



Reaching Sustainable Goals through Regional Collaboration and Innovation: The Story of Kent, Ohio

Community Development Society Annual Conference
July 21-24, 2013

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION





Overview

- Background
- Incorporating Sustainability into Bicentennial Planning Process
- Results 10 years later



City of Kent before 2000

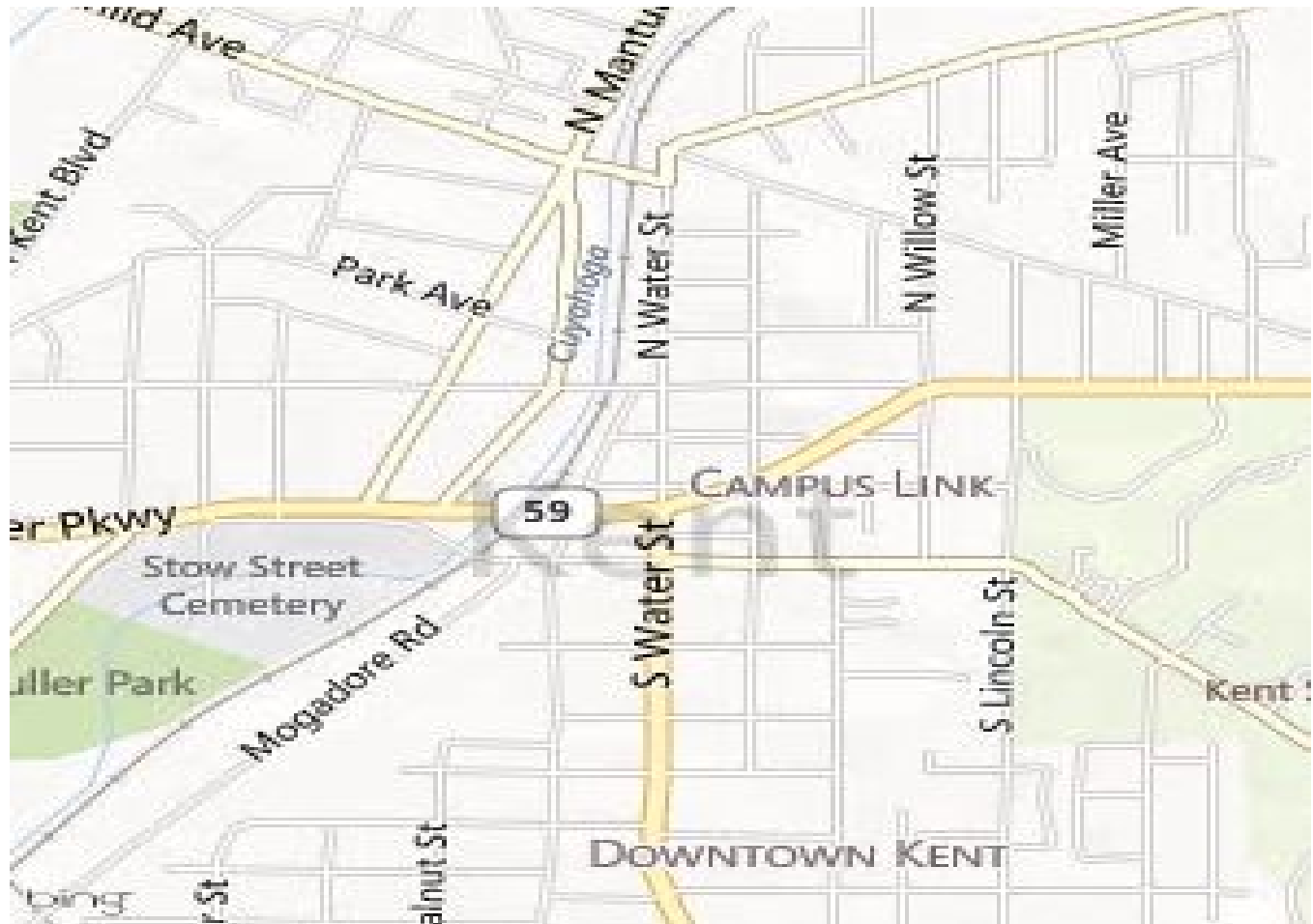
- 25 years ago economy was humming due to regional auto industry
- Collapse of regional industry in NEO led to pervasive pessimism & futility
- Town-gown relationship one of co-existence
- Downtown business district deteriorating physically & economically



