

# DOWNTOWN AKRON QUARTERLY UPDATE



3RD QUARTER 2021  
DOWNTOWN AKRON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



# WORKING FOR DOWNTOWN

## DAP Is Working for Downtown

In the third quarter of 2021, DAP continued to contribute to Elevate Greater Akron, maintaining ongoing contact with downtown businesses in the BRE portfolio. DAP staff also participates in weekly BRE meetings with additional businesses in other portfolios.

Kimberly Beckett continued to communicate with property managers and share important downtown updates, such as traffic advisories and programming information. Beckett also helped coordinate the first University of Akron Digital Marketing Workshop for local businesses, in which seven downtown businesses participated. A follow up workshop is being planned for the new year.

DAP staff worked to support the Akron Pride Festival in downtown, which drew an estimated 35K attendees, sponsoring the Pride flag installation on Main St. (see page 5), staffing the beverage station in Cascade Plaza, and executing several pop-up dance parties led by Illstyle Rockers hip-hop dance group on Main St., amid Pride attendees, as a means to spark more even more joy and

surprise at the event. Additionally, the event fireworks were sponsored by DAP and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

DAP and ambassador staff worked to welcome the Akron Marathon back to downtown. Kimberly and Dominic worked to promote the businesses open during the Akron Marathon with a customized downtown map and list of events. DAP and ambassadors staffed the information booth at the Marathon Expo on September 24, and the start and finish line info booths on September 25.

Using new wayfinding maps for downtown created by Guide Studio, Dominic designed new map inserts for the six kiosks along the Towpath Trail in downtown.

All ambassadors received training from Community Support Services (CSS) to help build relationships to the downtown unhoused population, connect them with services, and, if possible, start them on the path to permanent housing.

## Downtown Small Businesses and Storefronts in the News

**Focus on Black-owned businesses: Downtown Studio for Selfie Enthusiasts is a Work of Art**, by Alan Ashworth, Akron Beacon Journal: Stepping off the elevator to suite 501 is like stepping into a different world, and that's the way OH SNAP Photo Lab owner Tiffany Roper planned it.

The doors open to colorful artwork that announces the new downtown Akron business, a selfie museum crafted by local artists and the brainchild of entrepreneurial-minded Roper.

The "museum" is an invitation to the generations of young folks to take the selfie experience to another level, posing with backgrounds that can't be found anywhere else—6,300 square feet of uniqueness.

There's the cloud chamber, where cotton clouds dangle from the ceiling, illuminated by ricepaper lanterns. [READ MORE](#)

**Twisted Tomato Pizzeria and Beer Wall Now Open on South Main St.** Twisted Tomato Pizzeria and Beer Wall is open in downtown Akron, and their motto is "If it's pizza, it's possible."

Their specialty pizzas include Pumpkin, Shrimply Alfredo, Chicken Hawaiian Heat, Cajun Twisted Steak and others. You also can

order traditional pizzas with a variety of toppings, calzones, specialty grilled cheese sandwiches called Meltdowns, pasta, wings, fried chicken and more.

The brew wall holds up to 35 beers on tap, and the 2,500 square foot space contains a large dining room and many opportunities to enjoy Browns, Ohio State, Cavs and Guardians games. Follow their [Facebook account](#) for updates.

**Artist Derin Fletcher Opens Crea8tive Gallery and Event Space.** Savannah College of Art and Design and Liberty University alumnus Derin Fletcher opened Crea8tive Gallery and Event Space on S. Main St. in August 2021, hosting a grand opening celebration and an exhibition of her *The Color Series* paintings on August 28.

Fletcher's artwork is available for purchase from her website and includes original paintings, drawings, commissions, prints, Paint and Sip Kits, stickers and more.

In October, Fletcher's Crea8tive Gallery presented the Akron Black Artists Guild's first exhibition, *Outlined in Black*, which showcased the work of 16 local artists. Follow [derinfletcher.art](#) for news and updates from the gallery.



# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Residential Development



interior: The Standard, 22 E. Exchange St., 330-375-1183



interior: The 159 Main, 159 S. Main St., 330-752-6794

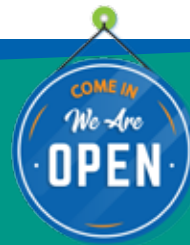


## Business Development

### Office Occupancy

	OCCUPANCY RATE	AVG ASKING RATE (PER SQ. FT.)
H2 - 2019	81.6%	\$16.49
H1 - 2020	79.5%	\$16.46
H2 - 2020	80.7%	\$16.24
H1 - 2021	80.2%	\$16.54

\*Data from CBRE



## Business Outreach

Q3 - 2021	CONTACTS MADE*
RETAIL BUSINESS CONTACTS	45
NON-RETAIL BUSINESS CONTACTS	44
RETAIL AND BUSINESS PROSPECTS**	19

\* 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



# AUGUST & SEPTEMBER MARQUEE EVENTS



## Thousands show LGBTQ pride at downtown Akron festival

*By Stephanie Warsmith, Beacon Journal, Aug. 2021*

*'The perfect year to move downtown': Adjusting locations for growing crowd*

The festival began four years ago at Hardesty Park in Northwest Akron and the attendance grew each year, increasing from about 8,000 in 2017 to 20,000 in 2019. The event wasn't held in 2020 because of the pandemic.

Organizers decided to move it for the first time this year to downtown Akron, a location that could better accommodate the crowd that was expected to be record-breaking.

Phil Montgomery, finance chair of the festival, said the new venue allowed for the vendors to be more spread out—a plus, given the continued COVID-19 concerns—and for the addition of a third stage for entertainment.

"It was the perfect year to move downtown," he said.

The downtown location also permitted a first for the festival—fireworks.

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



## Akron Marathon returns to downtown with thousands of runners, onlookers

*By Alan Ashworth, Akron Beacon Journal, Sept. 2021*

Hours before sunrise, Anne Bitong and her staff assembled in downtown Akron to put the final touches on the event they'd planned for months.

After a one-year absence from the city's streets, the Akron Marathon was hours away, making a grand return from the virtual marathon of 2020.

"We left the start line at 1 a.m. and got [back] here at 4 a.m.," said Bitong, president of the Akron Marathon Charitable Corp. "...There's no better event than the Akron Marathon to get us back from the pandemic."

The marathon's 950 runners, the half marathon's 2,539 competitors and the 2,411 relay runners at Saturday's event seemed just as enthused to be back, with participants from 42 states snatching up all the available spots two months before the races.

The eager runners and thousands of their supporters gathered in the early morning hours for the races, lining the blocked-off roads of downtown Akron and creating a festive atmosphere in perfect race-day weather.

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





# DOWNTOWN PROGRAMS

## 2021 Double-A Northeast League Akron RubberDucks Win First Title at Home Since 2009

Rallying from down 5-0 through seven innings, the RubberDucks came back to walk off the Bowie Baysox, 6-5, on Bo Naylor's two-out, ninth-inning RBI single that won Game 3 and earned Akron a sweep of the Double-A Northeast Championship Series at Canal Park Friday night. The sixth championship in Akron franchise history was its first since 2016 and the first clinched at home since 2009.

In the bottom of the ninth, Will Brennan launched a leadoff 430-foot solo home run to right field to tie the game, 5-5. After a walk to Brayan Rocchio, a sacrifice by José Fermín, two intentional walks and a popout, Bo Naylor lined a two-out single down the right-field line for the 6-5 win.

Akron won Eastern League titles in 2003, 2005, 2009, 2012, and 2016, with the first three being clinched at Canal Park...

[\*Click here to read the full story on milb.com\*](#)



## Love the Wall Refresh

You may have noticed a brighter, more colorful wall on S. Broadway this summer. That's thanks to the dedicated volunteers from Goodyear who repainted the Love the Wall mural from July 22 - 28.

In just 5 days this great team painted the north side of the wall, which is 728 feet long and 10 feet tall at its tallest point, and the south side of the wall, which is an additional 318 feet long. Puzzle Creative, located at 465 S. Broadway, generously provided space in their warehouse for paint and painting supplies, as well as an area to wash brushes.

Originally designed and completed in 2015 by artist Nathan Mayfield, *Love the Wall* is a colorful, welcoming gateway into downtown for thousands of cars, bicyclists, scooter riders and pedestrians every day.



[\*Click to view a timelapse video of the painting. Video: Fitzwater Photography\*](#)



# DOWNTOWN PROGRAMS



## Downtown Beautification

Over the course of the 3rd quarter, DAP maintained 226 downtown beautification elements, comprised of self-watering planters, boxes, hanging baskets, parklets and in-ground beds. The different elements could be experienced along Main St., in the Northside Green, on Mill, High, Exchange, Broadway, and Falor Streets, and as part of the North High St. Parklet. Plantings for 2021 totaled about 1,000 plants. At the close of the quarter, ambassador Darrell Stamps removed the 2021 plantings and winterized the planters and other beautification elements so they will be ready for use in 2022.



