

DOWNTOWN AKRON QUARTERLY UPDATE



2ND QUARTER 2026
DOWNTOWN AKRON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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ICYMI (In Case You Missed It!)

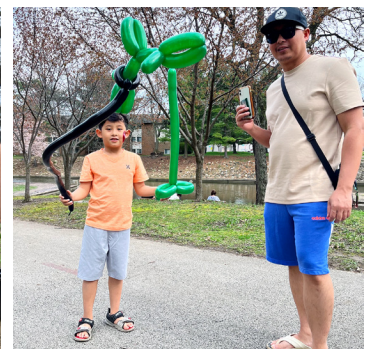
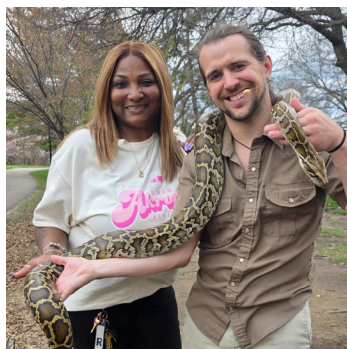
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Save the Date: Upcoming Downtown Akron Events in 2026



"I AM COMMITTED TO WORKING, LIVING AND PLAYING IN DOWNTOWN AKRON, AND I ENCOURAGE EVERYONE IN NORTHEAST OHIO TO COME ENJOY DOWNTOWN."

—Luis Escudero, owner of El Patrón Tequilería & Cuisine, pg 16



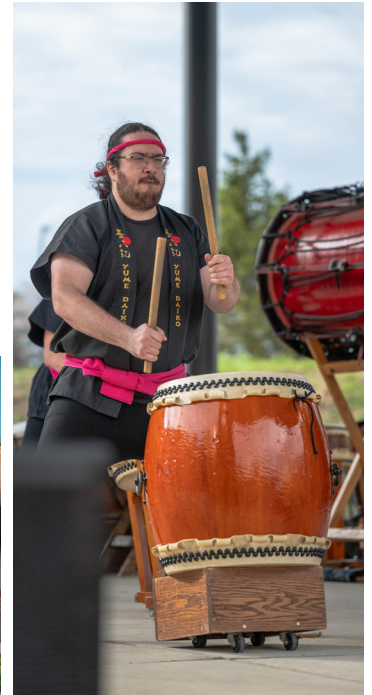
DOWNTOWN AKRON, 2ND QUARTER 2026

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO? [CHECK OUT THE DAP EVENTS CALENDAR.](#)



5:

UPDATED OR
NEW DOWNTOWN
GUIDES & STORIES
pg 9



7,086

PEOPLE GREETED
WITH A SMILE
BY DOWNTOWN
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pg 8

“THERE’S BEEN A TREMENDOUS
AMOUNT OF WORK DONE
DOWNTOWN OVER THE PAST 10
OR 15 YEARS, BY MANY PARTNERS
IN THE COMMUNITY, TO MAKE
DOWNTOWN AKRON A GREAT FIT
FOR WHAT COMPANIES WANT”
—CBRE Senior Vice President Warren Blazy, *pg 10*



YOUR DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORS

Downtown Small Businesses and Storefronts in the News

Green Dragon Inn offers layers of flavor, board games, by Tawney Beans, *Akron Beacon Journal*:

Downtown Akron has a medieval tavern where patrons can enjoy handcrafted cocktails, made-from-scratch food and play almost any board game under the sun.

That place is The Green Dragon Inn, a medieval-themed board game bar and café that has a library of over 750 games to check out. They've got everything from Candy Land to Cards Against Humanity to Foodies, a game where players take on the role of managers in an international food court.

"I felt like if we were going to open an establishment, I wanted it to be directly in line with what we were already doing and something, you know, family friendly and fun & unique."

The Green Dragon's owner, Jameson Reeves, also owns Full Grip Games and its adjoining candy shop downstairs from the restaurant.

[READ MORE](#)

Where to get the scoop on ice cream in the Akron area, by Kerry Clawson & Tawney Beans, *Akron Beacon Journal*: When I think about gourmet ice cream, I think of Chill Ice Cream. Over the years, my family and I have found it quite a treat to indulge in ice cream at Chill's downtown Akron location, especially after events across the street at Lock 3.

Brothers and co-owners Pat, Zack and Jeremy Jaworski focus on making new and unique artisan flavors each week, in addition to seven signature flavors. Pat said Wednesday that means "really high quality, really unique ice cream."

[READ MORE](#)



This iconic Akron eatery is now accepting credit cards for first time, by Kerry Clawson, *Akron Beacon Journal*: Luigi's Restaurant, which used to be one of the last holdouts in town, is finally accepting credit cards after operating as a cash-only business in Akron for 77 years.

[Luigi's manager Jim] Corl, who has worked at Luigi's for 28 years, said he's already seen changes.

"We're seeing good friends we haven't seen for a while and we're meeting new people."

Corl's also been seeing more business lunches now that Luigi's accepts credit cards.

"I've started to see that already, because they can only use their card... because that's the only way they can write it off," Corl said. [READ MORE](#)

Ray Wise brings 'Twin Peaks' to Akron in hometown return, by Conor Morris, *Ideastream Public Media*: Actor Ray Wise, known most widely as Leland Palmer in the cult classic television show "Twin Peaks," returned to his hometown of Akron this week to give fans an inside look at his almost 60-year career in show business.

