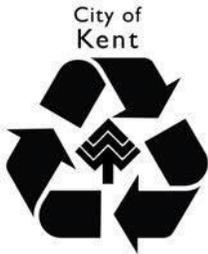


# Sustainable Kent News

The latest on sustainability efforts in Kent



Sustainability Commission



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Happy Winter everyone! This is a great time of year to think about energy efficiency and ways to help you stay warm and save money! A handy list of tips from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency offers ways to help prevent pollution through energy efficiency activities with some highlights as follows:

**Turn down the Thermostat.** Ideally, keep your home heated to 68 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and 60 at night. Use extra blankets and sweaters instead of turning up the heat. Likewise, in the summer, dress cool to save on air conditioning costs and energy.

**Lower your water temperature.** Turn your heater down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. You'll cut your water heating costs by 6-10 percent.

**Purchase Energy Efficient Products and Equipment.** By looking for the Energy Star label on products and equipment, you can reduce your energy bill by 30 percent and your electric lighting charges by 40 percent while cutting pollution. [Learn about Energy Star.](#)

**Replace your showerhead.** By using a low-flow showerhead, you reduce water consumption and energy usage to heat the water. They pay for themselves in only four months.

**Turn unused appliances and equipment off.** Turn off equipment and lights at night and on the weekend, unplug appliances when they are not in use.

**Clean or replace filters regularly.** Be sure to check furnace, air conditioner and heat pump filters regularly. By cleaning your heating, ventilation and air-conditioning equipment, your units will last longer, avoid costly down time and improve indoor air quality....

(full list of tips available at <https://www.epa.gov/p2/pollution-prevention-tips-energy-efficiency>)

Continue reading below to learn about features Kent’s City Hall utilizes to help with its energy efficiency and overall sustainability, programs available to help with furnace and hot water tank replacements, and information regarding the current status of renewable energy and associated battery storage sectors.

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

## CHRONICLING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

### Kent's City Hall Facility: LEED Silver Specifications

The City of Kent has been thinking about sustainable design and building practices for a long time! In November of 2008, the City passed a resolution requiring that all new construction of City buildings, in excess of 5,000 square feet, meet LEED Certification at the Silver Level, unless a waiver is granted. The full resolution can be read by clicking the following link: <https://www.kentohio.gov/media/zrraiwic/2008-202-resolution-leed-silver.pdf>.

The City's Climate Action Plan discusses this same Resolution ([see page 14 of the CAP](#)) and notes that in 2018, the Kent Police Department moved into a new building that was built to LEED Silver Standards, with Kent's new City Hall, which opened in April of 2025, planned to be built to Silver standards as well.

LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a globally recognized green building rating system administered by the U.S. Green Building Council, that according to its [website](#), "offers a framework for healthy, efficient, and cost effective green buildings, providing environmental and social benefits". Essentially, certain criteria must be met across different categories to earn points that determine the rating level of a project, ranging from Certified to Platinum.

The LEED program updates its standards regularly, and Kent City Hall was built with sustainable design elements in accordance with LEED version 4. The architects who helped design Kent City Hall, Brandstetter Carroll, Inc., provided the City with a list of the following sustainable design elements that were incorporated into City Hall and work structurally to help it be the beautiful and efficient building we use today.

PROJECT NOTES KENT  
CITY HALL PROJECT  
NO. 18023

**SUBJECT: LEED v4 Credentials**



**August 6, 2025**

### Sustainable Design Elements

The following sustainable design elements have been incorporated into the new Kent City Hall in accordance with LEED v4 guidelines.

#### Location and Transportation

- Sensitive Land Protection
  - Project site is located on land that has been previously developed.
- Surrounding Density and Diverse Uses
  - Main entrance is within a 1/2-mile walking distance of at least eight (8) existing and publicly

available diverse uses listed in Appendix 1 Table 1. Only two uses in each type may be counted.

## APPENDIX 1. USE TYPES AND CATEGORIES

**Table 1. Use Types and Categories**

Category	Use type
Food retail	Supermarket
	Grocery with produce section
Community-serving retail	Convenience store
	Farmers market
	Hardware store
	Pharmacy
	Other retail
Services	Bank
	Family entertainment venue (e.g., theater, sports)
	Gym, health club, exercise studio
	Hair care
	Laundry, dry cleaner
	Restaurant, café, diner (excluding those with only drive-thru service)
Civic and community facilities	Adult or senior care (licensed)
	Child care (licensed)
	Community or recreation center
	Cultural arts facility (museum, performing arts)
	Education facility (e.g., K–12 school, university, adult education center, vocational school, community college)
	Government office that serves public on-site
	Medical clinic or office that treats patients
	Place of worship
	Police or fire station
	Post office
	Public library
	Public park
	Social services center
Community anchor uses (BD&C and ID&C only)	Commercial office (100 or more full-time equivalent jobs)
	Housing (100 or more dwelling units)

- Access to Quality Transit
  - Within a 1/4 mile there is access to about 250 weekday bus trips and 130 weekend trips.
- Reduced Parking Footprint
  - Parking footprint was reduced by 60% due to surrounding local public transit and walking and bike paths as well as a code allowance for reduced parking in the downtown area.
- Green Vehicles
  - 2% of parking spaces in the project provide electrical vehicle charging.