## Downtown Summer Programming

The 2021 summer programming schedule provided fun activities to all, six days a week. The schedule included free fitness/wellness classes (DrumFIT, FamilyFIT, Exercise Basics, Kickboxing, Line Dancing, Nutrition 101, Pop-up Dance Classes with ArtSparks, POUND, Taiji, Thank Dog! Bootcamp, Yoga and Zumba), roller skating parties, walking, scooter and bike tours, live music, Recess on Main and activities with the new Downtown Try Cycle. All events and activities were free to attend thanks to the generous support of the Knight Foundation, Ohio Arts Council and KeyBank.

Roller skating on Cascade Plaza was expanded to two parties per month and a total of 1,150 people attended one or more of 8 skating events. An added K-Pop Skate night in early September drew 238 more enthusiastic K-Pop fans.

In all, DAP brought over 120 summer programs to downtown, drawing more than 3,500 visitors. Yoga attracted 852 participants; line dancing drew 587 and Zumba drew 344.

New this year was the concert series, Busking in the Green, which showcased a different performer every Saturday from 6 - 7 p.m. in the Northside Green, through September 25. The concerts made use of the EarthQuaker Seismic Station, a custom-made cabinet on wheels with a stool, chalkboard sign, microphone and stand, and a rechargeable, battery-powered amplifier, complete with four EarthQuaker Devices effects pedals. Performers ranged from classical musicians, to Irish fiddler players, Latin jazz musicians and singer-songwriters.



# DOWNTOWN PROGRAMS





# CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING

## DAP Ambassador Stats Jul. 1 - Sept. 30, 2021

12543

TRASH COLLECTED (LBS)

17

MOTORIST/  
VEHICLE  
ASSISTANCE

1085

SCOOTER  
SUPPORT

1024

BUSINESS CONTACTS MADE

665

BUS STOPS CLEANED

277

GRAFFITI  
REMOVED

242

SKYWALK  
PATROL

258

PARKING  
ASSISTANCE

34

SAFETY  
ESCORTS

29030

FLOWER  
WATERING  
(gallons)

151

WEED  
ABATEMENT  
(block faces)

8815

HOSPITALITY  
ASSISTANCE



A team of downtown ambassadors works to ensure a clean, safe and welcoming environment by providing safety escorts, cleaning of common touch points, and other services to make downtown safe and enjoyable for everyone.

Ambassador hours of operation:  
Monday - Saturday 7 a.m. - 11 p.m.  
Sunday: 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

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

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



**“I previously emailed in complimenting two of your Ambassadors serving the downtown Lock 3 area. Since then I’ve ran into the wonderful Val Kramer several times and wanted to commend her by name. She is always a delight to engage with and as a volunteer myself working during Akron Pride it was a pleasure to speak with her again and offer refreshments for her hard work.”**

**—Jon Repp, via email**



# MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

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	Q3 - 2020	Q3 - 2021
FACEBOOK	7,740	9,170
TWITTER	9,218	9,321
INSTAGRAM	4,844	5,998
LINKEDIN	1,312	1,575

WEBSITE TRAFFIC	Q3 - 2020	Q3 - 2021
USERS	35,999	74,153
SESSIONS	48,826	94,681
PAGE VIEWS	84,011	167,956

EMAIL NEWSLETTER	Q3 - 2021
NUMBER PUBLISHED	11
SENDS	47,940
OPENS	9,341
CLICKS	1,302
SUBSCRIBERS	16,911

Stay connected to the latest information on downtown Akron, subscribe to Do Downtown, our bimonthly email newsletter at [downtownakron.com/news/subscribe](https://downtownakron.com/news/subscribe), and follow us on social media @DowntownAkronPartnership

## 2021 Downtown Guide

New Downtown Guides are available in locations in Northside Marketplace. More pick-up locations are coming soon.

For the 2021 Downtown Guide, DAP worked with 12 local photographers to envision downtown as a place for everyone, filled with possibilities. The guide is more of a “look book,” and its pages are an invitation to find yourself among the people, places, culture and the heart of the city.

[View the digital copy.](#)





# NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## Akron entertainment venues say their crowds are back and as excited as ever

*By Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Jul. 2021*

Dad rock and all, the boys (and girls) are back in town at Akron's live music and performance venues.

And local event promoters who are fielding their first live shows in nearly a year-and-a-half say the crowds are back, too.

Asked recently how he was doing, Akron Civic Theatre executive director Howard Parr seemed to have to pause and take a breath.

"Doing great, actually," Parr said with some reflection. "I'm happy to be back at it."

