

Sustainable Kent News

The latest on sustainability efforts in Kent



Sustainability Commission

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City of Kent, Ohio

Happy Spring everyone! This season is full of wonderful events to celebrate Earth Day, experience the beautiful Cuyahoga River, and enjoy Kent’s vibrant downtown! Be sure to check out the Calendar section and make some time to connect with all the Kent community has to offer!

In other happy news, the City of Kent had applied for the Ohio EPA’s Encouraging Environmental Excellence Award that recognizes exceptional achievements across 15 Environmental Stewardship and 6 Community & Regional Sustainability criteria, with four possible award levels: Achievement, Silver, Gold and Platinum. The Ohio EPA sent notification that the City was awarded a Silver level for the 2024 and final award cycle of this program!

Receiving this award is an important recognition of Kent’s long history of environmental excellence and hard work to achieve sustainability goals that generate economic and financial benefits for the City, provide a healthier environment, and an improved quality of life for those living, working and playing in Kent.

Details about the projects and activities that earned the City of Kent this award will be featured on the City’s Sustainability Overview webpage soon. Stay tuned to learn more!

Should you ever have questions, comments, and/or suggestions related to the City’s CAP or other sustainability work, please feel free to contact the City’s Sustainability Coordinator, Julie Morris, at: julie.morris@kentohio.gov.



CHRONICLING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure: EV Charging Stations available soon at Kent's new City Hall



The City of Kent's Climate Action Plan (CAP) directs the City to explore the City's current and future EV landscape. At the time of the CAP's development, the City had already secured funding for two EV charging stations to be installed at the new City Hall, a project which is considered part of the CAP's larger EV infrastructure initiative.

The City had been envisioning EV charging options for public use for many years and in 2020, the City secured funding through the Ohio EPA's Diesel Mitigation Trust Fund (DMTF) grant program to purchase two electric vehicle charging stations that would be made available at the City's future City Hall.

Fast forward to today, and these EV charging stations have been installed in the parking lot of the soon-to-open open City Hall! They will be available for the public to use as soon as the City Hall is completely open. One station is located at the North side of the parking lot off Day Street, with the other being located at the South end of same. Each station has two charging ports, allowing access for up to four cars to charge at one time.



Kent City Hall EV Charging Station North-Side



Kent City Hall EV Charging Station South-Side operating screen

Once available, the EV charging stations will require payment through ChargePoint (check out their driver support page at <https://www.chargepoint.com/drivers/support>), and the charging rates will be as follows:

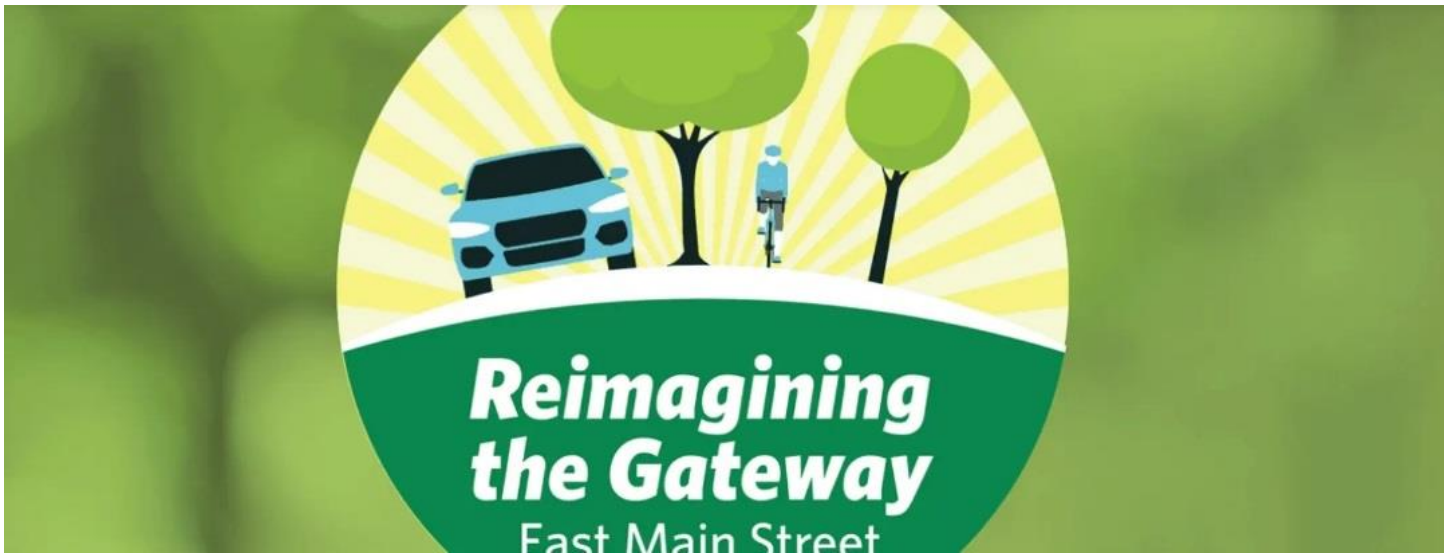
- \$1.25 per hour for the first four hours of charging, after which the rate will increase to \$5.00 per hour.

