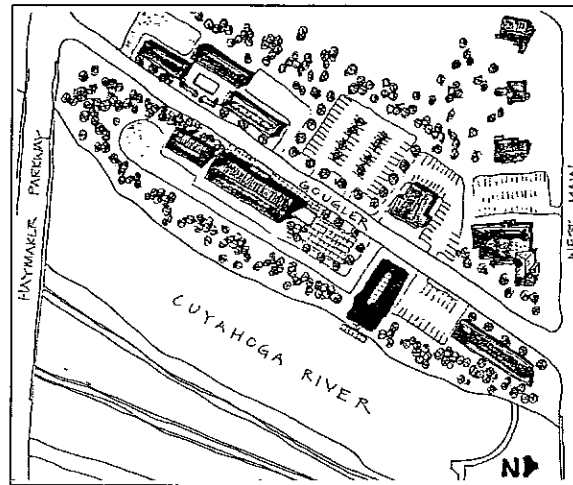


4. Encourage new commercial and industrial business development

- Encourage mixed-use development and maximize limited land area
- Infill vacant land sites and increase density
- Encourage more riverfront development
- Consider incentives such as tax abatements for new businesses, especially for renovation of historic structures
- Enhance service area to appeal to residents and students

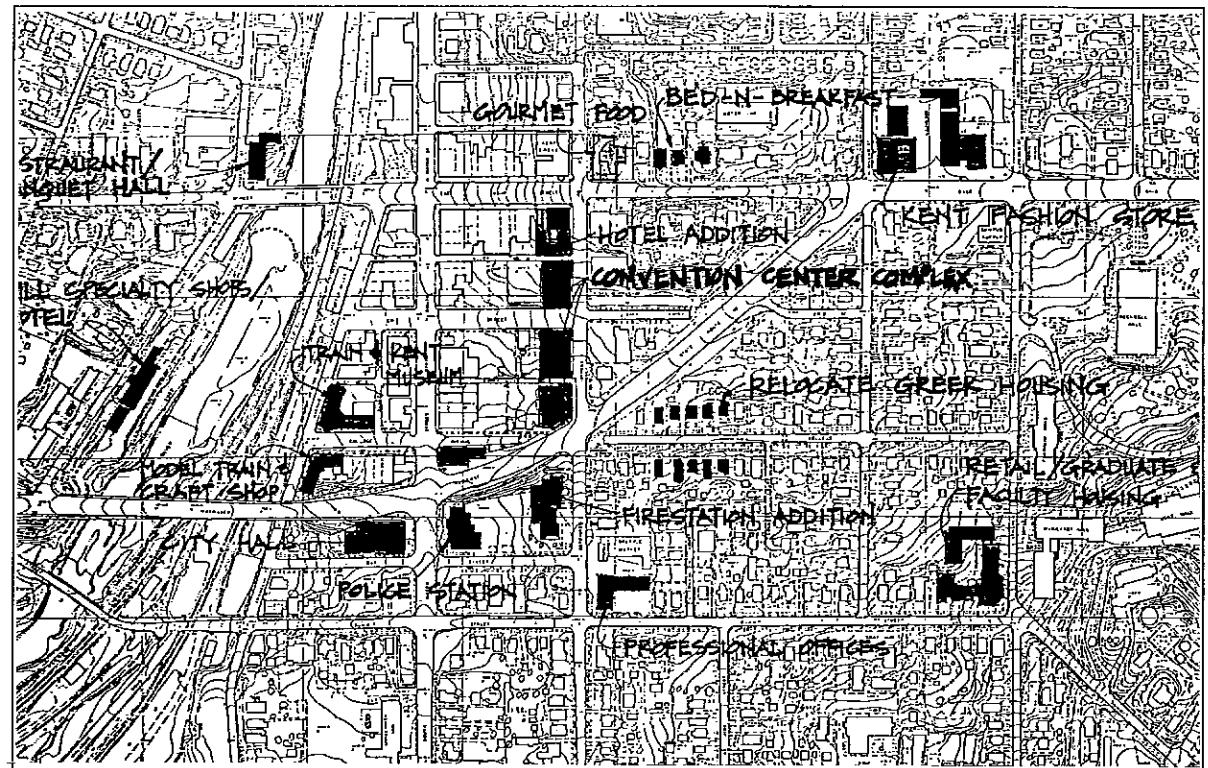
The following proposals are graphic strategies for accomplishing some of the objectives described above:

1. This diagram illustrates how predominant nodes can be used to link various areas of the community. Developing anchors in each node can effectively move people through the area. (Team 1)
2. Developing the Alpaca Mill on Gougler into a special attraction and highlighting the historical connection to the mill era can provide a unique experience to entice tourists to visit the area. Possible development includes recreating a woolen mill and selling a product which is uniquely "Kent" or using the mill as an inn to encourage convention business. (Team 4)
3. Infilling vacant sites and encouraging mixed-use development can restore economic activity. This proposal creates a commercial center in a residential neighborhood providing services not previously available. (Team 5)
4. This illustration indicates locations for possible new development. The addition of restaurants, bed and breakfasts, a train museum and hobby shop, and specialty shops would provide a rich diversity of activities to visitors. (Team 1)

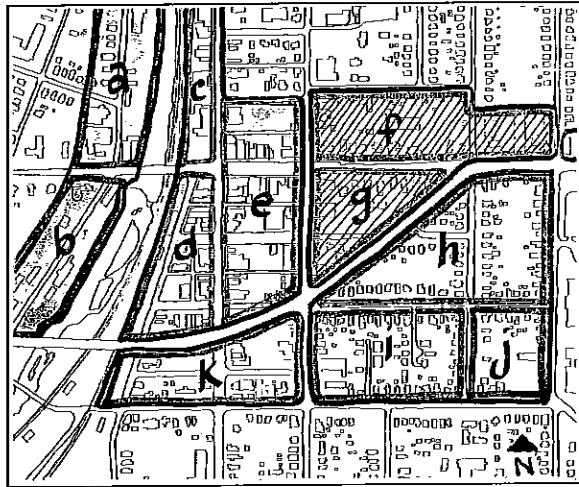


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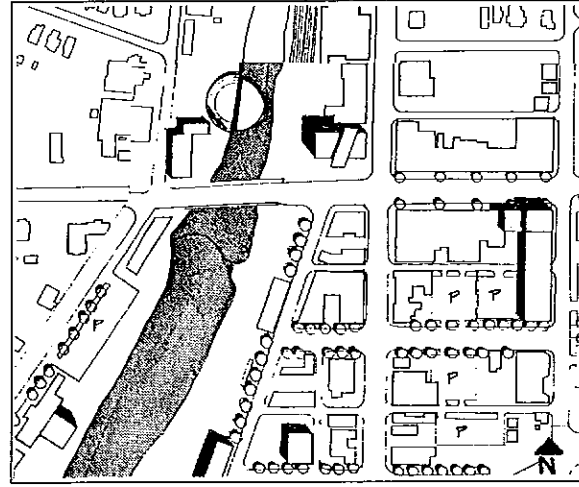
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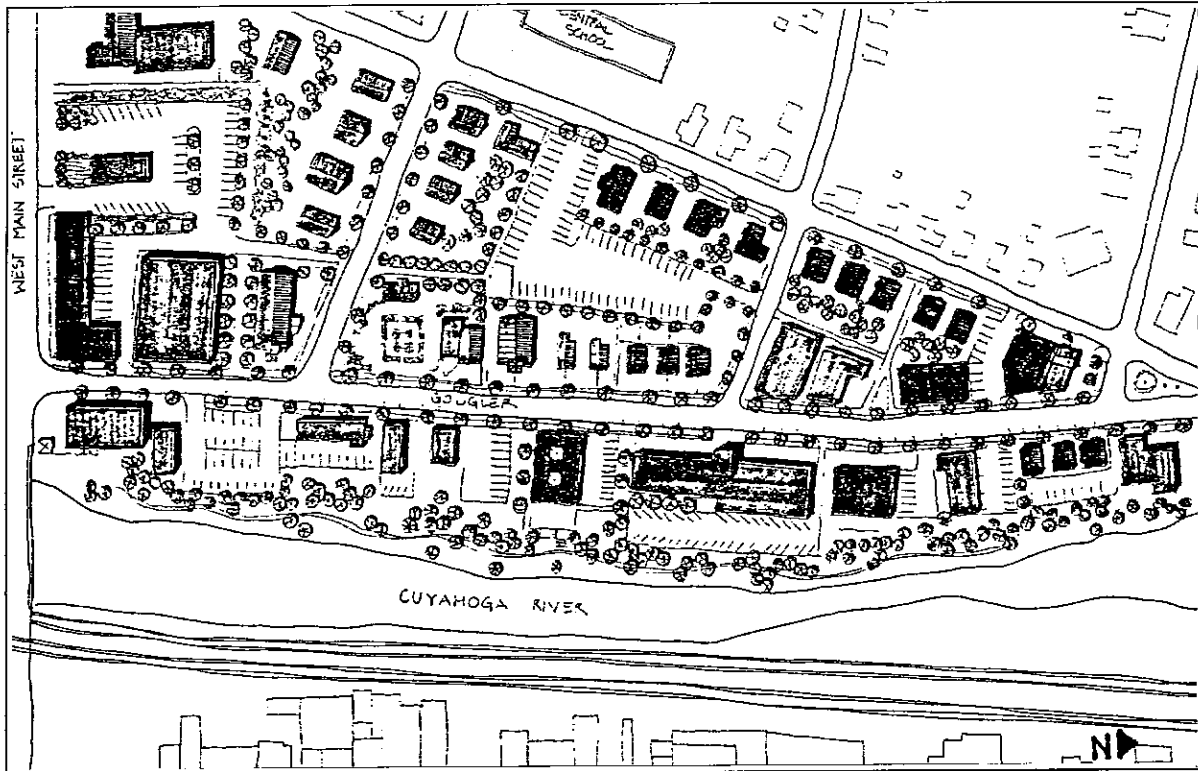
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5. Economic Zone Map. This proposal divides the study area into districts and suggests focusing on developing a key idea, which would serve as the anchor node to draw people into and through each area. (Team 4)
6. The addition of an outdoor riverside theater would provide a unique activity to draw people into downtown Kent. Renovating the existing Bissler Building to include restaurants and specialty shops would extend the activity. (Team 2)
7. This proposal suggests initiating more development on the west bank of the Cuyahoga River along Gougler Avenue. Through the infilling of vacant sites with mixed-use development and the advantageous use of the riverfront, a previously neglected area could contribute significantly in boosting the city's economy. (Team 4)

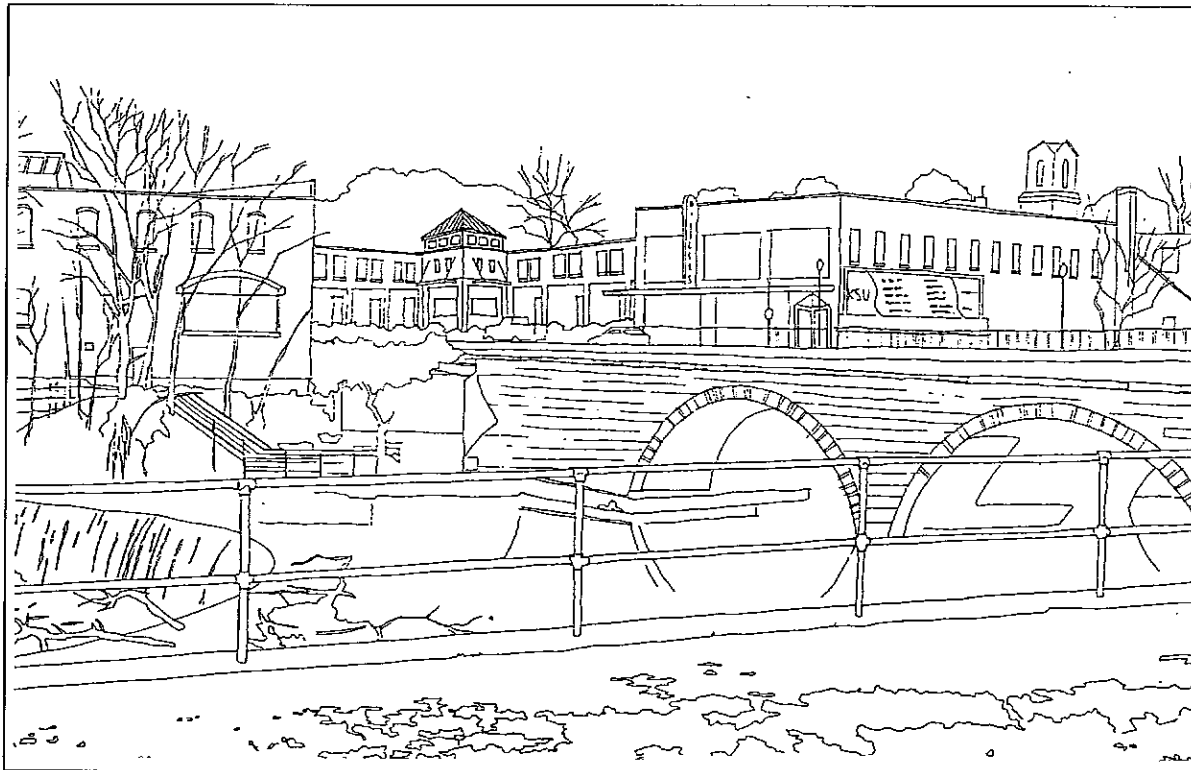
II. Improve the Identity and Image of the Area

In order to compete successfully in the regional marketplace, a city must project a clear image of the character and identity of the community. By enhancing and improving the existing features in the environment and promoting the addition of new elements, which highlight the historical and cultural influences of the city, it is possible for the city of Kent to strengthen its identity and attract attention in the regional market and be recognized as a unique tourist destination as well.

A few of the objectives and ideas for improving the identity and image of Kent are listed below. Again, these suggestions are not intended as requirements but as ideas for accomplishing the general goal.

1. Take advantage of historical and cultural influences

- Highlight the physical references to the canal and railroad eras
- Emphasize the architectural character of historic structures
- Develop "events" which attract attention and provide an experience unique to Kent
- Increase awareness of University events

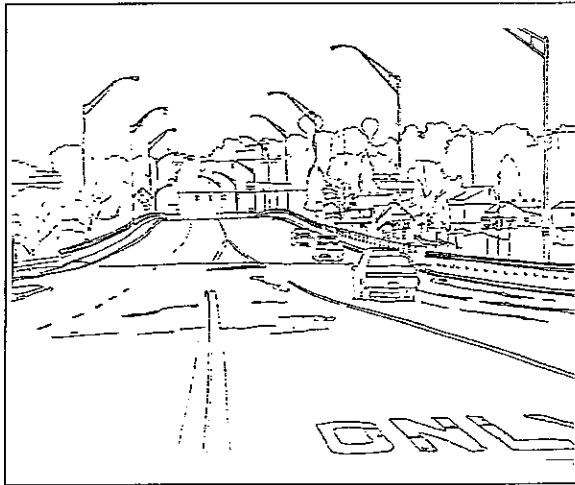


2. Improve the quality of existing physical image elements (nodes, edges, paths, districts, and landmarks)

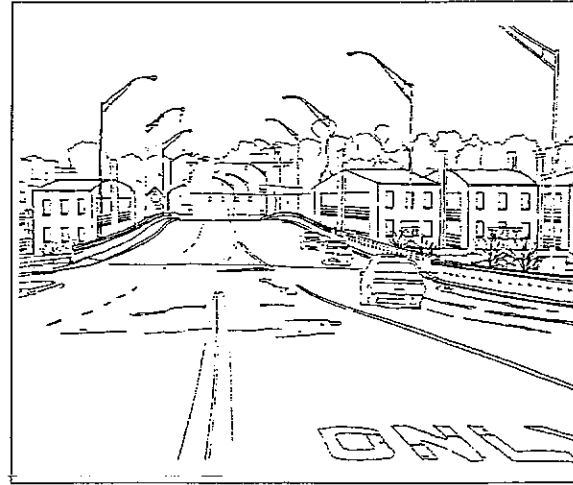
- Improve the character and quality of highly visible nodes of activity
- Use natural edges to create positive definitions of space and activity. Minimize barriers that prohibit access to adjoining areas
- Improve access and quality of existing pathways. Create new pathways that provide a memorable activity for visitors. (bike paths, riverwalk paths, etc.)
- Promote a clear vision for the various districts by defining specific roles for the industrial, commercial, and residential sectors of the community
- Take advantage of existing landmarks to promote the visual identity of Kent and project recognizable images to tourists

