

## Spotlight Article #2 – Engineering Division

At some point over the years, many of you have probably driven down a street in the City of Kent and wondered when it would get fixed. It's a valid question and one we get frequently in the City Engineering Office.

With 196 lane miles of road in the City of Kent, the streets are our single largest asset. But they can also be our largest liability, with much of the City's capital resources needed to keep these roads in good condition. So how do we do that?

By and far the most cost-effective way to keep our streets in good condition is to perform preventative maintenance. A certain amount of the street funding is set aside each year to perform annual preventative maintenance; things like filling potholes, pavement repairs, crack seals and seal coats. These repairs typically happen quickly, and many times aren't noticed until they are done. We also have an annual street and sidewalk program that makes improvements like asphalt pavement, curbs, drive aprons and sidewalk replacement. You can see the list of streets scheduled for repairs this year on [our website](#).

So how do we pay for these needed street repairs? The City budgets around \$1.5M a year for streets and sidewalks, but that is not enough for all that needs to be done. There are several other funding avenues (pun intended) that we actively pursue so we can do more. These include:

- Federal transportation funds – the federal government usually approves a five-year budget for transportation projects. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed in 2021 is the latest Transportation Bill and a significant portion of these funds go to roads, bridges and transportation for federally qualified streets. In Kent, we received federal funds for the upcoming East Main Street Improvement, the North Mantua Street and the St. Rt. 59 Alternative Transportation Projects.
- Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Municipal Paving Program – this paving program is run by the State and provides 80% of funding for state routes that go through a city. For example, ODOT funds were used for paving portions of St. Rt. 43 in 2023 and St. Rt. 59 in 2020.
- Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) Resurfacing program – this program helps fund 80% of repairs to non-state roads. We have used AMATS resurfacing funding for improvements on Main St., South Water St., Fairchild Ave., Franklin Ave. and Crain Ave, to name a few.
- Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) – These are state funds that can be used for any streets, including local roads in neighborhoods. The OPWC will fund smaller portions of a project, typically around 50 percent. We have used OPWC funds to complete neighborhood streets like Rockwell St., Woodard Ave. and Harris St. Thank you to Ohio voters in May 2025, for electing to continue to fund this program.

I hope this gives you a better idea of all the factors that go into keeping our streets and roads in good condition. If you are concerned about your street or want to know when it may be scheduled for repairs, please call the Engineering Office at 330-678-8106, or send me an email at [jim.bowling@kentohio.gov](mailto:jim.bowling@kentohio.gov).

P.S. Speaking of street improvements, work began in August on the East Main Street Improvement Project. You can find out all the details, and look for project updates once work begins, on the [East Main Street website](#).