This rating structure will help the City cover its costs associated with station service fees as well as providing the energy, in addition to helping encourage drivers to move their cars so that more folks can use them throughout the day.

The City will have more information about the EV charging stations at City Hall on its Sustainability Overview webpage (<https://www.kentohio.gov/business-building-development/sustainability-overview/>) as the stations become available to use.



Kent City Hall EV Charging Station South-Side



The City of Kent along with its partners - the project's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), Kent State University, PARTA (Portage Area Regional Transport Authority), AMATS (Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study) and ODOT (Ohio Department of Transportation) - are undertaking a \$25.5 million rehabilitation of a three-quarter mile portion of East Main Street.

Did you know that the East Main Street Project also includes EV Chargers for public use as a proposed improvement? These charging stations will be installed in four Kent State parking lots along the north side of campus, adjacent to East Main Street. This project also falls under the City's CAP Bike and Walk Infrastructure initiatives. Keep up with updates on this project at the City's East Main Street Project page:

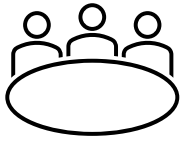
<https://www.kentohio.gov/business-building-development/engineering/current-engineering-projects/east-main-street-project/>

VISIT OUR SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW WEBPAGE!

The City has a webpage to highlight its sustainability work and keep the community posted about related Climate Action Plan implementation progress, programs, news, events, and more!

Visit: <https://www.kentohio.gov/business-building-development/sustainability-overview/>

AROUND THE CITY



Engineering News

City of Kent, Ohio Division of Engineering

City of Kent’s Engineering Division is releasing quarterly updates to provide more information about how projects are prioritized as well as what projects are on the horizon. Be sure to check out the 2025 First Quarter Report at <https://www.kentohio.gov/media/gfwm4bo2/2025-q1-engineering-spotlight.pdf> . For more information you are also welcome to contact City Engineer, Jim Bowling at 330-678-8106 or Jim.Bowling@KentOhio.gov .



Public Transit: A Piece of the Sustainability Puzzle

By Denise Baba, Communications & Public Advocacy Advisor at PARTA

Have you ever considered how your use of public transportation might promote sustainability efforts in Kent? Are there trips – even just a few – that you could make using a PARTA bus rather traveling in a car by yourself? It’s something to consider.

When people rely on public transit, they’re more likely to walk or bike for part of their commute. This shift promotes healthier, low-impact ways of getting around and it reduces reliance on fossil fuels.

Fewer cars on the road mean lower levels of harmful pollutants like nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and



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particulate matter. This improves air quality, especially in urban areas like Kent, benefiting both the environment and public health.

All PARTA fixed route buses are equipped with easy-to-use bike racks that can quickly secure up to two bicycles. When you purchase a ticket to ride, your bike can travel along for free. Just remember that the cyclist is responsible for all aspects of placing, securing, and removing a bicycle. Bus drivers are not permitted to physically assist riders with placing a bicycle on the rack.

Now that spring is here, and warmer weather is on the way, think about reducing use of your personal vehicle and giving public transportation a try. To bridge that “first mile/last mile” distance to the bus stop, bring a bike along. Easy to follow instructions can be found on the bus bike rack itself, or you can visit the [PARTA website](#) for more detailed information.



Around The City

Is your organization, business, or other group working on sustainability initiatives? If so, reach out to the City's Sustainability Coordinator, Julie Morris (julie.morris@kentohio.gov) with the details about your work to have it considered for inclusion in a future edition.

The intent of the Around the City column is to help share not just about efforts made within the City's departments, but to also share about the work our community is doing to help reach sustainability goals.