Parr's been "at it" since 2007 at the Civic, and at other venues before that, so he knows a thing or two about the local live entertainment scene. After about a 15-month hiatus when the Civic had no shows due to COVID, Parr said he has been more than happy to return to serving audiences—and ecstatic to see they haven't left him.

"What we're seeing across the board is the numbers are basically what they would have been pre-pandemic, or better," Parr said.

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

## Community Organizations Receive over \$1.7M in Funding from GAR Foundation

*GAR Foundation press release, Jul. 2021*

GAR Foundation awarded \$1,727,000 in grants to Akron nonprofit organizations at its August grant distribution meeting. This round of funding was awarded to 20 nonprofits and included five multi-year grants to organizations in the areas of economic and workforce development, basic needs, and K-16 education.

Organizations receiving multi-year grant funding include Akron Urban League, the University of Akron, Battered Women's Shelter, Family Promise, and Victim Assistance Program. Four of the five multi-year grant recipients were awarded funds for operational support while the University of Akron dollars will be used for last-dollar scholarship funding that will enable students to remain on campus.

"As our community continues to face unprecedented challenges, it is our goal to help key nonprofit partners breathe a little easier and focus on their mission through multi-year grants," states Christine Mayer, President of GAR Foundation. "We continue to be impressed and inspired by the work our grantees are doing to provide critical support to individuals and families in Akron."

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



# NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Downtown Akron's Residential Development is Just Getting Started

*By Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Aug. 2021*

Economic development experts and downtown advocates say the city has only begun to satisfy the demand for downtown apartments, while real estate developers say they've had no trouble leasing new units and are prepared to build more.

Downtown Akron has been on a residential tear over the last couple of years, with several big projects unveiling hundreds of new apartments, and more seeming constantly to enter the pipeline.

But if you think the city's center has all the housing and residents it can support, downtown backers, economic development experts and those building some of the current projects have news for you: Downtown is only just beginning to meet its housing needs. It can support hundreds or even a thousand more apartments, planners say. Developers of current projects say they've been encouraged enough by their initial experience to want to do more.

"In my mind, we're nowhere close," said Welty Building Co. CEO Donzell Taylor, asked if he thought downtown Akron residential development was reaching a saturation point.

[Read the entire story on \*crainscleveland.com\*](https://www.craincleveland.com/story/news/economy/2021/08/11/downtown-akron-residential-development-just-getting-started/7544440002/)

## The Goodrich, Akron's Latest Apartment Project, is Set to Open by Year's End

*By Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Oct. 2021*

Mentor developer Lance Osborne said he hopes to have the first of two buildings open this year as he works to complete one of downtown Akron's largest residential developments to date.

Akron's 139-unit residential development at Canal Place—one of its largest to date—expects to open late this year under a new name, and its developer is already eyeing additional projects downtown.

Mentor developer Lance Osborne, president of Osborne Capital Group, said his apartments at Canal Place will be named The Goodrich, after BFGoodrich, which once operated from the two buildings Osborne is converting to luxury apartments.

Construction began in March, and Osborne said so far he's not had any major issues with shortages of labor or materials.

[Click here to read the full story on \*crainscleveland.com\*](https://www.craincleveland.com/story/news/economy/2021/10/11/the-goodrich-akron-apartment-project/7544440002/)





# NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## DOWNTOWN AKRON COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Looking for office or storefront commercial space? Downtown Akron Partnership can help you search for available locations within our 42-block Special Improvement District and arrange for tours. This is a free and confidential Site Selection service provided by our organization. **Click here to try it!**

Visit [downtownakron.com/do-business](http://downtownakron.com/do-business) to view the ways in which DAP can help you relocate or start your business in downtown.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The DAP website highlights available job opportunities within the Special Improvement District. Whether it's an office job or service position, full or part time, we want this page to become a go-to source for those interested in working downtown.

TO UPDATE YOUR COMPANY PROFILE, PROVIDE A PHOTO OR TO LIST A JOB OPENING, PLEASE EMAIL [INFO@DOWNTOWNAKRON.COM](mailto:INFO@DOWNTOWNAKRON.COM).

