

The University, Downtown Redevelopment & Historic Preservation

A Perspective on Kent State University's Role in
Redeveloping and Preserving Downtown Kent

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Research
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Introduction

Postsecondary institutions throughout the nation are assisting their surrounding communities in the process of urban redevelopment. The University of Connecticut, Marquette University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Yale University have received a significant amount of attention within the United States. The areas surrounding the University of Akron and The Ohio State University have engaged in redevelopment initiatives in which each university has played a significant role. The Northeast Ohio Research Consortium (NEORC), which includes the University of Akron, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, and Youngstown State University, became intrigued with the recent growth in redevelopment projects and collaborations. The member institutions agreed to research the extent to which their respective universities participate in local redevelopment. The purpose of this particular paper is to review Kent State University-City of Kent interactions and identify ways in which the University and the City can work together to foster economic revitalization in Downtown Kent.

Unlike the other members of the NEORC, Kent State University is not situated within the heart of a major urban area, but the sheer size of the institution and its affect on the economic and social landscape of Northeast Ohio warrants its inclusion in this study. Many other redevelopment projects throughout the nation and the state involve façade modernization and, in some cases, complete transformation of the neighborhood’s ambiance. Through the utilization of the national Main Street program, a branch of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Kent community has taken a different approach that will focus on improving the economic base of the downtown while still maintaining the small town appeal.

Every redevelopment project involves the management of competing interests and goals. A very important objective is to make sure that the mix of existing and new businesses appeals to not only the local residents, but to the students as well. One other objective that is often ignored in city-university redevelopment literature is the connection that can be strengthened between the faculty, students, and business owners during the redevelopment process. Considering the University’s limited ability to commit financial resources beyond those associated with any pre-determined real estate plans, there are some significant non-real estate opportunities that must be highlighted and explored. The following sections of this paper give a brief overview of development in Kent from a historical perspective, highlight current and potential physical development projects, and address a number of existing non-real estate projects that have room for potential growth.

History of Development in Kent, Ohio

The City of Kent started out as a small grist-milling village called Franklin Mills in 1805 (Kent Historical Society 1999). As a result of its prime location near the Cuyahoga River, the village grew into a prosperous town that housed a number of mills and factories. Early growth was also stimulated by the development of Atlantic and Great Western Railroad yards and station (Kent Historical Society 1999). Eventually Kent State University, formerly Kent State Normal School, was established in the City in 1910 and has since become the largest employer in Portage County. By 1930, the University's population had reached just over 1,000 students. In that same year, 8,375 people were living in Kent, Ohio (Kent Historical Society 1999). As the University's student population grew, the City of Kent began to diversify in demographical terms. By 1990, the student body population was only 4,736 people off from being equal to the size of Kent's citizenry. Now, 22,317 students are enrolled at KSU's main campus and over 28,000 people living in the city.¹

KSU employees who are also City residents are net contributors to the City's finances in terms of income tax revenue, not to mention the fact that student residents and workers also play a significant role in business activity and tax proceeds. Growth in the city is created in part by multiplier impacts from student/University expenditures, which help businesses in the area. City officials and University administrators alike are keenly aware of the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between the institution and the municipality. City Manager David Ruller said in a personal interview that the two bodies used to merely coexist with, or tolerate, one another.² The Cartwright Administration and former City leaders did more to facilitate meaningful cooperation between the two. KSU and the City of Kent are currently working through periods of transition in leadership in which both the president of the University and the city manager are fairly newly. Thus, the goals and needs that have to be met by these new leaders are different than in previous years. One such goal is to build a *collaborative* effort for redesigning Kent in order to help the University utilize the city as a recruitment and retention tool and help the city rejuvenate its former economic vibrancy.

Kent, Ohio is uniquely situated in the middle of an urban triangle that is formed by the highways connecting Akron, Cleveland, and Youngstown. A large portion of the students who attend Kent come from one of these three larger metropolitan areas. The characteristics of a location are important factors in the aspiring college students' and jobseekers' decision making process, among other things. The City