Product Alert: Help! What do I do with my used or unwanted batteries?

**By Judy Nelson,
Chair, City of Kent Sustainability Commission
Chair, Portage County Solid Waste District's
(PCSWD) Policy Committee**

During a recent policy committee gathering for the Portage County Solid Waste District (PCSWD), one of our members raised concerns over the dangers of batteries in the solid waste stream. After some discussion, we agreed we needed to do more to provide clear guidance to our residents regarding proper disposal of them. By providing space in this quarter's Sustainable Kent eNewsletter, the City of Kent joins us in these outreach efforts, and I am very grateful for their support.

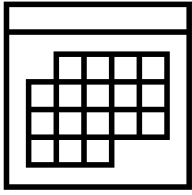
Many of you may recall, as I do, news reports detailing the occurrence of in-flight fires caused by cell phone batteries, but I had been unaware of, and was surprised to hear of, a recent scary incident right here in Portage County. The following is a summary of the news report regarding this incident (Retrieved 4/10/25 from: [Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Watch: February 2025 Edition Part I](#)):

*On February 7, 2025, Streetsboro firefighters responded to a fire in a trash truck on Aurora-Hudson Road, Streetsboro, Ohio. The truck operator noticed flames and dumped the load onto a parking lot to avoid further damage. The cause of the fire was a **crushed lithium-ion battery** discarded improperly in residential waste. The incident highlighted the risks posed by incorrectly disposed lithium-ion batteries, as they can enter thermal runaway, sparking intense fires. Officials from Streetsboro Fire Department urged residents to dispose of batteries correctly at specialized recycling facilities and warned about the dangers of improperly discarded batteries igniting compacted trash. No injuries occurred in the incident. Link to original article: [Cleveland 19](#)*

According to the U.S. EPA website, proper handling of lithium batteries not only prevents fires but also enables us to recover and transform materials they contain into other useable products. The cobalt, graphite, and lithium that are found in these batteries are considered critical minerals. Critical minerals are raw materials that are economically and strategically important to the U.S., have a high risk of their supply being disrupted, and for which there are no easy substitutes.

The good news is all residents of Portage County have a great option for battery disposal/recycling right here in our own county at the PCSWD facility in Brimfield. To maximize your trip to their facility, I recommend checking out the District's website, [Portage County Recycling](#), for additional information regarding batteries and all the materials they accept as part of CHaRM, their Center for Hard to Recycle Material. Please be sure to observe any special handling instructions included on their website.

In conclusion, **we are asking you to help us address this problem by NEVER throwing batteries or electronics containing batteries in the garbage or in your curbside recycling bin!** By making the commitment to properly dispose of these used/unwanted items, we can all play a role in reducing the risk of fires and harm to people, property, and the environment with the added benefit of recovering the critical minerals they contain. It's a win/win for sure!



CALENDAR & ITEMS OF INTEREST

Supporting our local businesses and organizations is a key component of Sustainability! Check out the City's Culture & Community section of the website (www.kentohio.gov/culture-community/) for more details about the following:

- **Haymaker Farmers' Market**
 - Open year-round, every Saturday morning in Kent: Held outdoors in downtown Kent on Franklin Ave. from April through November, 9am to 1pm, and indoors at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent – Hobbs Hall from December to March, 10am to 1pm. Visit www.haymakermarket.com for full details.

- **Main Street Kent**
 - A non-profit organization that focuses on the promotion, beautification, and revitalization of downtown Kent. The City of Kent, Kent State University, local businesses, and community members support Main Street Kent. Check out their full calendar of events here: www.mainstreetkent.org/events/full-calendar/.

- **Kent In Good Company Podcast**
 - Hosted by Kent resident and small business owner, Katy Thomas, head to the Main Street Kent website at the following link to listen and learn more about Kent's local businesses: <https://mainstreetkent.org/discover/in-good-company/>.

- **The Kent Area Chamber of Commerce**
 - Visit www.kentbiz.com/events/eventcalendar for a full listing of Chamber and Community events.

- **Kent Historical Society & Museum**
 - Learn more about our community at Kent's primary history resource and reference center! Visit www.kentohiohistory.org for organization details and events.