Evolution of Town-Gown Relationship

- KSU 2nd largest State University in Ohio
28,000 on Kent Campus
- City of Kent
29,000 residents
- Relationship
May 4th shootings and mistrust
“Continuum of C’s”
Coexist-Cordial-Cooperative-
Collaborative

Kent, Ohio



Bicentennial Plan Sustainability Goals

Initiatives	Environmental	Social	Economic
Downtown Revitalization	Enhance Cuyahoga River corridor (natural) Re-orient buildings to face river (natural & built) Reuse existing downtown buildings (built) Remove portion of dam to improve water quality; preserve rest (natural & built)	Walkable community Places for families to gather Recreational & entertainment opportunities Downtown loft/apt. housing	Financing for local entrepreneurs Local business opportunities Attract more customers to downtown Provide entertainment, arts and cultural options
Special Planning Area: Campus Link	Provide for alternative modes of transportation Enhance green space	Tie together campus and community	Students & parents drawn to downtown shopping and accommodations



City of Kent Bicentennial Plan

Completed March 2004

Selected Goals:

- Encourage and promote locally owned businesses
 - ✓ Downtown merchants organize to improve commercial activity and sidewalk events
- Develop Kent's downtown as an economic focal point
 - ✓ Create a comprehensive parking strategy
 - ✓ Downtown Kent is a pedestrian friendly area
 - ✓ Build a university hotel and convention center
- Promote traffic management
 - ✓ PARTA develop a plan to increase ridership by 2006
 - ✓ Build a multi-modal facility to increase use of alternative forms of transportation
- Improve pedestrian orientation
 - ✓ Develop a five to ten year plan for installation and repair of sidewalks
- Use existing buildings for redevelopment
 - ✓ Architectural standards for downtown by 2007
- Preserve natural resources
 - ✓ Cuyahoga River becomes a focal point and destination
 - ✓ Preserve and enhance significant features like Main Street Dam

