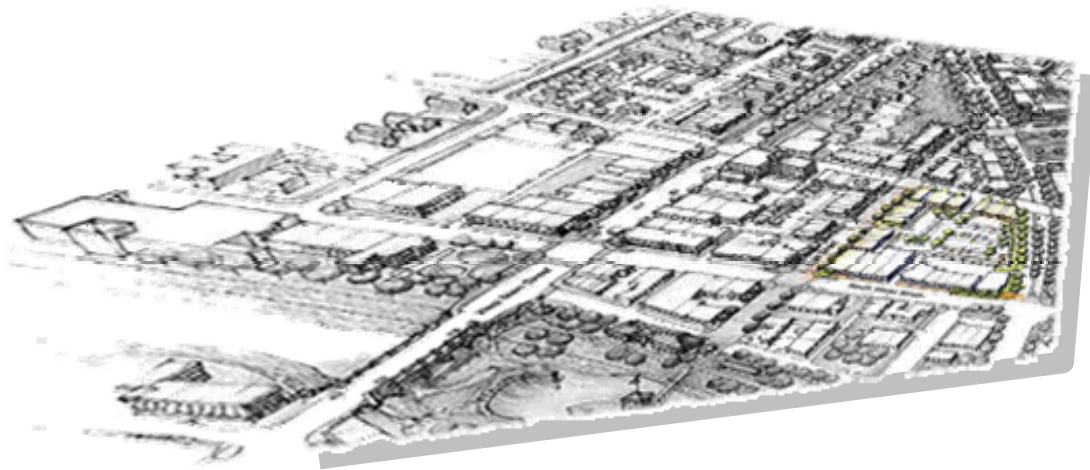




2007-01

# Request for Qualifications



*Downtown Kent  
Redevelopment Project*

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# INDEX

I. Project Overview	Page
1. RFQ Summary	page 1
2. RFQ Process Overview	page 2
3. Kent Project Opportunity	page 3
4. About Kent	page 4
5. About Kent State University	page 5
6. Kent, Central to Northeast Ohio	page 6
7. Downtown Kent Background	page 7
8. Redevelopment Planning	page 8
9. Redevelopment Strategy	page 9 – 10
10. Redevelopment Goals and Objectives	page 11 – 12
11. RFQ Site Identification	page 13
12. Significant Programs and Resources	page 13 – 14
13. Developer Responsibilities	page 15 – 16

## II. Submission Requirements

1. Successful Expressions of Interest	page 17
2. Directions for Written Submission	page 17 – 19
3. Review Process	page 20
4. Evaluation Criteria	page 20
5. Schedule	page 21
6. Registration and Questions	page 21
7. SOQ Due Date	page 22

## III. General Information

1. Insurance	page 22
2. Legal Compliance	page 23
3. Conflict of Interest/Non Collusion	page 23
4. Indemnification	page 23 – 24

## Reference Exhibits

Reference Exhibits and the contents of this RFQ may be found under the Projects section (choose Downtown Redevelopment RFQ) on the City of Kent website at: [www.ci.kentohio.org](http://www.ci.kentohio.org)

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2007-01

# Request for Qualifications

**RFQ Summary:** *The City of Kent is soliciting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from development firms interested in partnering for a high visibility, mixed-use redevelopment project in downtown Kent that may include a new hotel/conference center as well as new retail, restaurant and downtown residential. This exciting opportunity brings together best practices in Main Street revitalization and college-town development initiatives.*

Qualified firms may indicate interest by responding to this Request for Qualifications. To request a complete RFQ package, please contact:

*Suzanne Robertson*  
Downtown Redevelopment  
City of Kent  
215 East Summit Street, Kent, Ohio 44240  
330-676-7500  
330-678-8033 (fax)  
[robertsons@kent-ohio.org](mailto:robertsons@kent-ohio.org)

Submittals will be received until **11:00 am, December 21, 2007**. Submissions received after this date and time will not be considered.

The City reserves the right to reject any and/or all submissions, and to accept the submittal(s) that in its judgment is in its best interest. Each submission shall contain one original and five copies, and shall be in a sealed envelope or package clearly identified as "RFQ 2007-01 Downtown Kent Redevelopment Project" delivered to the address noted above.

## ***Downtown Redevelopment The Final Pieces of a Great Community***

For Inquiries or Questions Contact:  
Suzanne Robertson  
City Manager's Office  
(330) 676-7500

RFQ 2007-01  
Downtown Kent Redevelopment Project



# RFQ Process Overview

The City of Kent (herein referred to as the “City”) invites your participation in this RFQ to redevelop a 3 acre site in downtown Kent. The RFQ allows prospective developers to formally express their interest to develop the site in partnership with the City and in cooperation with Kent State University (herein referred to as the “University”). The City is looking to use the redevelopment of this block to be a catalyst for a larger multi-block revitalization project in the adjoining blocks. The University is looking for this project to help them attract students, faculty and administrators by creating a vibrant downtown that offers diverse retail, dining and entertainment options.

The purpose of this RFQ is to solicit Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) from qualified developers for the City to consider in seeking a development partner. Based on the SOQs received, the City will evaluate the viability of the submittals and will identify a short list of potential teams to interview. If after interviews are conducted, the City determines that one or more of the submittals is a good fit for the Kent project, it will begin negotiating for the purpose of selecting a development team and preparing a development agreement. If negotiations are unsuccessful with the first firm selected, the City will consider the next most responsive submission.

Once a development partner has been selected, the development team will talk further of the City’s expectations for redevelopment and how to ensure this redevelopment builds on the success of what’s already downtown. The development team will also work with the University to further define the hotel/conference center concept. This redevelopment project is not contingent upon a hotel/conference center, but it is considered a high priority component for the City, the University, and Kent’s corporate community.

The City will consider SOQ’s that include teaming of developers with specific expertise and/or capabilities to successfully complete the desired development. Successful firms should provide an integrated approach to achieving the project goals and objectives outlined in this Request for Qualifications.

It is important to note that no contract will be awarded without further discussion and negotiation with the respondents. The intent of the RFQ is to identify the best prospective development partner(s). The City will not be responsible for any costs incurred for the preparation and submission of this RFQ.