- **Kent Parks and Recreation**
 - Offers a variety of locations, programs, and events for individuals and families to enjoy. They provide quality recreation and entertainment for the community through parks, sports, fitness, education and cultural arts. Visit their full program and event offerings at: www.kentohio.gov/culture-community/kent-parks-and-recreation/

- **Yard Waste Transfer Site Open!**
 - The yard waste transfer site hours are Tuesdays 9am-1pm, Wednesdays 5-8pm and Saturdays 9am-noon. The site is a place for residents of Kent to drop off your brush, clippings and other yard waste. It is also the place to get the grindings from the waste, to use like mulch, for free! Stop by near Cherry Street and Mogadore Rd, near the entrance to Plum Creek. Full details at: [Yard Waste | City of Kent](#)

- **Who's Your Mama Earth Day Festival – 4/19/2025**
 - Get ready for the nineteenth annual “Who’s Your Mama?” Earth Day Festival Block Party presented by Standing Rock Cultural Arts! The Earth Day celebration block party will be held Saturday, April 19th from Noon to 4pm at the corner of Water and Main Streets in Hometown Bank Plaza in Kent. Full details and schedule of activities at: [Standing Rock Cultural Arts Kent Northeast Ohio](#)
- **Kent State University Earth Fest – 4/23/2025**
 - Join on and off campus organizations and departments for a fun-filled Earth Day event with food trucks, music, information, giveaways, and prize drawings. The event starts at 11am and ends at 2pm. It will be held on the Kent State University’s Student Center Risman Plaza (or if rain, on the 2nd floor of the Student Center). Full details for Earth Fest and a schedule of other Earth Month activities at: [Earth Month | Kent State University](#)
- **Kent State University DI Hub Fix-It Kent Repair Workshop – 4/24/2025**
 - Do you have items that are in need of repair? Would you like to learn how to repair them yourself? Bring your small appliance, electronic device, clothes in need of mending, bikes or other items that may need small repairs to Kent State’s DI Hub Fix-It Fair where experts will be available to guide you making your own repairs. The event will be held in the Reactor space in the DI Hub and will run from 4pm to 8pm. Full details at: [Fix-It Kent Community Repair Workshop | Kent State University](#)
- **Main Street Kent’s Clean Up Kent Spring Edition – 4/26/2025**
 - Meet up at the gazebo at the corner of Franklin Avenue and W. Main Street in downtown Kent to check in and pick up supplies to clean up the downtown district. The event will run from 9am to Noon. Full details at: [Clean Up Kent ~ Spring Edition | Facebook](#)
- **Spring Clean-Up throughout the month of May – check for your neighborhood dates in the Spring 2025 Tree City Bulletin here: [Tree City Bulletin Newsletter | City of Kent](#)**
 - Please try to donate, find a reuse, or recycle unwanted items before placing them at the curb for collection.
- **Habitat for Humanity of Portage County 2025 Recycle Extravaganza – 5/14/2025**
 - Head over to Habitat for Humanity of Portage County located at 1510 S Water Street in Kent to join their annual event where you can dispose of many of your recyclable items in one stop! Shredding of confidential and legal documents will be available as well. The event will run from 4pm-7pm. Full details at: [Habitat for Humanity of Portage County | 2025 Recycle Extravaganza](#)
- **Cuyahoga River Days – 5/15/2025 & 5/17/2025**
 - There will be several events over the course of this weekend to celebrate the Cuyahoga River. The Edith Chase Symposium on May 15th will feature a lecture on Big Lessons from Small Streams presented by Dr. Dave Costello, and poetry readings on the theme Poems for Tributaries Everywhere. The River Day Festival @ Haymaker Farmers’ Market and River Day Electrofishing Demonstration will be held on Saturday, May 17th. Find full details and a schedule of activities at : [Cuyahoga River Days | City of Kent](#)

- **Erie Depot 150th Birthday Celebration – 6/1/2025**
 - Head downtown to Over Easy at the Depot located at 155 E. Erie Street in Kent for the Kent Historical Society’s celebration of the Erie Depot’s 150th birthday! The event will run from 3pm-5pm. Full details at: [DEPOT 150 - Kent Historical Society & Museum](#)
- **Kent Heritage Festival – 7/05/2025**
 - Head to downtown Kent for this annual celebration. Full details at: [Kent Area Chamber of Commerce | Heritage Festival](#)

CITY OF KENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Meetings are held on the first Monday of every month at the Service Administration Complex (930 Overholt Road, Kent, OH 44240) from 5:30pm – 7pm and are open to the public.

Visit us on the web: [Sustainability Commission | City of Kent \(kentohio.gov\)](#)