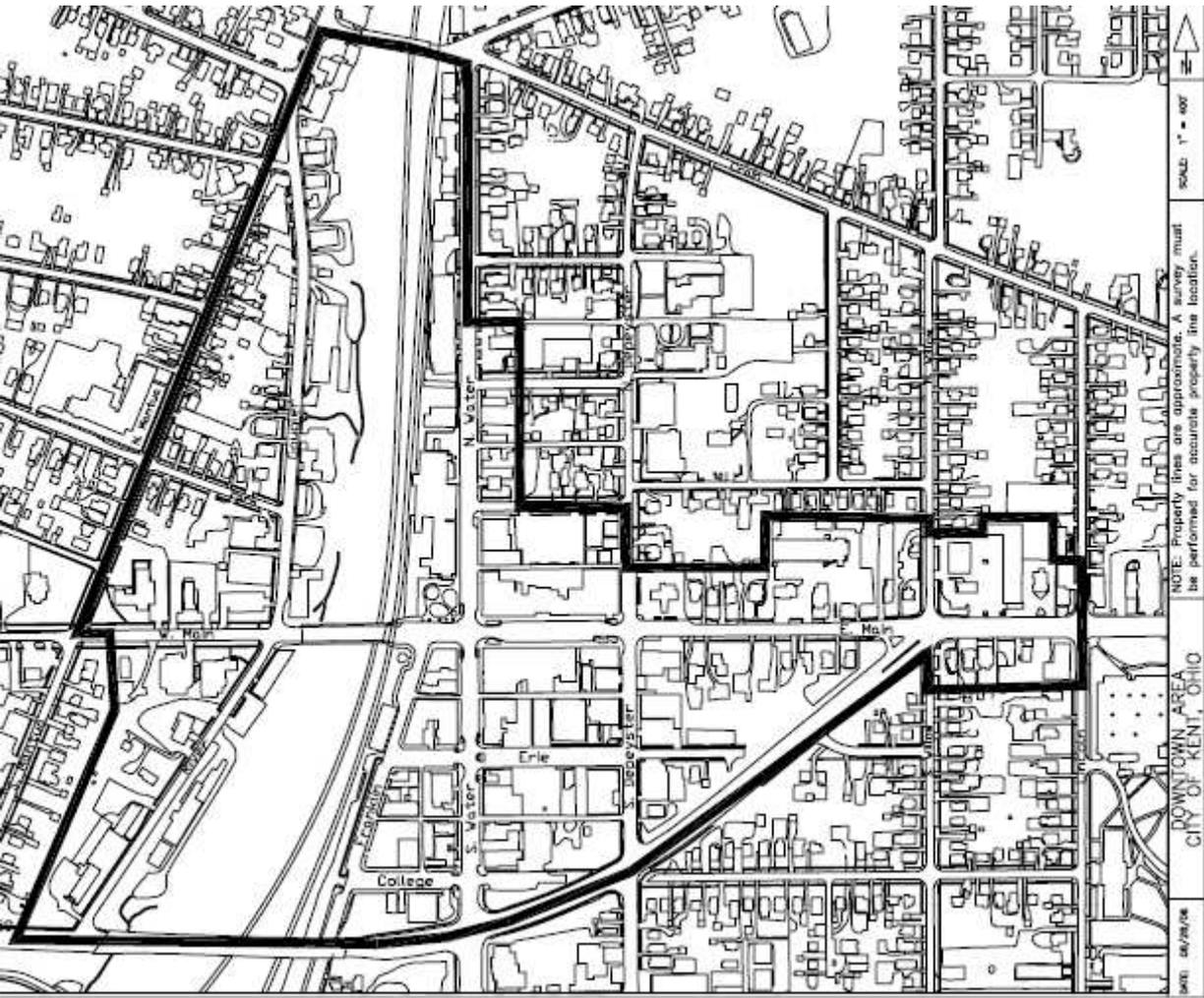
¹ United States Census Bureau; Kent State University's Website - www.kent.edu.

² Personal interview with David Ruller conducted in April 2007.

and the University have the capacity to serve a niche of current and potential residents and students who want to live in a municipality that has a small town feel, but that is located near some other bigger cities. It is important, however, to also have an attractive mix of businesses, activities, and residences in order to actually hold the attention of the target population. In order to reach the goal of developing a healthy economic mix, it really does take full-time dedication and community support. The following sections elaborate on the steps that the City, in collaboration with the University, is taking in order get off on a strong start in economic development.

Current Projects & Organizational Framework

In 2004, the City compiled a comprehensive bicentennial plan. The project leaders held over 45 public meetings in order to gather information about citizens’ social and business needs and to stimulate ideas about growth in Kent.³ One of the areas of top priority for the citizens was to revitalize Downtown Kent. The map below is a part of the bicentennial plan and it outlines the downtown area, which is enclosed by North Mantua Street, Water Street, Lincoln Street, and Haymaker Parkway. The City’s central business district was determined to be a main concern at a City Council Retreat and in meetings with the City’s top CEO’s. It was also brought up in several University-City meetings, too. In the end, stakeholders were demanding that revitalization and economic development occur in the Downtown Kent.



³ Personal interview with Mary Gilbert conducted in April 2007.

