

# DOWNTOWN AKRON QUARTERLY UPDATE



**4TH QUARTER 2020**  
DOWNTOWN AKRON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



# DOWNTOWN AKRON PANDEMIC RESPONSE

## DAP Distributes \$150,000 in Covid-19 Recovery Grants

During the fourth quarter 2020, Downtown Akron Partnership (DAP) distributed \$150,000 in Downtown CARES Act Grant Program funds provided by the City of Akron to storefront/retail businesses in the 42-block Special Improvement District.

Retail, personal service, entertainment and restaurant businesses have been significantly challenged throughout the COVID-19 pandemic as they continue to navigate operating restrictions, health code changes and compliance, and reduced foot traffic due to stay-at-home advisories and remote working. While these challenges were faced by businesses across the board, minority-owned businesses were particularly hard-hit.

Similar to the Downtown Akron COVID-19 Recovery Grant, funded by the United Way of Summit and Medina and distributed by DAP in September 2020, the grant prioritized assistance to minority entrepreneurs and storefront/retail businesses. In total, DAP awarded grants to 68 downtown businesses and retailers.

## Recovery Grant Stories

Tammy O's Barber & Beauty Salonspa has been operating for 20 years in The Shoppes at Akron Centre Plaza. There have been obstacles in the past, but never quite like those of the last year.

"Due to construction, the pandemic, and many downtown businesses switching to working from home, our customer base has been cut in half," owner Tammy Ostrander said.



"We greatly appreciate the grant we received, which has been a tremendous help in covering our rent and has allowed us to remain open and grow. To attract clients and more revenue, we have added a nail tech trained by Jessica in Beverly Hills and an aesthetician specializing in custom facials, eyelash extensions, lifts, tints, waxing and massage therapy to our team. Specials and spa packages are a treat for yourself or make great gifts throughout the year. As our business is growing, we are now in demand for and gladly welcoming barbers and stylists to join us in keeping the people in our community handsome and beautiful."

Renea Woods-Baylor started her business, The Tea Lady, Inc., by drawing from her experiences at gatherings at her



parents' home as a child, as well as their entrepreneurship, her mother's artistic skills in creating beautiful tablescapes and her late husband's culinary creations as an executive chef. She has been proudly bringing the joy of high tea events to all in downtown Akron, with elegance, style and joy, since 2019.



But, as she explained in a recent *Devil Strip* interview, the pandemic "put an immediate halt on my business. But it allowed me to really look at what direction I want to go into, what I want to do, what is going to be our new COVID-19 before-and-after look. It gave me a lot of time to really concentrate on my company and marketing." [Read the entire interview here.](#)

The Tea Lady, Inc. received the CARES act grant in December 2020, which made it possible to reopen in January 2021.

"This grant made a huge impact for our business," Woods-Taylor said. "It gave us the opportunity to create marketing material, purchase new place settings and products, and securing our wholesale account so that our shelves are full with product. We are excited to be downtown for years to come. Thank you so much for your support."

# DOWNTOWN PUBLIC SPACE ACTIVATION

## Concerts in the Commons, Winter Edition

In December 2020, DAP partnered with the Akron Civic Theatre to work with Live at AV Club and Inda Blatch-Geib Designs to produce Concerts in the Commons, Winter Edition.

The concerts were filmed in advance on stage at the Akron Civic Theatre, against a specially-designed, wintry stage set created by Blatch-Geib Designs. The concerts featured an eclectic line-up of local artists: vocalist Rachel Osherow, Latin Jazz guitarist Victor Samalot, Jazz composers and musicians Theron Brown and Chris Anderson, Zydeco band Mo' Mojo (pictured), singer-songwriter Shelby Olive, genre-blending hip-hop, rock artist Jul Big Green and Emmy-nominated pianist, Kofi Boakye.

The concerts were broadcast on Sundays at 7 p.m. from December 13 through January 24, and often included holiday music. Live at AV Club created a Holiday Special episode for December 23, comprised of songs from each of the seven performances.

DAP Director of Engagement and Events Kelli Fetter said,

"This series is a collaborative effort between DAP, the Akron Civic Theatre, the artists and Live at AV Club to bring great music to everyone in a way that's virtual and easy to access,

but still unique and surprising. It helps to have talented artists sharing their music in an exciting venue like the Civic to make the concerts special. So, order some take out from your favorite downtown restaurant and enjoy the show every Sunday at 7 pm."

The wintry-themed stage set was reinstalled in the storefront windows in the Bowery to further enhance winter and holiday decorations in Lock 3, and along the Main St.