Development teams wishing to respond should demonstrate their ability to plan, finance, construct and manage the project redevelopment by submitting a Statement of Qualifications to 215 East Summit Street, Kent, Ohio, 44240 by 11 am. December 21, 2007.

Respondents should be aware that the Ohio Public Records Act requires that any information submitted to the City is considered “public information” and may be viewed and/or copied by any member of the public, including news agencies and competitors.

# Kent Project Opportunity

This is a unique situation for a developer to participate with the City and the University for a significant redevelopment project in downtown Kent. This project seeks to combine public and private investment to reinvigorate the downtown and enhance the connectivity between downtown Kent, Kent neighborhoods, and the Kent State campus in new and exciting ways. This connectivity is expected to be a catalyst for redevelopment all around the project area, making it one of the most important revitalization projects in Kent's history.

The City has established a number of programs and projects to support this development including land banking, flexible CD zoning, downtown streetscape improvements, riverfront park construction, downtown revitalization studies, retail site assessment (Buxton Company), downtown parking studies, hotel and conference center market analysis, whitewater park feasibility assessment, Main Street Ohio program, downtown Kent Development Corporation, downtown façade loan and grant programs, community reinvestment area tax abatement, low interest revolving loan fund, etc. Kent has also adopted plans and ordinances supporting mixed use, walkable, and sustainable redevelopment in the downtown area. The City now seeks a developer that is capable of implementing the community's vision.

The University has been acquiring property in the redevelopment area to support their interest in a hotel/conference center and other related academic functions that they believe would benefit from an off campus location. The Kent State Foundation is currently engaged in the quiet phase of a capital campaign to raise funds that could be available to support the University's investment in this prospective redevelopment.

The University will be celebrating its centennial anniversary in 2010 and it is looking to be a partner in a transformative redevelopment project that will be worthy of celebrating this significant milestone while also setting a new standard for Kent and Kent State University for the next 100 years.

*Please note that the City is looking for an innovative project with a creative approach to the use of the retail, commercial and residential space. The City believes downtown Kent should be a destination for those seeking unique shopping, restaurant and entertainment experiences that combine the best of the "old" with the best of "new" Kent.*



# Request for Qualifications 2007-01

## About Kent

The original "Tree City," Kent is a college town and more – a community of families, businesses and industries located on the banks of the Cuyahoga River. As the home of Kent State University, Kent residents enjoy the highest educational values and all of the benefits of living in a university city.

Images of  
Kent



Kent offers a full complement of community living – including downtown commerce and services, medical care, full-service local government, local history and culture, and local employment. Jobs are based in the University, area businesses, and important national and international employers. The result is an unusually rich quality of life.

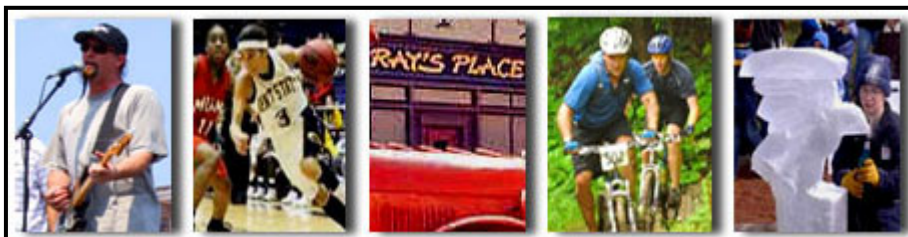
According to the 2000 Census, the resident population of Kent is 27,906, with the student body adding another 24,000. The community is home to an internationally diverse population; an aspect that is strongly valued by residents. Kent is a mature, largely built-out community with little remaining room to grow, so redevelopment and infill is a top priority. The population has remained steady during the past decade and Kent has an unusually high level of education per capita, nearly twice the national average.

The total labor force is about 15,000, with an unemployment rate near the current, national rate. Employment is primarily in services, manufacturing, and wholesale/retail. In addition to Kent State University, the City School District and the City government, major global employers include Ametek/Lamb Electric (fractional horsepower motors), Gougler Industries (machining molds), Davey Tree Expert Company, Smithers-Oasis (foamed plastic) and Land O' Lakes (production plant).

*Kent is the World  
Headquarters for  
Davey Tree*



Kent is one of only 40 Main Street Communities in Ohio, which makes available significant local and state resources for restoration and redevelopment projects in Kent. Main Street Kent co-sponsors a series of community events downtown in partnership with Kent's arts, cultural, business and sports groups that attract thousands of students and families into downtown all year long.



Images of  
Kent

# About Kent State University

## *Big Ideas, Big Impacts in Kent*

Kent State University is Ohio's **third largest public university** and it is recognized nationwide as a significant research and teaching university. In addition to over 250 undergraduate and 75 graduate programs, Kent State is home of the renowned Liquid Crystal Institute and the Silverman School of Fashion Design and Merchandising. Kent State enrolls over 23,000 students on the Kent campus and is the largest employer in Portage County with 3,150 employees.



Among universities in Ohio, Kent State is known for providing highly personal attention to its students - who come from across the nation and 90 foreign countries. And for its **170,000 alumni**, Kent remains a place of fond memories.

## *Community Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration*

Kent State is a partner of the community in many ways. As **one of only 9 universities** in the nation to receive the “Community Engagement, Outreach and Partnership” designation, Kent State continually seeks to apply their academic expertise into the Kent community. The administrative and professional staff interact regularly with the City for joint planning and new initiatives. Many of the students live off campus and participate in neighborhood living. Students and their organizations provide thousands of service hours in Kent.



## *Economic Engine as a Consumer and Producer*

Kent State is a catalyst for economic, cultural and workforce development in Kent. Kent State is one of only 37 universities in the country to be designated a Research II institution by the Carnegie Foundation – and this research capability has propelled Kent State to a ranking of **5<sup>th</sup> worldwide and 2<sup>nd</sup> nationwide** in the number of startups per \$1 million invested in research spending. These startup companies drive Kent's new economy.



Kent State's business administration program was recognized in 2007 as one of the “**Best Undergraduate Business Programs in the U.S.**” by U.S. News and World Report. Many of these business school graduates have gone on to business success in Kent, turning their ideas into new downtown businesses.