Wise also talked about growing up in Akron and his time at Kent State University during an appearance at the Night-light Cinema.

"I'm a child of Akron, molded like a piece of clay, you know, and I've taken all of my experience from early on, and I use it to this day."

Wise has been in more than 300 roles on film, TV and beyond. And he said it all started at Akron's Garfield High School, acting in school plays.

"I'm a child of Akron, molded like a piece of clay, you know, and I've taken all of my experience from early on, and I use it to this day," he said. [READ MORE](#)

VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Business Development

Office Occupancy

	OCCUPANCY RATE	AVG ASKING RATE (PER SQ. FT.)
H1 - 2026	77.5%	\$16.86
H2 - 2025	75.5%**	\$16.90
H1 - 2025	82.4%	\$18.41
H2 - 2024	83.2%	\$18.51

*Data from CBRE

**Drop in occupancy rate is reflective of the 1st official tally to include the departure of FirstEnergy.

Q2 New Downtown Businesses

Downtown Akron Commercial Cleaning | 401 S. Main St.
330-333-1155
downtownakroncommercialcleaning.com

7 17 Credit Union | 388 S. Main St., Ste 204
800-775-7741
717cu.com

AllOne Health EAP | 159 S. Main St., Ste 205
800-451-1834
allonehealth.com

Q2 2026 Residential Data

market asking rent per unit by bedroom

PERIOD	STUDIO	1 BED	2 BEDS	3 BEDS
Q2 - 2026	\$967	\$1,267	\$1,582	\$2,002
Q1 - 2026	\$967	\$1,240	\$1,495	\$1,956
Q4 - 2025	\$910	\$1,221	\$1,446	\$1,918
Q3 - 2025	\$939	\$1,217	\$1,476	\$1,920
Q2 - 2025	\$940	\$1,228	\$1,505	\$1,965

*Data from CoStar Realty



Residential Development as of Q2 - 2026

646 potential units in the pipeline

624 units added since 2018

94.6% Residential Occupancy*

*Data from CoStar Realty

Q2 2026 Residential Data

market asking rent per SF

PERIOD	PER SF
Q2 - 2026	\$1.72
Q1 - 2026	\$1.66
Q4 - 2025	\$1.62
Q3 - 2025	\$1.63
Q2 - 2025	\$1.65

*Data from CoStar Realty



Hospitality | Summit County

HOTEL PERFORMANCE JAN. - JUN. 2026

	OCCUPANCY	AVERAGE DAILY RATE	RevPAR†
SUMMIT COUNTY	60.1%	\$119.59	\$67.12
OHIO	59.2%	\$124.14	\$73.52

HOTEL PERFORMANCE 2025

SUMMIT COUNTY	58.4%	\$110.23	\$64.41
OHIO	58.3%	\$122.02	\$71.16

*Data from Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau

†RevPAR (revenue available per room) calculated by multiplying hotel average daily room rate by occupancy rate



DAP Business Outreach

Q2 - 2026

CONTACTS MADE*

RETAIL BUSINESS CONTACTS	30
NON-RETAIL BUSINESS CONTACTS	30
RETAIL AND BUSINESS PROSPECTS**	18

* refers to the number of unique visits/contacts initiated by DAP per quarter

** refers to the number of requests for DAP's assistance in locating space for business

APRIL – JUNE EVENTS



2026 Downtown Akron Sakura Festival Welcomes 12,000 to Downtown Akron

Apr. 24, 2026, by DAP Staff

In Japanese culture, there exist handmade dolls, usually with a white, ghost-like appearance, called Teru Teru Bozu. These dolls are talismans, deeply rooted in Japanese folklore, whose purpose is to keep away the rain and bring pleasant weather. We credit members of our event-planning committee, who made and hung Teru Teru Bozu, for helping push off the rain forecasted for April 4 and ensuring a breezy, sunny, pleasantly warm afternoon for the 2026 Downtown Akron Sakura Festival. We estimate that 12,000 people—more than we’ve ever seen—attended this celebration of springtime, Japanese culture, and the 471 cherry blossom trees that line the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail through downtown Akron.

We were overwhelmed with gratitude for the thousands upon thousands of people who came downtown to enjoy the fresh air, blossoming trees, free crafts and activities, abundant food and shopping experiences, traditional performances, and good company.

[*Click here to view the full story.*](#)



2026 Downtown Akron Juneteenth Kick-Off Celebration Welcomes 1,500 to Lock 3

Jun. 17, 2026, by DAP Staff

An estimated 1,500 people joined us this year throughout a delightfully mild Sunday afternoon and evening to commemorate the day enslaved people in Texas finally learned they were free. This year’s festival theme was Cultivating Our Future. The event took place on June 7, a few weeks ahead of Juneteenth (June 19), to serve



DOWNTOWN PROGRAMS

as a kickoff to the plethora of Juneteenth festivities in and around Akron, many of which have been in place for several years.

In addition to our typical festival offerings—diverse food and beverage options, retail vendors, resource providers, and live music—we, for the second year in a row, held small-group workshops and demonstrations aligning with the seven principles of Kwanzaa, led by individuals from throughout the community, relating to preserving African American culture, strengthening community voices, financial empowerment, traditional health practices, appreciating African American beauty and more.