## NEW BUSINESSES IN DOWNTOWN AKRON

### [AfterMath](#)

388 S. Main St., Ste. 350 | 330-376-2111

### [Crea8tive Gallery](#)

380 S. Main St.

### [Funny Noodle](#)

209 S. Main St., Ste. 1

### [OH SNAP Photo Lab](#)

209 S. Main St., Ste. 501 | 234-678-7884

### [Pretty Lash Tag](#)

106 S. Main St. | 330-289-3486

### [Twisted Tomato Pizzeria and Beer Wall](#)

325 S. Main St. | 330-928-2222

### [Vantage Aging](#)

388 S. Main St., Ste. 325 | 330-253-4597

## Akron's Rubber City Match Program to Aid 20 Small Businesses

*By Megan Becka, Cleveland.com, Aug. 2021*

The city of Akron this week announced the second round of winners of the Rubber City Match program, which offers businesses resources and support to grow and prosper while boosting Akron's neighborhood retail zones.

The program offers four award levels—financial aid, design assistance, technical support and space matching with vacant retail properties in Akron's Great Streets neighborhood business districts. The program on Monday announced its Business Plan Award and Space Award winners for 2021. Some 80 percent of the winning businesses are Black-owned, and 75 percent are woman-owned, according to the city.

[Read the entire story on cleveland.com](#)

## Nail Salon, Cookie Maker to Settle Down in Akron with help from City's Rubber City Match Program

*By Megan Becka, Cleveland.com, Aug. 2021*

Tipped and Waxed Nail Nook and Fat T's Cookies are two businesses looking to settle down in Akron with the help of the city's Rubber City Match program.

The establishments were among 20 winning businesses announced in the second round of the program, which offers businesses resources and support to grow and prosper while boosting Akron's neighborhood retail zones. Some 80 percent of the winning businesses are Black-owned, and 75 percent are woman-owned, according to the city....

Both Fat T's Cookies and Tipped and Waxed Nail Nook were Space Award recipients. They will each will be matched with available commercial properties in Akron and receive technical help from the Bounce Innovation Hub, the Minority Business Assistance Center, or the Small Business Development Center to help them select their space. They will also be eligible for micro-grants to have attorneys review their lease documents....

Travis Howe is also looking forward to having a space of his own for Fat T's Cookies, a business he started in 2017 by selling small batch, quarter-pound cookies out of the trunk of his car to pay for his gym membership.

[Read the entire story on cleveland.com](#)



# NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Akron/Summit CVB Launches Phase 3 of Akron[RE]bound Campaign

*Akron/Summit CVB Press Release, Aug. 2021*

The Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau is launching Phase 3 of its “akron[RE]bound” campaign on Saturday, August 28, 2021 with a multi-faceted digital strategy.

Initially, the [www.akronrebound.com](http://www.akronrebound.com) website was designed and launched less than three weeks after Governor DeWine’s March 2020 stay at home order. The website provided up-to-date information as the pandemic unfolded, including: financial assistance resources, travel sentiment survey results, and other hospitality industry research. In the months that followed, the website also provided virtual hospitality industry offerings for residents and visitors alike, and also outlined strategies for the Akron/Summit County hospitality industry’s recovery.

In September 2020, Phase 2 featured an initial four month social media campaign entitled: [RE]activate akron; with an extended grant from the Knight Foundation, the social media campaign will continue through the end of 2021. Weekly posts on the Akron/Summit CVB’s social media platforms (@akronsummitcvb – Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) showcase and amplify the diverse array of local hospitality industry offerings (arts, entertainment, dining, retail and outdoor recreation). To date, the campaign has generated 464,884 impressions, and has achieved 38,514 engagements.

[View the entire story on downtownakron.com.](http://downtownakron.com)

## Akron Community Foundation Announces Nearly \$2.6 Million in Grants

Today, Akron Community Foundation’s board of directors approved grants totaling \$2,583,653, including \$548,000 in competitive civic affairs grants chosen by the foundation’s Community Investment Committee.

This quarter’s civic affairs funding includes a \$6,000 grant to Adaptive Sports Program of Ohio to provide Everyone Plays activity kits to Summit County children with disabilities.

Adaptive Sports Program of Ohio is the largest organization in the state working to remove barriers for physically disabled individuals to participate in sport activities. By providing adaptive equipment and structured community-based and interscholastic programs, the nonprofit achieves its mission to make physical activities more attainable for everyone.

[Also included in the grant cycle, Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad.]

[View the complete story and list of grant recipients on downtownakron.com](http://downtownakron.com)





# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS



## JUDGE ANNALISA STUBBS WILLIAMS JOINS KENT STATE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION'S NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Akron Municipal Court Judge Annalisa Stubbs Williams has been selected to join the Kent State University Alumni Association's National Board of Directors. Her appointment was effective July 1, 2021.