Some time ago, a City employee by the name of Mary Gilbert attended a seminar which served as an introduction to the National Main Street Program, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP). Mrs. Gilbert was quite impressed with what the program had to offer and felt that it was the optimal organizational framework (which is explained in detail in the subsequent paragraph) for downtown redevelopment in Kent because it emphasizes community involvement and small, focused projects. When she took the idea back to the community's leaders, they were very enthusiastic about the Main Street Program. Thus, in 2006, Main Street Kent was born through grassroots effort and business sponsorships.

The NTHP collaborates with organizations to help strengthen the capacity of state groups to make historic preservation a priority in design and development.⁴ Historic preservation is a key factor in downtown redevelopment because it helps enrich and enhance living and working environments. Heritage Ohio (HO) is the state's NTHP coordinating body and it oversees the operation of 32 local Main Street (MS) programs, including Main Street Kent.⁵ HO helps local programs realize economic growth through community cooperation in their central business districts while protecting historically and architecturally significant buildings. As of 2006, MS programs throughout the state helped generate \$315 million in improvement investments and attract a net of 382 new businesses to their municipalities. Existing businesses have also expanded and local residents are volunteering their personal time to work on redevelopment projects. The guiding methodology for all MS programs is a four-point approach that focuses on comprehensive community image development. Local programs:

- 1) Organize downtown stakeholders to build consensus and facilitate meaningful ideation,
- 2) Design and help implement a physical improvement plan for building facades, landscapes, streetscapes, etc.
- 3) Promote the downtown's unique characteristics, businesses, and events to attract shoppers, tourists, and investors, and
- 4) Engage in Economic Restructuring activities like business expansion, adaptive reuse of vacant buildings, and development of a balanced business mix.

In order to actually implement the four points above, HO and the NTHP encourage local groups to follow eight principles:

- 1) Employ a comprehensive approach to economic development through which the four-points are balanced at all times,
- 2) Work first on small, simple projects then move to bigger ones in an incremental fashion to build an understanding of the economic development and historic perseveration processes,

⁴ National Trust for Historic Preservation's Website - <http://www.nationaltrust.org/>.

⁵ Heritage Ohio's Website - <http://www.heritageohio.org/>.

- 3) Understand that the Ohio and National MS programs are there to provide technical assistance, but that MS is a self-help development program that requires a lot of local community effort,
- 4) Develop partnerships between the public and private sectors to build on the strengths that each one has to offer,
- 5) Identify and capitalize on existing assets,
- 6) Make sure every program and project is executed to the highest quality level possible,
- 7) Build public support for change as changes in attitude and practice are necessary for MS to be successful, and
- 8) Implementation-Oriented activity is necessary in order create confidence in the program.

Kent State University & Real Estate Developments

For the last several biennial budget years, the state legislature has cut back on the amount of resources for Ohio’s public institutions of higher education. Budget cut backs have led these institutions to be quite cautious in their planning and spending so as not to soak students with higher tuition and other related expenses.⁶ Kent State University, like all of the other public colleges and universities in the State, aims to tackle projects of highest priority each year, although it does have some longer-term goals for expansion in mind. In addition to salaries, benefits, curriculum, and student services, the University must also allocate money to the maintenance of buildings and infrastructure. Kent State University sits on 866 acres of land and is comprised of 119 buildings, so while the institution itself and its basic physical improvement activities naturally affect the City of Kent, the projects that occur near Downtown Kent are the ones that play an even greater role in supporting MSK’s mission.⁷ Below are two pictures that show the current development projects that are located closets to the start of Downtown Kent.

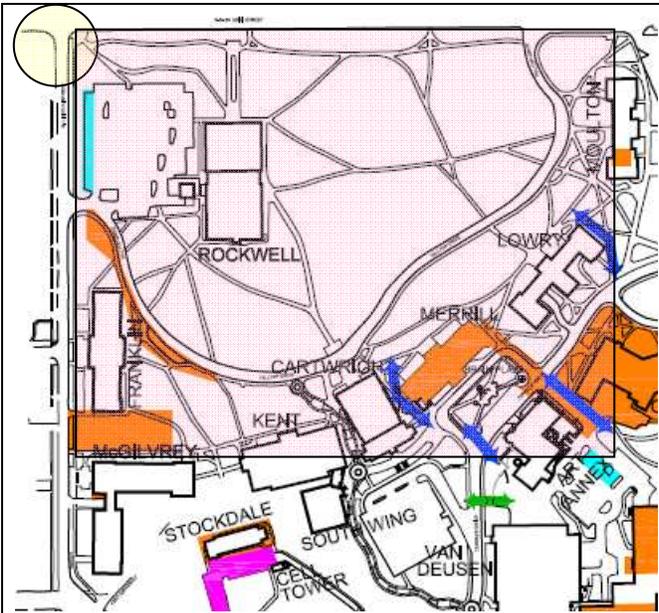


Figure 1.1 City of Kent Bicentennial Plan
Orange- Construction sites and storage areas
Teal- Contractor parking Blue- Pedestrian access routes
Pink- Pavement resurfacing Green- Temporary parking access