3. Improve the quality of physical space-defining characteristics (identifiable patterns and building form and mass)

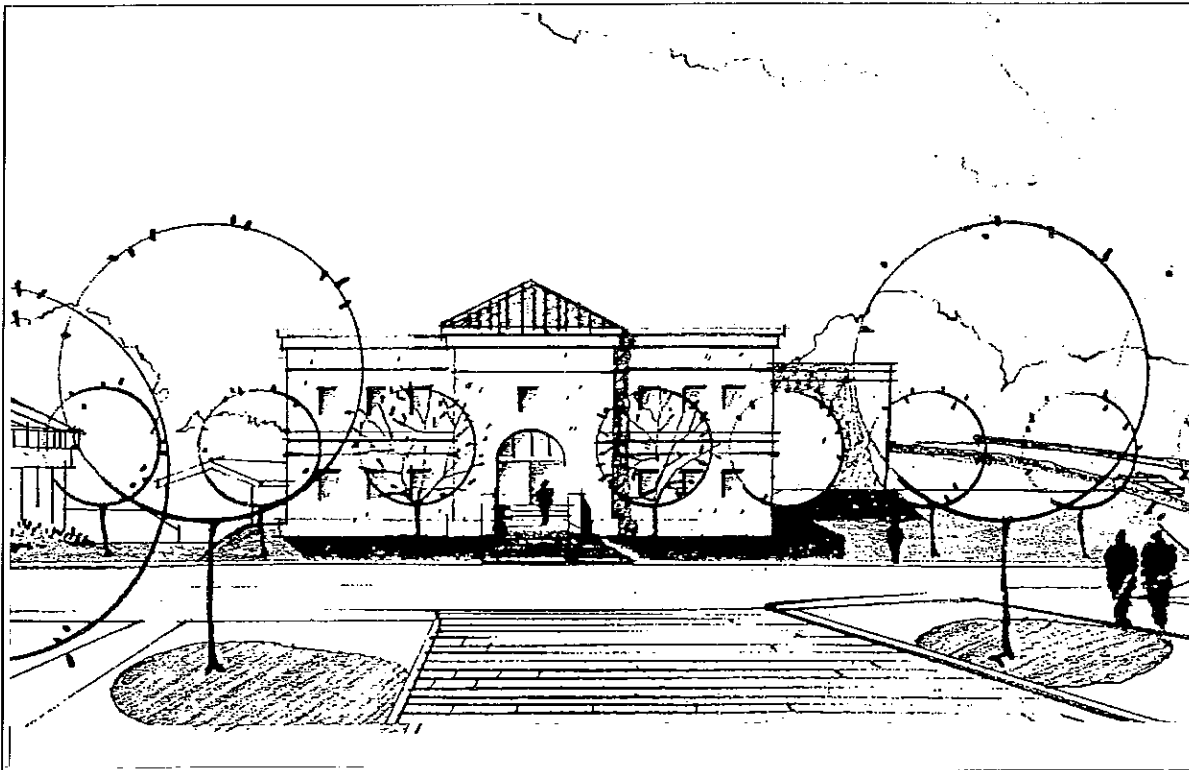
- Replace fragmented patterns and discontinuities in the urban fabric with identifiable patterns
- Define key spatial elements
- Create a visually coherent design
- Establish an open-space pedestrian network
- Utilize neotraditional town planning methods
- Use spaces to define activities and the character of the city



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4. Improve the streetscape

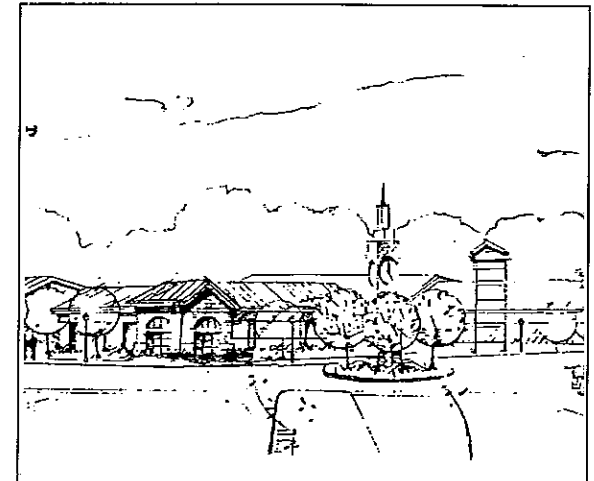
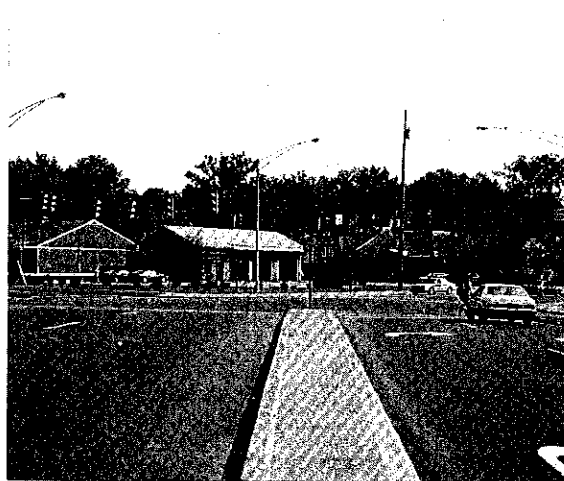
- Consider the street as a unifying element
- Utilize streetscape "furniture" to reinforce the physical character of the city and provide a sense of continuity
- Improve the physical condition of the streetscape and the buildings to project an image of civic pride
- Emphasize and develop strong points of entry or "gateways" into the city to accentuate the sense of arrival to a unique place
- Create a pleasant, safe, and exciting visual environment for outdoor urban activities

Key to illustrations.

1. (Previous page) A proposed mixed-use center at the northwest corner of Cougler and Main streets illustrates how a new building can reflect the architectural character of the surrounding area and project a cohesive image. If a vacant corner is infilled, commercial activity can be increased and extended to the west side of the river as well, anchoring further development in this area. This proposal also suggests the adaptive reuse of the existing Bissler Building as a community recreation center. (Team 3)
2. Illustration of how the western end of the Haymaker Parkway appears today. This bridge is one of the most heavily traveled entrances into the study area. (Team 3)
3. With the addition of residential housing units along the river, an identifiable "gateway" is created which marks the arrival to Kent. (Team 3)
4. By incorporating architectural styles which are reminiscent of the historic character present in Kent, a sense of unity and continuity is maintained. This proposal suggests the addition of a new civic center across from the existing City Hall. (Team 5)

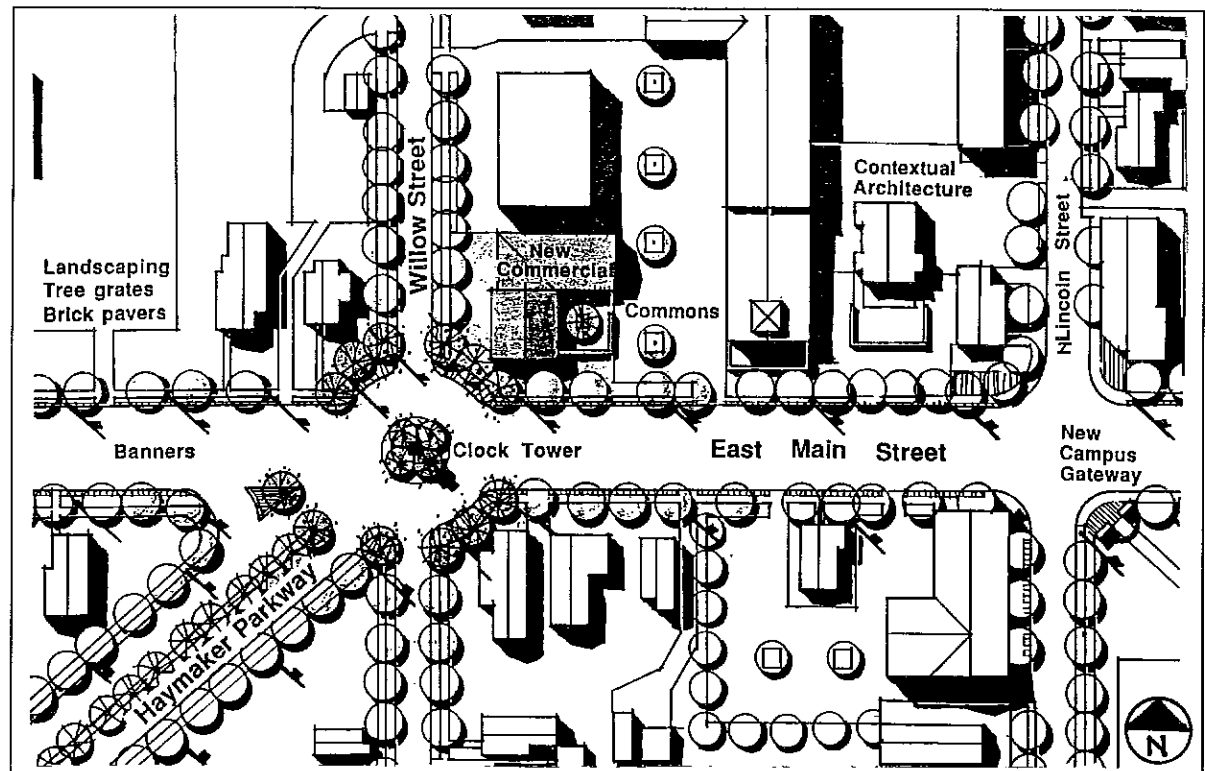
Key to illustrations:

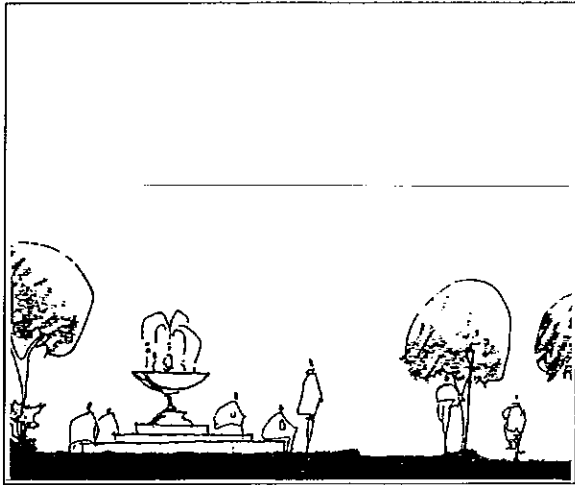
5. Photo of the Haymaker Parkway at the intersection of East Main Street as it appears today.
6. A proposed clock tower marks the transition point between the downtown and the University, creating a recognizable landmark which helps to organize a very active node and give it some identity. By carefully developing the northeast corner of Willow and Main beyond, a view is established which helps to move people through the area with less confusion. (Team 5)
7. A plan of the intersection of the Haymaker Parkway and East Main Street illustrating how the proposed clock tower landmark can help to create a focal point and a gateway at a heavily traveled node. (Team 5)



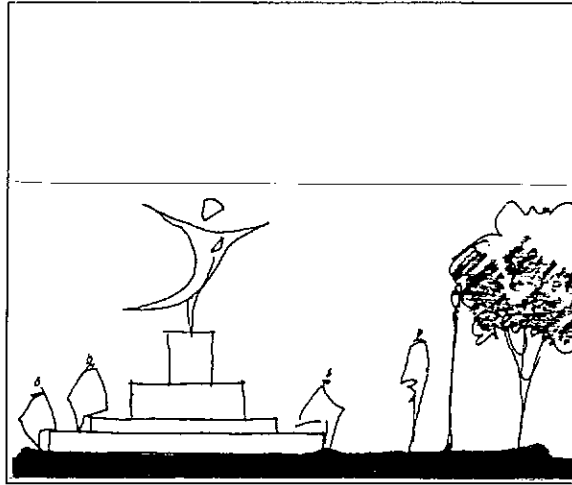
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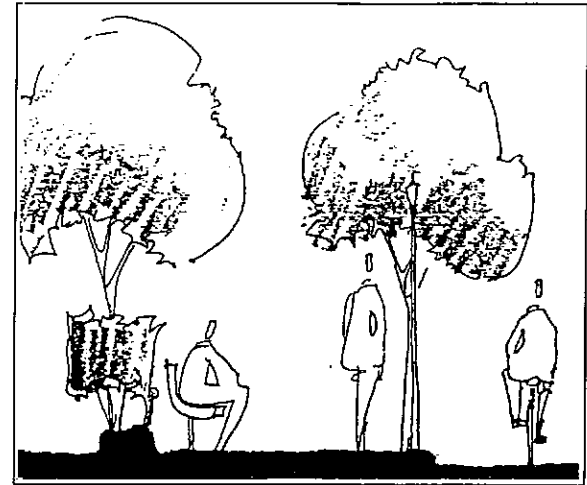




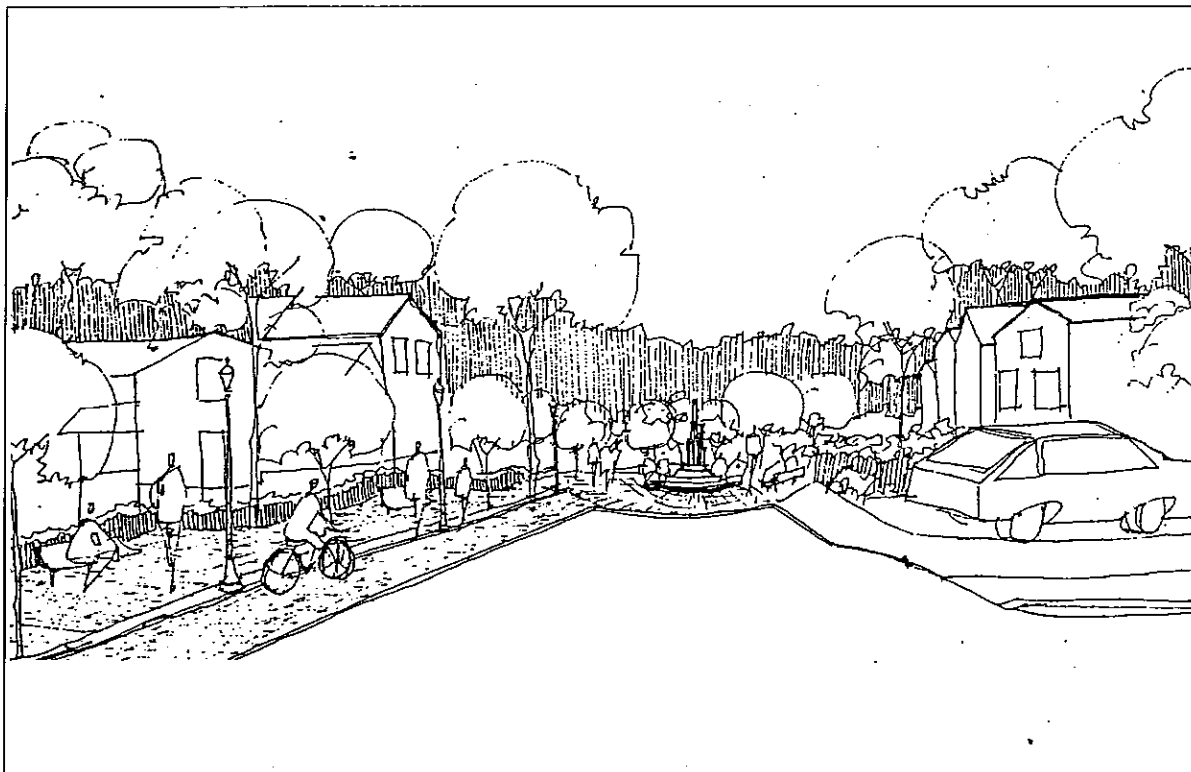
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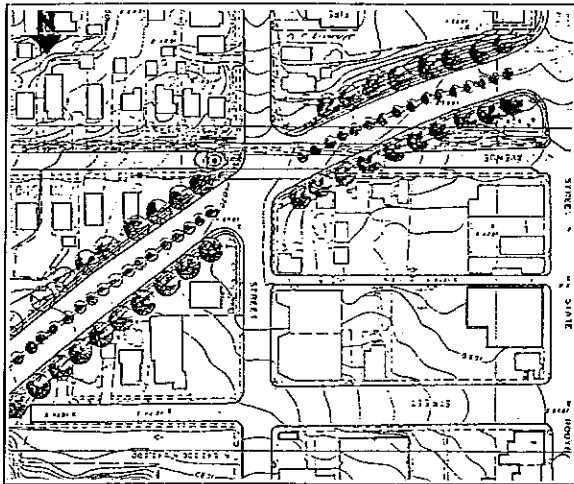
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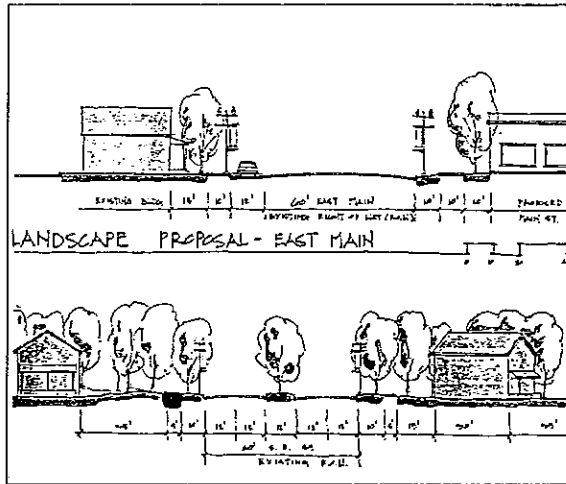
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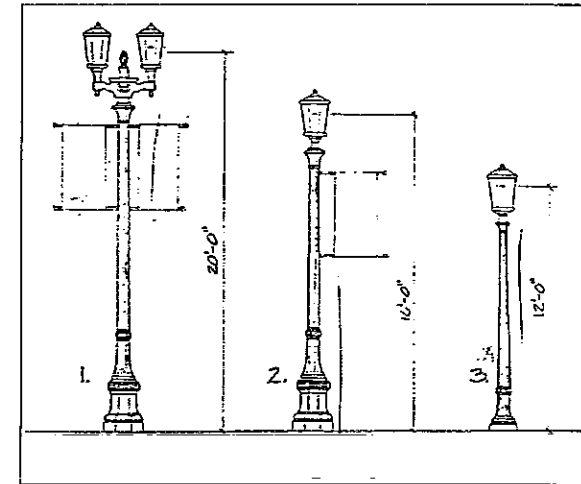
- 8. Illustration showing how appropriately scaled streetscape elements, such as fountains, can enhance outdoor spaces and invite activity, thus creating a vital urban atmosphere. (Team 5)
- 9. The addition of sculpture or outdoor art can provide memorable landmarks and improve the visual quality of the street setting. (Team 5)
- 10. By providing clearly marked pedestrian pathways, improved with the addition of furniture and landscaping, a continuity can be established and a pleasing activity is added which helps to project a cohesive image. (Team 5)
- 11. An illustration showing how an exciting streetscape can be designed to incorporate some of the items mentioned above. (Team 5)



12.