Concerts in the Commons, Winter Edition was made possible in part by state tax dollars allocated by the Ohio Legislature to the Ohio Arts Council, and through a partnership with the Akron Civic

Theatre. Additional support for the concerts is provided by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Technical support provided by Live at AV Club.

[Find out more on downtownakron.com](https://downtownakron.com)



## We Are Banner Project

If you visit Main St. in downtown Akron, you may notice a few new faces in the neighborhood. Stunning portraits blended with expressions of our city's character, combined with stylized street- and topographic maps have appeared on banners, METRO RTA bus shelters, and in the outdoor art gallery at Lock 3.

The work is a collaboration between Alexandria Couch and Micah Kraus called, *We Are*. The artists were brought together by DAP to celebrate downtown as a place for all people.

"Collaboration is a little scary because as an artist, and just as a person, I like to have control, and I respect that in another artist as well. But the potential of



collaboration is that you can go places you could never reach on your own," Kraus said, referring to the project in an [ArtsNow Dreamers and Doers interview](#) in June 2020.

Couch added, "Sharing the same core goals, showing Akron in the best light that we can through our own avenues, made it so much easier to work together on a project like this."

Sponsors of *We Are* include Synthomer Foundation, Knight Foundation, Akron Civic Commons, Akron Community Foundation, GAR Foundation, Ohio Arts Council, the City of Akron, ArtsNow, Akron METRO RTA, and The Bowery.

[Find out more on downtownakron.com](https://downtownakron.com)



# DOWNTOWN PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS



## Who's the Little Girl in the Lock 4 Mural? She's Laila

*By Kerry Clawson, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec, 2020*

Wonder who the sweet little girl is pictured playing so intently with a globe on the massive new mural at the Akron Civic Theatre?

It turns out that's Laila Giselle Vales, a 4-year-old from West Akron who met the Los Angeles muralists with her father and his fiancée last summer at Gorge Metro Park. The artists asked Laila's dad, Monte Vales, if they could photograph her enjoying nature and "just being a kid at one of her purest moments," Vales said months later in a Facebook account.

At the park, Laila was playing with little twigs and pebbles. On the mural, she's harnessing an energy "playing with the cosmos," muralist El Mac said, alongside a little boy modeled after his own son, Max.

When muralists El Mac and Aiseborn introduced themselves to Akron native Vales and his fiancée Andrea Smith July 5 and talked about their project at the Akron Civic Theatre, Vales, 31, never dreamed his daughter would become the focal point of the massive public artwork.

"I didn't know them or anything; they were complete strangers," Vales, a 2007 Firestone High School graduate, said by phone Monday. "When he [El Mac] told me he was taking pictures of other kids, I thought it was going to be a big community thing" for the mural.

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

## 'Birds of a Feather' Community Art Project Soars at Akron Library

*Akron Beacon Journal, Dec, 2020*

A community art project that bridges several generations shows trees that morph into the Akron skyline, with dozens of birds flying together in the forefront.

The project, called "Birds of a Feather," will be on display through Feb. 1 at the Akron-Summit County Public Library.

The trees and skylines were the work of a local artist and her students, while Summit County seniors crafted the birds.

"Through the challenges of 2020 and in any year, this collective work symbolizes that we are never alone, there can be safety in numbers and that we're all heading in the right direction," said Danette Rushboldt, an interpretive artist for Summit Metro Parks who oversaw the project.

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



# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Huntington Plans New Community Investment

*By Jim Mackinnon, Akron Beacon Journal, Sept. 4, 2020*

Huntington Bancshares Inc. on Tuesday announced a \$20 billion, five-year lending, investment and philanthropic commitment it said is aimed at helping improve financial opportunities for consumers, businesses and communities in Ohio and six other states in which it operates.

The 2020 Community Plan was developed in cooperation with Midwest community organizations to reflect the needs of people and businesses in the seven states, the Columbus based bank said in a news release. Huntington said it will work with hundreds of community organizations to implement the plan.

It is too soon to say how much of the commitment will spread throughout the Greater Akron area, but the plan fits in well with Elevate Greater Akron initiative strategies to help low/moderate income and minority economic inclusion needs, said Nick Browning, Akron region president for Huntington.

"I would anticipate more money for Akron over the previous plan," Browning said. The new \$20 billion commitment is about 20 percent larger than Huntington's previous \$16 billion program, he said. By the end of 2020, the Huntington-Akron Foundation will have donated a total of \$8 million over the past four years to Akron-area nonprofits, Browning noted.

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



## Portage Path & Partners Awarded \$1.5M Grant to Advance Nurse Practitioner Fellowship Program

*By Emily Harrison, Portage Path and Partners, Sept. 22, 2020*

The Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) has awarded \$1.5 million dollars to Kent State University College of Nursing, with \$1,325,700 of that award earmarked for Akron's Portage Path Behavioral Health. This year Portage Path will receive \$342,900.