[Click here to view the full story.](#)



CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING

DAP Ambassador Stats Apr. 1 - Jun. 30, 2026

1,806

TRASH COLLECTED (LBS)

124

GRAFFITI
REMOVED

133

WEED
ABATEMENT*

1,222

BUSINESS CHECKS

257

METRO
HOSPITALITY
ASSISTANCE

127

METRO RULE
ENFORCEMENT

33

SKYWALK
PATROL

16

SKYWALK
CLEANING

275

HOSPITALITY ASSISTANCE

7,860

MEET & GREET**

186

BUSINESS
CONTACT

24

BUS STOPS
CLEANED



Downtown ambassadors maintain hours of operation seven days a week through support from Akron Civic Commons.

For ambassador services or to report a problem, call the on-duty ambassador during hours of operation at 330-706-7383.

Monday - Wednesday 7 am - 9 pm
Thursday - Saturday 7 am - 11 pm
Sunday 7 am - 8 pm

For non-emergency issues outside of ambassador operating hours, use the Akron Police Department's non-emergency numbers, 330-375-2181 or 330-375-2101. For any emergency at any time, call 911.

[Find out more about downtown Ambassadors.](#)

*Weed removal from block faces.

**Meet & Greet are recorded every time an ambassador speaks to a member of the public.

“We love the Downtown Akron Ambassadors!!! They’re such a great asset to our downtown area!! They’re always super friendly & have been super helpful when we’ve needed them!”

—Mint Hair Collective, via Instagram



MARKETING & PROMOTIONS



Downtown Guides & Stories

Guides

- It's All Fun and Games in Downtown Akron (*updated!*)
- 12 Downtown Akron Restaurant Patios for Dreamy Summer Dining (*updated!*)
- 12 Things You Need to Do in Downtown This Summer (*updated!*)

Stories

- 2026 Downtown Akron Sakura Festival Welcomes 12,000 to Celebrate Springtime
- 2026 Downtown Akron Juneteenth Kick-Off Celebration Welcomes 1,500

Win in Akron

Video series highlighting downtown businesses. Click on each to view:

- Boiling House
- Evelyn's Coffee & Bánh Mi
- El Patrón Tequilería & Cuisine
- Zeber-Martell Studio & Gallery
- Eddie's Famous Cheesesteaks
- The 1 Food & Spirits
- Art x Love
- The Nightlight
- Street Craftery

MARKETING DOWNTOWN

Ongoing paid ads and search on Google (through DAP's Google Ad Grant account) and Facebook for Q2 2026 were focused on:

- Increasing foot traffic in the central part of downtown, especially Lock 3 and the DORA

A selection of results of the campaign include:

53,737 Facebook Reach, 2,096 clicks for 5 downtown fitness on the plaza ads

25,056 Facebook Reach, 1,305 clicks for 2 downtown restaurants ads

39,045 Facebook Reach, 1,013 clicks for 1 downtown experiences ad

25,198 Facebook Reach, 504 clicks for 2 downtown ads (Meet on Main and Lock 3's 1st concert)

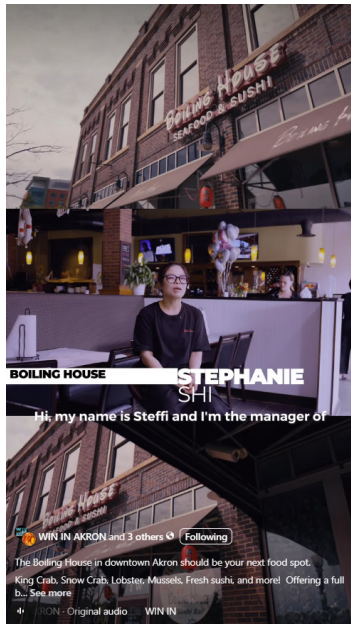
3 Google Ad Grant Ads drew 2,698 link clicks to the DAP website, and 14,190 impressions

Top Google searches that were served DAP ads included

- Akron Ohio Attractions - 848 clicks
- Akron Ohio Events - 626 clicks
- Akron Ohio Concerts - 592 clicks
- RubberDucks Game - 227 clicks
- Lock 3 Concerts - 188 clicks
- Downtown Akron Partnership - 104 clicks

For the 3rd Quarter 2026, Dominic has added 2 (of 3) new ads to the Google Ad grant account:

- A Keyword search for Food and Drink options downtown
- A Performance Max campaign promoting downtown experiences, such as candle-making, gaming, movies, and so on.
- A Performance Max campaign for downtown food options is planned for August.



DAP shares news about downtown progress, businesses, institutions and organizations, downtown life and the downtown community in numerous ways. The most readily measurable outlets for promotion and advocacy are digital, through the DAP website, social media and email newsletter. Below are selected metrics related to these communications.



SOCIAL MEDIA	Q1 - 2026	Q2 - 2026
FACEBOOK	21,247	21,898
TWITTER	8,888	8,878
INSTAGRAM	12,834	13,100
LINKEDIN	3,665	3,745
TIKTOK	1,149	1,183
BLUESKY	283	302

WEBSITE TRAFFIC	Q1 - 2026	Q2 - 2026
USERS	113,038	122,916
SESSIONS	137,539	161,268
PAGE VIEWS	214,170	256,499

Stay connected to the latest information on downtown Akron, subscribe to Do Downtown, our weekly email newsletter at downtownakron.com/news/subscribe, and follow us on social media @DowntownAkronPartnership.