The Kent State Alumni Association's National Board of Directors is a 21-member volunteer board which meets quarterly. [Find out more.](#)

## SUMMIT ARTSPACE WELCOMES THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Summit Artspace recently appointed three new members to its Board of Directors: Irene Prezelj, Michele Setzer, and Stephanie Smith. The three professionals began their roles as acting board members this July, supporting Summit Artspace's mission to help artists thrive professionally, creatively, and financially. [Find out more.](#)



## CLEVELAND TACO GUIDE: CLEVELAND'S 30 BEST TACO DISHES INCLUDES NOMZ BANH MI TACOS

Nomz's banh mi tacos were born out of ingenuity. From Nomz's inception, the banh mi sandwich was a staple on its menu. When owner Samuel Lavictoire expanded Nomz's kitchen, he decided to see if the recipe worked as a taco. And boy does it. [Read the article by Henry Palatella on clevelandmagazine.com](#)

## LEADERSHIP AKRON ANNOUNCES DIVERSITY ON BOARD CLASS 6

On July 27, 2021, Leadership Akron announced its class of 14 individuals for its 2021-2022 Diversity on Board program.

Diversity on Board provides leadership development, education and board matching services to advance minority representation on nonprofit and public boards. Over 70 nonprofit boards in Summit County currently have Diversity on Board graduates serving as board members or board committee members. [Find out more.](#)

## DEVELOPMENT FUND OF THE WESTERN RESERVE PROMOTES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Effective August 1st, 2021 Rachel Bridenstine has been promoted to Executive Director of The Development Fund of the Western Reserve (DFWR), a certified Community Development Entity of the U.S. Treasury Community Development Finance Institution Fund, which is managed by the Development Finance Authority of Summit County. Rachel will direct and manage all initiatives of DFWR to ensure effective operations, regulating compliance and maximizing community impact. [Find out more.](#)





# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

## AKRON CITY COUNCIL WELCOMES DR. JOAN M. WILLIAMS AS COUNCIL CHIEF OF STAFF

Today, Akron City Council announces that as of Monday, July 26, 2021, Dr. Joan M. Williams has assumed the newly created position of Chief of Staff to the Council. In her role, Joan will be responsible for planning, directing, and coordinating the overall operation of the Office of the President and Council leadership. She will serve as a liaison between the Office of the Council President and the Office of the Mayor, other departments of the City, and federal, state, and local government offices as appropriate. [Find out more.](#)

## SALVATION ARMY HONORS KEN BABBY WITH AWARD

Ken Babby, owner and CEO of the Akron RubberDucks, received The Salvation Army's Community Medal Award during a luncheon and Red Kettle Kickoff event Nov. 4.

"The Salvation Army's Community Medal Award is presented to individuals and organizations who make a significant ongoing impact in the Greater Akron community through professional and volunteer work," said Major Steven Stoops, area coordinator and corps officer for The Salvation Army in Summit County. "[Babby's] mission is to provide affordable family fun at Canal Park and he's hit it out of the park on that score." [Read the entire article at akron.com.](#)

## CHRISTINE AMER MAYER NAMED TO UNIVERSITY'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine has appointed Christine Amer Mayer to serve on The University of Akron Board of Trustees, effective August 27.

Mayer is president of GAR Foundation where she guides the foundation's strategic direction and annual grant-making which focuses heavily on education and economic development. She will fill the position vacated by Michael Dowling. Her term will expire July 1, 2028.

"Christine Amer Mayer is a consummate professional that is known for her passionate support of organizations throughout the greater Akron area, and we look forward to having her join the Board of Trustees," said Joseph M. Gingo, Board chair. "She will bring a truly unique perspective to the Board that will allow us to better serve the students at the University of Akron." [Find out more.](#)

## AKRONYM BREWING WINS BEST OF SHOW IN NATIONAL BEER COMPETITION

Akronym Brewing earned a silver best-of-show award at the National Honey Beer Competition.

More than 240 beers were entered in more than a dozen categories. Akronym's Spicer St. Christmas Ale won gold in the Fruit/Vegetable/Spiced beer category and then took silver in best of show. [Read the entire article on cleveland.com](#)





# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS



## FIFTH THIRD BANK NAMES NEW AKRON CITY PRESIDENT, BY JEREMY NOBILE, CRAIN'S CLEVELAND BUSINESS

Fifth Third Bank has found a new Akron city president in middle market relationship manager and former KeyBank commercial banker Tracy Dowse.

In the role, Dowse will oversee a region comprising the Akron, Canton and Youngstown markets.