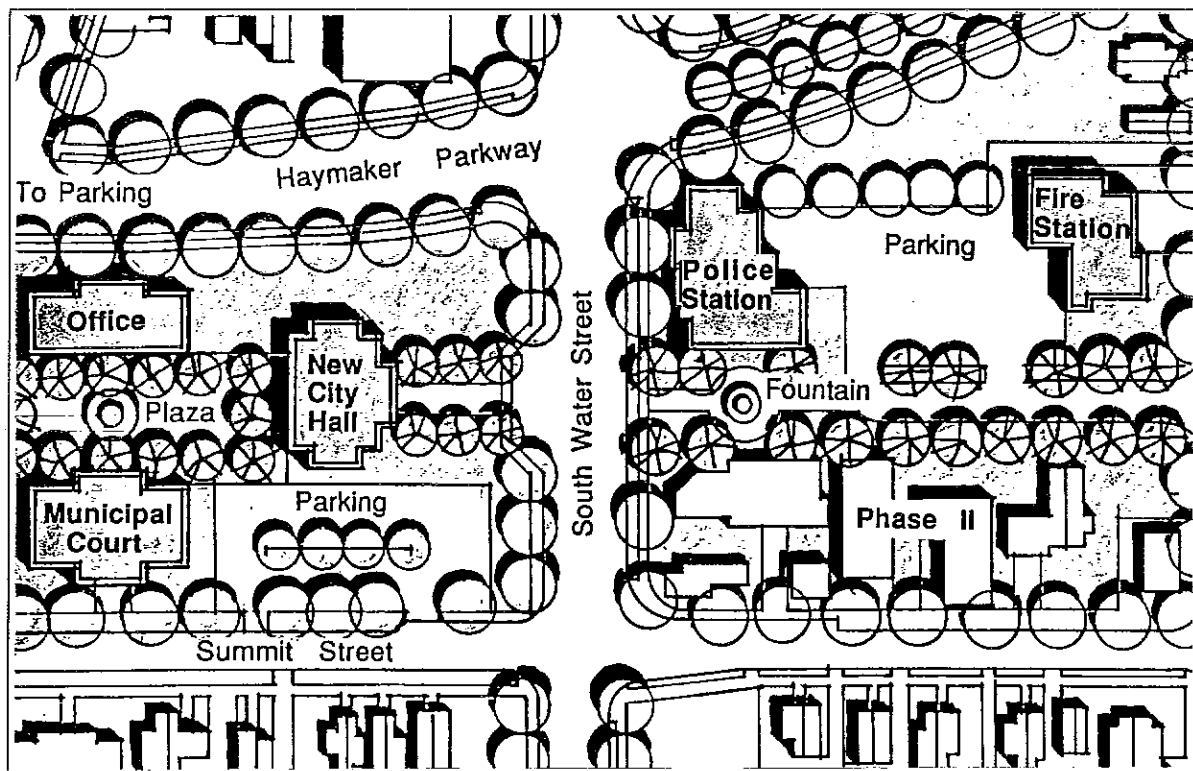
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Key to illustrations:

12. Plan of the Haymaker Parkway suggesting the addition of trees along the edges and in a new median strip. Not only would this help to calm traffic, it would create a "boulevard" identity which complements the image of Kent as the Tree City. (Team 5)
13. Section through the proposed median strip showing how the space becomes more appropriately scaled to humans. (Team 1)
14. A proposed streetscape banner and lighting program would visually connect the downtown area with the University. The use of light fixtures which are sympathetic with the historic architecture in the area would complement the character of Kent. (Team 2)
15. This proposal illustrates how a municipal district could be created with the addition of a new city hall, a municipal court building, and an office building. By defining an entire district of similar uses a strong identity is created which projects a solid image to the community. (Team 5)



15.

III. Provide Safe, Effective Pedestrian & Vehicular Movement

An important goal of the revitalization process is to maintain safe conditions for the people moving about in the environment at all times. As the analysis of pathways and circulation has shown, there are often physical conflicts which can occur between pedestrians and automobiles and which can create potentially dangerous situations. By taking appropriate measures to correct and improve existing conditions creatively, where these conflicts are present, the designer can provide an exciting urban environment.

The objectives which best define the idea of safe, efficient movement for pedestrians and automobiles are listed below. These ideas are not intended as requirements but as suggestions for accomplishing the general goal.

1. Reweave the street and sidewalk system where discontinuities occur

- Minimize barriers between the University and the downtown
- Improve links and accessibility between all districts
- Improve pedestrian access to buildings from parking areas
- Separate pedestrian and vehicular paths

2. Reduce pedestrian - vehicular conflicts

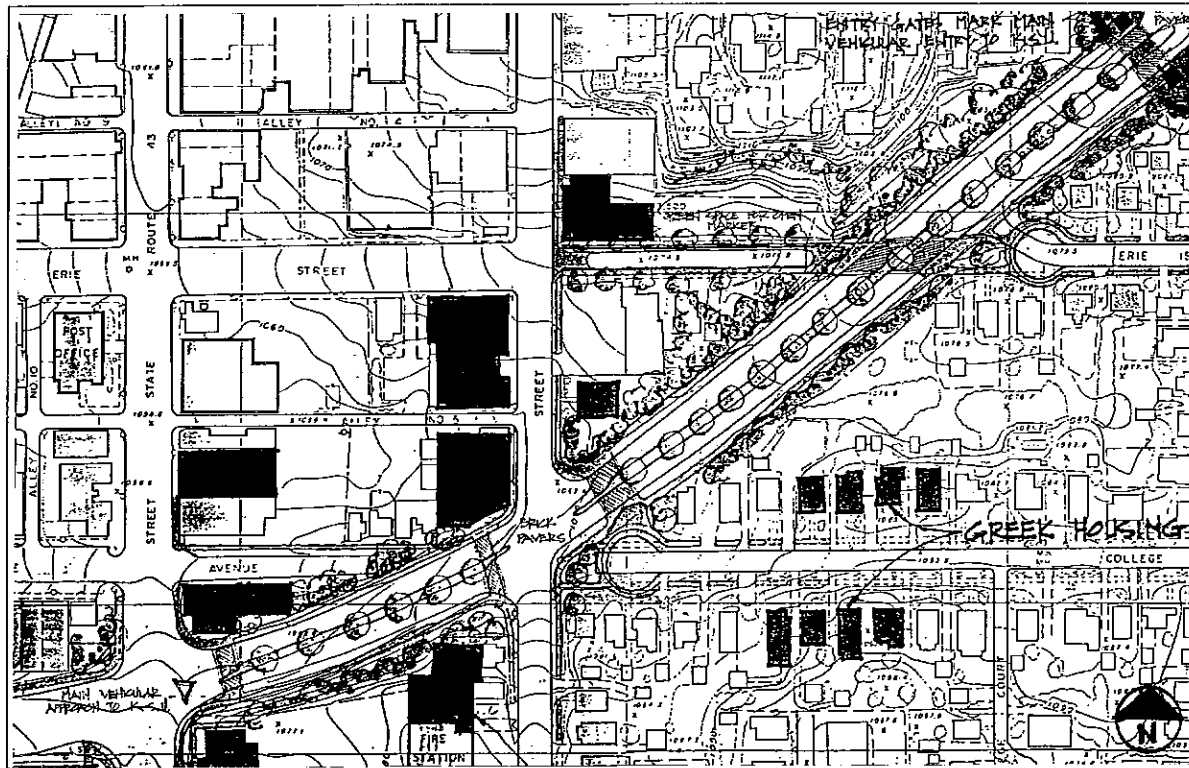
- Eliminate curb cuts on main pedestrian streets
- Use "traffic-calming" measures to slow vehicular movement on main roads (Illus. 1)
- Creatively utilize paving and signage to mark pedestrian crossings clearly
- Create double-deck parking behind main buildings of the Central Business District to concentrate parking and allow better access to the upper stories of buildings
- Relocate State Route 43 outside the Central Business District
- Consider closing a portion of the street in the Central Business District to create a pedestrian mall

3. Lead by enticing movement

- Create view corridors with elements such as trees or signs to move people through an area
- Locate landmarks or enticing elements at the end of views to create a visual destination

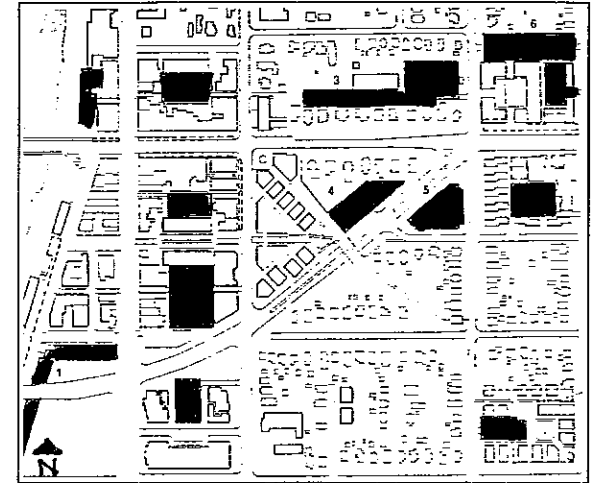
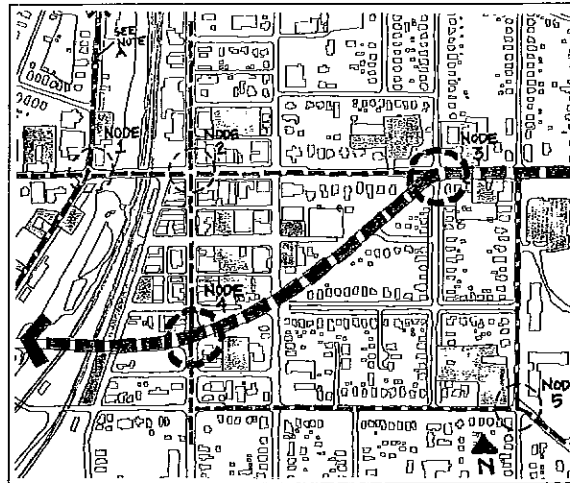
4. Provide alternate means of travel

- Create a taxi service to provide greater access to the public
- Develop a stonger transportation system.
- Centralize parking areas and provide a shuttle to major commercial districts
- Create designated bike paths to allow for safer movement
- Set up a car pool program



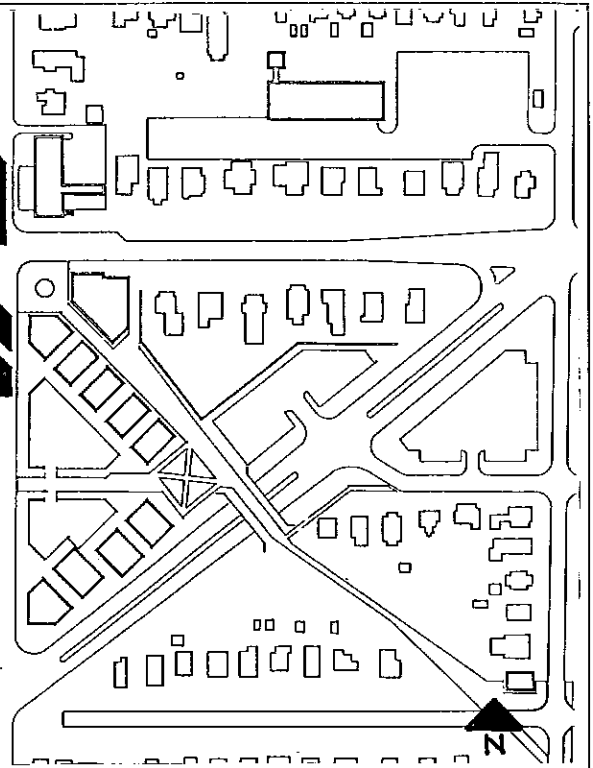
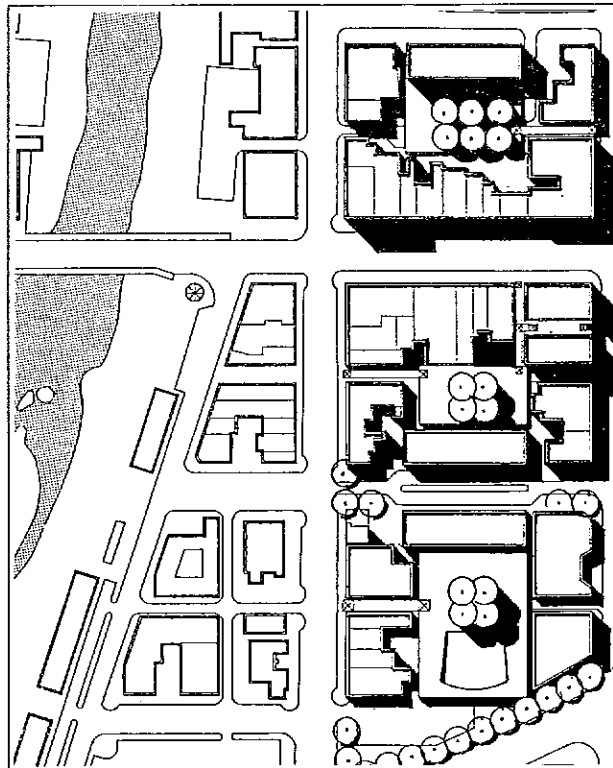
Key to illustrations:

1. Proposal indicating possible crossing locations across the Haymaker Parkway. By clearly defining the crossings with brick paving and planting trees in the median strip, traffic should be calmed considerably, and pedestrians will be able to cross this busy route safely. (Team 1)
2. Diagram illustrating the most predominant vehicular routes and nodes of activity where pedestrian-vehicular conflicts are most likely to occur. Measures should be taken to assure the safe travel of all persons for any revitalization attempt to be successful. (Team 4)
3. Several possible sites for new parking areas are indicated on this drawing. By strategically locating parking throughout the study area rather than concentrated in the downtown area, many of the present parking problems can be alleviated. (Team 3)
4. A creative proposal to improve the quality of existing parking areas behind the downtown commercial blocks suggests a parking garage with a public plaza above. With vehicular access provided at the lower Water Street level and plaza access located at the Depeyster Street level (and by ramps through the alleys), pedestrians may travel safely and conveniently in a very dynamic urban setting. This proposal also considers the idea of constructing a pedestrian bridge over the Haymaker Parkway linking the intersection of Main and Depeyster with the campus at Summit and Lincoln streets. (Team 3)



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IV. Improve University - Downtown Linkages

Kent State University plays a very important role in the history and economy of Kent. Without the University the city would certainly be a very different place today, but it is important that the image and identity of Kent be one which includes the entire community and projects a sense of unity. Over the years many of the links between the University and the downtown area have deteriorated, resulting in a breakdown in the urban fabric. It is the goal here to reconnect the pathways

and character of the adjoining districts to restore the unified identity of the city and project the image of a rich and diversely composed community.

The following objectives outline methods for improving the link between the University and the other districts of Kent, especially the Central Business District. Numbered items are objectives, and the bulleted phrases which follow are suggestions made by townspeople or students as possible strategies for achieving those objectives. These suggestions are not requirements but as ideas for accomplishing the general goal.