EMAIL NEWSLETTER	Q2 - 2026
NUMBER PUBLISHED	25
SENDS	224,907
OPENS	68,661
CLICKS	5,660
SUBSCRIBERS	20,671
TEXT MESSAGE SUBSCRIBERS	851

NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Historic AES Building's Comeback a Symbol of Downtown Akron's Rebound

It's old, it's huge, and it's all office space in the middle of a city that used to be darn near on its knees.

None of that has kept Akron's AES Building from rebounding in an era in which comparable buildings, many in larger and better-known cities, are struggling.

"There are several factors that have to line up. One is that there's been a tremendous amount of work done downtown over the past 10 or 15 years, by many partners in the community, to make Downtown Akron a great fit for what companies want," said CBRE Senior Vice President Warren Blazy.—*Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Apr. 9, 2026*

[Click here for the full story.](#)

Quaker Square Project Gets Boost as Ohio Gives \$1M Brownfield Grant

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine has announced brownfield remediation grants for projects in Summit, Medina, Portage and Stark counties—including to assist the redevelopment of Quaker Square in Akron.

DeWine, Lt. Gov. Jim Tressel and Ohio Department of Development Director Lydia Mihalik announced \$1M in funding from the Ohio Brownfield Remediation Program to the Summit County Land Reutilization Corporation for cleanup and remediation at Quaker Square.

Work at the Quaker Square complex at 135 S. Broadway in Akron will involve remediation of mold, asbestos and biological waste, as well as demolition to the interior, according to a list of funded projects from state officials.—*Patrick Williams, Akron Beacon Journal, May. 15, 2026*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

Major Downtown Akron Property Owner Closes in on Another Big Skyscraper

Gino Faciana has quickly become one of the largest, if not the largest, owners of commercial real estate in Downtown Akron.

If the co-CEO of Medina's Pleasant Valley Corp. is not at the top of that list yet, he'll definitely get closer if he closes on a purchase of Huntington Tower that's in the works.

Real estate professionals and downtown advocates have been buzzing privately with talk of the Huntington Tower purchase. It's not a done deal yet, but Greater Akron Chamber CEO Steve Millard said he's familiar with Faciana, his plans to purchase Huntington Tower and his aspirations to improve Downtown Akron.—*Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Apr. 13, 2026*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)



NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Federal Money Coming to Downtown for Projects in 2026

U.S. Rep. Emilia Sykes' office announced a number of projects in the area that would be receiving federal money as part of the 2026 appropriations process.

\$1.2 million for the downtown Akron Main Street Project

This project affects the stretch of roadway from 388 S. Main St. to 540 S. Main St., which includes Bounce Innovation Hub, the AES Building, GOJO, Canal Place and GPD Group (which recently committed to expanding its footprint downtown and remaining there long term).

The work, according to a news release, will include pavement construction with concrete curbs and side-walks, new lighting and traffic signals and aesthetic/landscaping treatments.

Bike lanes, upgraded pedestrian crossings with bump outs where possible, parking lanes, bus stops, and one lane in each direction for vehicular traffic with turn pockets will be included.—*Susan Zake, Signal Akron, Apr. 27, 2026*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

Two Years in, the University of Akron's President Has the School Playing to Win

Around the time of last year's Ohio State-Michigan game, drivers along I-71 in Columbus were greeted with a tongue-in-cheek message — "Visit that school up north. (Not that far north.)" —stamped with the University of Akron logo.

The billboard drew attention, and a spike in applications from central Ohio. But for President R.J. Nemer, it also reflected how he views the job — and how he wants prospective students to view Akron.—*Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Apr. 24, 2026*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

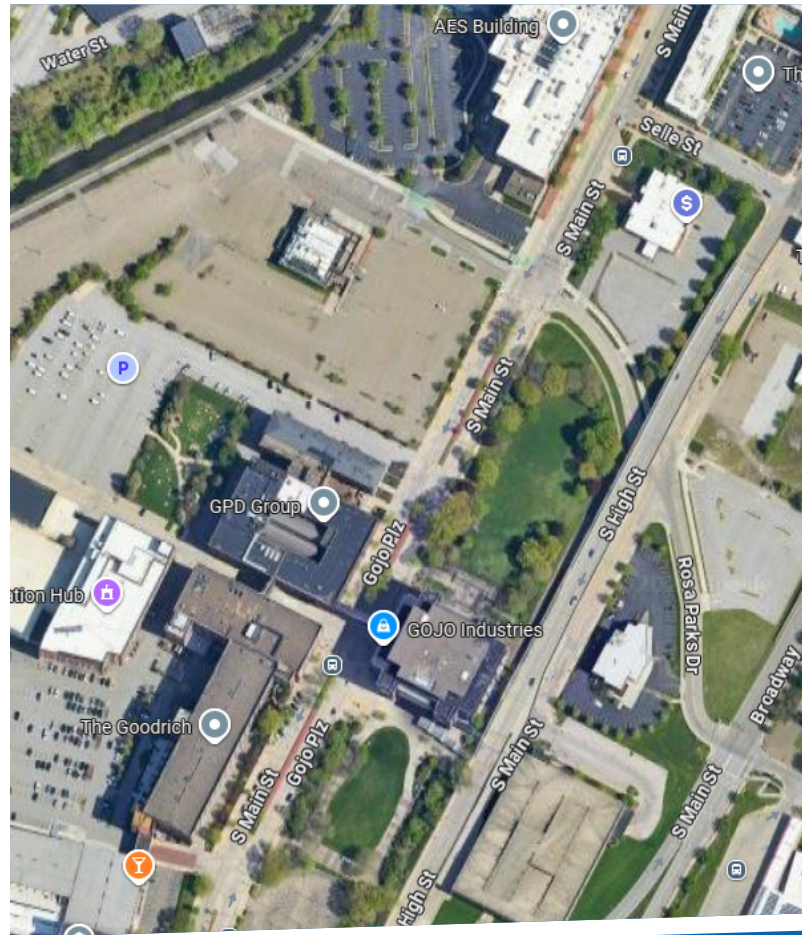
Akron Zoo Will Welcome Giraffes, Ostriches with 2028 Expansion

The Akron Zoo broke ground on its largest expansion to date Thursday with the unveiling of its giraffe exhibit.