### Water Efficiency

- Outdoor Water Use Reduction
  - No irrigation is required in this project.
- Indoor Water Use Reduction
  - All plumbing fixtures are low use water consumption fixtures, of at least 25% reduction.

Indoor Environmental Quality

- Enhanced Indoor Air Quality Strategies
  - Exhaust fans provided in all janitorial closets where chemicals may be stored.
  - Carbon dioxide monitoring is provided in all meeting rooms.
- Low-Emitting Materials
  - Low volatile organic compound (VOC) materials and coating were used throughout the project. Such as:
    - Paint
    - Sealant
    - Adhesives
    - Caulk
    - Carpet/flooring
    - Insulation
    - Ceilings
- Interior Lighting
  - Individual lighting controls are provided in at least 90% of individual occupant spaces.
  - Multizone control systems are in place for meeting rooms.
  - Presentation lighting is controlled separately.
  - Lighting controls are visible from the room the lights are in.
  - Occupancy sensors and automated lighting controls are provided in all meeting rooms.
- Daylight
  - Manual glare-control devices (window shades) are provided for all regularly occupied spaces.
  - Horizontal shade fins on the exterior of all large glass expanse are provided.
  - Projected columns on the exterior of the 3-story curtain windows were designed to provide vertical shade.
- Quality Views
  - Building achieves a direct line of sight to the outdoors via vision glazing for 75% of all regularly occupied floor area.
- Acoustic Performance
  - Acoustic panels are installed on all walls in the Council Chamber.

Innovation

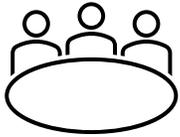
- LEED Accredited Professional
  - Architect Rick Parker LEED AP

**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



**From the City of Kent's Community Development Department**

**FURNACE & HOT WATER TANK REPLACEMENT PROGRAM FREE TO QUALIFYING HOUSEHOLDS**

The Kent Furnace Inspection and Targeted Replacement Program is available to income-eligible homeowners living within Kent City limits.

**This program provides:**

- 1) FREE furnace inspections, cleaning, tune-up, repairs and possible furnace replacement;
- 2) possible replacement of hot water tank and/or installation of expansion tank;
- 3) one combination carbon monoxide/smoke alarm and additional smoke alarms, as needed;
- 4) referral to additional energy conservation programs; and
- 5) energy conservation education to further increase energy efficiency and reduce heating costs.



Replacement of an inefficient furnace is one of the simplest and most effective ways to improve energy efficiency and reduce the impact on the environment. The Community Action Council of Portage County operates this program through a grant from the City of Kent Community Development Department. Licensed heating and plumbing contractors obtain permits and inspections issued by the City of Kent Building Department.

**In order to qualify for the program, you must:**

- 1) own and occupy your single-family home;
- 2) meet low-to-moderate income guidelines, and
- 3) complete the application and provide all required documentation.

Elderly applicants, disabled applicants, and families with minor children are given priority. The program is designed to offer a one-time service.

To obtain additional information please contact Kailyn Cyrus, the City's Zoning and Grants Coordinator, at 330-678-8108 or [Kailyn.Cyrus@kentohio.gov](mailto:Kailyn.Cyrus@kentohio.gov) or the Community Action Council of Portage County (CAC) by telephone at 330-297-1456, or visit CAC's website at <https://www.cacportage.net/>.



