

KENT DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

IMPACT REPORT

2024



NOVEMBER
2024



MESSAGE FROM KENT DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

As we approach the end of another eventful year, we're honored to reflect on the growth, resilience, and community spirit that have shaped historic downtown Kent. It's been a year marked by meaningful achievements, fun events and creative solutions to challenges, all made possible by the hard work and dedication of everyone involved with the Kent Downtown Partnership (KDP). Here are some highlights:

Strengthening Community: Our goal for downtown Kent is to be a welcoming and inclusive community. This year we hosted a series of free community events, volunteer and stakeholder open houses and expanded holiday celebrations that drew thousands of residents and visitors downtown, supporting local businesses and reinforcing our community bond.

Supporting Businesses: Small businesses are the heart of downtown Kent. We continue providing resources and opportunities for growth, awarding small business grants, helping new businesses open and supporting existing ones in adapting and expanding.

Beautification and Infrastructure: This year, we launched "Illuminate Downtown" to enhance aesthetics, safety, and pedestrian pathways. Thanks to generous contributions from businesses, service groups, and individual donors, we've begun this project and will expand it as funding permits. Seasonal planters, artwork, and signage have added to Kent's unique character. With programs like murals, hanging flower baskets and cleanup days, our dedicated community members and volunteers continue to keep downtown looking its best.

Looking Forward: In 2025, we'll be collaborating with the city on the "Rediscover Downtown" plan, expand our events calendar, increase support for small businesses and continue infrastructure improvements. We're also excited to build and strengthen partnerships that help bring cultural experiences to life through arts and community groups.

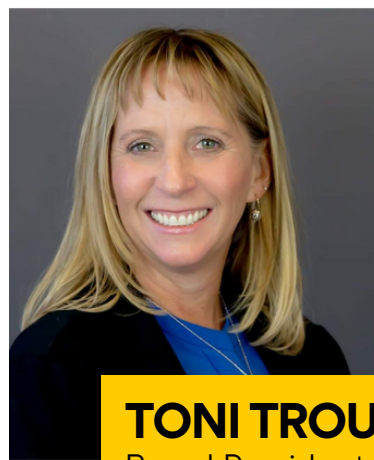
Thank you!

Together, we're building a downtown that reflects our values and welcomes all. Thank you for your commitment and support. We look forward to making downtown Kent an even more special place for our community

Sincerely,



GAILA HAAS
Executive Director



TONI TROUTNER
Board President



147

Supported small businesses & vendors

1514

volunteer hours

9

New businesses

8

Micro grants awarded by KDP to Small businesses

OVERVIEW

VISION

To be the heart of our community offering opportunities, creativity and innovation. To foster strong partnerships and be a vibrant and thriving community while preserving our historic character and charm

MISSION

To strengthen commerce and promote growth in historic downtown Kent through programs and events that celebrate our unique and diverse community and culture.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers:

- Toni Troutner, President
- Linda Golley, President Elect
- Jeff Middleton, Past President
- Doug Scharnhorst, Treasurer

Legal Counsel:

- Erik Olsen, Hanis, Irvine, Prothero

Ex Officio Members

- Zenovia Harris, Kent Chamber of Commerce
- Kelly Spreitzer, Assesso ShoWare Center
- Director, Greater Kent Historical Museum

Members:

- Suzanne Cameron, Around the Clock Mgmt
- Joy Cortado, Harborstone Credit Union
- Kevin Grossman, Green River College
- Greg Haffner, Retired
- Kaki Kesterson, Maggie's on Meeker
- Randall Smith, All Pro Building Maintenance
- Dillon Stearns, Davis Door Services
- Diane Whitely, Kent Lions
- Souleymane Tiendrebeogo, MeshHouse
- Michelle Wilmot, City of Kent
- Judy Woods, Retired

ENGAGEMENT

KDP is dedicated to keeping our downtown vitality flowing through a welcoming atmosphere, promotion of special events, business promotion and fostering dialogue and collaboration among our downtown community and stakeholders.

In 2024, the KDP engaged the community through the following programs and projects:

Community Connections, whether participating in our board or committees, attending events or volunteering, the community came together bringing new ideas and enthusiasm to our workplan and deepening our impact.

Shop Local & Small, KDP features and promotes downtown businesses throughout the year via our social media, newsletters and grand openings to create a buzz through our small business community and provide an economic boost.