The Lehner Family Foundation Giraffe Journey will cover approximately 9.25 acres when it opens in 2028. The area will have enough space for up to 12 giraffes, plus ostriches, wildebeests and Marabou storks.

Giraffe Journey will have outdoor and indoor viewing areas. Year-round feeding experiences will be available for guests who want to get close to animals.—*Brittany Moseley, Signal Akron, Jun. 5, 2026*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)



FEATURED RESIDENCE

The Standard on Main, 22 E. Exchange St.



The Standard on Main features fantastic community amenities like a 24/7 fitness center, a yoga studio and a business center. All new 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom apartments feature open concepts, designer-inspired interiors, high-end finishes, and an excellent downtown location within walking distance of The University of Akron, downtown restaurants and recreation, and the Ohio & Erie Towpath Trail.

Additional amenities include hardwood floors, walk-in closets, island kitchens, and both property manager and maintenance on site.

NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



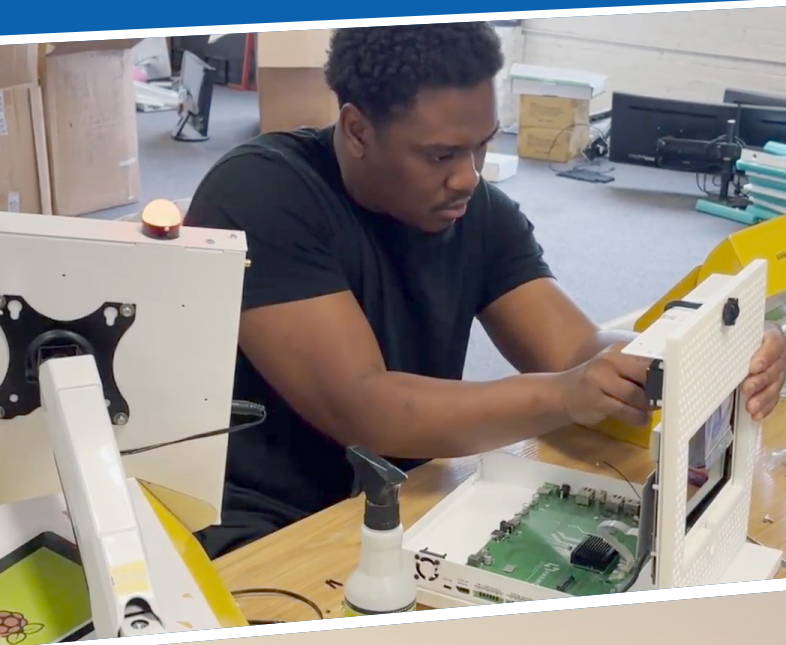
New Polymer Facility Coming to UA Campus

Akron City Council has cleared the way for work to begin redeveloping a 40-acre area of the city, including 25 acres of the University of Akron campus.

The city administration's Lincoln-Mill Redevelopment Plan includes a new polymer pilot facility located on Lincoln Street adjacent to the existing National Polymer Innovation Center.

According to the plan, "The purpose of the new facility will be to enable academic researchers, small and start-up companies and existing industry to make initial scale-up quantities of novel polymers to evaluate real-world performance, demonstrate commercial value and attract investment."—*Derek Kreider, Akron Beacon Journal, Jun. 16, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)



The Midwestern Exodus Is Finally Ending

For many years, the abandoned B.F. Goodrich tire factory was a symbol of this city's manufacturing decline. Recently it was the magnet that drew Nate Albright back to town.

Albright, a 30-year-old engineer who grew up near Akron, had moved to Las Vegas with his wife during the pandemic. He wasn't necessarily looking to return, until a tech startup housed in the Goodrich building lured him back with an engineering job that combined his main interests—software and manufacturing.

"When you live in a place that's been losing population since the 1960s, to say out loud that we believe this place can stabilize and grow... it landed on some ears as ridiculous," said Kyle Kutuchief, a program director in Akron for the philanthropic Knight Foundation. "And to now be at a place where we're leveling off and starting to tick up a little bit, it gives me goosebumps."—*Jeanne Whalen & Paul Overberg, Wall Street Journal, May 25, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)



Affordability, Amenities Lure New Residents

WalletHub ranked the Rubber City as the fifth most affordable place to live in the U.S. Akron climbed to second place in the personal finance website's analysis when compared to other small cities, ranking only behind the Phoenix suburb Surprise, Arizona.

The WalletHub analysis follows a Wall Street Journal story in May about how the Midwest—and Akron, specifically—was finally gaining more people than it was losing.

"For decades, the swath from the Dakotas to Ohio steadily lost population to other parts of the country, as manufacturing jobs disappeared and the growth of the service economy pulled people to the South," the newspaper reported.

NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"Now signs are emerging that the out-migration is slowing, and, in some places, even starting to reverse," the newspaper said.

It cited census estimates from last year that showed the Midwest gained slightly more people from the rest of the country than it lost.—*Amanda Garrett, Akron Beacon Journal, Jun. 20, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)

Summit Sweet Stroll Returns for a 2nd Year

Popcorn! Peanuts! Candy! The Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau (ASCVB) is excited to announce the return of the Summit Sweet Stroll on June 13, 2026. The stroll is a deliciously fun way to explore Summit County one scoop, handful and sweet treat at a time.

Back for its second year, the Summit Sweet Stroll invites participants to discover 21 local candy shops, ice cream parlors, popcorn stores and confectionery destinations across Summit County. Whether you're revisiting a longtime favorite or satisfying your sweet tooth somewhere new, the stroll offers plenty of opportunities to indulge while supporting local businesses.—*ASCVB news release, Jun. 10, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)

Akron Community Foundation Distributes Over \$6M in Quarterly Grants

Akron Community Foundation's board of directors recently announced grants totaling \$6.2 million and approved \$671,500 in arts and culture grants chosen by the foundation's Community Investment Committee. Akron Community Foundation's board approved 57 arts and culture grants in total.—*Akron Community Foundation news release, Jun. 9, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)

GAR Awards Nearly \$2M to Akron-area Nonprofits in May

GAR Foundation awarded nearly \$2 million in grants to 24 Akron-area nonprofit organizations following its May distribution committee meeting. Among this quarter's grantees, GAR is highlighting three organizations whose work reflects both immediate community needs and long-term community vitality: Summit County Continuum of Care, Signal Akron, and the National Center for Choreography-Akron (NCCAkron).—*GAR Foundation news release, May 14, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)



NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Roetzel & Andress HQ Space in Downtown Akron Sold

The headquarters of law firm Roetzel & Andress in Downtown Akron's O'Neil's Building have been sold by an outside entity that includes some of the law firm's past and current employees.

But the city need not worry, Roetzel says, because the big law firm isn't going anywhere.

In fact, it reports it already has extended its lease with the new owner, real estate investor Joe Sofio.—*Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Jun. 30, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)

7 17 Credit Union Celebrates Opening of Second Branch in Akron

7 17 Credit Union celebrated the opening of its second branch in the city Wednesday.

The new branch, which is located inside the AES building downtown and shares a space with the Greater Akron Chamber, will emphasize business banking services to support the financial needs of Summit County enterprises.

According to a news release, the downtown location reflects 7 17's commitment to expanding services in north-eastern Ohio, and the branch's proximity to the Greater Akron Chamber underscores a strategic focus on fostering business relationships and community engagement.—*Staff story, Business Journal, Jun. 18, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)



Ohio Legislature Approves City of Akron State Capital Budget Requests

This year's capital budget bill provides nearly \$7.8 million for Summit County projects...

Additionally, \$250,000 was secured for the Lock 2 Vision Plan, which aims to create a high-quality designed park along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail in downtown Akron for children, parents, and visitors connected to Akron Children's Hospital, 7 17 Credit Union Park and Lock 3 Park. The reimagined Lock 2 Park aims to include interactive play areas for children, accessible walkways, swings and benches. Located near the center of the 101-mile Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area and Towpath Trail, Lock 2 Park hopes to become a destination for the 2.5 million hikers and bicyclists utilizing this nationally significant regional resource. This investment in public space will be transformative and attract future development to this area while creating a regional asset to promote economic vitality.—*City of Akron press release, Jun. 11, 2026*

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)



BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

AKRON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM RECEIVES 2025 OMA AWARD FOR ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCESSM PROGRAMMING

Akron Children's Museum's Kindergarten Essential ExperiencesSM program, "Explore Galore with Monsters and More!" is part of the broader Essential ExperiencesSM initiative—a citywide collaboration that ensures every elementary student in the Akron Public Schools system receives a robust, co-curricular learning experience connected directly to classroom instruction. Essential ExperiencesSM was developed to provide guaranteed access to high-quality field-based learning, regardless of school, neighborhood, or family resources. Through this initiative, over 9,000 PreK through 5th grade scholars each year visit one of seven Greater Akron arts and culture organizations. [Find out more.](#)

OHIO & ERIE CANALWAY COALITION NAMES CATHERINE TIMKO AS PRESIDENT & CEO

Timko most recently served for over 16 years as Executive Director of the Lake Erie Nature & Science Center, reporting to a 19-member board of directors and leading 32 employees of that nature education organization. She previously served as Ohio, division, and regional development director for The Trust for Public Land over eight years, following several years in a development role with Stan Hywet Hall and Gardens. [Find out more.](#)

AKRON RUBBERDUCKS NAME NOEL BLAHA PRESIDENT, GENERAL MANAGER

Blaha will succeed Jim Pfander, who will depart at the end of May to join the Tampa Bay Rays.

"I am humbled and honored to become the new President and General Manager of the Akron RubberDucks," Blaha said. "The RubberDucks are synonymous with 'Affordable Family Fun' in Akron, and I look forward to continuing the excellent work being done at 717 Credit Union Park. [Find out more.](#)

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY NAMES NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Kaitlin Booth, who assumed her new role March 30, fills the position left vacant by Michelle Alleman, who was named the executive director in early February.