In addition, Kent State has established itself as a powerhouse in the MAC, **winning more titles for men's and women's sports** than any other school in the conference. These sporting events bring tens of thousands of family, friends and fans into downtown Kent each year, looking for places to dine, stay over, and celebrate their victories.



**Kent State  
Alumni  
Businesses  
in Kent**

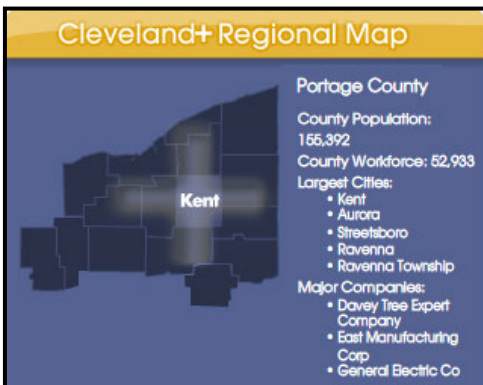
# Kent – Central to Northeast Ohio

Kent is conveniently located 8 miles east of Akron and 31 miles south of Cleveland in Portage County. This location puts Kent right in the middle of northeast Ohio, with **300,000 households** within a 15 minute drive from downtown Kent.



Northeast Ohio has much to offer. With major hubs such as Cleveland, Akron, Canton and Youngstown plus the hundreds of cities and towns in between, it covers over 6,000 square miles and is home to over **four million people** within a 1 hour drive.

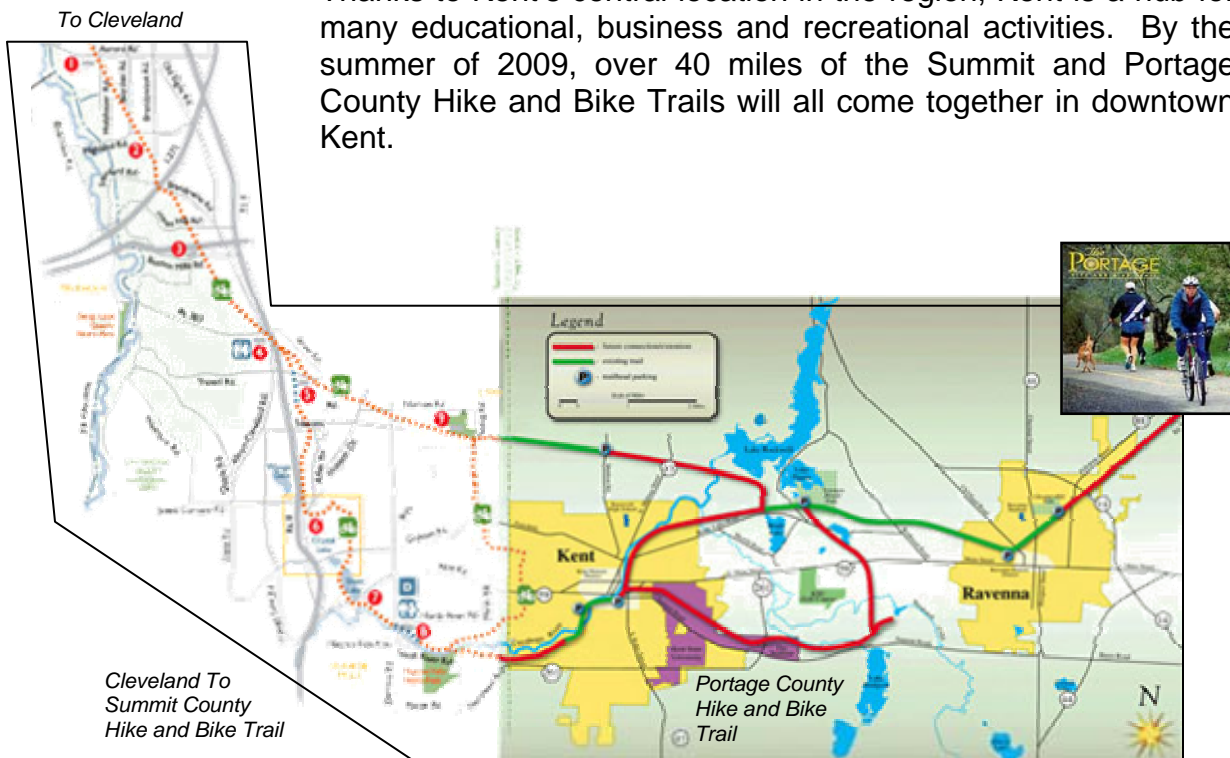
Northeast Ohio has embarked on a new regional campaign that seeks to market Cleveland “plus” the other cities and towns that make up the area as one united region leveraging its strengths to compete for businesses, residents and visitors.



The region has big cities plus small towns. It has the Cleveland Grand Prix plus Akron’s Soap Box Derby; The Cuyahoga Valley National Park plus Mill Creek MetroParks; Fortune 500 companies plus emerging businesses; Clusters of business excellence such as liquid crystals, polymers, health care, advanced manufacturing and much more.

And right in the middle of it all – is Kent.

Thanks to Kent’s central location in the region, Kent is a hub for many educational, business and recreational activities. By the summer of 2009, over 40 miles of the Summit and Portage County Hike and Bike Trails will all come together in downtown Kent.



# DOWNTOWN KENT BACKGROUND

The focus of the project will be downtown Kent within which there is a diverse arrangement of existing land uses, traffic patterns and adjacent neighborhoods.



Downtown Kent is the central business, judicial (county courthouse), financial and entertainment district in Kent. The downtown has an advantageous location at the intersection of two State Routes (SR59 and SR43) which are the most heavily traveled east-west and north-south arterials in Portage County. Downtown Kent is less than 5 miles from the Route 76 Interstate.



Downtown Kent is located on the scenic Cuyahoga riverfront and abuts a successful redevelopment project in the West River neighborhood where the City leveraged \$3.4 million in public dollars to stimulate \$18 million in new private investment – that led to the construction of new doctor, law, and financial offices, as well as a new library and new housing that complements the historic homes in the area.



Portions of the downtown corridor have already experienced or are undergoing restoration and redevelopment, e.g., Home Savings Bank and Plaza, City Bank Antiques Building, WW Reed Building, Ray's Place, Water Street Tavern, and the Pufferbelly. The most pressing need for downtown is extending compatible in-fill development beyond the Main Street corridor, and where appropriate, strategically building new structures that complement the existing structures and compel additional redevelopment downtown.