He will report to Nick Buzzelli, who has held the president title since March 2020. Buzzelli was recently promoted to senior vice president, senior commercial banker.

Dowse has 19 years of experience in banking, with a specialty in asset-based lending.

He was with KeyBank from April 2020 until this month. Prior to Key, he worked as a commercial banking relationship with Wells Fargo in the Cleveland/Akron region.

Dowse serves on the boards of the United Way of Summit & Medina, Development Finance Authority of Summit County, Greater Akron Musical Association, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Western Reserve and Secured Finance Network Ohio Chapter. [Read the entire article on crains-cleveland.com](#)

## CATCH THEM IF YOU CAN, THE BEST FOOD TRUCKS IN SUMMIT COUNTY

This year, Sutter traded in his 9-foot trailer for a 22-foot food truck that has a 10-foot hood and triple the fryer space. The new vehicle was unveiled to the public at Highland Square's PorchRokr Music and Art Festival in August. [Read the article by Tawny Beans on beacon-journal.com.](#)

## AKRON/SUMMIT CVB RECEIVES SEVEN STAR AWARDS

The Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau (ASCVB) received seven STAR Awards from the Ohio Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus (OACVB) during their September 16, 2021 meeting and awards luncheon in Columbus Ohio.

In the \$1 million and above overall budget category, the ASCVB was recognized with the following: 1st place STAR Award—Marketing Campaign—Summit Brew Path; 1st place STAR Award—Web Site—[seeakronnow.com...](#) [Find out more.](#)

## TEAM USA BRINGS HOME 8 MEDALS FROM SALZBURG, AUSTRIA AT THE 2021 WORLD MARTIAL ARTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Four members of Savage MMA travelled to Salzburg, Austria to compete in the World Martial Arts Championships. All four members earned an accolade at this competition.





# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

The team prepared for the trip for 6 months and has spent countless hours in the gym training to represent Team USA and Savage MMA.

Team USA spent three days competing in various competitions against some of the best in the world. All 4 members that represented Team USA are locals to the area and members of Gotham Gym and Savage MMA. [Find out more.](#)

## MAYOR HORRIGAN HONORED TO REPRESENT AKRON WITH APPOINTMENTS TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL BOARDS

This month, the Ohio Mayors Alliance announced that Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan has been appointed by his peers to serve on its Board of Directors. The Ohio Mayors Alliance is a bipartisan coalition of mayors in over two dozen of Ohio's largest cities. He was also recently honored by The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) with an appointment as Co-Chair of the Mayors' Water Council.

"I am honored to be chosen by my peers to serve in these regional and national leadership positions," Mayor Horrigan said. "The best way for me to improve outcomes for Akron residents is to tap into best practices and pursue collaborations that will strengthen our position with respect to infrastructure, the economy, and core city services. I look forward to bringing Akron's experiences and insights to both the OMA Board of Directors and the Mayors' Water Council." [Find out more.](#)

## JANICE TROUTMAN NAMED AAF AKRON 2021 SILVER MEDAL RECIPIENT

The Akron chapter of the American Advertising Federation (AAF-Akron) is pleased to announce that Janice Troutman, director of Myers School of Art at The University of Akron, is the 2021 recipient of its distinguished Silver Medal award.

Janice began her design career as an Art Director at Smiley/Hanchulak after graduating from Kent State University. In her five years at Smiley/Hanchulak, she worked on award-winning promotional campaigns, publications, print ads, package design, brochures and corporate identities for local, regional and national accounts.

After starting her own design firm, Troutman Design (which recently celebrated its 30th year in business), Janice returned to Kent State to earn her Master of Arts in Graphic Design to begin her teaching career. [Find out more.](#)

## SUMMIT SPORT AND SOCIAL RAISES MONEY FOR PETS

Summit Sport and Social hosted the 6th Annual Volley for the Pets Tournament in downtown Akron in September 2021. The organization raised over \$11,450 for Paws and Prayers Pet Rescue.

Summit Sport and Social is the premier provider of adult recreational sports leagues, fun-filled social events, and tournaments in the Akron/Canton area. [Find out more.](#)





# TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

## FEATURED PROPERTY

### Akron Centre Plaza | 50 S. Main Street

Akron Centre Plaza is a class A 12-story building in the heart of downtown Akron. McKinley Commercial Services provides on-site management. The building has state-of-the-art internet and fiber optics. \$12.50/SF. On-site amenities include a bank, hair salon and space for 3 restaurants. For more information, contact Kimberly Beckett 330-374-7676 | [kbeckett@downtownakron.com](mailto:kbeckett@downtownakron.com)



## FEATURED BUSINESS

### Dirty River Bicycle Works 110 N. Main Street

Dirty River Bicycle Works offers full service bicycle repair and maintenance, bicycle sales (including kids' bikes), bicycle accessories including helmets, shoes, clothing, parts, and tools.