As collection development coordinator at the Akron-Summit County Library, Booth led her team in modernizing workflows, chaired the Floating Task Force, and played an instrumental role on the Migration Team during the library system's seven-month migration to new system software and the patron search interface, library officials stated in a March 31 news release. [Find out more.](#)

NCCAKRON CELEBRATES A DECADE OF SUPPORTING DANCERS NATIONWIDE

Through dance labs and residencies, the National Center for Choreography-Akron has supported the research and



BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS



development of new work by more than 800 dancers from across the country.

The organization also awards an annual \$50,000 choreography prize and runs the Creative Administration Research program, which helps dance artists tackle challenges and support their artistic vision through mentorship and alternative administrative practices. [Find out more.](#)

BEACON JOURNAL EARNS TOP HONORS IN STATE JOURNALISM COMPETITION

The Akron Beacon Journal took home several top honors in the 2026 All-Ohio Excellence in Journalism Awards competition, presented by the Press Club of Cleveland.

Beacon Journal Executive Editor Cheryl Powell was named the Best in Ohio Opinion Writer for a series of editorials she wrote in 2025 outlining the impact of federal budget cuts and policy changes on the region. [Find out more.](#)



SUMMIT ARTSPACE CELEBRATES 2026 ARTS ALIVE AWARDS WINNERS

For nearly 25 years, the Arts Alive Awards have recognized local artists, arts educators and advocates who bring the arts to life and shape the local community.

Summit Artspace hosted the Arts Alive Awards gala and ceremony May 20 at House Three Thirty to celebrate this year's honorees in 12 categories:

- Arts Alive Award: The Remember Balloons;
- Summit Artspace Champion: County of Summit;
- Arts Educator: April Levack;
- Arts Patron: Deb Yandala;
- Emerging Artist: Stephen Tornero;
- Artist Empowerment: Heather Meeker;
- Outstanding Artist in Dance: Valerie Salstrom;
- Outstanding Artist in Theatre: Melanie YC Pepe;
- Outstanding Artist in Music: Dr. Suyeon Ko;
- Outstanding Literary Artist: Marion Starling Boyer;
- Outstanding Visual Artist: Devon Brantley;
- Rising Arts Leader: Taylor Clapp. [Find out more.](#)

EL PATRÓN TEQUILERÍA & CUISINE CELEBRATES 5 YEARS IN BUSINESS WITH RIBBON CUTTING

Owner and operator Luis Escudero says, "My major mission with running my business in downtown Akron is to create a thriving restaurant that attracts people downtown with a fresh and authentic take on Mexican cuisine. We also deeply desire to highlight positive experiences in Akron. This city is a great place to visit and enjoy. It is a safe and vibrant community that brings in people from all backgrounds and life experiences. As a stakeholder in this city, I am committed to working, living and playing in downtown Akron, and I encourage everyone in Northeast Ohio to come enjoy downtown." [Find out more.](#)



BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

SUMMIT COUNTY TOURISM INDUSTRY CELEBRATED AT 2026 ZENITH AWARDS LUNCHEON

The Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau (ASCVB) celebrated the region's hospitality and tourism industry during the 23rd Annual Zenith Awards Luncheon on May 6 at the John S. Knight Center. Nearly 300 hospitality professionals, community leaders and industry partners gathered to recognize outstanding contributions from businesses and individuals across Summit County.

Leianne Neff Miller, president and CEO of the Summit County Historical Society of Akron, Ohio, received the 2026 Chairman's Award. This honor is given to a partner in the hospitality industry who has made significant, innovative and notable contributions; who advocates for our collective work in elevating, growing and promoting Greater Akron and Summit County as a premier destination; and a leadership legacy that has left a lasting, positive impact on the hospitality industry.

Other awardees included Zeber-Martell Gallery and Clay Studio, Akron Zoo, and Akron History Center. [Find out more.](#)

GREATER AKRON CHAMBER NAMES 2026 30 FOR THE FUTURE HONOREES

The Greater Akron Chamber is pleased to announce the 2026 class of 30 for the Future honorees, marking the 20th anniversary of the awards program and two decades of recognizing leaders whose vision, talent, and commitment are making a lasting impact on Greater Akron.

Since 2007, the Chamber has celebrated 600 professionals aged 25-39 whose leadership and accomplishments have helped strengthen the region. This year's honorees continue that tradition, reflecting the strength and breadth of the region's business community—from professionals carrying forward the legacy of organizations that have long been pillars of our community to those helping build and grow companies that are investing in our region and driving its future success. [Find out more.](#)

LEADERSHIP AKRON WELCOMES SIGNATURE CLASS 43

Leadership Akron announces the members of Signature Class 43, a group of 39 leaders who will begin a ten-month experience designed to deepen their understanding of Greater Akron, strengthen meaningful connections, and prepare them to lead with greater context, empathy, and community awareness.

Leadership Akron's Signature program brings leaders out of familiar routines and into the people, places, systems, and conversations shaping the region. Throughout the program year, participants will engage directly with Greater Akron's institutions, explore the opportunities and challenges facing the community, and build relationships across sectors that extend far beyond the class experience. [Find out more.](#)



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50 S. Main St.



This is more than a premier Class A office address—it is an entirely new standard for business in downtown Akron. We haven't just refreshed the surface; we've rebuilt the experience from the inside out. With a complete HVAC overhaul, fully modernized elevators coming soon, and common areas redesigned for the modern professional, 50 S. Main Street is a fundamentally different building. Experience the evolution of office space. At 50 S., collaboration spaces open onto a window line that fills every floor with natural light. Lounge areas and training rooms are built for the kind of informal interaction that drives great work. And when the day calls for a break, everything you need is right downstairs.

