

July 31, 2025



Boards and Commission Interviews

Kathy has scheduled interviews for board and commission vacancies at 6:50 pm.

Committee of the Whole

1. Yard Beautification Awards (Dom)

Dom has requested Committee of the Whole time to present the inaugural Yard Beautification awards to 4 residents representing different neighborhoods in Kent. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

This new awards program is part of an effort to improve neighborhoods in Kent by showcasing the best examples of property maintenance and landscaping.

Council Actions

Receive the staff report, no action is necessary.

2. Staff Updates (Nick, Bridget, Jim, Jamie, Angela)

Five Department Heads have requested a few minutes at the start of the Committee meeting to share brief comments about noteworthy topics in their departments.

Administration Recommendation

Receive the staff reports, no action is needed.

Council Actions

Receive the staff report, no action is necessary.

3. Amendment to Public Meeting Notice (Hope)

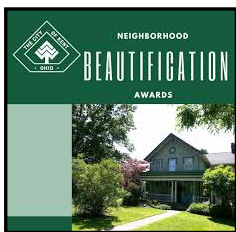
Hope has asked for Committee of the Whole time to present modifications to the City's advertising requirements/methods listed in our Public Meeting Ordinance. Hope is asking Council to update the location for where the physical posting of public meeting notices will posted to the new City Hall address. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

With the completion of the City Hall property, Hope is recommending updating the City's public meeting notice posting requirements to the new City Hall address. I recommend Council support for Hope's proposed change.

Council Actions

Approve the proposed amendment to the City's public meeting notice Ordinance as presented, with the emergency clause.





Community Development Committee

1. Rental Registration and Tree Inspection Follow Up (Bridget)

Bridget has requested Community Development Committee time to present her findings on the Council referral to consider adding tree inspection to the list of items inspected with the rental licensing and inspection program. Bridget met with the City Arborist to review the procedures used by the City to evaluate the health of street trees as part of the City's public tree maintenance program, and she discussed the options to include that service as part of the rental inspections. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

With over 2,000 rental unit inspections performed annually, it is not possible to commit to inspecting all the trees at those properties as the demand is too much for the City Arborist (he's also the City's Central Maintenance Supervisor) to manage, but the staff believes that through improved internal sharing of information among Health, Community Development and Service departments that tree "inspections through a referral based approach could begin to better address Council's concerns for the conditions of street trees at rental properties.

Council Actions

Receive the staff report, and direct staff accordingly.

2. Update on the Kent Convention and Visitor's Bureau (Eric)

Eric has requested Community Development Committee time to provide Council with an update on the activities of the Kent Convention and Visitor's Bureau. With the arrival of COVID and the turnover of leadership at the Chamber, there was a brief period of inactivity by the Visitor's Bureau, but Eric will report on the reconstitution of the executive board and the activities and conferences that the Visitor's Bureau is targeting for 2025-26. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Events, festivals and conferences have proven to have beneficial impacts on the local economy, and it is encouraging to see the Kent Convention and Visitor's Bureau re-establish its role in facilitating more visitors, customers and prospective businesses to Kent.

Council Actions

Receive the staff report, no action is necessary at this time.

Finance Committee

1. Staff Report on 2026 Budget: Item 2. Public Safety Needs (Chief Shearer, Chief Samels)

Chief Shearer and Chief Samels have requested Committee time to provide an update on their respective department operations and staffing levels. Both departments have had their service responsibilities and call volume increase over the last couple of decades, but the city's financial uncertainty prevented a corresponding increase in staffing levels to match the rising demand. Overtime has historically been used to handle the occasions of high-volume calls, but overtime is no longer a sustainable option due to the high costs and the staff burnout challenges it is causing on morale, retention and attraction of replacement employees. Both Police and Fire are requesting consideration of adding 3 new employees as a step towards better balance between staffing and service expectations. The cost for 3 positions is estimated at \$400,000 for each department.

Administration Recommendation

There are cost efficiencies and performance gains that can be achieved with a staffing level that better aligns with service needs that are not possible within the constraints of current staffing levels. I believe the Chiefs have put together a good business case for adding the new staff in the 2026 Operating budget.

Council Action

Receive the staff report and provide staff direction on next steps.



Finance Committee (continued)

2. Certified Liens to the County for Outstanding Payments (Rhonda)

Rhonda has requested Finance Committee time to present the annual list of addresses for certification and submission to Portage County to be added to property tax records as tax liens against the property due to lack of payment. (attachments)

Administration Recommendation

The City annually submits a certified list of addresses that have failed to pay their City bills and have not agreed to an extended payment plan. I recommend Council certify the list and authorize the staff to forward it to the County as presented.

Council Actions

Certify and authorize the submission of the proposed property tax liens as presented, with the emergency clause.