Owner Ryan "Otis" Adams states, "I see a big opportunity in Downtown Akron. The best bike trail in Ohio passes right through it and the number of bike lanes and cycle paths are increasing daily. Akron is the gateway to endless outdoor exploration starting with the Towpath and continuing into all the Metroparks and the National Park. I am so excited to provide a truly exceptional service experience that is sincere, helpful, personal and fun. People will immediately notice what a difference getting Dirty makes."



### METRO RELEASES FIRST DRAFT OF NEW BUS NETWORK

On September 15, 2021, METRO released the first draft of its Reimagined Network as part of a public engagement process that will run until the end of October 2021.

Reimagine METRO is an effort to develop a detailed service plan and implementation schedule for a redesigned suite of mobility services that meet the goals of METRO's Strategic Plan, adopted in November 2020. The Reimagine METRO Transit Service Plan is the portion of this effort focusing on METRO's fixed-route service, while future phases will consider the demand response programs and the potential for new mobility options.

The Draft Reimagined Network is METRO's initial plan for what the local bus network could look like if it were designed to meet the goals of the Strategic Plan: to "focus METRO's fixed route services on METRO's highest ridership corridors, and on serving markets where (and for whom) transit is essential."



However, this is just a first draft! Now METRO needs to hear from everyone in the community about how the Draft Reimagined Network would affect their use of transit to refine the plan. METRO encour-

ages members of the public to learn more about the Transit Service Plan and the Draft Reimagined Network at [reimagine-metro.com](https://reimagine-metro.com).

The first public outreach period on this network ended October 31, 2021. A revised version of the Draft Reimagined Network, as well as scenarios for how METRO's network could look with more funding, will be developed over the winter of 2021.

### NOW HIRING

METRO RTA is the premier public transportation provider serving Summit County, Ohio. METRO is seeking driven individuals who want to take the wheel and make a difference in our community. METRO prides itself in its innovative approach to serving our communities through diverse services, cutting edge technology and customer service that is second to none. If you are interested in driving us into the future, while continuing our rich and deeply rooted history, we want to hear from you.

*[Find out more and apply at akronmetro.org.](https://akronmetro.org)*



## Mayor Dan Horrigan's 2021 State of the City Address Provides Vision for Ongoing Economic and Social Recovery

*City of Akron Press Release, Aug. 2021*

Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan delivered his 2021 State of the City Address to a gathering of community, business, and neighborhood leaders during an evening event at the Akron Civic Theatre. The roughly 30 minute speech was an opportunity to unite a community grappling with economic and social upheaval, loss, and uncertainty in the wake of the pandemic.

The last State of the City Address was delivered on February 26, 2020—just 11 days before the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Ohio. Tonight, Mayor Horrigan provided a personal look into the challenges City Hall faced throughout the last year and a half, and shared his vision for citywide recovery.

Looking back on 2020, Mayor Horrigan said “Some days the best I could hope for was an opaque view of what was ahead. But, my faith in Akron never wavered.” He went on to share what he calls “the beginning of that path forward” and “a solid foundation for our recovery.”

“This isn’t about going back to the ways we have always done things,” he added, “but creating an even better future—one that works for every single one of us.”

That recovery starts with federal support in the form of roughly \$145 million provided to the City of Akron under the American Rescue Plan (revised from an initial estimates of \$153 million). The funds will be spent in six areas in critical need of investment:

- Housing: \$25 Million
- Public Utility Support: \$30 Million
- Local Economic Recovery: \$21 Million
- Youth Violence Prevention: \$24 Million
- Parks and Public Facilities: \$30 Million
- City IT and Budget Stabilization: \$15 Million

With respect to housing, Mayor Horrigan shared his proposal to spend \$15 million on housing rehabilitation and an additional \$10 million to support infill construction to buttress neighborhoods hardest hit by past and current economic downturns.

In the realm of local economic recovery, Mayor Horrigan talked about the Akron Resiliency Fund, which has seen early success eliminating barriers for small businesses in need of capital. He also detailed his plan to work to see that a downtown community development corporation (CDC) is developed for Downtown and to continue to work with the Elevate Akron partners to accelerate local economic momentum and equitable growth. .

[Click here to read the story on akronohio.gov.](https://akronohio.gov)







#Downtownakron

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