Portage Path Behavioral Health Medication Clinic Coordinator and Kent State College of Nursing Researcher James Tudhope, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC, and his team, Wendy Umberger, Ph.D., RN, PMHCNS-BC, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs at Kent State College of Nursing and Drs. Jeffrey Moore, Portage Path Behavioral Health and Vikil Girdhar of AxxessPointe Community Health Centers, will educate and increase the number of new behavioral health nurse practitioners in northeast Ohio. The program, which previously was able to graduate two to three Fellows an-

nually, will now have the capacity for four fellows this year, five the next and six in the final year of the grant appointed by the mayor and confirmed by city council. Members would serve two-year, staggered terms.

This program improves access to, and the quality of, integrated, interprofessional community-based psychiatric nursing services in an under-served area. There has been a long-term shortage of psychiatric Nurse Practitioners and this program is designed to attract the best newly licensed professionals and support them while they gain confidence and competence to practice in the demanding atmosphere of a community mental health center.

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



# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## Welcome to Evelyn's: Akronites Bring Vietnamese Coffee and Banh Mi Downtown

*By H.L. Comeriato, The Devil Strip, Oct. 2020*

As a kid, Vinh Nguyen grew up eating his mother's recipes—Vietnamese dishes that inspired him to explore cultures and cuisines all over the world.

"Growing up, whenever my mom cooked, for instance, a Vietnamese noodle dish, the broth would take all night. It'd have to simmer through," says Nguyen. "I felt like there's definitely time involved in that. You're going to have a product that you feel proud of."

Nguyen says he's always had an idea for a coffee shop—a place where students and young people could come to connect, share ideas and build meaningful relationships. Evelyn's Coffee & Banh Mi (<https://www.evelynscoffee.com/eat.html>), which opened at 11 E. Exchange St. in July, is the realization of a lifelong vision of community, family and food.

Named after Nguyen's 2-year-old daughter, Evelyn's serves Vietnamese drip coffee and what Nguyen calls "just a very small sampling" of Vietnamese and Korean cuisine.

Evelyn's serves Vietnamese coffee the traditional way: one cup at a time, brewed through a metal drip filter. Once the drip is finished, the hot coffee is poured over ice—a splash of sweetened condensed milk at the bottom.

[Click here to read the full story on thedevilstrip.com](https://www.thedevilstrip.com)

## Downtown Akron's Law Building to Reopen Soon with New Name, Purpose and Features

*By Jim Mackinnon, Akron Beacon Journal, Nov. 2020*

Downtown Akron will soon get a newly repurposed—and renamed—Law Building on South Main Street.

The 11-story, 150-foot-high neoclassic revival structure that first opened in 1911, being rebuilt at an estimated cost of \$30 million, will hold surprises both above ground and below when finished with a mix of "modern urban" residential, office and commercial space designed to appeal to young professionals and others.

"Our goal was to be different than anything downtown," developer Tom Rybak said. "We're basically breathing life into the structure."

# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Leasing for the first of 107 pet-friendly studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments in the upper floors is expected to begin in January. A former small law office inside is being converted into the building's sole two-story apartment, complete with spiral staircase.

"We have great views on almost every single floor," said Rybak.

Rybak, an architect who founded firm T.M. Rybak & Associates in New Jersey, did the design work as well as being the developer. Other Rybak projects around the nation include the headquarters for the New Jersey Devils hockey team; Salvation Army buildings; AAA branches; a high school; and other residential and commercial projects, including renovations similar to the Law Building.

The Akron apartments will be priced at market rates, depending on such things as length of a lease and amenities, Rybak said.

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

## #ChooseGrowth330 Q & A with Kassandra Morrison of NOMZ

*By Greater Akron Chamber Staff, Nov. 2020*

*What is the background story of your business? When/ how was it created?*

We've been open for about two years. Sam, my partner, who makes all of our menus used to work for Mustard Seed. I used to own a t-shirt company, and inside of the Northside Marketplace with like a small shop in the back and I saw that there is no restaurant in the marketplace. People would come in all the time for lunch and they had nowhere to go.

*Where does the name come from?*

We use it as a slang term all the time and it means to just go grab food. It was actually the first name we came up with when we were trying to decide what to call the restaurant and it just stuck.

*How has your business experienced growth?/How do you expect to see growth?*

When we initially opened, we had a really great grand opening and people were super impressed with the food. Over the past couple years, we went from having one person on staff to now having seven between all of our businesses. So I would say that growth has probably come just from constantly evolving our product and the quality of products as we do seasonal menu changes. We're always updating and looking to be inspired by new things and offer new items on the menu. We do social media marketing, so that's been very successful for us.