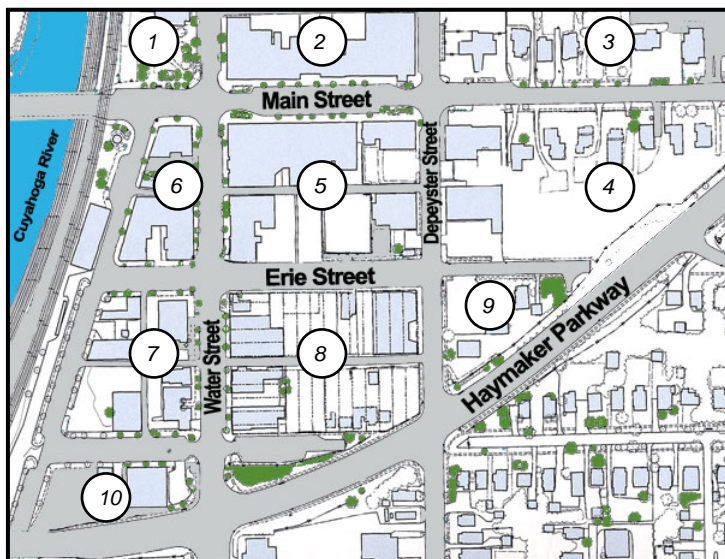


*Voted Best College Bar in Northeast Ohio*

The central business district is built around the historic Main Street corridor. Taking advantage of the favorable topography, Main Street crests at the top of the hill at the Kent Stage and provides a scenic path down to the Cuyahoga River. In the 1970's the Haymaker Parkway was built, and today there are 10 city blocks between Main Street and Haymaker Parkway that are in various stages of redevelopment. (see map below)



*30,000 visitors for Kent Heritage Fest*



*Brick Streetscape*

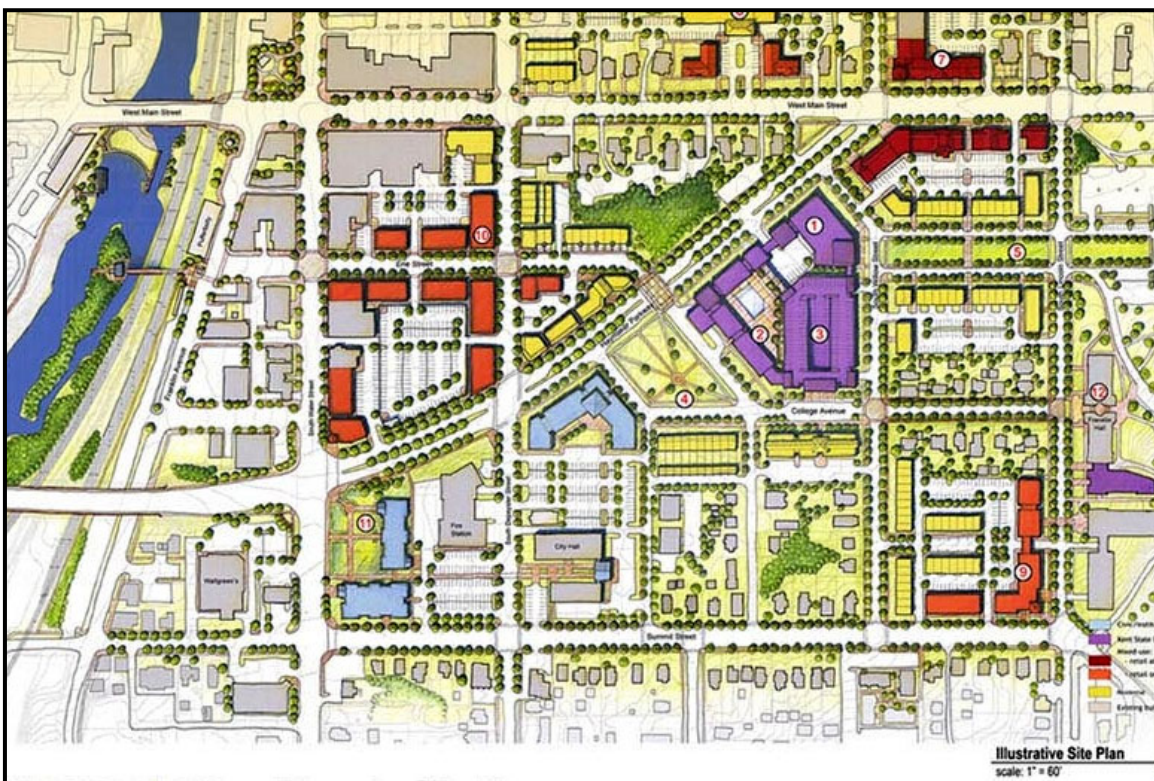


*Open Air Plaza and Stage*

# Redevelopment Planning

In recent decades, the City of Kent has considered several plans and concepts to reinvigorate the downtown business core and improve the linkage between downtown Kent, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the Kent State University campus. Beginning in 2002, the City partnered with Kent State University and Ohio State University to bring a team of architects and planners together to work with Kent businesses and residents in the preparation of the City's Bicentennial Plan.

After two years of public charrette and visioning exercises, the City's Bicentennial Plan was completed in 2004; winning a national award for exceptional urban planning in 2005. Downtown redevelopment and improved connectivity with Kent State University, including a new hotel/conference center, was identified as one of the community's top priorities in the Plan.



*Bicentennial Plan Design Concept*

The Bicentennial Plan provides a vision for downtown that encourages mixed-use pedestrian-friendly redevelopment that capitalizes on the downtown's physical assets and urban design. The goal is to create an active, medium-density downtown with a pedestrian-friendly streetscape leading past shops that extend and inter-connect the campus to the east and the riverfront to the west. This pedestrian-friendly downtown environment is expected to reinvigorate construction activity, generate private investment, spawn economic expansion, and establish downtown Kent as a regional business and cultural activity center.