1. Define and create nodes of activity to serve as anchors for connections

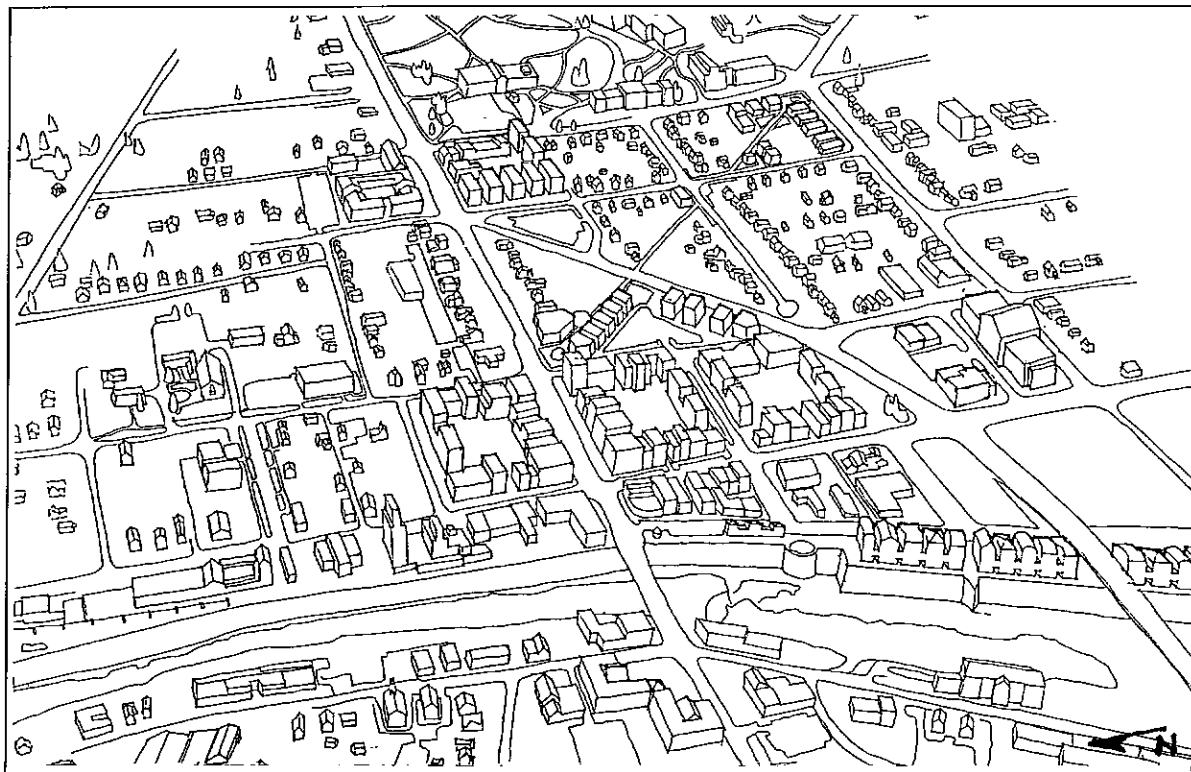
- Highlight existing landmarks to be used as destination points, such as the Kent State University Museum, train station, etc.
- Develop new anchors such as hotels, stores, or activities to create nodes of interest which could facilitate moving people from the University to the downtown
- Remove undesirable nodes of activity which inhibit links

2. Utilize spatial and physical methods to create visual connections

- Create view corridors which lead by continuity and rhythm of elements such as trees, street lights, etc.
- Place visible landmarks or create interesting views at the ends of major paths to entice movement
- Eliminate path obstructions or elements which interfere with the consistency of the surroundings
- Continue the character of the downtown into the University
- Continue the streetscape elements onto the campus and connect to major nodes

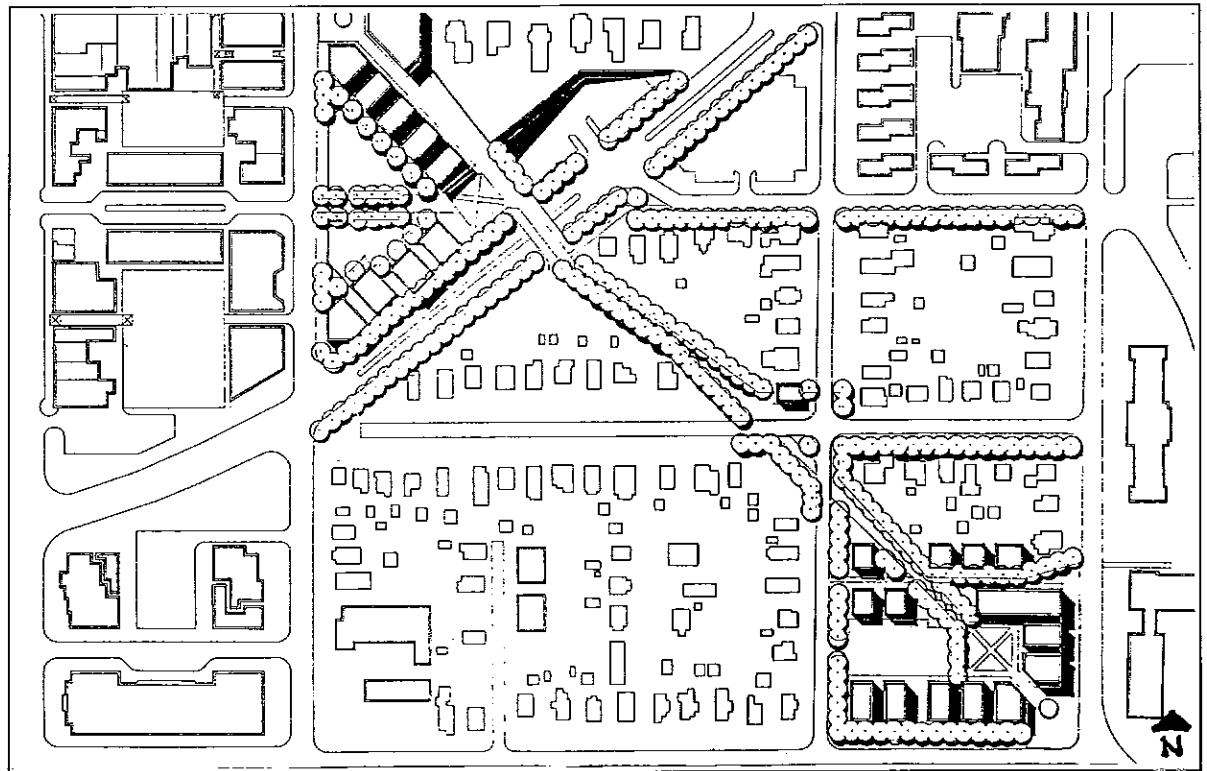
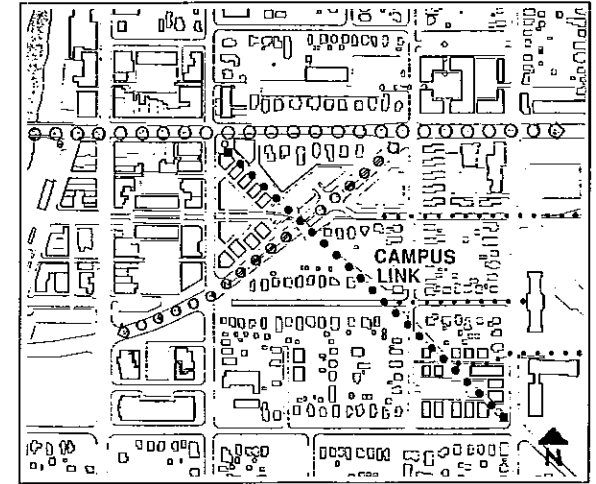
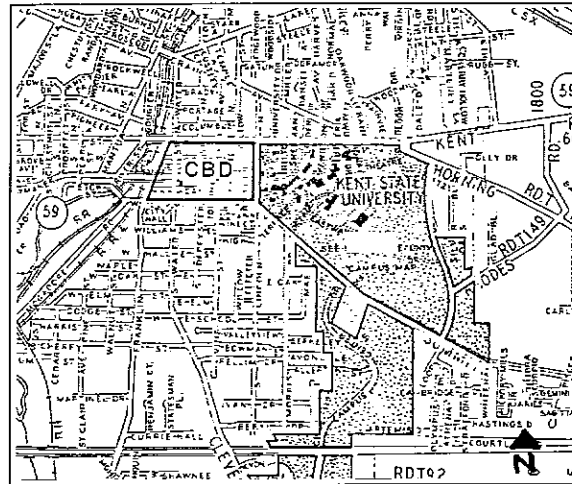
3. Create a seasonal banner program along major paths

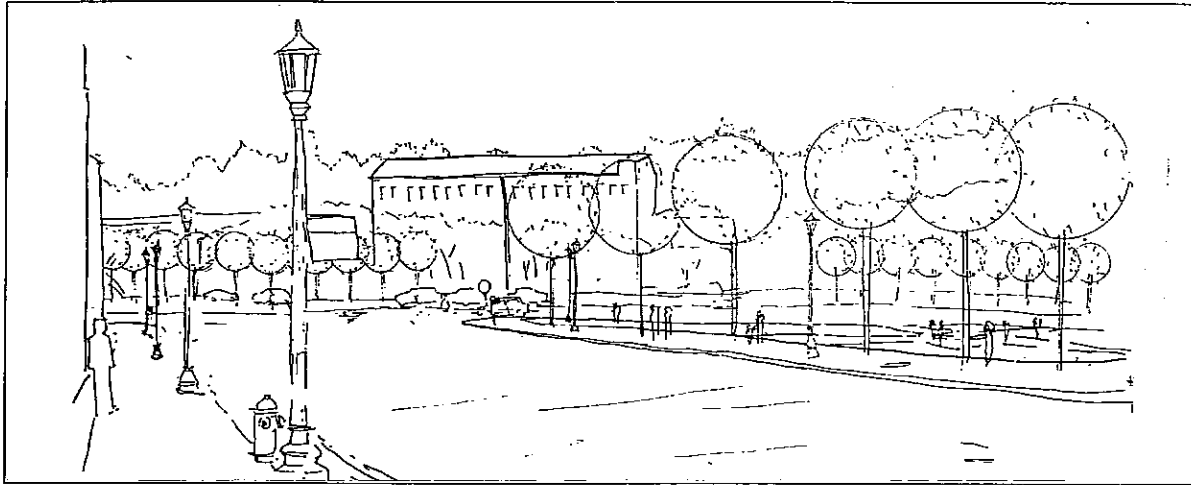
- Combine University events and Kent community events into one program
- Create logos and images which unite both communities
- Encourage joint sponsoring of festivals and events



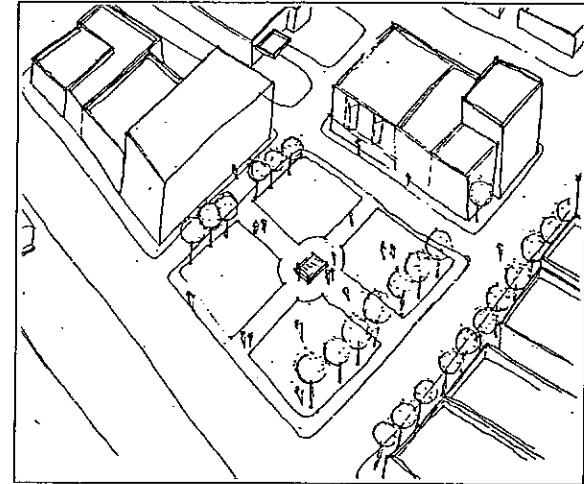
Key to illustrations:

1. Perspective drawing showing how a pedestrian pathway from the corner of East Main and Depeyster streets to the corner of Summit and Lincoln streets might appear. (Team 3)
2. Map of the Kent area showing the strong directional impact and orientation of Summit Street on the study area. (Team 3)
3. Proposal which extends Summit Street with a pedestrian path through the College Park residential area making a connection with the downtown commercial district at Main and Depeyster streets. (Team 3)
4. Proposed development of the pedestrian link between East Main and Summit streets illustrating how creating new nodes of activity can be used to draw people through the area. The diagonal orientation is an extension of Summit Street (See illustration 2 above). (Team 3)

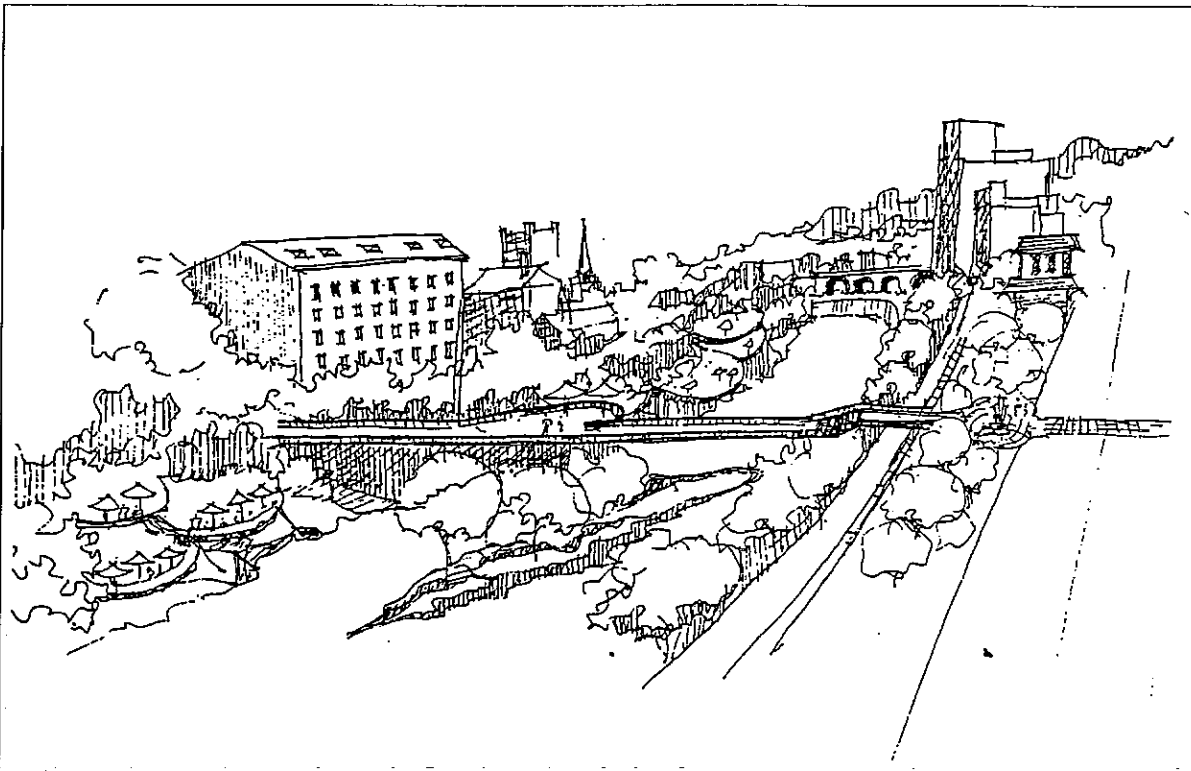




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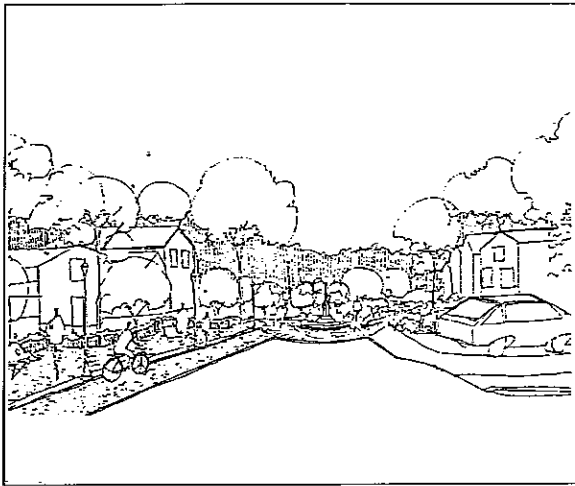


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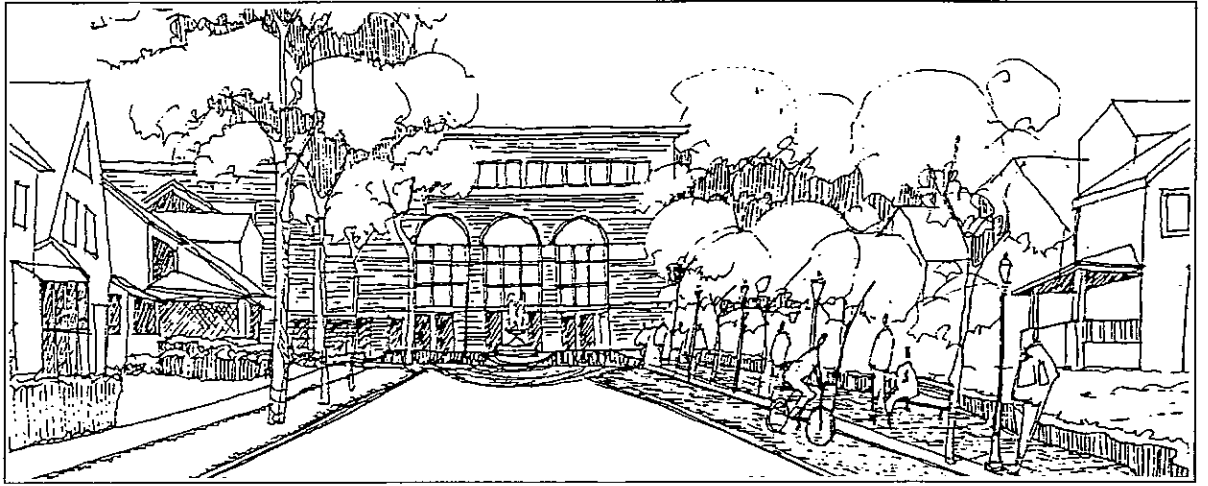
Key to Illustrations:

