

Mayor and Members of City Council

Jerry Fiala, Mayor & President of Council

Ward Councilmembers

Ward 1 Garret Ferrara
Ward 2 Jack Amrhein
Ward 3 Wayne A. Wilson
Ward 4 John M. Kuhar
Ward 5 Heidi L. Shaffer
Ward 6 Tracy Wallach

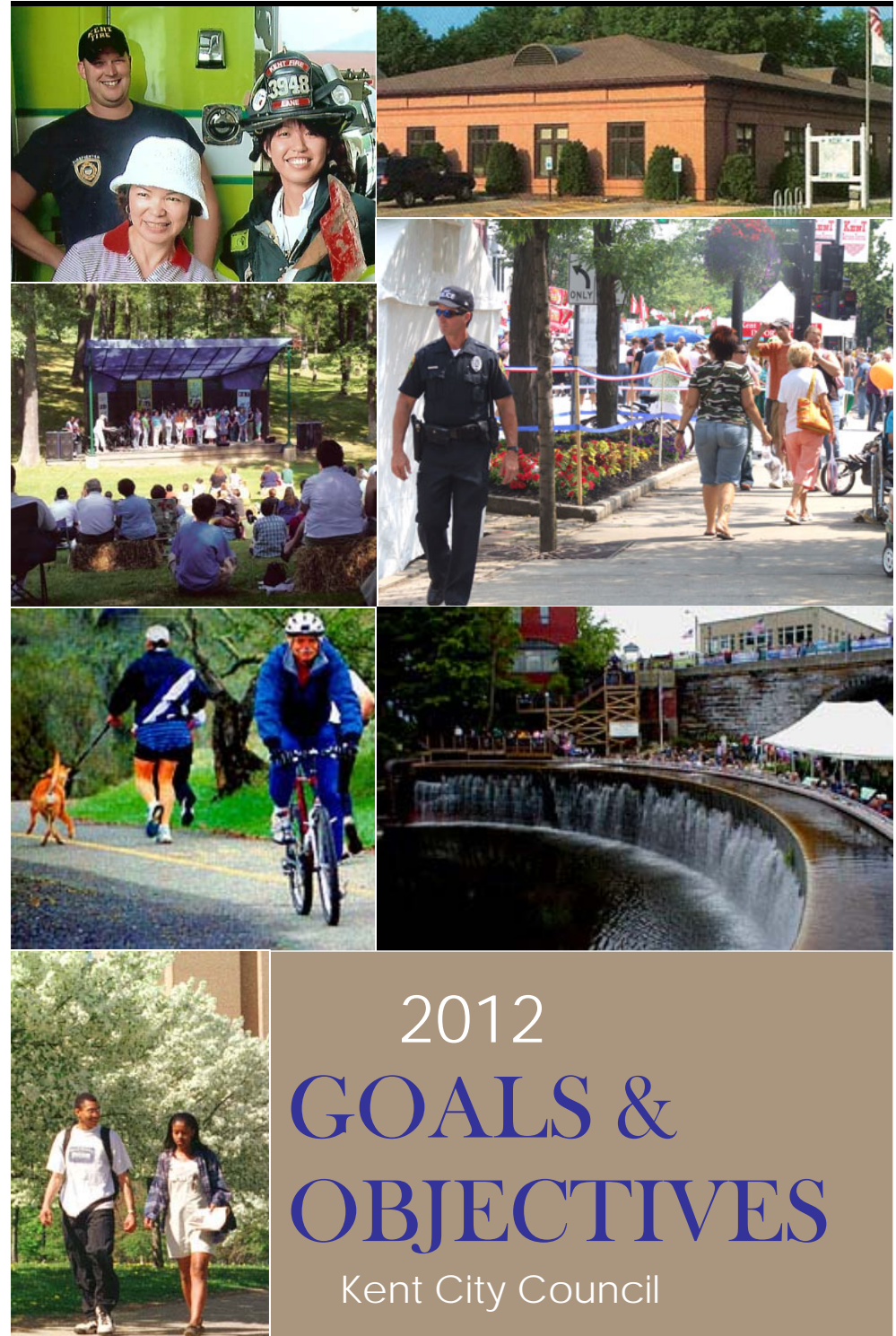
Council At Large

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2012
**GOALS &
OBJECTIVES**
Kent City Council

Kent's Mission Statement

To make Kent the city of choice in northeast Ohio for residents, businesses, visitors and students seeking to connect to their community in a personally meaningful and enriching way.



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Strategic Goal

Government Performance

"to provide the best services at the lowest possible cost"

Objectives:

- Deliver exceptional public services with a high level of customer service.
- Commit the entire organization to achieve customer satisfaction.
- Utilize the latest technology improvements to improve customer information, communication and interaction, e.g., online payment of bills, credit card payments, meter reading, web site, etc.
- Make sound business decisions using data and customer input.
- Develop and institute performance metrics to measure progress towards objectives.
- Create a culture of continuous improvement; provide training in quality improvement techniques.
- Strive to leverage technology to improve productivity and do more with less operational resources.
- Be strategic and market driven in planning and managing public services.
- Work towards full cost accounting of utility services and enterprise funds with rate based user fees.
- Create an atmosphere of innovation, risk taking and tolerance for failure as an occasional price for improvement.
- Benchmark City operations against best practices to ensure the delivery of the best services at the lowest possible cost.
- Create a culture where things are done right the first time, every time.
- Develop innovative ways to make participation in local government activities possible for all residents and foster a sense of engagement among the citizenry by communicating a common identity, actively seeking insight into the needs of the community and aligning City services with customer expectations.