*Bicentennial Plan Downtown Renderings*

# Redevelopment Strategy

To facilitate the implementation of the concepts presented in the Bicentennial Plan, the City has identified 7 development clusters (or precincts) that serve to guide the planned redevelopment of the central business district. The clusters categorize development preferences for each precinct and create a framework to manage redevelopment investments. The concentric circles radiating around each cluster loosely define the target area for each cluster.

Prospective developers should refer to these parameters to understand the context of the project and should be prepared to discuss the impact and ability of their project to advance the goals of each cluster. The redevelopment block falls in Precincts #3 and #4.



**Cluster 1: Incremental Growth** - The Main Street corridor is the primary access into downtown and it is characterized by unique shops, dining and entertainment. The buildings in this Precinct have interesting architectural appeal and historical relevance, so it is important to preserve that character by encouraging incremental revitalization through frontage and façade improvements in a well planned slow growth strategy. Over time, it is hoped to be able to extend the Main Street “feel” further East through to the intersection of Main Street and Haymaker Parkway, including restoration of the historic Kent Hotel along the way.

**Cluster 2: Parking** – As downtown grows, it will be necessary to expand parking opportunities. The City would like to centralize the parking as much as possible so that it can support new and existing business. In order to maximize parking density, the City is interested

in a downtown parking structure. The Parking Precinct was identified as the most centrally located block downtown that also has the largest amount of existing surface parking and has favorable topography in consideration of a multi-level parking structure.

**Cluster 3: Catalyst Precinct** – This is the block identified by the City for immediate redevelopment as outlined in this RFQ. This block has exceptional exposure along SR 43 and SR 59 and with fewer buildings on it, it is redevelopment ready.

**Cluster 4: Hotel and Conference Center** – Through a series of hotel feasibility studies, the City and the University identified Cluster 4 as the ideal location for a new hotel/conference center complex. This complex could include other University functions, including a new Welcome Center, which would create a new West Gate for the Kent State Campus immediately adjacent to downtown.

**Cluster 5: Municipal Precinct** – The City campus includes a new fire station, City Hall, Council Chambers, and an old Police Station. The City is currently evaluating opportunities to build a new Police Station in partnership with the Portage County Court which would make the old Police Station and the County Courthouse Building located on SR 43 available for redevelopment. It may also be possible to locate a new multi-modal facility in the vicinity of Precinct #5 that could provide convenient transit and vehicle access to the public safety building, City Hall, as well as downtown to the west and the University to the east.

**Cluster 6: Special Opportunity** – The large parcel centered in this Precinct used to be the site of the old Kent Motor Inn. The property was recently purchased by a developer interested in redevelopment. This parcel occupies the highest vantage point at the top of the Main Street hill which gives it an extraordinary view of both campus and downtown, creating a special opportunity for a signature redevelopment that visually links campus to the downtown business district. This block would make an excellent location for expanded downtown housing opportunities.

**Cluster 7: West Campus Gate** – The West Gate area is anchored by a number of expanding quick casual dining opportunities, e.g., Chipolte, Starbucks, and a few retail stores. Despite the success of these stores, the area could benefit from a stronger sense of place as it is currently a bit disconnected from the business activity downtown. The City would like to see better connectivity to create a seamless connection and natural flow between the edge of campus and this isolated business sub area with the central business district.

It is important to remember that the Precinct concepts are suggested only as a framework not a blueprint. The City is not requiring development to occur in exact accordance with this outline. Rather, the City is hoping to use the framework to get things started and keep things moving in a positive direction that when completed will create an extraordinary downtown experience.

# Redevelopment Goals and Objectives

The City of Kent is committed to creating high quality mixed use development that will maximize the benefits to the community, businesses and the University. The City is seeking a creative and innovative developer that can demonstrate an ability to achieve the goals of downtown redevelopment.

The Bicentennial Plan, in conjunction with the City's Sustainability Goals and Economic Development Strategy, identifies a number of overarching priorities that will influence this project:

1. Reconnecting the downtown core with area neighborhoods and the Kent State campus by extending elements of the urban fabric across Haymaker Parkway for a more seamless pedestrian, bicycling and vehicle experience.
2. Leveraging the riverfront to be conducive to greater business and public use, e.g., Kent's award winning Kent Dam Project, while incorporating techniques for improved water quality.
3. Creating a transit oriented project that reduces traffic demand and congestion, and promotes more bus, pedestrian and biking activity, e.g., expanded PARTA routing in downtown Kent.
4. Encouraging the development of new quality residential living options in the downtown core, e.g., students, retirees, art lofts, etc.
5. Providing an urban downtown plan that works as a model for using environmental building techniques and conservation measures.
6. Maximizing downtown recreational activities, e.g., whitewater park, bike trails, to promote active and healthy lifestyle options.
7. Providing technology and business incubation for start-up and spin-off companies.
8. Re-establish a greater corporate presence in downtown Kent, e.g., corporate row.
9. Take advantage of the historic tax credits in downtown Kent to encourage investment in unique retail, entertainment and dining options in a vibrant lifestyle center that appeals to students and families alike.

The specific objectives of the downtown project include:

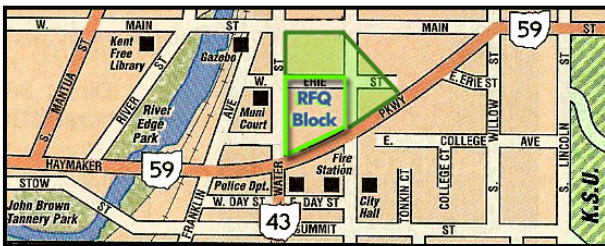
- 1. Compatibility and Connectivity** – The project should promote the growth and vibrancy of downtown Kent in a way that is compatible and integrated with surrounding neighborhoods. The project should strengthen linkages and reinforce gateways and corridors between the campus, surrounding neighborhoods, and within downtown.
- 2. Maximizing Value and Vibrancy** – The project should seek to develop the site to its highest and best use in the context of the overall downtown economy. This project will be evaluated not only by what it brings to downtown Kent, but what impact it will have on existing downtown businesses. The project must contribute

towards achieving a healthy mix of land uses within the downtown core, including the need for some additional open space, affordable housing, etc.