We now have The Treatery, which is a rolled ice cream shop and we just recently purchased the bar and converted it into a cocktail coffee bar. I see in the next year we will really just double down at the marketplace and focus on making everything really come together for a strong future. There is potential for a bigger location so we can do more for NOMZ. A future goal is to make our own brands of meats and cheeses to bring in more of a grocery aspect.

[Click here to read the Q & A on greaterakronchamber.com](#)





# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## **The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron Receives \$750,000 from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for Creative Administration Research**



The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron (NCCAkron) announces a \$750,000 multi-year award from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to build out a new program, Creative Administration Research (CAR). Over the next three years, NCCAkron will foster a national think tank of up to 20 dance Artist Teams to investigate alternative administrative practices in support of their discrete artistic visions. Every six months, cohorts of up to six dance artists will be onboarded to engage in the CAR program.

NCCAkron's Executive/Artistic Director Christy Bolingbroke explained, "Creative Administration Research work developed out of a series of realizations and early prototypes dating back to 2018. We have been exploring the fact that NCCAkron helps new dances get made, but in many ways we were also being complicit in a system where artists lack administrative infrastructure or a consistent operating environment. According to NEFA's 2016 Moving Dance Forward report, at least 80% of today's dance field work is created on a project or independent basis, but artists are asked to keep pace as if they are full-time or an incorporated nonprofit. The so-called best practices developed across our sector over the past 70 years are not necessarily best for everyone. Through our Creative Administration Research program we aim to disrupt this dynamic."

[Click here to read the full story on downtownakron.com](https://downtownakron.com)



## **GOJO Becomes a WBENC-Certified Women's Business Enterprise**

GOJO, the Makers of the PURELL brand, is now certified by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) as a Women's Business Enterprise (WBE). WBENC is the largest certifier of women's business enterprises in the U.S. and a leading advocate for women business owners, leaders, and entrepreneurs.

"We are proud to be a WBENC-Certified family enterprise," said Marcella Kanfer Rolnick, Executive Chair, GOJO Industries. "WBENC Certification aligns with our GOJO Values and our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. And we are always looking for ways to bring value to our partners and customers. Our distributor partners and both private-sector and public-sector end user customers have also told us our WBENC certification is significant because GOJO can now help them achieve their supplier diversity goals and, in turn, formally demonstrate their commitment to fostering diversity and equity."

[Click here to read the full story on gojo.com](https://gojo.com)





# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Akron2Akron Recap

With support from Akron Community Foundation and Knight Foundation, DAP was able to partner with Akron2Akron to produce four virtual walking tours, from June 26 through October 13, 2020. The popular monthly tours—usually presented as community walks—were shifted to virtual events and led by Charlotte Gintert and Greg Milo, with videography by Tim Fitzwater. The trio visited various downtown Akron locales, offering sneak peeks of The Bowery, the Law Building, Akron Civic Theatre, and checking out downtown businesses such as Crave, Akronym Brewing, Dirty River Bicycle Works. The series also explored downtown Akron's beautiful public spaces, including Lock 2, Lock 3 and the North High Street Parklet. The tours are available to watch on [Akron2Akron's Facebook page](#).



## GAR Foundation Announces Grants Totaling More Than \$2.4 Million

*GAR Foundation news release, Nov. 2020*



GAR Foundation awarded \$2,447,500 in grants to Akron nonprofit organizations at its November Distribution Meeting. This round of funding included another set of proactive, unsolicited grants for nonprofit organizations supporting emergency needs due to COVID-19.

Supporting inclusive economic prosperity in Akron was a key theme, evident in grants to the Elevate Greater Akron collaborative (\$445,000), the Akron Urban League (\$50,000), and Western Reserve Community Fund (\$70,000).

"In addition to supporting critical basic needs during this challenging time, GAR remains focused on the communi-

ty's economic health during this pandemic. Our support of Elevate Greater Akron (EGA) is central to our strategy to support lasting, inclusive economic prosperity in Akron," said Christine Mayer, president of GAR Foundation. "We continue to be impressed and inspired by the work of the many partners in this endeavor."

The Early Childhood Resource Center was awarded \$435,000 to continue its successful partnership with the Foundation's STARS: Supporting Teachers and Ready Students project. STARS supports 24 Akron-based early childhood centers (preschool and childcare) with teacher education, coaching and ongoing professional development over a two-year period. The new funding will continue the program and add six new Akron centers to the cohort.