For more information, contact
Shaunte Wright
330-374-7676
sdwright@downtownakron.com

FEATURED BUSINESS

7 17 Credit Union 388 S. Main St., Ste 204



7 17 Credit Union is a local, community-minded credit union in Ohio offering valuable personal and business banking solutions including checking accounts, savings accounts, auto loans,

mortgages, home equity loans, HELOCs, credit and debit cards and much more.

With 17 branches and state of the art technology, 7 17 is able to provide banking services to more than 130,000 members in the greater Warren, Kent, Ravenna, Canton, Akron, Middlefield and Youngstown, OH, areas.

METRO RTA: MAJOR MILESTONES IN SERVICE COVERAGE & 2025 RECORD RIDERSHIP

METRO Regional Transit Authority (METRO) is honored and excited to announce that it is now accessible to all Summit County residents through fixed-route services on METRO Direct and through a variety of METRO Select services, including METRO SCAT, METRO ADA, and the newly expanded METRO NEXT.

In 2023, METRO introduced its service expansion and new service model, called Reimagine METRO. Creating more viable mobility solutions was part of the Reimagine METRO plan, and moving forward, has proven to be a successful service model. Reimagine METRO was just the first step of an ever-evolving role METRO plays in its community.—*METRO RTA Press Release*

[Find out more.](#)



METRO RTA LEADERSHIP SELECTED TO SERVE ON NATIONAL COMMITTEES

Two executive team members and a member of its Board of Trustees have been selected to serve on national committees for the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

Robert DeJournett, a METRO board member and former Board President, has been selected to serve on APTA's Executive Committee. DeJournett will serve as Transit Board Member At-Large, representing transit agencies and communities across the country.

Members of METRO's executive team were also selected to serve at the national level.

Jarrod Hampshire, Chief of Staff, was selected to serve as Secretary of the APTA Bus Operations Committee.

Shawn Metcalf, Chief Protection & Development Officer, was selected to serve as the Secretary of the APTA Security Affairs Committee.—*METRO RTA press release*

[Find out more.](#)

ICYMI: (IN CASE YOU MISSED IT)

Mayor Shammias Malik Highlights New Initiatives, Partnerships, and Vision for Akron's Future in 2026 State of the City Address

During his third State of the City address delivered on Tues. May 19 at the historic Akron Civic Theatre, Akron Mayor Shammias Malik outlined a sweeping vision for Akron's future centered on collaboration, innovation, and community investment. The speech highlighted major new initiatives across housing, public safety, youth opportunity, sustainability, and economic development, all tied together through the city's "Together for Akron" framework.

"Our address was about more than programs or announcements," said Mayor Malik. "It was about the belief that Akron's future can be incredibly bright if we continue to work together. Every major step forward we are making, whether it's housing, safety, sustainability, youth investment, or economic growth, is happening because residents, businesses, nonprofits, schools, and public institutions are leaning in together."

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)

City of Akron Receives Energy Efficiency Awards from SolSmart and Dynegy

The City of Akron has received two major recognitions for its leadership in clean energy and sustainability. Akron was awarded the SolSmart Silver designation, a national program recognizing local governments for solar-ready policies, practices, and communications that make it easier for residents and businesses to adopt solar energy. Additionally, the City was selected for the 2025 Dynegy & Homefield Energy Leadership Award in Community, reflecting Akron's ongoing commitment to energy efficiency and environmental stewardship.

These honors underscore Akron's progress in advancing practical, cost-saving sustainability initiatives that benefit residents while strengthening the community's long-term environmental resilience.

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)

City of Akron Reissues Request for Proposals for Former APS Headquarters Building

The City of Akron is soliciting proposals from qualified developers for the purchase and redevelopment of 70 N. Broadway St., Akron, Ohio 44308 - the previous Akron Public Schools Headquarters Building ("APS HQ") located in downtown Akron. The City is interested in proposals that prioritize the adaptive reuse of the existing building. [View the full RFP here.](#) The City previously issued the RFP in August of 2025 but the only proposal received did not come to fruition.

The goal of this RFP is to see the redevelopment of an economically viable downtown asset. The successful purchaser will be required to purchase the building and land "as is". Purchaser will be required to secure and maintain APS HQ until property transfer and start the project within 90 days of property transfer.

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)



COMMUNITY

Akron, OH

Population:
187,557

For More Information:
[View Designee Website](#)



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**THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1 • FREE
FITNESS CLASSES ON CASCADE
PLAZA** YOGA, DANCE CARDIO, LINE
DANCING, PILATES, FUNCTIONAL
FITNESS, & MORE



**AUGUST 22, 10 AM - 11 PM
AKRON PRIDE FESTIVAL
MAIN ST., LOCKS 3 & 4,
CASCADE PLAZA**



**AUGUST 28 & 29
PIZZA FEST • LOCK 3**



**AUGUST 28, 7 PM • E5C4P3
JOURNEY TRIBUTE WITH
THE TWISTOFFS • LOCK 3**



**AUGUST 29, 7 PM
BRETT YOUNG WITH DEK
OF HEARTS • LOCK 3**



**SEPTEMBER 5 & 6 • AKRON CITY
FESTIVAL • LOCK 3 • CLICK HERE
FOR DETAILS**



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FESTIVAL • LOCK 3 • 2 - 9 PM**

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