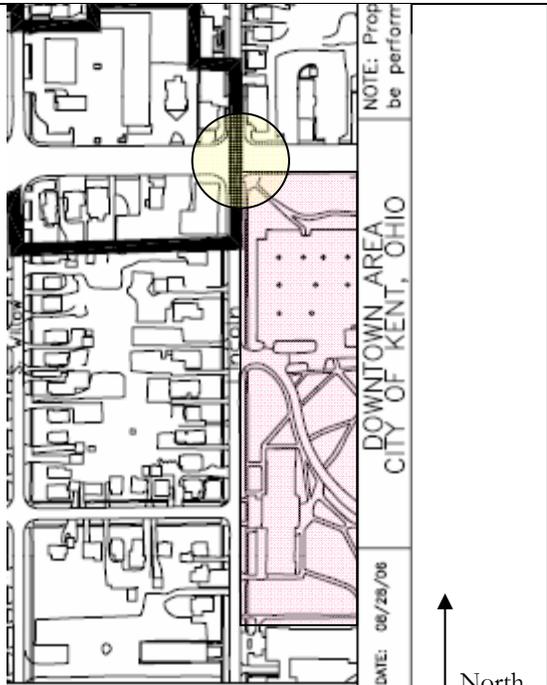


Figure 1.2
Kent State University Office of the University Architect

⁶ Undergraduate Student Senate Coffee Talk discussion in April 2007 with President Lefton.

⁷ Kent State University’s Website – www.kent.edu.

The yellow dots indicate the Lincoln Street-East Main Street (St. Rt. 59) intersection. The rose-colored boxes indicate the section of Kent State University's Front Campus that is most visible from Downtown Kent. The thick black lines in Figure 1.2 highlight the official designation of downtown. Kent State University begins on the east side of Lincoln Street while downtown businesses lie on the west side of Lincoln Street. As one can see from Figure 1.2, some of the buildings in the Front Campus region of the University's campus are undergoing significant renovations. These projects are not occurring directly in downtown, but they do have an indirect effect on the area in terms of the appearance of the overall streetscape. Since the University is actually renovating rather than demolishing the highlighted academic buildings, its activities are thus aligned with MSK's mission of historic preservation. In fact, Front Campus is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which is the "Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation."⁸

A long-term goal of the University is to build a hotel and a conference center near Downtown Kent. The hotel would include retail and dining space on the first floor and there could be some office space as well. The prospects of such a project starting soon are unlikely; however, the plans have received strong support from many University officials, including President Lefton, and many business leaders are intrigued by the idea as well. A hotel and conference center would bring more jobs to Kent, spur economic activity in both downtown and throughout the city, and give the University another means to provide students access to jobs and other opportunities to gain hands on experience in their chosen fields. Hospitality management majors could engage in supervised practicum-experiences, marketing majors could conduct research and analysis for the University and design the hotel's campaigns, and the retail space could house student-run start-up businesses. The hotel and conference center would provide the University with more space to host events and it could eventually serve as an additional source of income as external groups may wish to rent space for their own activities.

MSK suggested that KSU become a partner in the redevelopment project by purchasing a building known as "the old hotel," which is located on the corner of East Main Street and Depeyster Street. In a personal interview, Gilbert remarked that the purchase and renovation of "the old hotel" would be an excellent opportunity for the University to have a physical presence in the City's central business district. Moreover, the space could be used for similar projects that have been coupled with the hotel-conference center plan. City Manager Ruller even suggested opening a "fashion house" retail space for the students who are majoring in fashion design and merchandising. KSU is present in Downtown Cleveland via the Urban Design and Architecture program, and the University just recently opened a

⁸ National Trust for Historic Preservation's Website - <http://www.nationaltrust.org/>.

fashion design studio in New York City with support from alumni donations. The “the old hotel” partnership would be contingent upon several factors including the current owner’s willingness to collaborate and the University’s financial capability. Nonetheless, the University is clearly being encouraged to consider expanding its presence into Downtown Kent.

The Lefton Administration is eager to promote student entrepreneurship and the University has adopted a new motto of “excellence in action.” Projects like the ones above present the University with boundless options to advance its dual mission of community outreach and academic excellence, but, as previously stated, any new development plans are indeed long-term goals. Other University priorities take precedence over any extensive off-campus development plans, according to President Lefton. There are, however, some projects that the University does engage in and that can be expanded to help benefit Downtown and the City of Kent. The following section looks at these options in detail.