**Renewable Energy and Battery Storage Are Booming - Plus Local Issue Info**  
**By The Kent Environmental Council**

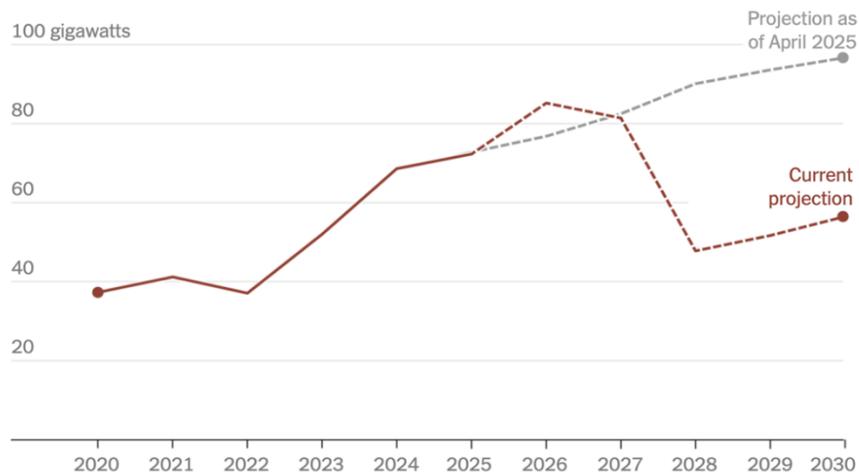
The federal administration will be presiding over a renewable energy boom in the next couple of years. In 2025, solar and wind outpaced coal as the leading source of electricity, accounting for 85% of new power added to the grid in the first nine months.

Companies are expediting the installation of solar panels, wind turbines and batteries before the credits expire or become harder to claim. Major wind and solar projects must be under construction by July 2026 to be eligible for federal tax credits. Battery installations have longer to get started. To hit deadlines, many developers have ordered the transformers, solar panels and other equipment much sooner than they normally would. Only relatively big companies can spend so much money up front. Some of these larger companies may buy up some smaller projects whose backers are strapped for cash. One California company bought \$25 million worth of solar panels it did not need. They are storing them in a rented warehouse. There are so many projects in the pipeline that experts are predicting the boom to last through 2027.

That so many renewable energy projects are poised to be built reflects just how much momentum the renewable sector has -- not just because of subsidies, but also because of tremendous demand for energy. Solar and batteries are much easier than natural gas or nuclear power to install, and are cheaper, while the cost of building gas power plants has soared. This year renewable and batteries will make up about 93% of new capacity added to the U.S. grid.



**New U.S. renewable energy and battery capacity**



Note: Data includes solar, wind and battery storage projects. Source: BloombergNEF By The New York Times

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/14/business/energy-environment/trump-renewable-energy-batteries.html>

Yes, current policies will likely adversely affect growth here in the U.S. because the One, Big, Beautiful Bill Act (passed in July of 2025) makes changes to energy policies, so greenhouse gas emissions will fall at a much lower rate than previously projected. The International Energy Agency recently almost halved its expectations of how much solar and wind energy capacity the U.S. will add over the next 5 years. Most of that effect will be felt beginning in 2028, the last full year of Trump's presidency. The loss of renewable energy tax credits is likely to raise energy bills because it can take years to build alternatives like gas or nuclear power plants.

Despite this, individuals as well as companies are starting to recognize the cost savings of moving to sustainable future. Companies are including the cost of preparing for that future in their short-term, mid-term and long-term planning. Many investors are demanding such planning. Renewables also provide homegrown jobs, energy independence, and less risk from volatile global energy prices.

The use of artificial intelligence is on the rise, so much so that 'The Architects of AI' were named the 'Person of The Year' by Time Magazine in its year-end issue. AI is very energy intensive, necessitating savings wherever possible. Forty-five percent of the world's data centers are currently located in the U.S. A typical AI data center uses as much power as 100,000 homes and by 2030 AI data centers could consume 8% of all U.S. electricity. To power these centers, energy providers will need to invest in new sources of power, cooling solutions and infrastructure. And cheaper renewables will be a big part of the mix.

Skyrocketing demand is shaking up the political calculus and will also help push the clean energy momentum this year by streamlining permitting and the process of connecting to the grid as well as by reducing costs for things like permitting and fees.

As people demand affordable, reliable energy, pushing specific energy technologies on ideological grounds is unsustainable. While an energy strategy with a diverse mix of sources is the way forward as demand grows, many believe that market forces will continue to ensure that most new electricity is renewable. This also provides optimism for decreased emissions to help our climate. Also positive is that global renewable capacity is set to rise by 11% in 2025, which puts the global goal to triple renewables by 2030 within reach.