- 3. Sustainability** – the City is seeking a development that is sustainable, promotes healthy lifestyles, incorporates design standards that are aesthetically-pleasing and reflect the architectural character of historic downtown buildings and Kent State campus; and is environmentally friendly including Leadership in Energy Efficient Design (LEED) standards, and other best practices where possible.
- 4. Job Creation** - The project seeks to expand the downtown job base, including returning more professional offices into the downtown core, and promoting an equitable business environment by creating opportunities for participation by qualified local businesses as well as minority and women-owned businesses, and encouraging a sustainable mix of national, regional and local firms. The City is looking for a favorable return on public investment in land which includes income tax revenues from new jobs.
- 5. Downtown Business Mix** – the project must expand the commercial opportunities downtown, providing high quality retail, restaurant and office space that fills under-served portions of the Kent market, captures retail leakage, and has proven success in college towns combining locally unique-boutique style shops with regional/national anchors.

# RFQ Site Identification

The City and the University have assembled 3 acres of land\* (through purchase and options) for redevelopment in downtown Kent (herein referred to as the “RFQ Block”). This tract of land is available for commercial and residential development. In addition, there is an opportunity to expand redevelopment beyond the block into an additional 3 acres adjoining the site (referred to as “redevelopment target area”).



RFQ Block location, aerial view, and traffic count data

\*There are 2 blighted parcels (approximately 1/3 acre) in the RFQ Block that are currently under an eminent domain court action

## Significant Programs and Resources

**Downtown Kent Corporation (DKC)** The DKC was created to serve as the City’s development agent with a particular emphasis on downtown redevelopment. The purpose of the DKC is to coordinate the City’s investment strategy to encourage the revitalization of the city center consistent with the values of preservation and adaptive reuse of the historic and cultural resources of downtown. The City has used the DKC to assemble land and promote redevelopment in a manner that upholds the downtown’s urban character, fosters continued redevelopment, all the while maintaining the pedestrian, street-oriented character found downtown. A seven-member Downtown Kent Corporation Board, including the Mayor and City Manager, oversee the DKC activities.

### Land Assemblage

For nearly a decade, the City and the University have been acquiring land either through purchase or under option in the RFQ Block for the purposes of redevelopment. To date, 3 acres have been assembled in the RFQ Block but there is an additional 2+ acres potentially available adjacent to the project.

### **Retail Assessment**

The City hired Buxton Company to provide a detailed retail site assessment for the RFQ Block. The study defined the retail trade area, performed a market profile segmentation, and quantified the dollars available in the trade area across all categories of products and services. The data is available for review.

### **Multi-Modal Transportation Facility**

The City and the University secured nearly \$400,000 for the study of a multi-modal feasibility project serving the central business district. The study is underway with findings expected by the end of 2007. The facility is expected to combine transit, pedestrian, biking and parking in a multi-purpose structure that would include retail, community centers, etc.

### **Fairchild Bridge Project**

The City has completed the design for a new Fairchild Bridge at the north end of the downtown business district. This new bridge will redirect traffic entering and exiting downtown from the north by sending it directly into the central business district along south Water Street. When complete in 2009, this will be the largest bridge construction project in Portage County history and should have a significant impact on traffic in downtown Kent.

### **Downtown Whitewater Park Evaluation**

The City and Main Street Kent are working with a recreational consultant to evaluate the feasibility of constructing a whitewater park in downtown Kent. With the Summit and Portage County Hike and Bike Trails connecting downtown, the City is looking for ways to further expand the recreational opportunities in the Cuyahoga River and create a cluster of outdoor activity based businesses. The study is expected to begin in early 2008.

### **Parking Studies**

Over the last decade, the City has engaged in a number of site specific parking studies evaluating the availability and usage of public parking to support commercial and residential demand. Some information is available through these studies but it may be necessary for the Developer to work with the City to complete a more comprehensive parking management analysis. The City anticipates the need for public participation in expanding parking capacity in and around the RFQ Block.

### **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

The City may consider the use of a TIF to encourage commercial and/or residential redevelopment downtown. The City's support of a TIF would redirect increases in property taxes to finance the costs and expenses associated with infrastructure improvements required for a redevelopment project downtown.

### **Hotel Market Analysis**

The City and the University hired Deloitte and Touche in 2000 to perform a hotel market feasibility study. The hotel study surveyed the regional hotel market demand,

forecasted hotel usage rates and evaluated alternative hotel site locations. The data from the study is available.

## **Developer Responsibilities**

This section provides a general overview of the anticipated responsibilities of the Developer. It is important that respondents state clearly the scope of their development interest and their experience with comparable projects.

In evaluating submittals the City will give added weight to the respondents that clearly promote the project goals and objectives, demonstrate experience in comparable projects, have worked in the region, have established relationships with the City, Kent State University, and Kent's corporate community.

Following selection of the Developer, the development responsibilities will be more specifically defined and negotiated in a development agreement between the parties and approved by the City Council.

### **Project Planning & Design**

Working closely with the City and project stakeholders, the Developer will be responsible for designing and implementing a plan that achieves the goals and objectives of the project. The Developer will work with the stakeholders to develop design schemes for the City to use to solicit input to obtain community support and approval.

The architectural theme must take into account the historic character of existing downtown buildings and draw from the history of the area. The developer's plan must be governed by the influences of the site's natural characteristics and should define a vision of the future, incorporating concepts on planning for urban development, environmental stewardship, and how infrastructure and services will be provided to support the development of the site and contiguous business activity.

### **Implementation**

The Developer will be responsible for developing a plan, securing the financing for projects, assisting individual tenants in securing financing, getting any approvals from the City and coordinating preliminary development negotiations. The City will assist the Developer in these efforts through streamlined and fast-tracked review.

### **Land Use and Development Approvals**

The Developer will be responsible for any permits or regulatory approvals for development of the site. This includes any required environmental site assessments and documentation, reports and approvals, building permits, and any similar necessary requirements. The City will assist the Developer in these efforts through streamlined and fast-tracked review.

### **Financing Infrastructure and Development Costs**

The Developer will be responsible for developing both publicly and privately financed structures. The Developer will be responsible for financing the cost of the proposed project. These costs include all pre-development and development costs such as infrastructure, public communications, entitlements, environmental, traffic, soil, or other studies, design and construction costs, and off-and-on-site work, including all utilities. The City will negotiate public/private partnership incentives to be incorporated into a development agreement to be approved by the Kent City Council.