The drawings on pages 42 and 43 are all part of a proposal to create an exciting pedestrian link between the University campus and the riverfront along College Avenue. (Team 5)

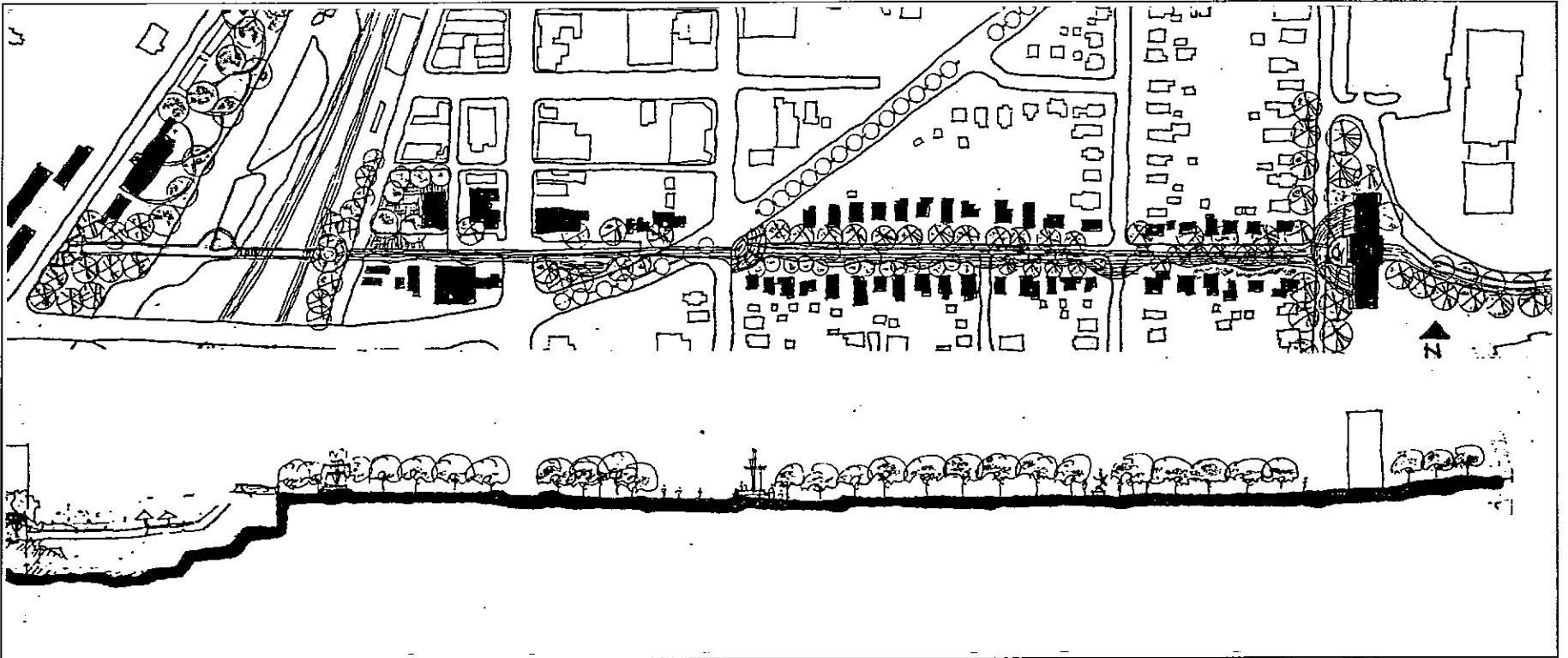
5. A public park anchors the west end of the College Street pedestrian path at the edge of the Cuyahoga River, creating a pleasant urban node of activity and a destination point.
6. Plan view of the park at the west end of College Street between Franklin Avenue and Water Street.
7. A proposed pedestrian bridge crosses the Cuyahoga River at the foot of College Avenue creating an exciting and unique activity.
8. Addition of a fountain enhances the streetscape and provides a place to rest along the way.
9. Historic Franklin Hall on the Kent State University campus anchors the east end of the pedestrian path.
10. Plan and section of the College Street pedestrian path. Note that the path continues into the campus.



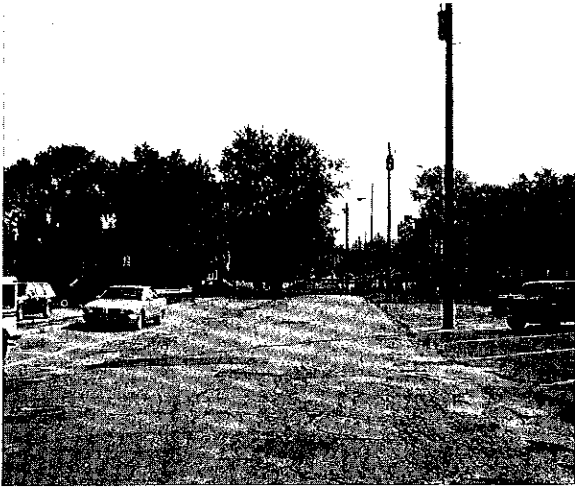
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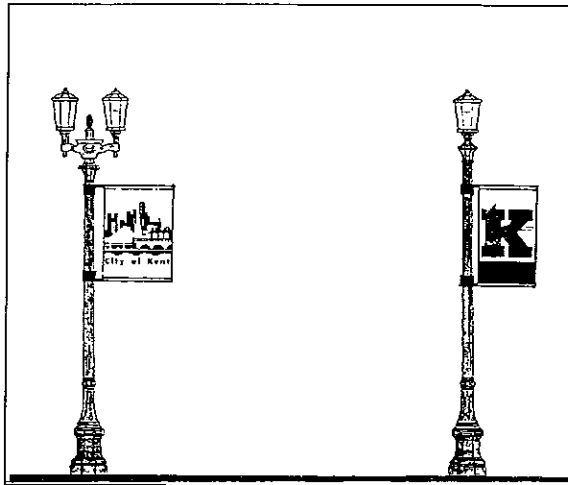
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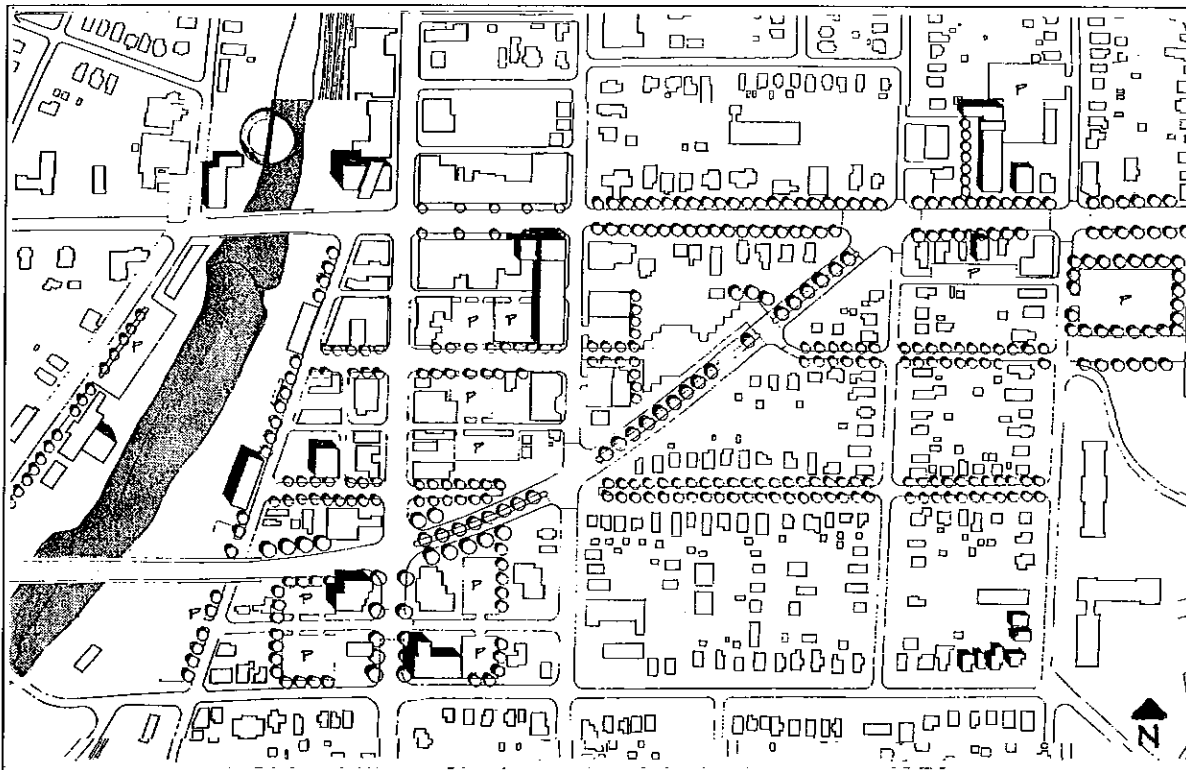
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Key to Illustrations:

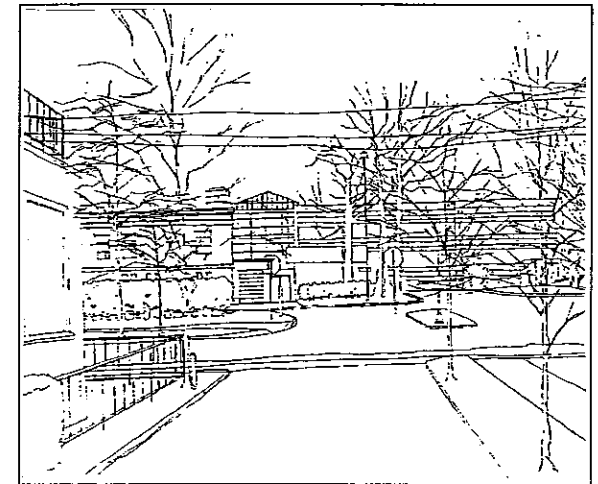
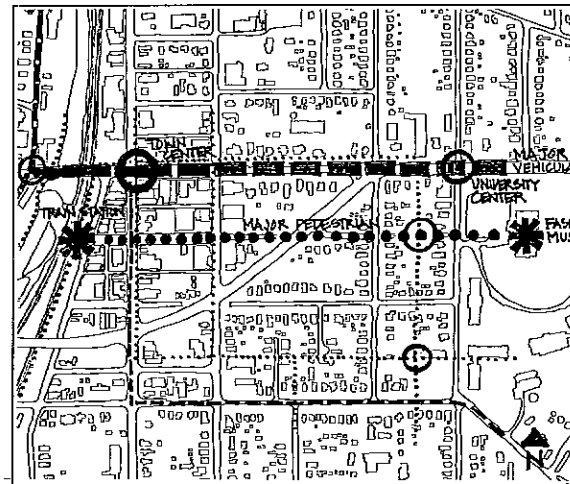
- 11. Photograph of how College Avenue appears today.
- 12. A banner program, which heralds forthcoming events on both the University campus and the downtown, creatively helps to unify the communities and can attract a great number of visitors. (Team 5)
- 13. A proposal indicating developing and improving conditions to provide a pleasant streetscape along both College Avenue and Erie Street. (Team 2)



13.

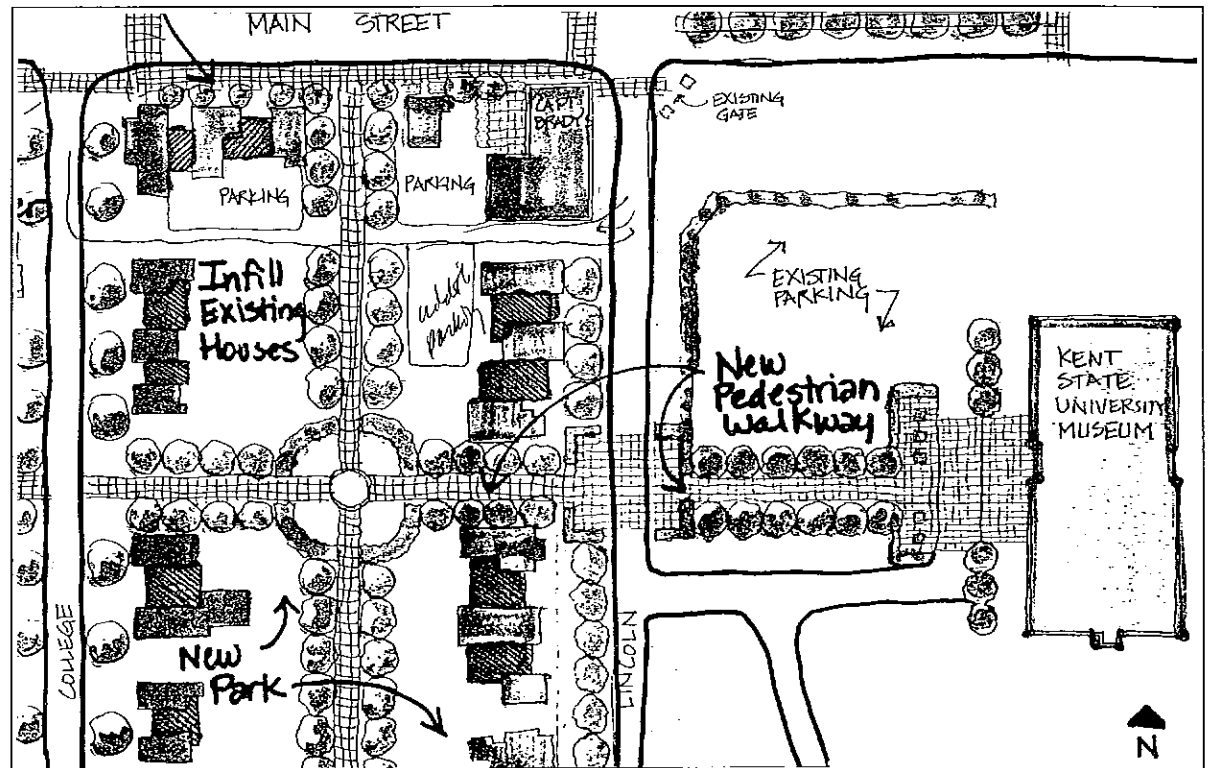
Key to illustrations:

14. A proposal to construct a strong link between the Kent State University Museum, located on the University campus, and the riverfront downtown would effectively entice visitors to experience the commercial district. By locating restaurants and shops near the museum along the path, a variety of activities would help to draw people from different districts and reconnect the deteriorated urban fabric. (Team 4)
15. Improving the streetscape at the entrance to the museum in Rockwell Hall, creates a strong visual terminus to the Erie Street pedestrian path. (Team 3)
16. A proposal to create a semi-public park in an inner-block void to connect the Erie Street pedestrian path with the commercial establishments along East Main. (Team 4)



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V. Utilize Open Spaces More Effectively

Since the evaluation and analysis phase of the design process points out that exterior open spaces are a vital part of the urban setting, one of the important goals of revitalizing the Kent area should be the improvement of the quality and type of open spaces located within the study area. With the employment of creative and imaginative techniques, many of the neglected existing spaces can become dynamic settings for human activity, and new spaces can be created that highlight the many features of Kent.

The following objectives have been defined to help encourage ideas for utilizing open spaces to the best advantage. Again, these suggestions are not intended as requirements but are ideas for accomplishing the general goal.

1. Make riverfront more accessible and more visible to visitors and pedestrians

- Provide landscaped entries and clear signage to draw people to the area
- Open lower levels of Gougler Street buildings to the riverfront
- Encourage more activities to take place along the river, such as art festivals, concerts, etc.