**Local Solar Growth – A Current Issue:** Portage County Commissioners are currently evaluating a proposal to restrict large solar installations on farmland in all townships. More information can be found in the recent Portager article referenced in the Sources section below should you wish to learn more about the issue. Should you wish to provide your perspective on the issue to the county commissioners, their contact information is as follows:

Phone for all three is 330-292-3600 from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm, or

Emails:

- Mike Tinlin. President, [mtinlin@portageco.com](mailto:mtinlin@portageco.com)
- Sabrina Christian-Bennett-Vice President, [schristianbennett@portageco.com](mailto:schristianbennett@portageco.com)
- Jill Crawford, [jcrawford@portageco.com](mailto:jcrawford@portageco.com)

Sources:

1. The New York Times: Renewable Energy Is Booming Despite Trump's Efforts to Slow It, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/14/business/energy-environment/trump-renewable-energy-batteries.html>
2. Fortune: Solar power and battery storage are booming despite Trump policy whiplash as clean energy meets soaring data center demand, <https://fortune.com/2025/12/21/solar-power-battery-storage-trump-policy-clean-energy-data-center-demand/>
3. Time: The Clean Energy Boom You Missed This Year, <https://time.com/7339625/clean-energy-boom-2025/>

## Sustainable Kent News

4. Time: The Global Axis of Climate Leadership Has Shifted, <https://time.com/7301792/big-beautiful-bill-trump-global-climate-action/>
5. Time: The Architects of AI are the Person of the Year, <https://time.com/7339685/person-of-the-year-2025-ai-architects/>
6. The Portager: Commissioners considering banning large wind and solar in county's townships, <https://theportager.com/commissioners-considering-banning-large-wind-and-solar-in-county-s-townships>



**FLASHES**  
**RECYCLE**  
**ELECTRONICS**

FREE OPEN TO CAMPUS + COMMUNITY

# Electronics Drive

MARCH 4, 11, 18 & 25 • 7:30AM - 3:00PM

**KSU SURPLUS STORE PARKING LOT**  
475 Terrace Drive

[tinyurl.com/KSUElectronics](https://tinyurl.com/KSUElectronics)  
powered by University Facilities Management & Office of Sustainability

  Office of Sustainability

E-Cycle Drive 2026

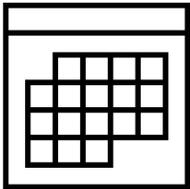
### **Kent State University Hosts Free Electronics Recycling Event: March 4, 11, 18, and 25**

The 2026 E-Cycle Drive at Kent State University is open to students, faculty, staff and the community of Kent. Electronics recycling will be open March 4, 11, 18, 25 from 7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. in the Kent State University Surplus Store parking lot at 475 Terrace Drive. Members of both the campus and city of Kent community can recycle used electronics through [Dynamic Lifecycle Innovations](#) an [R2v3](#) and [E-Stewards](#) certified company, where materials are handled in an environmentally and socially responsible way.

Materials permitted at E-Cycle Drive include: flat screen TVs, personal computers, laptop computers, servers and storage devices, monitors (LCD), iPads and tablets, flat screen TVs docking stations, floppy drives, DVD/CD burners, VCRs, circuit boards, scanners, copiers, printers, cables, wires, extension cords, digital cameras, cellular phones, string lights, DVD players, game consoles, network and telecom equipment and small kitchen appliances. Items that are NOT ACCEPTED include: kitchen appliances larger than a microwave are not acceptable (*Microwaves are accepted*), CRT Monitors, CRT TV's, Projection TV's, Copiers, Medical Equipment, Lab Equipment, Freon Containing Devices, Toner/Ink Cartridges.

Large drop offs by local businesses are accepted but must be scheduled in advance. Call 330-672-8704. For a complete list of accepted items and more information about E-Cycle Drive visit: [tinyurl.com/KSUElectronics](http://tinyurl.com/KSUElectronics)

E-Cycle Drive is hosted by Kent State University's University Facilities Management and the Office of Sustainability. The public electronics recycling drop-off event contributes to Kent State University's standings in the Campus Race to Zero Waste competition. This is the 17th year Kent State is competing in Campus Race to Zero Waste. For more information visit: [www.kent.edu/sustainability](http://www.kent.edu/sustainability).



### 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/](http://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 United Methodist Church (1435 E. Main St., Kent in the UMC Pierson Hall) from December through March, 10am to 1pm. Visit [www.haymakermarket.com](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://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/](http://www.kentohio.gov/culture-community/kent-parks-and-recreation/)

- **Main Street Kent's Snow Day – 1/24/2026**

- Join Main Street Kent for the third annual, family-friendly Snow Day complete with live music, fire pits, free s'mores (while supplies last), an ice carving demo and display, free crafts with Kent Parks & Recreation, Kent Jaycees and Portage Parks, winter Olympic Games with Kent State University, and tons of activities and specials at local businesses! The event will run from Noon to 6pm on January 24, 2026. Full details at: [Snow Day! – Main Street Kent](#)

- **Kent Beatlefest – 2/20/2026**

- Come together for the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual, free, Kent Beatlefest in downtown Kent on Friday, February 20, 2026. Full event details are available at [kentbeatlefest.com](http://kentbeatlefest.com)