3. 2025 Budget Appropriations Amendment (Rhonda)

Rhonda has been working with the department heads to reconcile the approved 2025 budget line items and she has prepared the necessary appropriations amendments to reflect the changes needed to balance those line items. (attachments)

Administration Recommendation

I recommend Council's authorization of the 2025 appropriations amendments as presented.

Council Actions

Approve the 2025 budget appropriations amendments, with the emergency clause.

4. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for Davey Tree Seed Campus (Rhonda)

Rhonda has requested Finance Committee time to present a proposed new Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreement based on the pre and post development property tax value of the new Davey Tree Seed Campus on SR43. Adopting a TIF for this project will enable the City to optimize the gains in property taxes for the site while keeping the City Schools, Parks and Rec, and Franklin Township whole. (attachments)

Administration Recommendation

The capture of the TIF gains in property tax is not a large amount of funding but it will go towards our public infrastructure improvements in this section of SR43 and I recommend Council's support.

Council Actions

Approve the proposed new TIF for the Davey Tree Seed Campus as presented, with the emergency clause.



Health & Public Safety Committee

1. Renewal of the School Resource Officer Position (Nick)

Nick has requested Committee time to present a request to renew the City-Kent Schools agreement for the use and funding of a School Resource Officer position in the 2025-26 academic year. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

This is a popular safety program, and I urge Council's renewal of the agreement.

Council Actions

Authorize the renewal of the School Resource Officer as presented, with the emergency clause.





Land Use Committee

1. Proposed Codified Criteria of the Design Guidelines (Bridget)

Bridget has requested Committee time to review the Design Guideline criteria that she recommends incorporating directly into the City's Zoning Code. Since the updated Design Guidelines removed the statutory authority of the ARB to issue "certificates of appropriateness," the staff is following up on the consultant recommendations to codify the most pertinent elements of the guidelines into the Zoning Code. (attachments)

Administration Recommendation

On March 18, 2025, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended Council approve the proposed Zoning text changes. In the presentation of those recommendations to City Council, Bridget offered to revisit a couple of those items in further detail with the Planning Commission after receiving public comments. Bridget took those items back through the Planning Commission on July 15, 2025, and she is presenting their recommendations back to Council. I support the passage of the proposed amendments as presented.

Council Actions

Approve the propose Zoning Code amendments as presented, with the emergency clause.

Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee

1. Request to Modify the KSU Homecoming Parade Route (Eric)

Eric has requested Committee time to present a request from KSU to modify the KSU Homecoming parade route and street closure plan due to the reconstruction work beginning on East Main Street during the East Main Street Improvement Project. The Homecoming Parade will begin at 10:30 a.m., and the new proposed route will have the parade start at the intersection of Loop Road, Johnston Drive and Rhodes Road. The Parade will proceed southbound on Loop Road to Summit Street, then continue westbound on Summit Street, where it will conclude at the intersection of Summit Street and Terrace Drive. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Staff have reviewed the request and recommend Council's approval of the proposed new parade route and street closure plan.

Council Action

Authorize the proposed parade route and street closure plan as presented, with the emergency clause.

2. Portage County Solid Waste Plan Update (Melanie)

Melanie has requested Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee time to present a request from the Portage County Solid Waste District to approve the updated Portage Council Solid Waste Plan. The Solid Waste Plan includes elements that impact the City, e.g., recycling, hazardous disposal facility, etc., and the County is required to get member jurisdictions' approval every 5-years for the updated plan. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Melanie will provide an overview of the plan update with Council and she and I recommend Council's support and acceptance of the plan.

Council Action

Authorize the proposed update to the Portage County Solid Waste Plan as presented, with the emergency clause.



Information Items

1. Kent Police Statistics

Chief Shearer has provided a copy of the police statistics report for June 2025. The MTD calls for service are down 31.5 % (by 323 calls); traffic citations are down 33.6% (by 45 tickets); accident incidents are down by 14.3% (by 6 incidents) for the month and serious crimes are down by 3 calls, at 1 incident when compared to June of 2024. (attachment)

2. Income Tax Report

Rhonda Hall has provided a summary of income tax collections for June of 2025. Overall, the City income tax collections YTD are up 3.4% (\$322,625) compared with YTD of 2024. For the month of June, the City income tax collections are up 12.0% (\$174,063) compared to 2024. (attachment)

3. Sustainability Commission Quarterly Newsletter

Julie Morris has provided the Summer 2025 Sustainable Kent Newsletter, per Council request. In addition to Climate Action Plan updates, there will be a variety of sustainability related information in each issue. To sign up for the newsletter, go to the City of Kent website. <https://www.kentohio.gov/business-building-developemtn-sustainabiltiy-overview/sustainable-kent-e-newsletter/>

2. Monthly Permit and Zoning Reports

Bridget Susel has enclosed copies of the monthly zoning and permit violations report for June 2025. Permit revenues were \$8,227.26 for the month with the most permits being issued for HVAC Pre-existing Residential (9 permits). There were 80 code enforcement items for the month. (attachment)