

Economic Activity – January 1, 2025 to April 30, 2025

New Business Activity

- Shah's Halal Food, a fast casual east coast restaurant chain specializing in Halal foods, has signed a lease for the former Kwench Juice Cafe space at 100 East Erie Street Suite 126 at College Town Kent. Menu offerings include salads, gyros, customizable platters, and sandwiches.
- Krazy Bins, the largest Target overstock outlet store in Ohio, held its grand opening at 1430 South Water Street in University Plaza on Friday, February 28th. The grand opening was so successful that Krazy Bins sold out of merchandise on Saturday and had to restock to open on Sunday.
- Johnny Scott Comics and Games has relocated from the ACME Plaza in the Franklin-Kent JEDD to the former Kent's Fun House & Thirty Store at 1312 North Mantua Street. Specializing in comic books, games, and pop culture collectibles, Johnny Scott Comics and Games also hosts game events throughout the week.
- Custom Shirts and Sportswear, located at 1335 West Main Street, submitted plans to the Building Department for an addition to the building.
- The Treehouse Inn, Kent's only Bed & Breakfast, opened at 711 South Water Street. Operated by Jeff and Megan Forstner, The Treehouse Inn has three, tree themed rooms, and is conveniently located less than half a mile from downtown.
- Always Indie, a boutique and artist collective, has signed a lease for the former Flasher's Fabric Care & Laundry at 154 East Main Street in Acorn Alley. This is the second location for this women-owned business which also has an online retail presence. With the leasing of this property, Acorn Alley now has 100% occupancy of its first floor retail spaces.

Updates on Existing Projects

- Beware of the Leopard, a new bar concept, opened in the former Standard/Franklin Hotel Bar space in Acorn Alley on the lower level of 176 East Main Street. Offerings include creative cocktails, wine, beer, and light fare such as duck fat popcorn, crudité, and cheese plates.
- The pizzeria Good Day Oven has opened inside of North Water Brewing at 101 Crain Avenue. Good Day Oven specializes in cold fermented, handcrafted, sourdough pizza, and is open Thursday through Saturday.
- Mirgs Slot Car Raceway opened at 1157 West Main Street in the former Michel's Lounge. The space features a slot car track, a small parts shop, and the owners just completed a drag strip. Mirg's Slot Car Raceway can accommodate all skill levels of slot car racer, from novice to seasoned professional.

- Maddalena's, the new Italian restaurant at 252 North Water Street, received its Certificate of Occupancy from the Building Department on April 29th. An opening date has not yet been announced.
- Progress continues on the following projects:
 - Smithers-Oasis warehouse expansion
 - Bibibop Asian Grill
 - Rascal House
 - ThunderStruck Donuts
 - Gulf Station renovation
 - Main Street Memorabilia
 - Davey Seed Campus
 - The Hasawi Building

Other Business Activity

- Katies Korner, located at 1412 South Water Street, recently changed hands when a local couple bought the business. The building was not included in the sale.
- The owner of the A&W, located at 1124 West Main Street, passed away unexpectedly in February. The family is exploring its options on how to proceed.

Meetings Attended/Outreach

- BREP Visits Attended
 - Quality IP on January 14th.
 - MAC LLT on February 4th.
 - Enterprise Plastics & Colonial Patterns on February 10th.
 - Eric Does Data on March 21st.
 - Emerald Environmental on April 29th.
- Meetings/Other
 - Attended multiple MSK, KACC, DKCVB, PDB, KSS, and Team NEO meetings.
 - Toured 302 North Water Street, the former CopyPrint, with the new owner and the Portage Development Board on January 13th.
 - Attended the annual Heritage Ohio evaluation of Main Street Kent on January 23rd.
 - Participated in a meeting about JobsOhio Programs and NOPEC programs with the Portage Development Board and the owners of 302 North Water Street on January 24th.
 - Assisted with Snow Day on January 25th.
 - Attended the KACC After Hours event hosted at Zenning on January 30th.
 - Participated in a meeting about the JobsOhio Small Business Grant with Team NEO, the Portage Development Board and a local business owner interested in purchasing a building for expansion on February 5th.
 - Attended the Heritage Ohio quarterly training on business recruitment for downtown spaces in Marion on February 18th.

- Participated in a job fair work session with the Hudson Economic Development Manager and the Six District Compact Culinary Arts and Hospitalities Studies Instructor at the Stow Munroe-Falls High School that will connect students with prospective employers in Kent and Hudson on February 24th.
- Attended the annual City-PARTA meeting on February 25th.
- Attended the ribbon cutting for Krazy Bins on February 28th.
- Held the annual Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council meeting on March 4th.
- Held the annual Tax Incentive Review Committee meeting on March 6th.
- Participated in a meeting about the JobsOhio Small Business Grant with Team NEO, the Portage Development Board and an investor that will be purchasing an undisclosed Kent manufacturer on March 17th.
- Facilitated a meeting between Portage Development Board, Akron Small Business Development Center, and an individual pursuing the purchase of a local textile screen printing business on March 18th.
- Facilitated and participated in a meeting with CREW (Commercial Real Estate Women) Great Akron and Main Street Kent, and the Kent Area Chamber of Commerce on hosting CREW's Annual Bus Tour in Kent on March 24th.
- Attended the Portage Development Boards Workforce Workshop at the KSU Hotel and Conference Center on March 25th.
- Facilitated and participated in a meeting with Engineering and Townhall II about using sidewalk along Columbus Street on March 26th.
- Participated in a meeting with TeamNEO, PDB, and a local Kent company interested in the JobsOhio Small Business Grant on April 3rd.
- Attended the ribbon cutting for Majestic Care on April 10th.
- Assisted with the Six District Compact School Culinary & Hospitality Program Job Fair on April 14th. The job fair was held at Joshua's, the student run restaurant at Stow-Munroe Falls High School. Five Kent businesses participated in the event.
- Participated in a meeting with TeamNEO, PDB, and a local Kent company interested in the JobsOhio Small Business Grant on April 14th.
- Attended the KACC Lunch with the City Manager on April 22nd.
- Attended the ribbon cutting for the new Engineering and Advanced Technologies addition at Kent Roosevelt High School on April 24th.
- Attended the ribbon cutting for the Treehouse Bed & Breakfast on April 24th.
- Assisted MSK with the Crafty Crawl on April 27th.
- Attended a planning meeting for the Ohio Tourism Day event at the Statehouse that the DKCVB will be participating in on April 28th.
- Brimfield JEDD meeting on April 30th.