### **Construction**

The Developer will be responsible for the construction of all necessary off-site and on-site improvements including but not limited to infrastructure such as utilities and roads; building cores and shells; tenant improvements; fixed furniture, fixtures, and equipment; and landscaping. The Developer will be required to comply with all applicable state and federal regulations concerning prevailing wage and other labor-related issues. In addition, the Developer will be responsible for negotiating all lease/tenant agreements.

### **Management**

It is desired that the Developer be responsible for long term management, leasing and maintenance of the development. This may include teaming with operators, e.g., hotel, and the use of public/private partnerships to maintain the public realm where appropriate.

# Statement of Qualifications Submittal Requirements

## Successful Expression of Interest

A successful Expression of Interest (EOI) would demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Historic downtown revitalization experience
- Previous project work in a Main Street Ohio City
- Successful Lifestyle Center/New Urbanist development (mixed use, 2/3/4 story development with retail, restaurant and residential; buildings on lot line, on wide well furnished public sidewalks; parking on street and off street)
- Proven track record of community involvement in project design
- Creative, inventive, innovative – capable of thinking beyond strip malls
- Financial resources to deliver the project
- Significant retail experience in college/university markets
- Experience with City/University collaboration
- Hotel and conference center construction and management expertise
- Proven ability to work with leaders in higher education
- Relationships with Kent/regional corporate leaders

The Developer must provide a description and identification of the companies and individuals proposed for the project. The Developer is not required but is encouraged to provide a description and conceptual representation of the key factors of their development program. This description and concept could enable a more effective understanding of the Developer's ability to achieve the City's development goals and demonstrate what the Developer could bring to the redevelopment block, all of which would be favored by the reviewers.

## Submission Requirements

The Developer must provide one original and five copies of the bound Statement of Qualifications and one copy of all materials in electronic format, including the following:

1. Cover – Should contain the RFQ title, the Developer's name and development opportunities being proposed.
2. Letter of transmittal – The letter of transmittal shall be no longer than two pages in length and shall contain:
  - a. The name, title, address, telephone and fax number(s) of the individual(s) with authority to bind the Developer during the period in which the City is evaluating proposals. Such individual shall sign the Letter of Transmittal.
  - b. The address and legal form of the Developer. If a joint venture is being proposed provide the above information for all participating firms.
  - c. Statement that the proposal will remain in effect for and not be withdrawn for 90 days after the due date.
  - d. Statement acknowledging receipt of every Addendum that the City may issue to the RFQ.
  - e. Statement that, if selected, Developer will negotiate in good faith with the City.

### 3. Table of Contents

#### 4. Statement of Qualifications

##### Section 1 - Overview of Developer and development team

This should include development experience with particular emphasis on experience with mixed use sustainable development in historic downtowns. Of particular interest are high visibility revitalization projects with a focus on mixed use lifestyle centers in university cities.

##### Section 2 - Experience Record

Examples of projects such as the one proposed for the site, representing other high-visibility mixed use projects in downtown locations with large universities, hospitality industry experience, familiarity with Kent's or other similar city's development processes, working with stakeholder groups and designing for maximum sustainability.

##### Section 3 - Organization and Management Plan

This section should include a description of the Developer's organization and management plan which shall be established to perform the contract services. The organization and management plan shall clearly identify the project manager and key personnel associated with the proposed development. If the Developer is a Joint Venture the company or firm affiliation of each staff must be identified.

The Developer shall detail the role of the team, including how the team will accomplish the following activities: Planning the development; construction; long term ownership, management and maintenance; proposed lease structure; and tenant selection. Resumes of all key personnel shall be included in the Appendix.

##### Section 4 - Conceptual project description and team philosophy

This section should include the vision of the team, how this proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the project, elements for success and the team's prior relationship with mixed use, urban redevelopment, especially in the context of infill/sustainable/green redevelopment. It should also include land use, adaptability, phasing strategies, and opportunity to benefit downtown, the City and the University as appropriate.

This section should include:

- a. Demonstration of the Developer's ability to understand and deliver the overall vision of the project with examples from other projects.
- b. Based on previous experience, a description of how the development could potentially benefit the downtown for both

- existing and new businesses, including methods/examples used in other projects.
- c. Based on experience, an indication of how the development could potentially impact the surrounding historic districts and neighborhoods, including methods/examples in other projects.
  - d. Based on experience, a description of the potential economic benefits of the project, including the impact on the local tax base, e.g., job creation, property values, City ROI, etc.
  - e. A discussion of experience/expertise with project elements, e.g., retail, hotel, restaurant, lifestyle centers, downtown residential, including the amount of square footage completed for each.
  - f. An explanation of the Developer's ability to integrate the redevelopment into the downtown business district, including methods/examples used in other projects.
  - g. Demonstration of Developer's ability to achieve the City's downtown goals and objectives, including other project examples.
  - h. A statement on whether development participation would be contingent on any local, state or federal government action (e.g., regulation changes, public funding-grants, loans).
  - i. A description of project approach to parking needs/parking management based on experience on comparable projects.
  - j. Conceptual project schedule with consideration of phases as appropriate.

#### Section 5 - Firm Information

- a. Background information - A concise description of the Developer, including organizational structure, subsidiary companies, identification of principals or parent companies, length of time in business, office locations and size, and overall number of personnel by discipline. If the Developer is a joint venture, the Developer shall furnish this information for each entity forming the Joint Venture and clearly indicate the reason for the Joint Venture as it directly applies to this Proposal.
- b. Project financing – a description of the team's ability to finance the project through completion. Please include your potential financial structure for the transaction, including typical project yield, based on previous development projects, and include the partners, investors, financiers you typically work with on these developments. Indicate how these relationships would contribute to the overall value you would bring to the City. If TIFs has been used previously, or would like to be considered for the Kent project, indicate Developer's experience meeting TIF projections.
- c. Client base – provide specific reference information for three clients you have served relevant to the proposed project, and include: Client name

and location, project dates, contact name, title and telephone number.  
The references must be relevant to service in the last sixty (60) months.

