



## Kao USA Revitalizes its Operations in Ohio, Securing 525 Jobs

Beauty care company Kao USA established its roots in Cincinnati several decades ago. The firm, which is responsible for brands like Jergens, Goldwell, Bioré, Curel, and Oribe, acquired the Andrew Jergens Co. at 2419 Spring Grove Avenue in Camp Washington in 1988, where it grew to employ 525 people as part of its research, development, and manufacturing operation.

### Growing Pains

Having witnessed remarkable success, the company looked to reshore various product lines and expand manufacturing operations in the manufacturing corridor along Spring Grove Avenue. However, it was landlocked by industrial valve company Powell Valves, which was situated in a neighboring property. Interested in continuing to grow in the Cincinnati region, Kao USA formed a partnership with the William Powell Company, alongside JobsOhio, REDI Cincinnati, The Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority (The Port), and the City of Cincinnati.

### A Collaborative Way Forward

Over a two-year period, all entities worked together to design a customized roadmap for Kao's expansion. This process involved huge efforts to assist Powell with obtaining a new headquarters on a nearby four-acre site, so Kao USA could subsequently acquire Powell's former facility and prepare a pad-ready site for its expansion.

To finance the acquisition, the Port board passed a resolution allowing it to issue up to \$8 million in tax increment financing bonds through the Southwest Ohio Regional Bond Fund. Construction on the new manufacturing facility will begin in 2022, with Kao committing to invest a minimum of \$35 million.

### A Win-Win Scenario

As a result of the agreement, Kao will not only retain its workforce of 525 people—representing more than \$51 million in annual payroll—but create an additional 45 jobs. Described as “a monumental effort inspired by true public-private collaboration to achieve a vision that works for all parties,” the deal is a significant win for Cincinnati, ensuring the city retains its influential presence in consumer products development, product research, and marketing innovation, and facilitating continued economic growth.

The project hasn't gone unnoticed. Recognizing the innovative, collaborative approach involved in this success story, the Ohio Economic Development Association has awarded the Kao USA expansion “Best Project” as part of its Annual Excellence Awards program.

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The creativity demonstrated by the Kao USA team and partners on this expansion project is a hallmark example of what happens when we work together. As a result of this collaboration, Cincinnati gains more jobs, and both Kao USA and the William Powell Company gain a larger footprint to do business. This is a major win for our region.”

**John Cranley**  
Cincinnati Mayor