Kent State University & Non-Real Estate Activity

Real estate development is not only expensive and time consuming for universities, but it is often a source of contention and factionalism within communities. Moreover, community outreach involves much more than just physical construction and there is a growing amount of literature that looks at the outreach role of the university in the 21st century. Institutions of higher education obviously house a wealth of human capital that municipalities can tap into. Municipalities, on the other hand, offer academics and students the opportunity to utilize their skills and knowledge to help local leaders address issues and engage in service. With regard to the relationship between KSU and the City of Kent, many of non-real estate-related means of collaboration already exist in the area, but they could always be enhanced.

As of today, about 15 University administrators and employees serve on different MSK committees. One of the volunteers is Dr. Patricia A. Book, KSU Vice President for Regional Development, and she is actually a member of the MSK Board of Directors. In her administrative post, Vice President Book is responsible for fostering development and University engagement in the Northeast Ohio region by leveraging the school's assets and forging reciprocal relationships with other development partners.⁹ The Regional Development office, in partnership with the Research division, is also responsible for the facilitation of start-up businesses that are based on research that was conducted at the institution. Most of these new businesses are based on commercialized technologies from the Liquid Crystal Institute (LCI), as well as from other technology-oriented departments. There is an agreement between the Office of Regional Development and the City of Kent that the City will be among the first informed about any new spin-off ventures in order to give local leaders the opportunity to attract the entrepreneurs to start in the area, according to City Manager Ruller. New businesses generate jobs and growth and if the entrepreneurs are encouraged to start-up downtown, then multiple missions can be achieved at the same time. In relation to entrepreneurship, even though the University could support student businesses in the future hotel and conference center, in the mean time, existing retail vacancies could be leased and filled either now or in the near future. The same is true for the aforementioned incubator start-ups.

The President and Vice Presidents of KSU guide the large-scale goals and objectives for the institution, but the sub-units, like individual departments and faculty members, can play a distinct role as well. In an article written by Robert Forrant and Linda Silka (1999), both of the University of

⁹ Kent State University's Website – www.kent.edu.

Massachusetts, Lowell (UML), they address faculty involvement in the community visioning, or redevelopment, process. The authors acknowledge the fact that some question the ability of universities, and especially faculty members, to play a consistent role in these community activities because of problems with timing, availability, and the basic nature of academic research (Farrant & Silka 1999). Universities run on a 9-month schedule, where as municipalities operate on a year-round basis. Additionally 15-week semesters, 10-week quarters, or any other division of the academic year could further complicate the ability for faculty to engage in long-term outreach research projects. Others contend that universities operate much too slowly to work with communities, making it hard for the large bureaucratic institutions to react quickly to communities in short time frames. Finally, academic research and practice-oriented research are not always compatible. Some people generally argue that “faculty alone are interested in theory, and this interest stands in the way of effective university involvement with the community” (Farrant & Silka 1999, 822).

Farrant and Silka present evidence from the experiences at UML that meaningful dialogue and collaboration between universities and cities can occur. After receiving a Community Outreach Partnership grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, UML faculty engaged the community “in defining research activities, workshops, and training sessions that city official and residents indicated were important to them” (Farrant & Silka 1999, 817). One component of this initiative was the City Scholars program which collected campus-wide proposals from faculty who desired to receive course load reductions in order to redesign courses to include community-centered curricula and activities. As City Scholars, the faculty would supervise students who worked on “community-requested” off-campus projects that were cross-disciplinary in nature and that supported the UML’s mission. For example, one City Scholar project was to help local business create more employment opportunities for women and minorities. The other component of UML’s community outreach initiative was to implement a structured process through which local groups could submit requests for faculty and student support on development projects. This way, the University was clear about the needs of the community and faculty members could self-select projects that were of their interest.

KSU does not necessarily have a City Scholars program, which is an excellent idea, but the University does have the Center for Public Administration and Public Policy (CPAPP). The CPAPP has a full staff that is dedicated to providing technical assistance to governmental bodies and nonprofit organizations, training public officials, and conducting policy research. The Center donated one of its graduate assistants to MSK for a portion of the student’s required time during the spring 2007 to work as an intern and to collect the information needed to complete this paper. This act of human capital sharing

has forged a stronger relationship between the CPAPP, the University and MSK by providing direct assistance to a project that is beneficial for both major entities. There is room for growth potential in this relationship though. The CPAPP is affiliated with the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program. The MPA program includes courses that are taught by experts in the fields of nonprofit management, public budget, financial management, and administrative theory and practice, just to name a few. In fact, Mary Gilbert is a graduate of the KSU MPA program, so there is an obvious connection between the City and the Center in that regard. The CPAPP could act as the facilitating body for the maintenance of an ongoing relationship in this area of community outreach since the staff and affiliated faculty are well adept at working on topics that concern MSK. Besides, the relevance of scholars in participatory research is well documented in community development literature, including work by the abovementioned authors, Randy Stoecker (1999) of the University of Toledo, and Adam Weinberg (1999) of Colgate University.