"STARS represents one of our initiatives that we believe is supporting the early education and care sector as a whole," commented Kirstin Toth, senior vice president of the Foundation. "We have seen very positive impact on the children in the care of STARS centers as a result of the Early Childhood Resource Center's work."

Other notable grants include \$300,000 over three years to the Ohio & Erie Canal Coalition for their work on Reimagining the Civic Commons; \$225,000 to Summit Education Initiative for operating support; \$75,000 for ongoing DEI efforts at the Conservancy for the Cuyahoga National Park. The Boys and Girls Clubs of Northeast Ohio was given a grant of \$25,000 for its Akron Club, in honor of Roger Read and in recognition of his service to GAR Foundation as an investment trustee."

[Click here to read the full story on garfoundation.org](https://garfoundation.org)

# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Akron Community Foundation Announces Record \$8.5 Million in Quarterly Grants

In December, Akron Community Foundation's board of directors approved a record amount of quarterly grants totaling \$8,579,481, including thousands of dollars in funds to downtown organizations. Among the downtown grant recipients were the Reach Out and Read program at Akron Children's Hospital, Community Legal Aid Services, Ronald McDonald House Akron, Victim Assistance, the 2-1-1 information and referral hotline of United Way of Summit and Medina, and dozens of other groups throughout Summit County. 2-1-1 Summit County is a key pipeline to essential social services in downtown and throughout the region. It is free and confidential and is offered 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with information on over 16,203 different services for Summit and Medina county residents, including supplemental food and nutrition programs, substance abuse treatment, disaster services and more.

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



## Knight Foundation Grants \$650,000 to Akron's ArtsNow, Nightlight Cinema

by Kerry Clawson, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 2020

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation announced Thursday \$650,000 in grants to two small Akron arts and cultural nonprofits, ArtsNow and the Nightlight Cinema, including support to hire new staff at both organizations.

"We're thrilled about these investments," said Priya Sircar, arts program director for the Knight Foundation. "With the onset of the pandemic in the spring ... it has really upended arts and cultural business models and obviously how people are making art and also how people are experiencing art."

A \$450,000 grant over five years will help ArtsNow continue to implement the Akron Cultural Plan at a time when physical distancing has proved that art is essential to connecting people, the foundation said in a statement.

The Akron Cultural Plan, a 15-year plan that began in 2019, is aimed at strengthening the city, advancing cultural diversity and increasing opportunities for all Akron residents to create and experience arts and culture. The plan was funded by GAR Foundation and the Knight Foundation.

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

## Tax Credit Greenlights CitiCenter Project

by Doug Livingston, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 2020

With the last piece of funding now in place, the \$28 million private redevelopment of the 11-floor CitiCenter in downtown Akron is set to begin in the first half of 2021.

Cleveland-based developer Ed Asher said Tuesday that construction should start in the second quarter of 2021 and last 12 to 16 months. The project, which will create 95 apartments and three floors of office space, received a \$3 million credit in the latest round of Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit awards.

The credits for redeveloping older structures can be applied against income taxes or other costs associated with the project.

"The funding stack is basically in place," said Asher, who expects the apartments to be available by mid to late 2022.

The old YWCA at 146 S. High St. had to be at least 90% vacant for two years to qualify for the state tax incentives. So, the last tenant—the city of Akron—emptied the building and relocated municipal offices to adjacent properties with Akron fire administration eventually finding a new permanent home at Station #4 on Thornton Street.

Built in 1933 as a rooming house for single and indigent women, Weston Inc. of Cleveland placed the only bid to buy the old YWCA building from the city for \$2.6 million in 2018. Asher is now taking the project on personally.

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



# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Harvest Mart Brought Fresh Food and Handmade Goods to Newly Re-Opened Main St. in October

By DAP Staff

DAP, working with Biderman Redevelopment Ventures (BRV), contracted Hudson, Ohio farmers' Market organizer J Hudson to bring Harvest Mart to the newly-re-opened Main St. area at Lock 3. The markets were held on Saturday, October 17 and 24, and were presented as part of a month of physically distanced #PictureYourselfOn-Main events and activities in downtown.

Harvest Mart was a collaborative effort between DAP, Lock 3 and J Hudson, who brought Ohio farmers with late summer produce, gluten-free foods, pasture-fed meats, pumpkins, gourds and apples, along with artisans selling fine art, jewelry, handcrafted food-preparation utensils and more.

DAP worked with Lock 3 and the Akron Children's Museum to add additional programming to the market, including live music, a screening of family movie Hotel Transylvania, activities for kids and families and Spin scooter tours.