Events, KDP hosted celebrations in our businesses, parks and streets, featuring music, vendors, artists/makers and food and drink. Here's example of number of people who visited downtown Kent at KDP events:

- Cajun Fest: 5000
- Salsa in the Streets: 1500
- Kent Nerd Party: 2000
- Street of Treats: 1200
- Cider & Ale Trails: 600
- Clean up events: 70



1414
Followers



4.4K
Followers

NEWSLETTER

Statistics



3,055
Subscribers

41.6%
Open Rate

26

B&O Tax Credit
Contributors

15

Community Events
Produced

16

Performing artists/bands

18

Sponsorships/grants
received

6

Volunteer/Community
Connection meet ups

25

Hanging flower baskets

SUCCESS STORIES



ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

One of Kent's business owners received the prestigious Excellence on Main, *Entrepreneur of the Year Award* at this year's Washington State PLACES Conference!

KDP proudly nominated Raman Arora, the new owner of Maggie's on Meeker, in recognition of her incredible entrepreneurial journey. Since taking over Maggie's, Raman has shown a commitment to quality, bringing fresh energy to the community and fostering a warm, welcoming atmosphere. Her dedication goes beyond just running a business—she actively contributes to the vibrancy of our community, making a meaningful impact through her hard work.

This award is a testament to Raman's vision and perseverance, and we couldn't be more thrilled to see her celebrated on this statewide stage.

MICRO-GRANT PROGRAM

This year, KDP launched a grant initiative to help businesses enhance their storefronts and improve curb appeal, offering up to \$500 in funding for each selected project.

This program aims to empower business owners to create a more inviting atmosphere that attracts customers and enhances the overall appeal of our community.

Through these grants, businesses have been able to make impactful updates, including installing new planter boxes, refreshing their paint, adding landscape improvements, upgrading signage, and enhancing lighting.

So far, we have received eight applications and awarded six grants, with two pending. By supporting business owners in updating their storefronts, we're actively working to make our downtown a more welcoming and attractive destination, reflecting the spirit and growth of our community.



KDP GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Advocacy: KDP advocates on behalf of our downtown, its businesses and stakeholders to drive action within both local and state governments.

Economic Development: We utilize established partnerships to strengthen a diverse downtown economy, supporting both existing and new businesses.

Placemaking: We strive to improve the community's perception of downtown through enhancements to the physical environment, artistic installations and gathering spaces.

Clean & Safe: In partnership with the City's Conservation Office and Kent Police, we collaborate to promote and advocate for a safe environment by hosting monthly safety meetings and clean-up events throughout the year.

Historic Preservation: Focus on preserving the unique character of our community. We aim to balance development with the protection of our heritage, ensuring that future generations can appreciate the architectural and cultural significance that defines our local history.



VALUES

Safety: Strive to provide a safe environment to both communicate honestly within the organization and to welcome customers coming downtown.

Communication; Listen actively and communicate clearly to promote understanding and build consensus.

Service: Prioritize prompt responses, maintain honesty, and foster trust with all customers.

Inclusion: Engage meaningfully with our diverse downtown stakeholders to support community involvement.

KDP STAFF



GAILA HAAS

Executive Director

Joined KDP **2019**



Gaila works to build strong connections and partnerships within Kent's Main Street program while also fostering strong relationships with nearby Main Street communities like Puyallup, Renton, Gig Harbor, and Sumner. Through leadership development training and participation in state conferences, she has strengthened ties with state and federal programs that support Main Streets and community development. Her ongoing work with local organizations has amplified the impact on the historic district, reinforcing a shared vision for a vibrant, inclusive downtown community.



KINGFISHER ABERNETHY

Events & Admin Coordinator

Joined KDP: **2024**



Kingfisher plays essential role in our events from ideas into memorable experiences. She oversees all event logistics, including selecting venues, coordinating vendors and ensuring a seamless flow on the day of the event.

With her meticulous attention to detail, she strives to ensure every event meets our high standards and keeps everything running smoothly. Her dedication, planning expertise and focus deliver quality and meaningful experiences for all.

CONTACT US



KENT DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

Phone:

253-813-6976

Email:

info@kentdowntown.org

Website:

www.downtownkentwa.com

Address:

202 W. Gowe Street, Ste A
Kent WA 98032

THANK YOU SUPPORTERS!