While there is a clear role for professors and administrators in the community development process, there is also a very distinct role for students as well. Part of the mission of KSU is “to prepare students for responsible citizenship and productive careers, broaden intellectual perspectives and foster ethical and humanitarian values.” KSU has embraced service-learning programs as one of the most effective ways to blend “meaningful community service experiences with academic learning” (Weinberg 1999, 800). The idea is that the classroom learning is enhanced by public service activities and vice versa. The University hosts programs like the Washington Program in National Issues and the Columbus Program in Intergovernmental Issues. There is also a fairly new program for incoming freshmen called the Applied Public Policy Learning Experience (APPLE) which aims to place underclassmen in local government and nonprofit agencies to get them started on the service-learning track.

Students could easily support the missions of local groups like MSK by supplying manpower and by working as interns. Additionally, MSK is looking to eventually obtain historic register designation for buildings in the downtown area and since it takes a lot of work to collect the necessary information for the process, students could help do the research. Weinberg (1999) notes that universities should be careful not to overwhelm the local agencies and nonprofits, as volunteer management are a time consuming job. Student-city partnerships must be carefully constructed, but well supervised service-learning programs could be beneficial for both students and community leaders alike.

One can be sure that students do get involved with projects in the City of Kent through means other than formal service-learning programs. Individual student groups partner with local service organizations and even create their own service projects, too. In fact, some students serve on MSK committees as representatives for sub-groups of the student body. In understanding, however, that the

development process in Kent is focused on attracting the right mix of businesses to meet the retail, service and social needs of the students just as much as the residents, there is now a greater necessity for communication between the two bodies. As mentioned earlier, the CPAPP could help guide this communication process as well, but there are already some active University administrators and officers that could possibly better fulfill this goal, like the Associate Director for Community Service Projects in the Center for Student Involvement and the Undergraduate Student Senator for Community Affairs. One idea is that these University leaders could help form a pool of volunteers made of up representatives from different student groups who are willing to work on downtown redevelopment and visioning projects.

Some people may be weary about involving students in such important projects, thinking that many of them are too young and naïve to take them seriously (Farroant & Silka 1999). Most traditional students do tend to be inexperienced in community organizing matters because of their age, but there are also many eager students who are quick learners and who want to get involved in the community. There are several student-run media sources, including the Daily Kent Stater which covers MSK activities quite well and some students have to complete serious portfolio projects in order to graduate. KSU's history alone alludes to some of the reasons why there may be a divide between students and townspeople. The MSK program is trying to forge a better relationship with the students and the following section highlights an excerpt of a survey that "Dynamics of Leadership" students did to help Mary Gilbert and to complete a class project. Nonetheless, students are an under utilized pool of human capital in the City of Kent, but they must be included in the downtown redevelopment activities in order to make it successful.

Dynamics of Leadership & Main Street Kent

Students in a Management and Information Systems called “Dynamics of Leadership” surveyed University affiliates (i.e. students, faculty, staff, etc.) and departments to learn their views of and purposes for going downtown. The departments were specifically asked questions about what roles they believe they could play in the redevelopment process. The following is an excerpt of the overall study and it provides an example of the kind of quality work that students can do to help KSU and the City of Kent prosper:

1. Describe the Department or Program surveyed. Put in an organizational context. What is the scope of their operation? Who did you speak to? What was there position?

The Theater and Dance Sector is a flourishing department within the College of Performing Arts. They are located in a B141 of the enormous Music and Speech Center. Here students, faculty and guest artists are given the opportunity to perform a vast array of comedy, musicals, drama and dance for the students and people of Kent.

The Theater and Dance Department offers the following degrees to a range of high caliber students. A Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Fine Arts, a Master of Arts, and a Master of Fine Arts. They offer a BA in Theatre Studies, BFA degrees in Dance Performance, Dance Education, Design/Technology and Musical Theatre, MA in Theatre History and Criticism, MFA degree in Advanced Acting (They also offer a "returning professional" M.F.A. track), MFA degree in Design/Technology (concentrations in Costume, Lighting, Scene Design and Theatre Technology), They also offer certificate programs in Entertainment Arts and Technologies, including Stage Lighting, Automated Lighting, Stage Scenery, Sound, Stage & Arena Rigging and Event-Based Video Production (Theater and Dance, 2007).

Kent State’s Theater and Dance Department has graduated several celebrities throughout the years. A few include Arsenio Hall, and Michael Keaton. This department is actively involved in enhancing each students experience to the fullest; they allow students to work with a rotating guest professional director, giving them memorable experiences that relate to the real world. To develop the students even further a number of guest designers, choreographers, and performers are introduced throughout the courses. The courses are taught in a mixture of lectures, performances and public forums by dedicated professors.