[Click here to read the press release on downtownakron.com](#)



## New Businesses

**Smack Yo Mamma Wings and Things**  
115 E. Market St. | 234-788-8626

**Eddie's Famous Cheesesteaks**  
147 S. Main St. | [eddiesfamouscheesesteaks.com](http://eddiesfamouscheesesteaks.com)

**Gotham Gym**  
15 N. Broadway St. | [gothamgymohio.com](http://gothamgymohio.com)

## Business Outreach

DAP connects with downtown businesses to ensure they have the information they need to thrive and grow. We also reach out to prospective businesses to strengthen and diversify the downtown business mix. Business Outreach is an important component of DAP's mission allowing DAP to remain attuned to the needs of downtown businesses by supporting them with resources, site selection assistance, promotion and information and advocacy services in the district.

Q4 - 2020	CONTACTS MADE*	CONTACT GOAL
RETAIL OUTREACH	80	75
BUSINESS OUTREACH	30	28
RETAIL AND BUSINESS PROSPECTS**	8	25
SITE SELECTION	10 SEARCHES	

\* 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



# 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	Q1 - 2020	Q2 - 2020	Q3 - 2020	Q4 - 2020
FACEBOOK	7,459	7,580	7,740	7,936
TWITTER	9,069	9,092	9,218	9,276
INSTAGRAM	4,338	4,448	4,844	5,149
LINKEDIN	1,236	1,287	1,312	1,351

WEBSITE TRAFFIC	Q4 - 2020	YTD
USERS	39,151	148,096
SESSIONS	46,912	182,122
PAGE VIEWS	102,008	370,815

EMAIL NEWSLETTER	Q4 - 2019	Q4 - 2020
NUMBER PUBLISHED	14	18
SENDS	81,701	76,775
OPENS	15,330	15,614
CLICKS	2,203	1,633
SUBSCRIBERS	—	16,575

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

## CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING

### DAP Ambassador Stats Oct. 1 - Dec. 31, 2020

**15,081**  
TRASH COLLECTED (LBS)

**18**  
MOTORIST/VEHICLE ASSISTANCE

**742**  
BUSINESS CONTACTS MADE

**828**  
BUS STOPS CLEANED

**49**  
GRAFFITI REMOVED

**108**  
PARKING ASSISTANCE

**727**  
SAFETY ESCORTS

**2,655**  
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 - Friday: 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. | Saturday 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.  
Sunday: 8 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,



# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

## 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.

Downtown Akron is the heart of business and government in Summit County. Whether you are looking to locate a new business, relocate an existing business or open a satellite office, downtown Akron is the place to be. With a wide-range of retail and office space, downtown offers beautifully renovated historic buildings as well as newer, state-of-the-art space.

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 also 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).**

## QUARTERLY DISTRICT MEETINGS

Updates include but are not limited to City of Akron construction projects, DAP updates, neighborhood updates and special events.

Meetings are digital.  
RSVP at [www.downtownakron.com/district](http://www.downtownakron.com/district)

**Canal District:** May 13, Aug. 12, Nov. 11 2021  
2 p.m.

**Northside District:** Mar. 11, Jun. 10, Sept. 9, Dec. 9 2021  
1 p.m.

**Historic Arts District:** Apr. 8, Jul. 8, Oct. 14, 2021  
10 a.m.

## BRANT T. LEE - PROFESSOR OF LAW; ASSISTANT DEAN OF DIVERSITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES, UNIVERSITY OF AKRON NAMED NASW PUBLIC CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Each year the NASW Ohio Chapter recognizes exceptional social workers, students, agencies, public citizens and elected officials whose work in service to their communities reflects the values of the social work profession. [Read the entire article.](#)

## CARLA CHAPMAN NAMED RECIPIENT OF OSLN'S 2020 OHIO STEM INNOVATOR AWARD

*Ohio STEM Learning Network, Aug. 2020*

Carla Chapman is the Director for Community Relations, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Akron Public Schools.



Chapman led a team of staff during the initial outbreak of the coronavirus. This team created and managed the "Connectors" program. The team consisted of Yvonne Culver and Desiree Bolden of Akron Public Schools, Andrew Ziccardi of Akron's I Promise School and April Porter of the United Way of Summit and Medina Counties.

The Connectors program ran throughout 52 days of remote learning, after Akron schools closed under the outbreak of coronavirus. Through the program, 254 non-instructional staff were recruited to call Akron students. After a training, these staff conducted check-ins on students. [Read the full story on \*osln.org\*](#)

## AKRON CHILDREN'S AGAIN TAPPED FOR ERC NORTHCOST 99 BEST WORKPLACE RECOGNITION

*Akron Children's Hospital, Sept. 2020*

Akron Children's Hospital was once again honored by ERC as one of Northeast Ohio's best places to work. This is the 14th time Akron Children's has earned a NorthCoast 99 award.