2. Create gathering places for people

- Provide a designated area for festivals, concerts, and meetings which is a visible part of the landscape creating a unique landmark
- Create secondary nodes which can be used for casual meetings, resting spots, etc.
- Incorporate a community garden program to provide landscaping at various intervals along some of the pedestrian paths
- Encourage the construction of outdoor cafes and eating areas
- Designate a location for sports activities such as volleyball, roller skating, and frisbee
- Include a playground for children

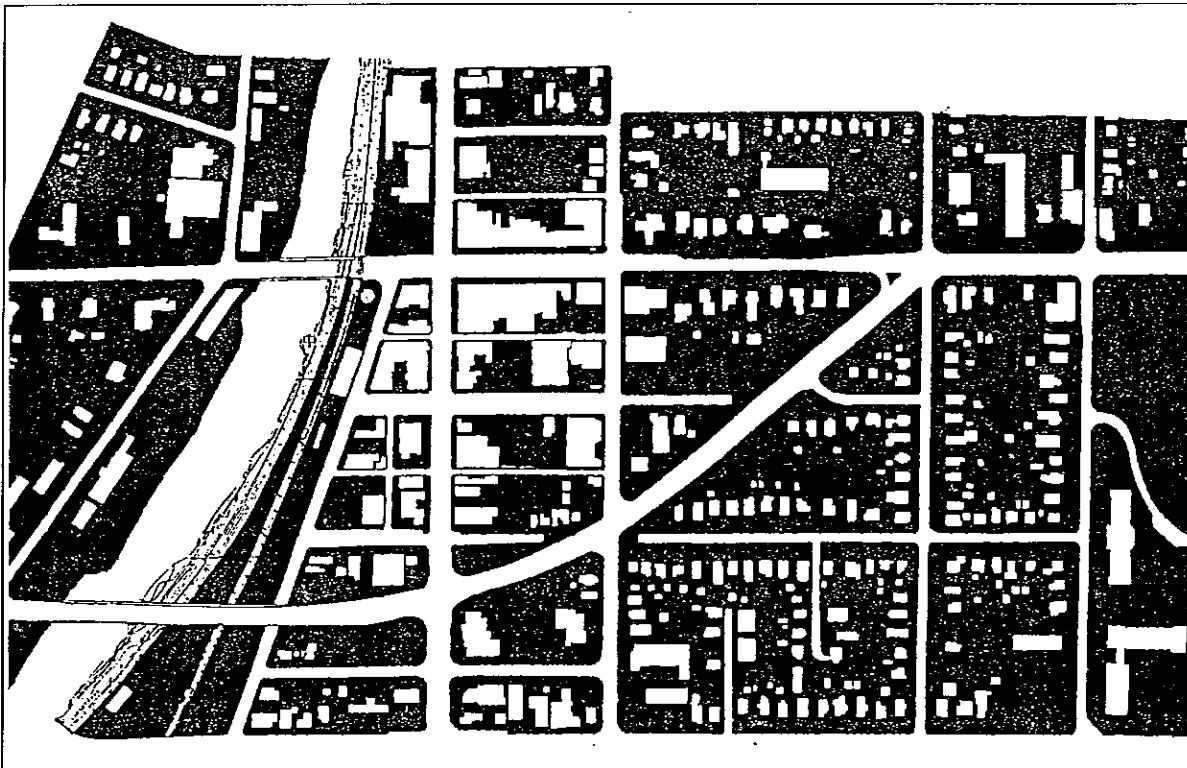
3. Develop inner-block voids

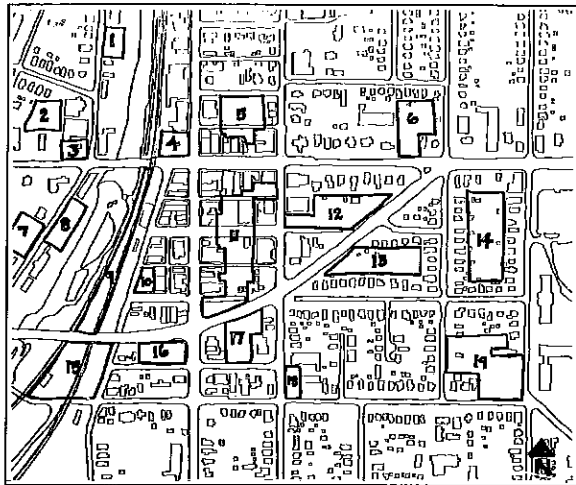
- Create semi-public spaces for gathering, eating, and playing
- Improve views from the rear of buildings
- Encourage spaces to be used as entrances to businesses
- Increase efficiency and improve quality of parking areas
- Develop more green spaces

4. Improve the open spaces along roads and pathways

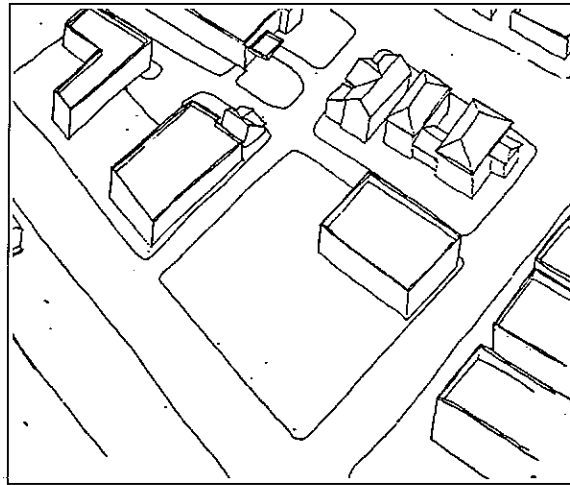
- Develop a greenbelt link between downtown and the University
- Add trees to strengthen the image of Kent as the "Tree City"
- Open up the river to views
- Improve the quality of the streetscape by adding benches, lights, and landscaping which echo the character of the surroundings

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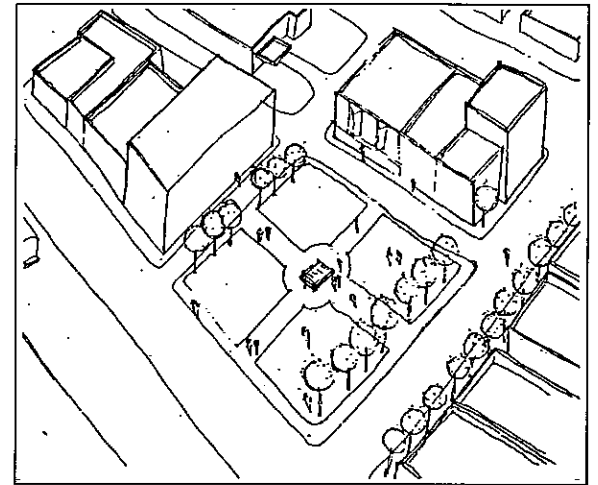




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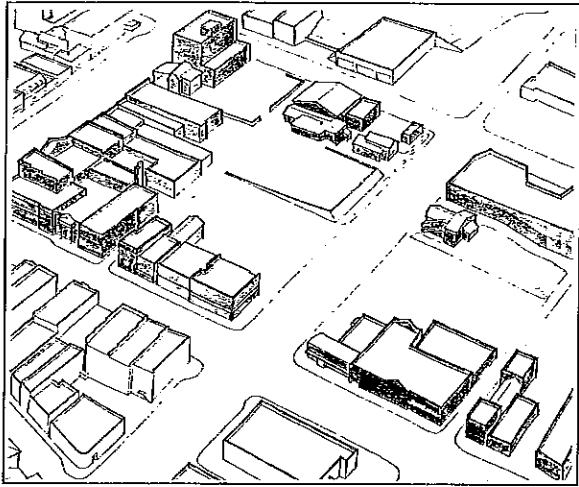
Key to illustrations:

1. A figure-ground diagram which clearly indicates the predominance of open space within the study area. (Team 5)
2. An illustration which locates those particular open spaces that need attention either by infilling new structures or by remaining as open spaces with improvements. (Team 4)
3. Many of the open spaces in Kent are vacant lots used for parking such as this space (no. 10 in illustration 2 above) at the corner of Franklin Avenue and College Street. This particular lot is in poor condition, and a portion is completely blocked off and unused. (Team 5)
4. View of the same open space improved as a public park, creating a pleasant gathering place adjacent to the river. Notice how adding height to the structures around the park helps to define the space. (Team 5)
5. Another view of the park from the eye level of the pedestrian. New structures around the park reflect the historical architectural character of the area.

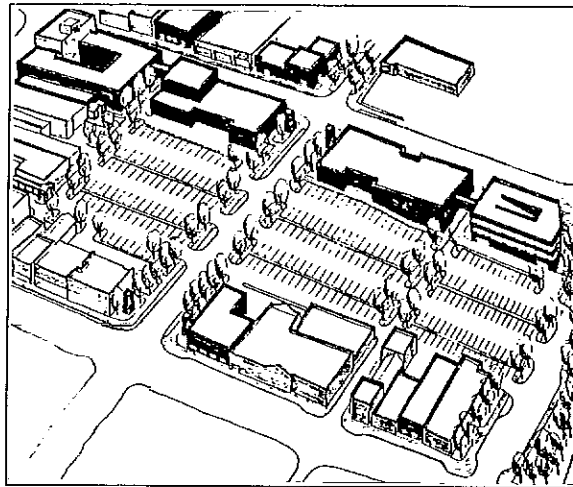


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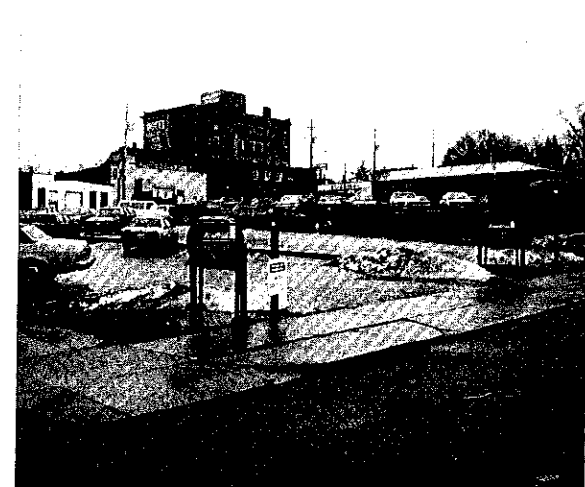
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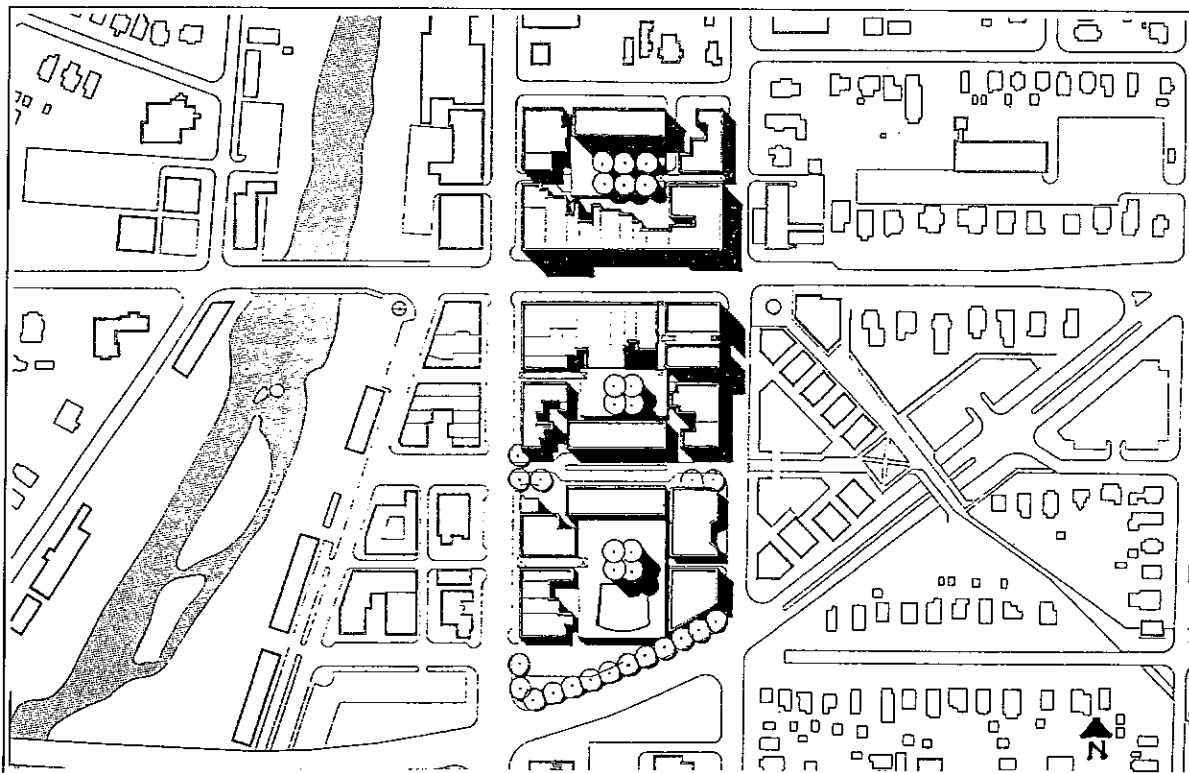


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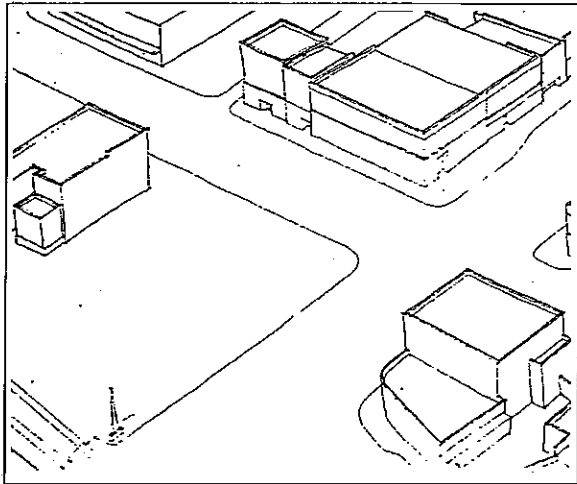
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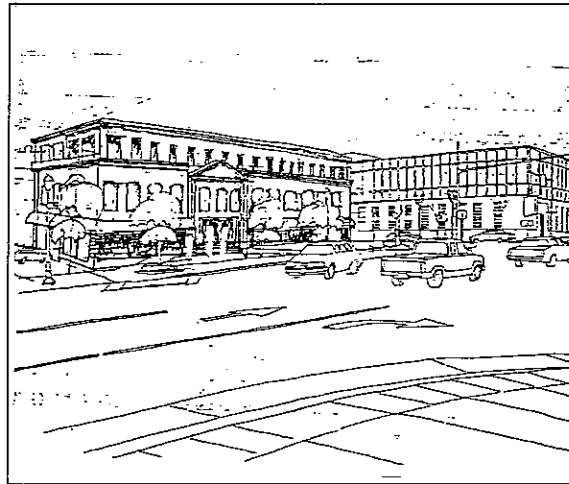


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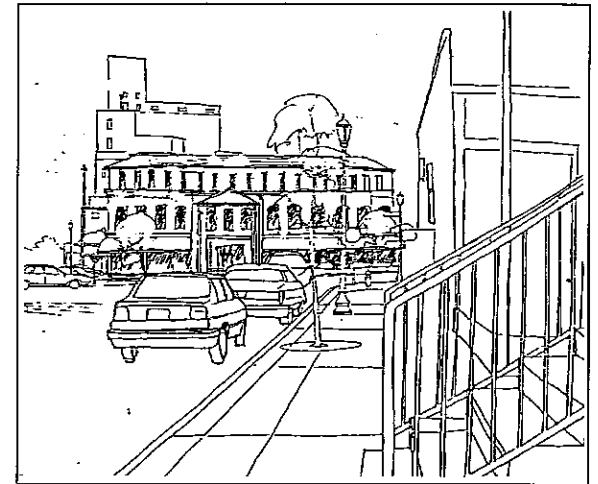
6. Drawing of the current appearance of the Erie Street parking area between Water and Depeyster streets. (Team 1)
7. View of the Erie Street parking lot showing proposed infill structures along Depeyster Street. Structures help to define the scale and character of the space and can add much needed uses to the area such as hotel or office space. This proposal also suggests creating arcades in existing alleys to connect the parking area with the main streets, and adding streetscaping elements. (Team 1)
8. Photo of the existing Erie Street parking area.
9. This proposal addresses the void spaces in the Central Business District where parking areas presently exist. It suggests the construction of a two-level structure which would provide parking on the lower level and a pedestrian plaza on the upper level, with access from both Water and Depeyster streets. This idea provides convenient access to unused upper stories of adjacent buildings and it makes excellent use of an existing inner-block void to create a pleasant location for such seasonal activities as summer jazz festivals, winter ice-skating, and springtime garden expos. (Team 3)



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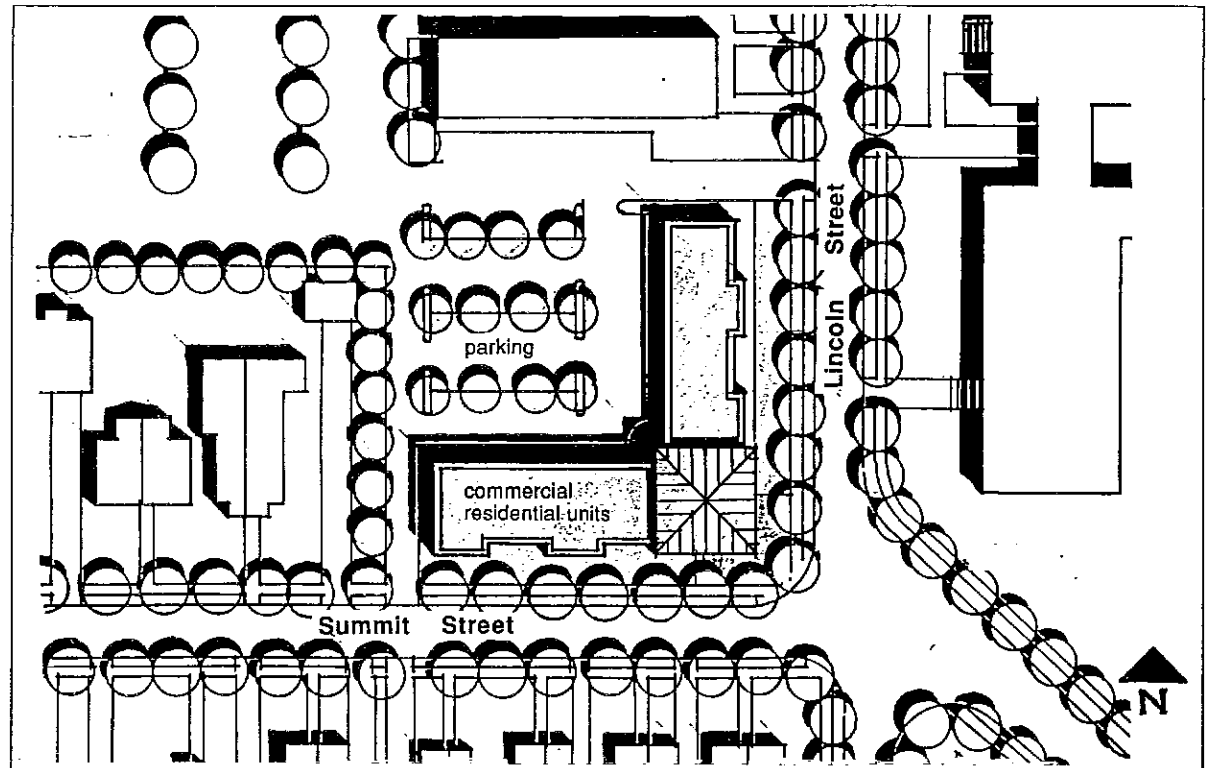
12.