As mentioned earlier the Music and Speech Center is an enormous infrastructure that contains several facilities available to the students. The most famous of these is the E. Turner Stump Theater and the Wright Curtis Theatre. The description of the E. Turner Stump Theater is as follows “This 506-seat continental style-theatre has housed major productions since 1960 and was fully renovated in 1989. The large trapped stage measures 100 feet by 45 feet with a gridiron height of 65 feet. Movable draperies accommodate both intimate and spectacular productions of theatre and dance” (Theater and Dance, 2007). The Wright Curtis Theater, “225-seat theatre utilizes movable seating, flexible traps, and a catwalk system to provide variety in production from conventional thrust and arena configurations to those utilizing multiple vertical levels and acting areas” (Theater and Dance, 2007). Other amenities include a lab theater, design studios, school computer lab, costume shop, scene shop, dance studios and a physical therapy center.

During the summer our school also produces [Porthouse Theatre](#). “This professional theatre employs both equity actors, non-equity performers and students for a season of theatre classics and major American musicals. Auditions are conducted nationally each year” (Theater and Dance, 2007).

In order to find out what resources the Theater and Dance Department had I interviewed the Managing Director of the department, Rebecca Gates. She advised me to go to the website for some of the information I provided in the earlier section of this paper and talked with me about how the Dance and Theater Department could contribute as a supplier to the downtown area. She was very welcoming to the idea and offered to help in anyway she could.

2. Write a general Statement about the interaction between the department you surveyed and the downtown community.

Even though we have a very beautiful and historic downtown for some reason there is a disconnect between the university and downtown area. This is evident as well in the Theater and Dance Department. Their interaction has been very little and this problem needs to be addressed because there is so much that both communities can offer each other. The Theater and Dance Department has always opened its doors and always encouraged Kent's community to come and see all of their performances. Downtown stores have always been encouraged to sponsor and advertise their stores during events; in exchange the downtown community also allows the departments to advertise their shows in their stores as well. The Department has also assisted Kent downtown communities with fundraising activities by offering free tickets that they can raffle or give away as a prize. The Porterhouse Theater, described earlier, offers scholarships to people of the Kent community that are not students so as to encourage the development of the people. Rooms and theaters can also be used by members of the downtown community for various reasons as long as they have permission.

3. List responses to questions on the survey form by the number of each question. Write each question and list answers to that question.

Personal communication reference based on an interview with Rebecca Gate, April 2007.

1. Have you, in the past, made any of your organizational resources available to Kent Commercial (Downtown) or Not for Profit interests?

Please list resources: They have allowed the downtown community stores, and people to post posters and advertise their programs within the department. No fees were involved. The Theater and Dance Department also in turn posted up coming shows and advertisements inside of various stores.

2. In the past year, have your facilities or resources been requested by Kent Commercial (Downtown) or Not for Profit interests?

Please list facilities requested: Ticket exchanges have been administered. They require the Theater and Dance Department to give them tickets to up coming shows which the community then use for fundraising. They are raffled, auctioned or given away as prizes for various charities and causes. No fees were charged for this.

3. What resources might your department have that would contribute to the growth and enhancement of a vital Kent Downtown? How might your department help build a vital Downtown, Kent?

Facilities: The department has two major facilities that are quite popular, the E. Turner Stump Theater and the Wright Curtis Theatre these two theaters have known to attract people from all the surrounding areas and even a few from out of town. By allowing the stores to advertise their products here they might be able to help bring a stronger customer base to the community. The theaters have several people that attend their shows these people just need to be directed toward the downtown area.

Expertise/ Consulting: This department has plenty of well educated students and faculty members that have a diverse array of backgrounds and experience. Several of the faculty members with broader backgrounds can get involved with the main street project. They can volunteer and counsel and they can also use their creative sense to come up with solutions to the problems of downtown.

Interns: The Porthouse Theater allows members of the downtown to join their summer program. This gives members of that community a chance to learn something and maybe use that information to start their own programs in the downtown area.

Programs: The Theater and Dance Department can put on shows in the downtown area. Provide some entertainment and draw the people out there. They can also hold some classes down their giving the students an excuse to visit the area and shop at the shops.

4. What, in your opinion, would help the university connect with the downtown area?

Several things like Kent Chamber of Commerce needs to provide more parking for example. Nicer stores that entice the students. Twenty-four hour study lounges, that are really nice and well connected. More activities that provide excitement for all ages and more shops that cater to the needs of the city.

4. Look at relationships in the customer dyad. Evans states, “The goal of building partnerships with customers and suppliers can be seen as an extension of the teamwork principle that applies to all TQ activities and as recognition that the needs of both partners must be satisfied if productive, long term relationships are to be established.” Describe your supplier-customer relationship. Why is this relationship important to each party to the relationship? What ideas do you have for managing it?