"We are honored and humbled to again receive NorthCoast 99 recognition, particularly because this award is based on employee feedback," said Rhonda Larimore, chief human resources officer at Akron Children's. [Read the full story on \*akronchildrens.org\*](#)

## THE DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AUTHORITY WELCOMES TRACY DOWE, NEW BOARD MEMBER AND RECOGNIZES JOE DANCY FOR 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

*DFA, Sept. 2020*

Joining the Board is Tracy Dowe, Relationship Manager and Vice President of Commercial Banking at KeyCorp, where he provides financial expertise, counsel, and customized solutions to business clients... Joe Dancy, Chief Tire Analysis Engineer from Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, was appointed to the board in 1999 and has served as Board Secretary, Vice Chair and Chair. [Read the full story on \*developmentfinanceauthority.com\*](#)

# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS



## CRAVE CELEBRATES 15 YEARS IN DOWNTOWN AKRON

Slightly eccentric, surprisingly down-to-earth, but entirely delicious, Crave has occupied a special place in the hearts of Akronites for 15 years in the historic arts district of downtown Akron. Crave offers a diverse menu with global influences, presented in a colorful, contemporary, art-filled setting. [Find out more on eatdrinkcrave.com](#)

## AKRON/SUMMIT CVB CAPTURES OHIO TRAVEL ASSOCIATION'S 2020 RUBY AWARD

ASCVB Press Release, Oct. 2020

The Bureau was recognized in the Spirit of Community category for its “akron[RE]bound” web site ([www.akronrebound.com](http://www.akronrebound.com)) and outreach campaign. Created and launched less than two weeks at Governor DeWine’s March stay-at-home order, the Bureau worked to become a key resource for Summit County hospitality industry partners and community stakeholders. [Read the full press release on downtownakron.com](#)

## LEADERSHIP AKRON ANNOUNCES ADDITIONS TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Leadership Akron Press Release, Oct. 2020

Leadership Akron is pleased to announce the following additions to its Board of Directors effective on Oct. 2, 2020.

Deniela “Dee” Williams, Executive Assistant, Division of COVID Response, Summit County Executive’s Office. As a leader in the community, Williams is sensitive and passionately driven to promote diversity and inclusion, especially as it relates to issues of race, education, and economic class. To this end, she works with various community organizations and serves on committees that advocate for equity in health, housing, education, employment, and business.

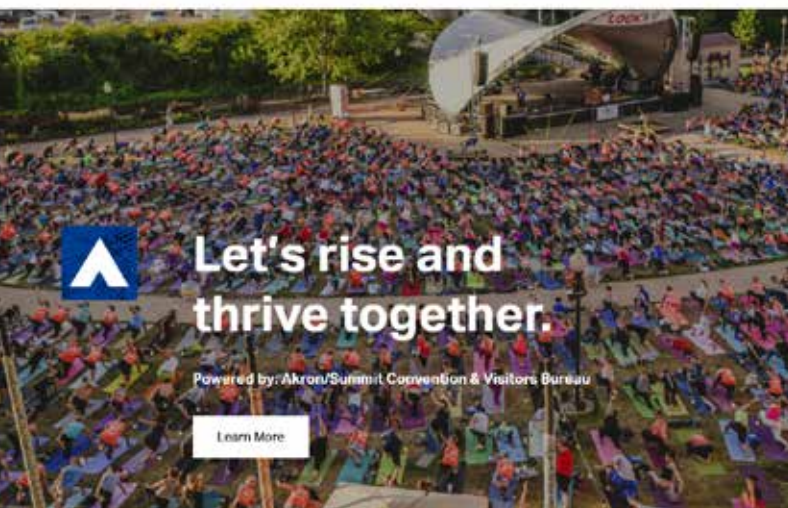
Justin Hilton, Kent State University Senior Administrator for Community Outreach... [Read the press release on leadershipakron.org](#)

## BROUSE RANKS AMONG TOP FIRMS FOR REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN ATTORNEYS IN LAW360'S GLASS CEILING 2020 REPORT

Brouse McDowell Press Release Oct. 2020

Law360 released its Glass Ceiling 2020 report<sup>1</sup>, ranking Brouse #32 nationally for representation of women attorneys (among firms with 100 attorneys or fewer). Two key factors determined the ranking—the proportion of female attorneys and female equity partners.