KSU Gateway - Esplanade

The Portage Hike and Bike Trail



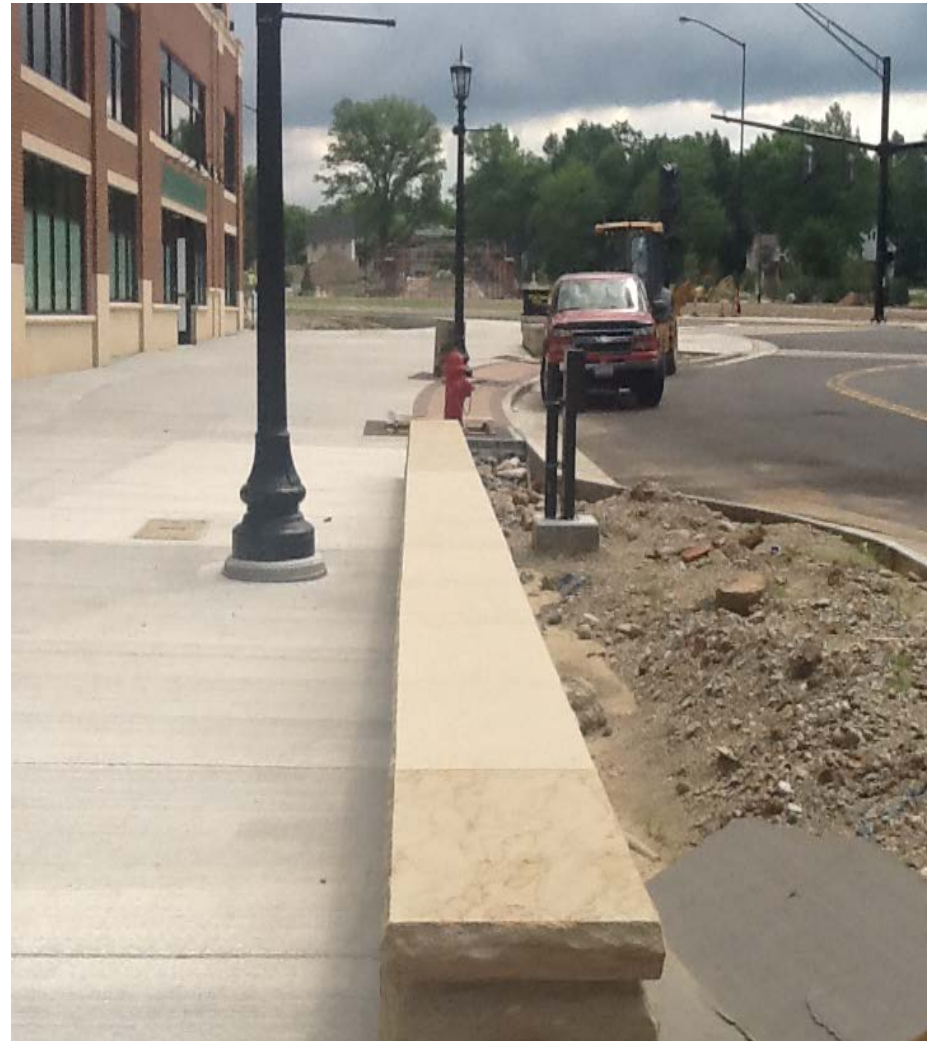
Grant Funding Provided by ODOT

Coming Spring 2013



COLLABORATIVE

Kent Downtown/Kent State University Connection



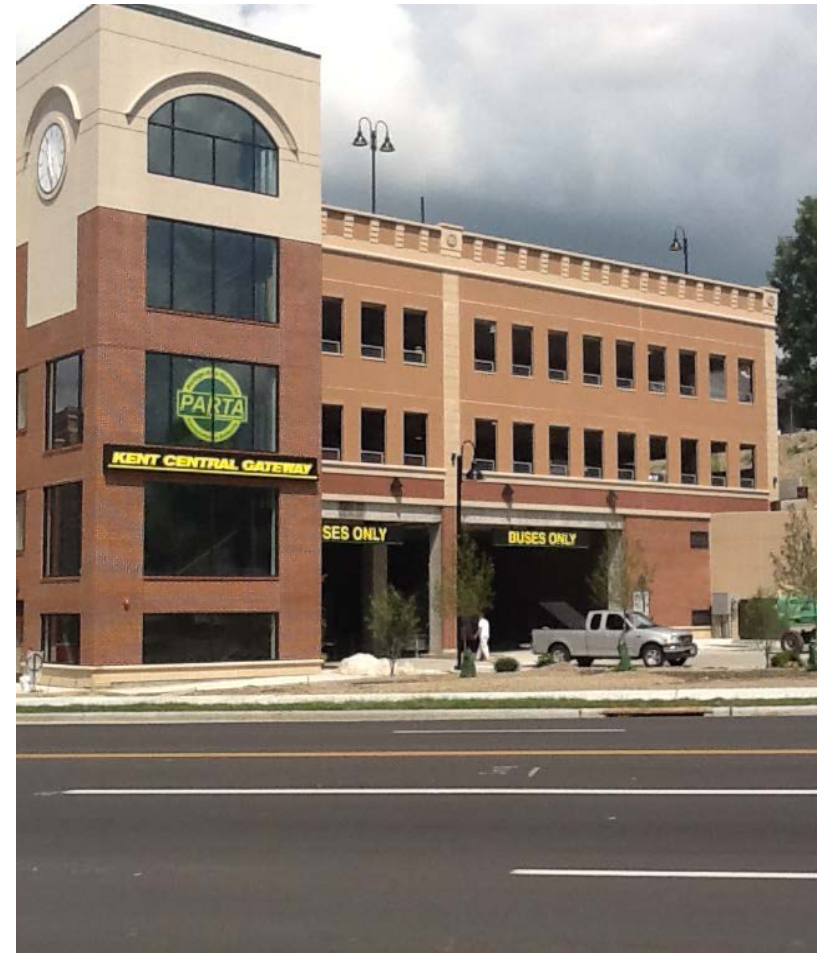
Places to Gather & Public Entertainment & Arts



Local Entrepreneurship



Walkable/Bikeable/Busable Community



Mixed Use Development



Design Standards & Historic Preservation



Recreation & Historic Preservation





Ten Year Results for Kent

- \$100 million investment & 1,600 jobs
- Reduced dependence on automobile
- Preservation of historic buildings
- Downtown is place to gather
- Creation of locally owned businesses
- Walkable/bikable community
- Improved water quality in Cuyahoga River
- Partnerships among KSU, City, developers, organizations & residents

A decorative vertical bar on the left side of the slide. It features a blue sky with white clouds and a portion of a wooden windmill structure.

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OSU Extension Sustainable Development Initiatives:
<http://sustainabledevelopment.osu.edu/>