Currently the supplier customer relationship that we have between downtown stores and the university is a selfish one. The problem is that the relationship is backward, having done some research I have come to the conclusion that the problem with the relationship up till now is that the university always expects and does not give in return. I think that this is an issue that needs to be resolved in order to eliminate the disconnect that there is between the university and the downtown community. As mentioned in the question in order for there to be a long term relationship between the parties their needs to be a balance of benefits that each party receives.

This relationship needs to be modified, both the Theater and Dance department and downtown community can profit from a strong partnership and I have several ideas that can help in this situation.

- One of the key areas that need to be explored is the need for more music and entertainment in that area. Most expect the atmosphere of a college town to be lively a place where everyone can express their creativity freely. A great way to integrate the needs of the community and the department is to create some kind of annual, monthly or weekly festival in the downtown area. This will encourage all kinds of tourists, students, faculty and residents of Kent and surrounding areas to shop there while enjoying the show. The department will be supplying an influx of customers to the area where at the same time the downtown area will be supplying the department with an area to showcase talent and a place to put their intellectual capital to good use. They may even be able to charge a fee to participants or to the audience enabling them to raise funds.
- It would be nice to have a location where cultural activities can be showcased encouraging a diverse population to the area. This might even encourage a new kind of population to move into the area. The department would be able to supply the tools necessary using the vast array of talents that they have in their scene shops and design studios. The materials can be collected and supplied by the professors and research assistants and diverse groups can be invited to showcase cultures by the administration sector of the department. The downtown community in turn will supply the department with the recognition and advertising the school needs. The fact that the Theater and Dance department handles all this will attract a more diverse group of students.
- The downtown area needs some work; it needs a brighter atmosphere that is welcoming to it all visitors. Creative students and faculty can help with this revitalization of the downtown area by helping with lighting, and graphics that can be displayed. The department can supply the area with useful tips and creative designs that are taught to students. This in turn gives the department a chance to put their teachings to practice. The downtown area will supply the university with an area that they can demonstrate and illustrate the concepts that the students have learnt in class.
- As the relationship becomes stronger between the school and the downtown they can get together and start raising funds for whatever causes they might need money for. This can be done through several activities the downtown stores can all have a sale or something while the Dance and Theater departments can put on show. They can gather money by inviting amateur artists and professional artists to perform. Some examples of performances can be poetry, plays, and spoken word. Panels can speak out about certain issues and the children of the city can also be involved by having activities that they can perform or join. Churches can be encouraged to participate as well, giving their congregations a place to show off their talents. Other market like stores can also be invited to sell their items downtown, all these events can create a vibrant environment that will bring money into the community and strengthen the relationship between the downtown and the universities school of Theater and Dance. The relationship is important because both parties can benefit from each other in

numerous ways. If this relationship is not developed both parties will be missing out on several opportunities that could cross their paths.

- Managing this relationship will be quite a task but can be accomplished by creating a highly organized organization. A strong board of directors that will set the goals and objectives is necessary then a stream of volunteers that can guide and follow through with these objectives would be helpful. The volunteers can set up committees that are divided into certain sections allowing for a trouble free, efficient and effective environment.

Conclusion

Unlike the other members of the Urban University Program and the Northeast Ohio Research Consortium, KSU is not located in the center of a large metropolis. The City of Kent is rather small, but the University is the second largest university system in the state, thus its impact on the City and the region as a whole warrants analysis. KSU produces some of the state and nation's best trained and educated workers and responsible citizens who are quipped to help drive economic and social advancement in their communities. One of the pedagogical tools that KSU utilizes to prepare its students for the real world is service-learning education. Students volunteer a tremendous number of community service hours both on- and off-campus, but more can be done to enhance the University's service-learning capacity in the City of Kent. The University's faculty include nationally and world renowned researchers whose work can be and is applicable to economic development and revitalization in the area. The CPAPP could help facilitate student, faculty, and City relationships by serving as the central point of communication and volunteerism distribution.

In summary, considering the fact that MSK is still growing and establishing itself as a powerhouse grassroots organization, and recalling that the University's plans for real estate development are long-term options, the best mode of economic development in Kent is through human resource capitalization. This is a lesson learned not just from the KSU-City of Kent collaborative experience, but also from the documented evidence of university-towns. It is true that many institutions of higher education throughout the state and the nation are engaging in extensive real estate and re-visioning campaigns, but the goal of this paper was to shed a different light on the revitalization process. There is not a one size fits all paradigm for economic stimulation and growth, but it is well-known that all extensive projects must be built on a strong foundation of concerted effort and community support.

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