10. One of the most important open spaces in the downtown area is the vacant lot at the northwest corner of Main and Water streets. Undeveloped since the Revco building burned down nearly twenty years ago, the space has created a gap in the continuity of the cityscape and caused the deterioration of the city center. (Team 5)

11. Illustration of a proposed infill building, which adds spatial closure to the heart of the commercial district at the corner of Main and Water streets, on the vacant site. By reflecting the scale, character, and rhythm of elements of the surrounding buildings, the proposed building restores a unifying image to the urban setting. (Team 5)

12. View of the proposed building from Franklin.

13. A proposal to locate a mixed-use building at the corner of Summit and Lincoln. The lot is currently vacant, but the new building would create a much-needed focal point at the corner and would serve as an incubator opportunity for the rest of the district and boost the economy as well. (Team 5)



13.

VI. Utilize Existing Structures More Effectively

Many of the structures and conditions already present in the Kent cityscape possess very positive features, which are either ignored or under-utilized in terms of their ability to contribute to the urban setting. No proposal would be complete without examining ways to enhance and improve the structures, which presently exist, and the goal of this section is to suggest imaginative and creative methods for utilizing these resources more effectively.

The following ideas suggest possible methods for improved utilization of existing structures. These are not intended as requirements but as suggestions for achieving the general goal.

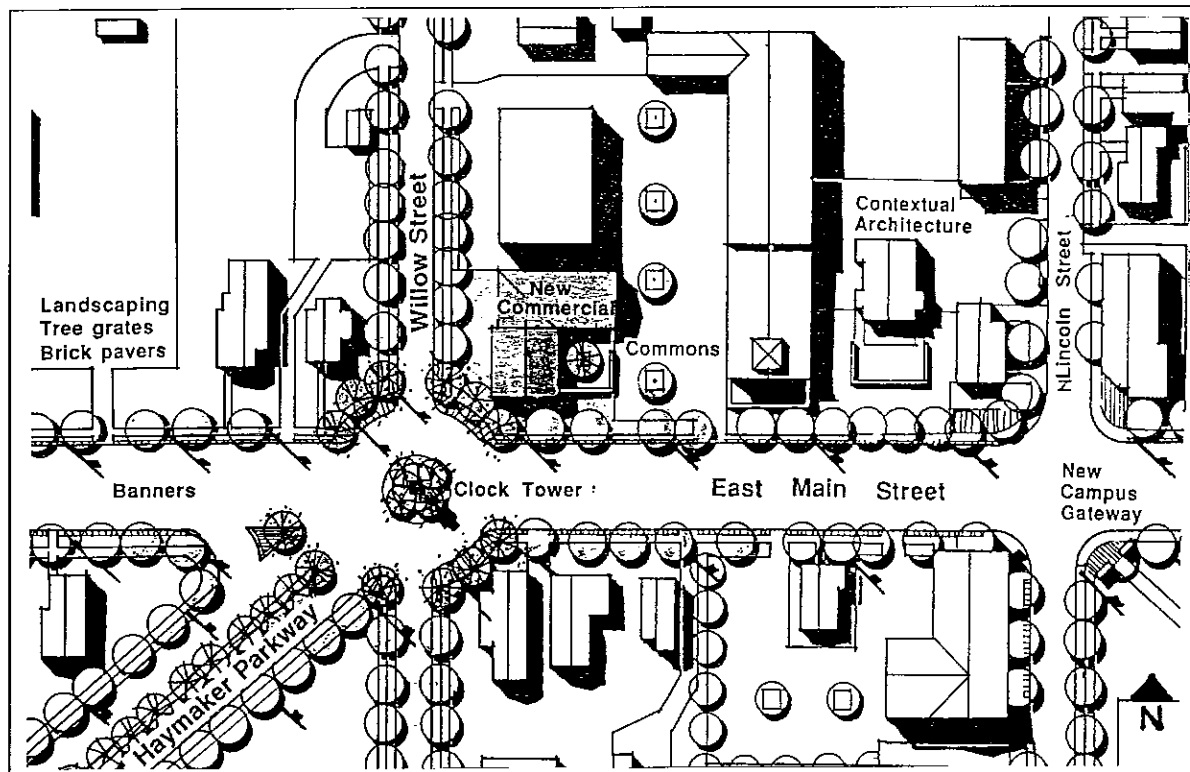
1. **Develop appropriate uses for important nodes of activity**
 - Define the architectural character which most successfully conveys the image of the area
 - Suggest uses for unused historic structures such as the Bissler Building, the Ellis Hotel, the Alpaca Mill, and buildings along Gougler
 - Suggest alternative and possibly more effective uses for buildings presently

occupied, such as the fraternity houses along Main Street, the gas stations at Depeyster and Main, and the old Post Office

2. **Encourage more intensive use of the upper floors of existing structures**
 - Increase density of commercial and mixed-use districts
 - New development should be sympathetic to the existing character and scale of buildings
 - Create new commercial, retail, and industrial buildings to attract businesses from outside the area
 - Strengthen the continuity and image of an area by filling the "missing teeth" with appropriate uses

3. **Encourage more intensive use of the upper floors of existing buildings**
 - Encourage incubator businesses
 - Develop residential housing for students, faculty, and community
 - Promote student businesses such as art galleries, typing services, etc.
 - Provide better access to and between the upper floors of buildings

4. **Improve the quality of the rear elevations of commercial buildings**
 - Create new entries and provide quality signage and add landscaping
 - Improve access from parking areas, adding lighting, ramps, etc.



Key to illustrations:

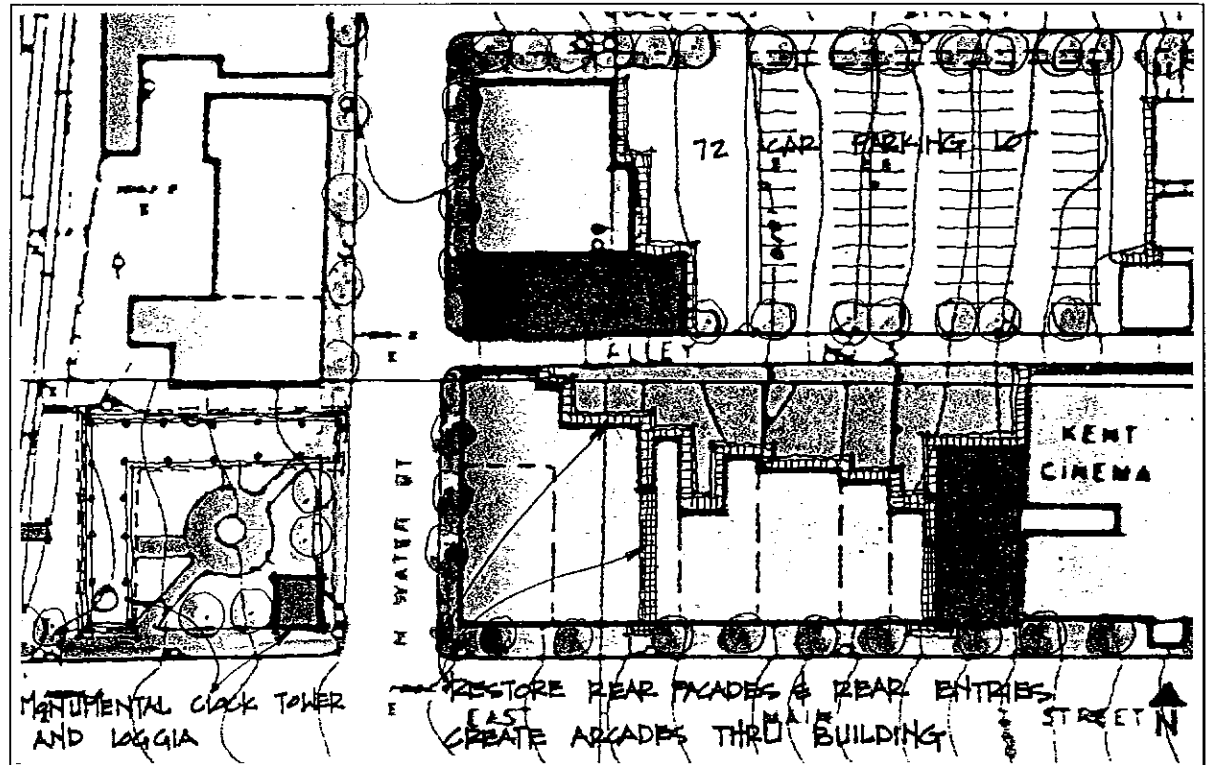
1. This illustration suggests ways to improve the effectiveness of the commercial area along Main Street between Lincoln and Willow streets. By eliminating vehicular curb cuts and providing access from the secondary streets, a dangerous pedestrian situation is improved. This proposal creates a commons area in what is presently a parking area to provide a more pleasant atmosphere for the many pedestrians who use the space. By infilling the corner of Willow and Main with a new building, a focal point or gateway is created to help define and orient the large open space created at the intersection of the Haymaker Parkway. Also suggested is the addition of trees and landscaping to unify the district and give it some identity and link it more successfully to the downtown. (Team 5)



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2. Photograph of the campus commercial district as it appears today.
3. Photograph of the rear elevation of building in the Central Business District from the parking areas.
4. This proposal suggests creating arcades in existing alleys to connect the parking area with the main streets. Improving the quality of the rear facades of the buildings and providing convenient access to all the business establishments will encourage more consumer activity in the downtown area and visually enhance the cityscape.



VII. Preserve and Enhance the History of Kent

Kent is a city with a rich heritage and an identity steeped in history. Part of the success that this community has enjoyed over the years is due to the available natural resources present in the environment and the ability of the inhabitants to adapt to the changing times. By maintaining a strong link with the historical influences which have shaped the city thus far, Kent will be prepared to face yet another new era of change. In order to accomplish this, an effort should be made to preserve and enhance the history of Kent.

1. Encourage development which highlights Kent's history

- Focus on the Cuyahoga River, riverfront, mill ruins, mill era, dam, canal route, canal locks, etc.
- Focus on the elements of the rail era such as the train station, railway cars, etc.
- Focus on the University, the campus, historical structures, fraternities, sororities, bars, and restaurants

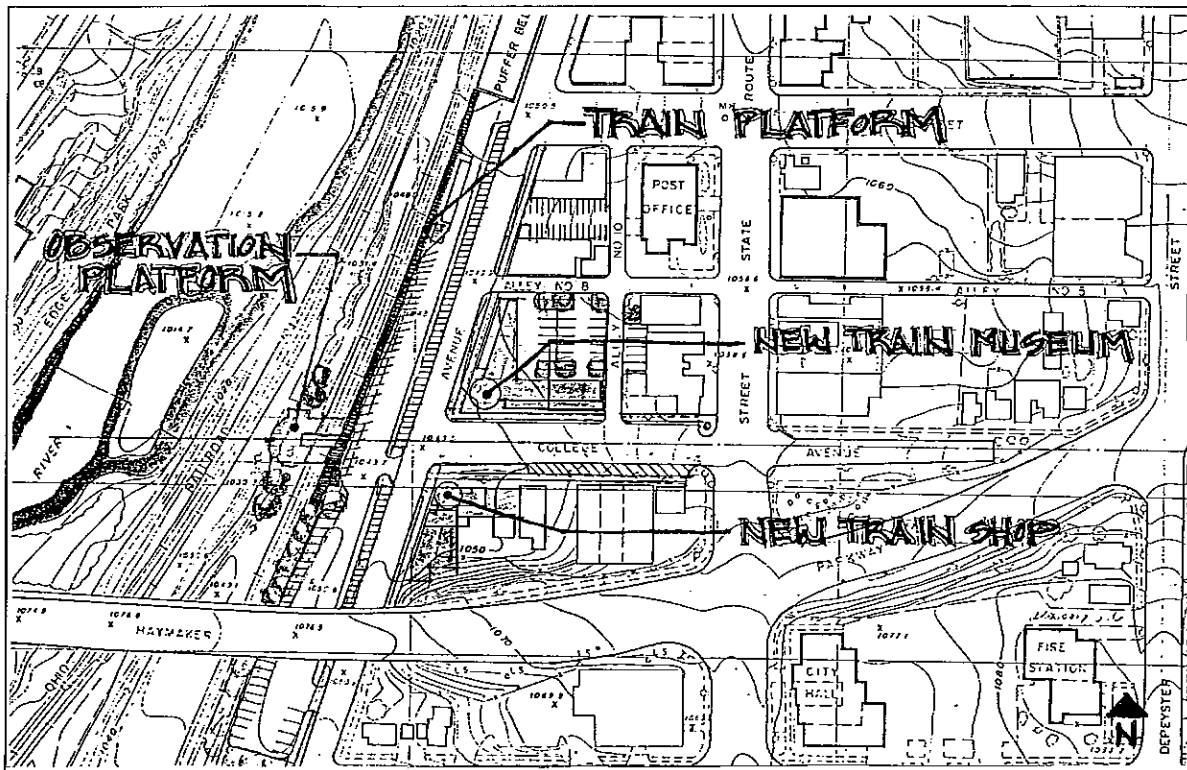
2. Improve the appearance of historic structures not utilized to their best potential

- Find appropriate uses for vacant buildings such as the Bissler Building, the Alpaca Mill, the Ellis Hotel, etc.
- Restore and repair historic facades on buildings such as the Huntington Bank, Gougler Machine, the Old Congregational Church, etc.
- Maintain historic character for any new development or infill structures.

3. Provide interpretation of the history of Kent to community and visitors

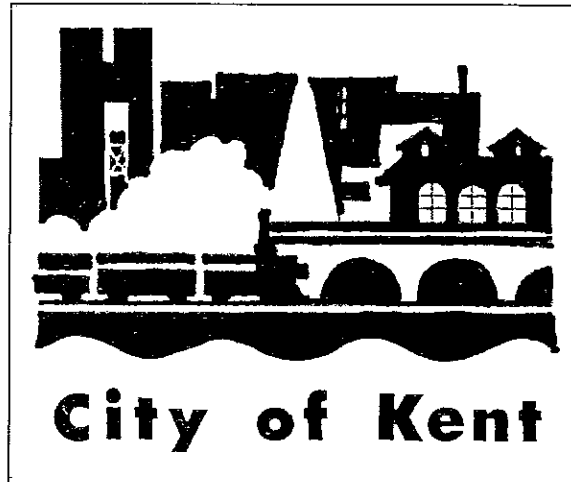
- Develop a marker system identifying historic structures or sites and create a walking tour.
- Clearly indicate historic events along riverfront pathways by signs, maps, etc.
- Develop a plaque which can be used to identify historic structures and which is available to residents to place on their historic homes
- Create images and logos which reflect the historical character of the city
- Write and distribute a new book on the history of Kent

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Key to illustrations:

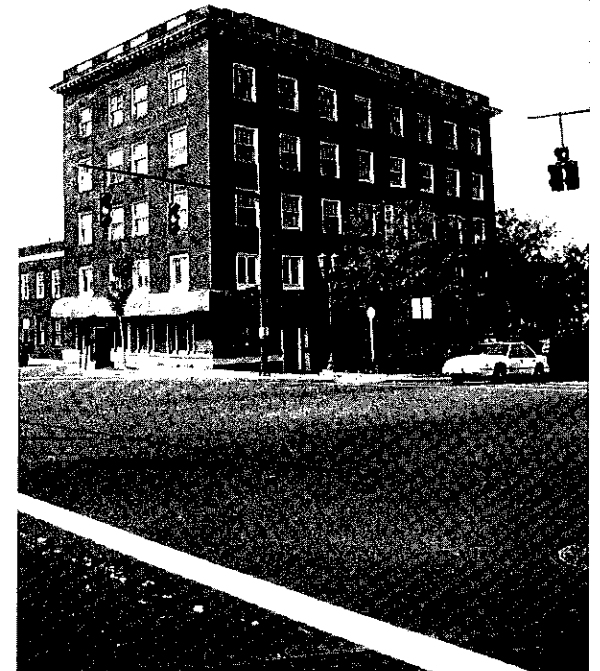
1. A proposal indicating development of the existing railroad tracks to include a new boardwalk and observation platform reminiscent of the passenger rail days. This proposal also suggests creating a new train museum and a train hobby shop to highlight the rail era. (Team 1)
2. Drawing of a logo which reflects the river, railroad era, and the architecture. This type of logo could be used on sign markers, literature etc. (Team 5)
3. Making the city an extension of the Cuyahoga Valley Line rail tours would be an excellent way to bring visitors to the area and provide an exciting activity.
4. A photograph of the Kent Ellis Hotel, a building in need of serious attention.