## Review Process

1. Review guided by Project Team who evaluates and ranks proposals according to established criteria.
2. If questions arise, Project Team will contact Developer for clarification or additional information.
3. The Project Team will make final determination of short listed firms.
4. The Project Team will interview top candidate firm(s).
5. The Review Committee sends recommendation to Council for discussion, possible interview, and selection.

## Evaluation Criteria

The City's primary goal is to select the most qualified development team or teams to create a vibrant downtown redevelopment. To achieve this, a short list of developers will be based on the overall quality and responsiveness to each section of this RFQ, which has been summarized as follows:

1. The quality, ability and relevant experience of the development team.
2. The quality and responsiveness to the proposed vision of the project.
3. The degree the proposal uses urban design principles and is consistent with the City's downtown goals and objectives.
4. The contribution and enhancements to downtown Kent.
5. The ability to finance the project.
6. The ability to obtain the necessary entitlements in a timely manner.
7. The ability to include sustainable, green design elements in the project.
8. Realistic schedule/phasing options
9. Experience in university/city collaborative redevelopment projects.

In reviewing each submission, the following points will be used to determine which submittals will be included in a short list:

1. Comparable Development Team Experience – 80 points
2. Demonstration of Understanding of Kent Project Concept – 20 points

## Schedule

Distribute Request for Qualifications	November 26, 2007
Voluntary pre-submittal conference and site tour; Kent City Hall, 215 E. Summit Street, Kent Ohio	1 p.m., November 30, 2007
Statement of Qualifications due to City Manager, 215 E. Summit Street, Kent Ohio 44240	11 a.m., December 21, 2007
Shortlist and set up interview times	
Conduct interviews	Second week of January 2008
Council authorization to begin negotiations with one or more teams	February 2008

## Registration and Questions

All interested Developers should register (call) their interest in this Request for Qualifications as follows:

Suzanne Robertson  
(330)676-7500  
Fax: (330)678-8033

All questions should be submitted in writing (may be faxed) and should be directed to:

C/O Suzanne Robertson  
Downtown Redevelopment  
City of Kent  
215 East Summit Street  
Kent, Ohio 44240  
Fax: (330)678-8033

A copy of all questions and answers will be distributed to registered Developers.

## Statement of Qualifications Due Date

One original and five copies of the Statement of Qualifications and one copy of all materials submitted in electronic format on a labeled and indexed CD must be delivered no later than 11:00 a.m. on December 14, 2007. All proposals delivered after this time will be returned unopened.

Submit proposals to:

C/O Suzanne Robertson  
Downtown Redevelopment  
City of Kent  
215 East Summit Street  
Kent, Ohio 44240

## General Information

The City of Kent reserves the right to reject any and all responses and to waive technicalities as deemed to be in the best interest of the City. The City reserves the right to request additional information from a respondent(s) as deemed necessary to analyze responses.

In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFQ, addenda shall be created and emailed to registered firms who have provided an accurate email address. If desired, a hard copy of any addenda will be provided upon request. The City of Kent is not liable for any cost incurred by the Submitter prior to issuing a contract.

The contents of this submittal may be included in contractual obligations if a contract ensues from this process. No reimbursement will be made by the City of Kent for any costs incurred prior to a formal notice to proceed should an award of contract result from this solicitation.

## Insurance Requirements

Commercial General Liability, Business Automobile Liability, Workers' Compensation, and Professional Liability Insurance are required from firms that enter into a contract with the City of Kent. This information is being provided for informational purposes only. Insurance coverage and limits will be determined and an actual insurance attachment prepared based on the proposed services submitted by the chosen professional services provider.

Projects that are conceptual, feasibility, development, master plans, etc. resulting in no construction or no construction oversight require Professional Liability with at least \$250,000 limit per claim, \$500,000 aggregate limit. Typically, projects that involve development or preparation of system specifications, diagrams, schematics, etc. or result in construction or construction oversight require Professional Liability with at least

\$1,000,000 limit per claim, \$1,000,000 aggregate limit. Please provide evidence or declaration indicating the types of insurance that is purchased for your business operations.

## Legal Compliance

Developer agrees to abide by the requirements of the following laws as applicable: Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Opportunity Act of 1972, Federal Executive Order 11246, the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Act of 1972, and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, and the laws of the State of Ohio. Further, Developer agrees not to discriminate in its employment practices, and will render services under this Agreement, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, veteran status, political affiliation, disability, or sexual orientation. Any act of discrimination committed by Developer or failure to comply with the foregoing legal obligations, as applicable, shall be grounds for termination of any contracts and/or agreements with the City.

## Conflicts of Interest/Non-Collusion

It is important that Developer avoid conflicts of interest. A typical conflict of interest is a situation where the Developer's private interest would interfere with its loyalty or responsibilities to the City or raises question about such interference. Accordingly, during the term of any agreement between the City and Developer that results from this RFQ, or while Developer is either performing services or receiving payment pursuant to any such agreement, Developer will not accept work, enter into a contract, accept an obligation, or engage in any activity, paid or unpaid, inconsistent or incompatible with Developer's obligations, or the scope of services to be rendered, to the City under the agreement, or that creates an actual or potential conflict of interest with the City. Developer shall warrant that, to the best of its knowledge, there is no other contract or duty on Developer's part that conflicts with or is inconsistent with the services sought to be provided the City pursuant to this RFQ.

Developer, upon signing an agreement with the City, shall submit to the City, on such form as the City shall designate, a Non-Collusion Affidavit.

## Indemnification

Developer assumes and agrees to be responsible for all claims for damages for injuries to persons or property arising out of the performance of its agreement, whether due to its own default or negligence, negligence of its subcontractors, defective conditions of the premises, negligence of the City of Kent or otherwise; provided, however, that Developer shall not be liable for any damage due solely to the affirmative negligent acts of the City of Kent committed in the performance by the City of Kent of any work on the premises. Developer agrees to indemnify the City of Kent on account of such claims and further agrees that it will indemnify the City of Kent fully against any damages, fines, penalties or forfeitures of any kind which may be imposed upon or levied against

the City of Kent as the result of the Developer's violation or failure to comply with any valid law, ordinance or regulation of the United States, State of Ohio or the City of Kent, including the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 as amended from time to time or any federal regulation adopted pursuant thereto. To further assure the performance of the covenant, the contractor shall procure and constantly maintain in force, at its expense, the liability insurance required.

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