Strategic Goal

Communities Within the City

"to strengthen the quality and enhance the value of neighborhoods"

Objectives:

- Strengthen and build effective partnerships with the City's diverse community; celebrate and capitalize on Kent's diversity.
- Provide services and programs for a multi-cultural audience.
- Increase awareness, participation and compliance with neighborhood code issues.
- Promote rehabilitation and sustainable infill development.
- Develop programs that encourage neighborhood based initiatives and planning.
- Partner with Kent State University to revitalize campus border neighborhoods.
- Seek programs that instill a sense of neighborhood pride.
- Strive to improve the rate of home ownership in Kent.
- Enhance neighborhood identities.



Strategic Goal

City and University Synergy

"to expand collaborative opportunities that enrich the university community experience"

Objectives:

- Showcase the abundant assets of the City's university community that make Kent a great place to live, work, play and learn.
- Embrace the university-city brand and leverage the social and cultural opportunities for community enrichment and personal growth.
- Promote life long learning opportunities and the value of education at every phase in a person's life.
- Create public spaces that attract diverse populations for engagement and interaction.
- Communicate Kent's town/gown vision to current and potential residents, visitors and members of the media.



Strategic Goal

Financial Health & Economic Development

"to be a prosperous and livable city for all citizens"

Financial Health Objectives:

- Ensure that Kent is a fiscally strong and financially well-managed City.
- Maintain superior financial reporting, financial controls, budgeting, financial management, and transparency, and invest in capital infrastructure to support efficient long-term provision of services.
- Maintain reserves, and increase them when appropriate, to ensure financial flexibility, and to assist with difficult economic times, disasters or other emergencies.
- Maintain a high financial credit (bond) rating, maintain debt policies and debt practices that allow the assessment of appropriate debt levels, and periodically review debt and debt service to minimize costs.

Economic Development Objectives:

- Aggressively pursue job expansion, retention and attraction to diversify the jobs & careers available to Kent residents across all skill levels.
- Increase the competitiveness of the Kent business climate to expand the existing employment base and create more jobs.
- Strengthen linkages with the City's largest employers and support Kent State University's goal to expand its research mission.
- Engage Kent's economic resources including the Kent Regional Business Alliance (KRBA), Kent State University, the Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDD), Main Street Kent, Downtown Kent Corporation, Portage County and the Chamber of Commerce to foster small business development and entrepreneurship.
- Involve the expertise and experience of the private sector for economic development.
- Facilitate sustainable redevelopment throughout the City with a focus on the downtown central business district using urban renewal, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs, TIF redevelopment financing, historic tax credits, façade grants, tax abatement, land banking, Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA), etc.
- Develop projects that revitalize aging centers or re-use vacant land for context sensitive retail, office or industrial redevelopment.
- Make education and workforce development a cornerstone of the City's economic vitality through partnerships with the Kent Public School District, Kent State University and Portage County Schools.

Strategic Goal

Support for Natural Resources

"to protect and promote the City's natural resources"

Objectives:

- Expand the opportunities for Kent residents and visitors to experience & enjoy Kent's natural resources, e.g., hike and bike trails, parks, etc.
- Serve as a model for conservation and environmental practices, e.g., green building codes, energy conservation, solar power, etc.
- Develop and promote eco-tourism, eco-recreation and green based business prospects in Kent.
- Support events that showcase the City's natural resources as a quality of life amenity.
- Reduce energy and fuel dependency; have a smaller carbon footprint as a City.



Strategic Goal

Superior Quality of Life

"to enhance lifestyle choices through the physical and social environment"

Objectives:

- Achieve the goals of the City's Sustainability Plan.
- Improve the City's transit, transportation and pedestrian networks to ensure safe and convenient access for people of all capabilities.
- Promote projects that diversify the retail base, providing greater shopping, dining and entertainment options in Kent.
- Expand awareness & access to arts, sports and cultural opportunities.
- Offer programs to rehabilitate aging housing stock, preserve property values, and promote a mix of affordable housing options.
- Support City beautification programs like the downtown flower pots, the Adopt-a-Spot gardens, street banners, public art, etc.
- Adopt design guidelines and where possible/affordable upgrade City crosswalks, medians, and sidewalks utilizing more landscaping, attractive pavers, bricks, colorized concrete, impressed asphalt, etc.
- Improve effectiveness of rooming house licensing and regulation.
- Continue to financially assist health and social service programs.

Strategic Goal

Community Safety

"to be an exceptionally safe city"

Objectives:

- Provide state-of-the-art 911 services for fire, police, and emergency medical and management services.
- Aid individuals who are in danger of harm and assist those who are unable to care for themselves.
- Use prevention and suppression programs to deter and reduce incidents of crime, fires and hazards.
- Continue to develop neighborhood relationships to proactively address public safety issues.
- Minimize death, injury and property losses while maintaining City governmental operations in the event of fire, hazardous material, severe weather, terrorism, and other disasters.
- Provide the best available emergency medical response, pre-hospital support and transport system to the residents and visitors in the greater Kent service area.
- Explore collaborative and regional approaches to addressing shared public safety needs.
- Assist in the resolution of conflict in a safe and peaceful manner.
- Create and maintain a feeling of security in the community.
- Provide quality customer service and responsiveness to citizens seeking public safety services.
- Ensure the physical safety of neighborhoods, business and shopping districts, schools and transportation corridors.
- Strive to hire and promote employees that reflect the diversity of the community.
- Protect constitutional guarantees.