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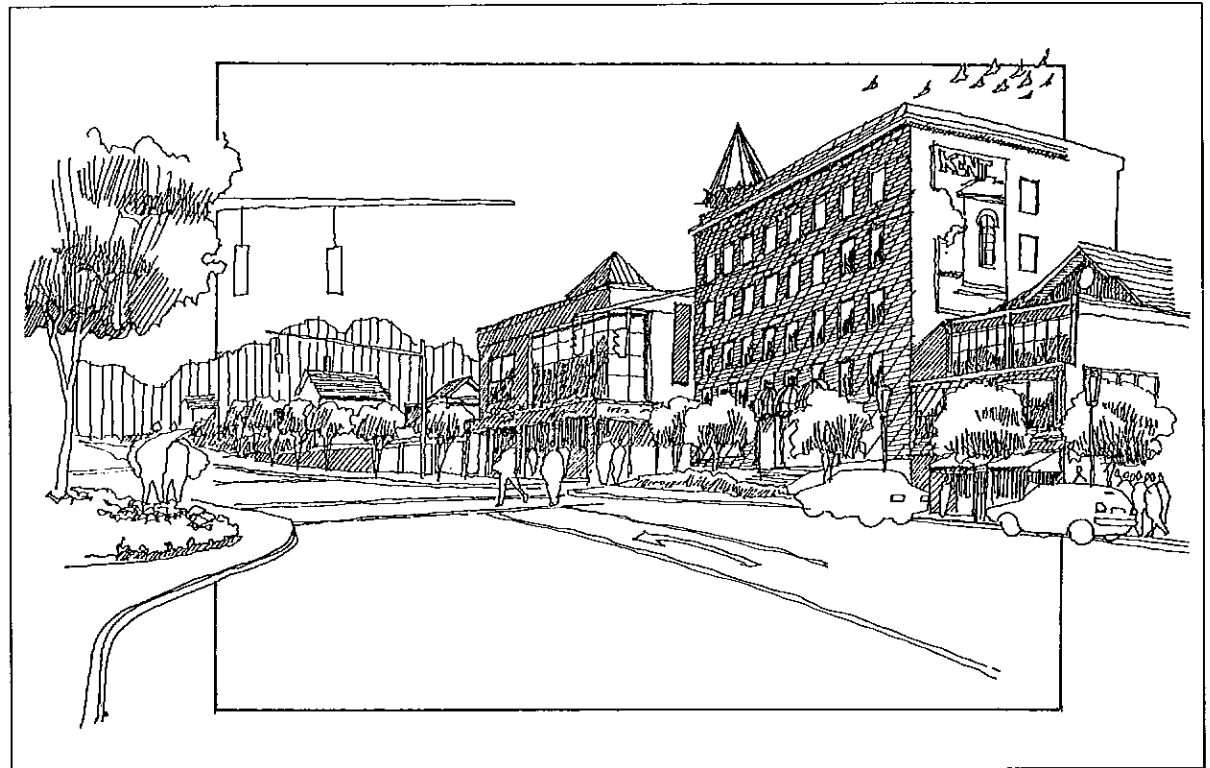


Key Development Sites

Cornerstones for Change

4

As a part of the effort to prepare a comprehensive urban revitalization program for the city of Kent, students of the Cleveland State University Levin College of Urban Affairs have selected four specific sites within the Kent study area to examine in greater detail: the Franklin Hotel (also known as the Town House Hotel), the Kent Heirs Block, the vacant space at the corner of Main and Water Streets, and the Bissler Building. Each case study examines the development potential and economic viability of the particular location and provides recommendations as to how the site might be used more effectively for improving the vitality of the city and strengthening the image of Kent. These case studies have been summarized and are presented in the following chapter.



Proposed renovation of the Franklin Hotel by Seiw-Hong Ong

The Franklin Hotel

A Summary of Case Studies prepared by Jack Crews and Shirley Thompson

Located on the southwest corner of East Main and Depeyster streets, the Franklin Hotel (also known as the Town House Hotel) commands a prominent location in the Kent cityscape. The five-story structure, which rises from the crest of a steep slope, is a visual landmark clearly visible from many of the major entry points into the city.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, the city of Kent enjoyed a period of prosperity due to the success of the railroad, expanding industry, and the opening of Kent State University. Consequently a group of local businessmen saw the need for quality lodging and in 1919 organized the Kent Hotel Company in order to construct a new hotel. One year later the Franklin Hotel was completed at a cost of \$250,000. The simple brick structure, accentuated with classical details, sported an impressive two-story lobby behind a row of four expansive glass windows with elegant arched tops and offered forty-four rooms. Containing approximately 16,000 square feet of total floor area, the building was constructed of concrete and masonry on a solid stone foundation. Unfortunately, the hotel never experienced the success that its founders had anticipated. As a result of frequent changes of ownership, poor management, and financial difficulties, the hotel never operated as a profitable venture. During

the ensuing decades, the advent of the automobile, a demand for modern amenities, and the opening of several new hotels in the vicinity prevented the Franklin Hotel from ever competing successfully as a hotel.

Today the building stands neglected and unused with the exception of the basement and a portion of the first floor, which house a tavern and lounge. Threatened with irreparable deterioration at the hands of disinterested owners, the future of the Franklin Hotel remains uncertain. Ironically as a new century dawns, the city of Kent is once again facing the need for increased, quality lodging. Might the Franklin Hotel finally become the elegant landmark first envisioned?

As part of the efforts by community leaders, residents, and students to put together a revitalization strategy for the city of Kent, the Franklin Hotel has been targeted as a key site for redevelopment. The central location, high visibility, and historical characteristics of the building mark it as a strong and identifiable node, possessing the potential to become a vital anchor and catalyst of downtown renewal.

Cleveland State University student Jack Crews is confident that the Franklin Hotel could be renovated and incorporated into a new hotel / conference center and has studied the feasibility of such an endeavor. Taking into account the posi-

tive features of the site such as its prime location close to both the University and downtown Kent, as well as some of the drawbacks such as the small size of the existing building and inadequate parking, Mr. Crews suggests that the property to the west and south of the present site be acquired to provide space for additional rooms, conference facilities, and parking. Consideration should also be given to providing a flexible and diverse range of accommodations to meet the varied needs of the University, the Kent community, and visitors.

Serving as precedent for Mr. Crews's redevelopment proposal is the Scanticon-Princeton Executive Conference Center in Princeton, New Jersey. Although the center is much larger in scope than the proposed Kent project, it serves as an example of how the University and the city can work together to create a positive impact on the community and economy.

Mr. Crews also considers the financial feasibility of the project. Although limited information precludes providing an accurate expense estimate for the entire project, he is confident that the restoration of the Franklin Hotel and the addition of new facilities would be a profitable venture, supported by the University and the community and playing an important role in reviving the downtown and inspiring positive change throughout the city.

The Kent Heirs Block

A Summary of Case Studies prepared by Jeannine Senft and Gail Visconsi

The fundamental goal of the Kent Center Project is to revitalize and improve the utilization of spaces and structures in the downtown area of Kent. By focusing on more specific goals, such as improving the economic vitality, identity, and image of the city; strengthening links between Kent State University and Kent's Central Business District; as well as preserving and highlighting the history of the area, a framework for assessing possible development strategies has been established. One particular area of downtown Kent, named the Kent Heirs Block, has been selected as a prime location for consideration because it contains a number of features which, used effectively, could successfully attain all of the goals above.

Roughly described as the north and south sides of East Main Street between Depeyster and Willow Streets, the Heirs Block is a mixed-use area consisting of a variety of commercial, residential, and boarding house properties, the majority of which are located in Victorian-era houses. This area serves as a distinctive connection between the University and downtown Kent, capturing a glimpse of Kent's history in its structures. Two houses in particular, located at 227 and 237 East Main Street have been chosen as sites to study for potential renovation as bed and breakfast or guest house-type inns.

Constructed during the late 1800s,

both houses exhibit intricately crafted details and features characteristic of the period. They were maintained as single-family homes until the 1950s when a zoning change of the area from residential to commercial prompted the selling of the homes which were turned into offices or boarding houses (primarily for fraternity organizations). The changes drastically impacted the appearance of the area. Fortunately both properties under consideration were salvaged from neglect and further decline and have been extensively renovated and restored to their original beauty. Currently both houses contain office space and have been altered only as required to comply with local safety codes.

According to Cleveland State University students Jeannine Senft and Gail Visconsi, the two Victorian properties have been chosen as sites for guest house development because they have the unique potential to capture an untapped segment of the market. Guest lecturers, research analysts, and visiting professors connected to the University would certainly take advantage of such accommodations as would executives of local businesses such as Davey Tree Expert Company, Amtek/Lamb, and Gougler Industries. In addition the regional tourism market is another resource from which to draw business. Parents of Kent State University students and local residents might also find

the guest house a welcome alternative for weekend lodging. Ms. Senft also suggests that the inn be used as an incubator business for students of food service and hospitality management programs.

Presently there is little competition for a venture of this type. Although the proposed sites are directly adjacent to the Inn of Kent, the type of experience to be offered at the guest house would be more individualized and upscale. Also in the vicinity is the Eidson House, which offers three rooms with a shared bath. However, indications are that the proprietor views the venture only as a part-time business.

Ms. Senft cites the Inn of Chagrin Falls as a model for developing a guest house. By securing the investment of a number of limited partners and obtaining bank loans the owners expect to make a profit within the first seven years of operation. A similar environment and market potential in Kent indicate that the guest house would be a profitable venture.

By focusing redevelopment efforts on the Victorian houses along East Main Street, it is hoped that a positive example will foster a commitment by adjacent property owners to improve the quality of the surrounding environment and preserve the historic character of the area, thus providing a unique urban experience for the community and visitors of Kent.



Kent Heirs Block House, East Main Street



Kent Heirs Block House, East Main Street

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The Bissler Building, corner of Main and Gougler streets

The Bissler Building

Summary of Case Study prepared by Habib Musawwir

Ideally situated on the west bank of the Cuyahoga River at the foot of the Main Street Bridge, the Bissler Building commands a prominent place in Kent's cityscape and has served as a familiar landmark for nearly seventy years. Formerly home to the Bissler Furniture Store, the building has unfortunately been vacant since 1984. Realizing the adaptive-reuse potential of the site, Cleveland State University student Habib Musawwir has examined the possibilities of successfully renovating the structure and suggests appropriate ideas for development and use.

The strategic location of the Bissler Building at the corner of Main and Gouglers streets and the amenities offered by the adjacent river are features which suggest that development of the site could create a strong anchor node with the capability to spur economic and social activity, serving as a catalyst for revitalization of the entire area west of the Cuyahoga River. In addition, Mr. Musawwir cites the Pufferbelly restaurant (in the former railroad station) and the law offices of Williams, Wilser, and Antognoli (at the southeast corner of Main and Gouglers streets) as examples of successful adaptive reuse development in the vicinity, leading to the conclusion that similar treatment of the Bissler Building would be a viable endeavor.

Upon investigation of the building itself, Mr. Musawwir notes that the structure, constructed in 1924 of masonry and concrete, appears to be sound and has been well maintained throughout its vacancy. Containing a total floor area of approximately 22,600 square feet, the Bissler Building is comprised of a basement (with east side accessible at the riverbank level), a street level with an existing primary entrance along Main Street, and one upper-level story. Each level consists primarily of open space which makes the building easily adaptable for a variety of new uses. These existing conditions indicate that the Bissler Building would indeed be a good candidate for adaptive reuse, and Mr. Musawwir feels confident that development of this underutilized site would strengthen the urban fabric.

Mr. Musawwir explored three alternative uses for developing the structure: food and entertainment, office, and residential, considering the economic viability and the urban implications of each.

A review of food and entertainment establishments in the immediate vicinity suggests a need for additional restaurants or entertainment complexes comparable with the quality of the Pufferbelly restaurant. The open spaces of the Bissler Building would easily accommodate gathering spaces used for such activities as dining,

dancing, gaming, etc., and few structural modifications would be needed, allowing optimal use of the existing space. Mr. Musawwir has estimated that the cost to build a new structure with like amenities would cost upwards of 2 million dollars and that adaptation of an existing structure would be preferable as it would minimize capital outlays.

Conversion of the Bissler Building for office space would also be a viable alternative and might be an attractive location for a variety of smaller tenants. Mr. Musawwir notes that a local architectural firm, Fuller Design Group, has investigated several ideas for using the building for office use and has suggested opening up the center bay of the structure with an atrium to provide an additional amenity for tenants. The architects also estimated that costs for basic renovation (not including the atrium) might be in the neighborhood of 1 million dollars (a preliminary estimate).

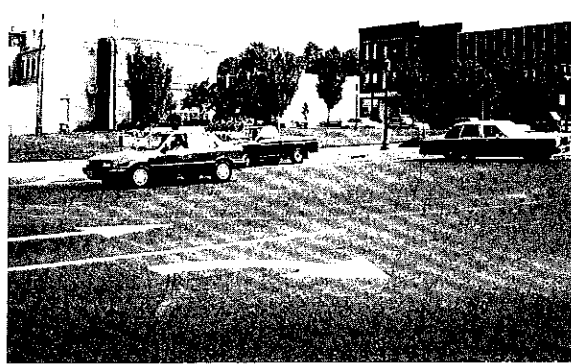
Residential development appears to be the least desirable alternative according to Mr. Musawwir. Because of the many code requirements necessary to convert the building into living spaces, and the possibility that the efficiency of usable floor space would not be cost effective, conversion to residential units would not likely result in a successful economic endeavor.

Corner of Main and Water

Summary of Case Study prepared by Robert Merchant

Possibly one of the most visible and important urban spaces in the city of Kent is the northwest corner of East Main and Water streets in the Central Business District. Located at the very heart of the city center, the site has remained vacant for nearly two decades. Considered as a critical and necessary anchor for successfully revitalizing the downtown area, the space has been chosen as a key development site for further study by Cleveland State University student Robert Merchant. By considering a hypothetical office/retail project to develop, Mr. Merchant has prepared an economic feasibility study for development of the site.

During the prosperous building boom of the 1830s, a number of new brick buildings were constructed on the east side of the Cuyahoga River in what is now known as the Central Business District. One of these buildings, a hotel and business block known as the Franklin House, was erected at the corner of East Main and Water Streets by businessman Zenas Kent. Serving as a hotel for many years, the building also housed a variety of businesses such as a dry goods store, offices, a department store, drug store, and for a short time even became home to the Kent Free Library. Unfortunately tragedy struck on August 27, 1972, when the entire building (and the eleven businesses which were located in the block) was lost to a devastating fire.



Vacant corner of East Main and Water streets

Since the time of the fire, the site where the building stood for so many years has remained vacant. Ownership of the property has changed hands several times and the site is currently under joint ownership by Home Savings Bank and Williams Brothers Mill. There are no plans by either party to develop the site at the present time.

The vacant site covers approximately 25,00 square feet and is bounded on the north by the Home Savings Block, on the south by East Main Street, on the east by Water Street, and on the west by the Conrail tracks. Currently the lot has been maintained as a park by the Home Savings Bank.

As the basis for a financial feasibility study, Mr. Merchant has selected the following conditions as hypothetical param-

eters for developing the block as a commercial/office center: A 22,000 square foot mixed-use building of three stories with rentable space for both retail and office activities, a market space along Main or Water streets with a permanent canopy to be used for flea markets and seasonal activities, and a landscaped courtyard. The structure would be constructed of materials sympathetic with the character of the downtown.

Mr. Merchant considered land acquisition costs and construction costs to conclude that a project of this scope could be estimated to cost approximately 2 million dollars. Through the use of creative funding from both private and public sectors and considering the possibility of pursuing such incentives as tax abatements and low interest loans, it was estimated that the proposed development would actually result in a loss of net annual cash flow. If the market structure were eliminated, the project would probably result in a small cash flow gain, but Mr. Merchant feels that such an endeavor would be only marginally profitable.

Citing the limited site size and the parking requirements of the city as the key factors limiting success, Mr. Merchant concludes that any development actually proposed for the site will need the cooperative effort of city leaders and developers to become a viable consideration.