Brouse was also noted as a “Ceiling Smasher” as the #1 firm in Ohio and the #8 firm nationally for highest representa-





# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

tion of women in its equity partnership (among firms with 51-100 attorneys). [Read the press release on brouse.com](#)

## PORTAGE PATH EARNS FIRST APRN FELLOWSHIP ACCREDITATION IN COUNTRY FOR COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH OR PSYCHIATRY

*By Emily Harrison, Portage Path, Oct. 2020*

Portage Path Behavioral Health's innovative Nurse Practitioner Fellowship Program has been awarded Accreditation with Distinction, the highest recognition awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Accreditation Program. [Read the press release on portagepath.org](#)

## GLASS HALF FULL AWARD: HONORING NICOLE MULLET

*GAR Foundation press release Dec. 2020*

GAR Foundation is honored to present Nicole Mullet, executive director of ArtsNow, with the 2020 Glass Half Full Award. The Glass Half Full award was initially created to honor GAR's former president Rob Briggs. The award annually recognizes a Summit County community leader for inspiring and optimistic leadership of a nonprofit organization.

In her role as the founding executive director of ArtsNow, Nicole collaborates with local leaders and organizations to advocate for the arts and culture sector, connects local talent to resources, and leads a team that promotes the diverse catalog of arts and culture offerings across multiple platforms to Summit County residents. [Read the full story on garfoundation.org](#)

## NORTHEAST OHIO BREWERIES WIN BIG IN OHIO CRAFT BREWERS CUP

*By Marc Bona, Cleveland.com Dec. 2020*

Market Garden Brewery, Akronym Brewing and Avon Brewing Co. won regional awards in the Ohio Craft Brewers Cup held this month.

A dozen breweries from the region earned medals in the statewide competition that is usually held in June but was shifted because of COVID concerns. More than 75 total awards were given over 29 style categories in the competition, which is judged by professional brewers. [Read the full story on cleveland.com](#)

## CTI OHIO CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

*CTI press release Oct. 2020*

As we enter the fourth quarter of a tumultuous and unprecedented year, we reflect and celebrate 2020 as a milestone year for CTI, marking the 25th anniversary of opening the company's first branch office in Ohio. [Read the press release on ctiengr.com](#)



# TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

## FEATURED PROPERTY

### PNC Tower 1 Cascade Plaza

98,482 square feet available for office and retail  
Available suites range from 658-32,985 sq ft and come with awesome views

- 24/7 on-site security
- on-site banking
- state-of-the-art internet, fiber & off-site data storage
- state-of-the-art heating and cooling plant
- LED lighting throughout the building
- water conservation equipment in all restrooms and kitchens
- in-suite janitorial services provided for all tenants, 5 days a week
- on-site management/maintenance

For more information, contact Kimberly Beckett  
330-374-7676 | [kbeckett@downtownakron.com](mailto:kbeckett@downtownakron.com)



## FEATURED BUSINESS

### Mint Hair Collective 70 E. Mill Street

Mint is a collective of stylists who exercise their creative expertise to elevate the experience of their clients and leave them feeling in mint condition. The salon offers hair cutting, coloring and styling services, while providing a relaxing and top-notch atmosphere for clients to enjoy.

330-217-1218 | [minthaircollective.com](http://minthaircollective.com)



### METRO RTA RECEIVES AWARDS, ACCEPTS GRANT

*By Akron.com staff, Dec. 2020*

METRO Regional Transit Authority (RTA) officials received three awards from the Ohio Public Transit Association (OPTA) and a \$450,000 Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone (HOPE) Program grant from the Federal Transit Administration Oct. 29.

METRO RTA CEO Dawn Distler accepted a Milestone Award from OPTA Executive Director Matt Carle, U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-District 13), state Rep. Emilia Sykes (D-District 34) and METRO Board President Robert DeJournett commemorating the organization's 50th anniversary last August.

Operators Amanda Jones and Sandra Guess received a Community Impact Award for helping to reunite a lost child with the family last January.

RTA Planning & Strategic Development Director Valerie Shea received a Four Under Forty Award, recognizing her achievements in transit and leadership within the community.

"On behalf of METRO's Board of Trustees, congratulations to the award winners for a well-deserved recognition," said DeJournett. "We are so proud of the team for their hard work and commitment to the community."

[Read the full story on akron.com](https://akron.com)

### RACIAL & SOCIAL EQUITY STATEMENT

On November 24, 2020, METRO's Board of Trustees unanimously voted in favor of Resolution 2020-33, a resolution adopting a Racial & Social Equity Statement as part of the Governing Principles of the METRO RTA Board of Trustees.

RACIAL & SOCIAL EQUITY STATEMENT  
Together We Will...

METRO's team stands together in solidarity against racism and oppression. We will ensure equity and dismantle systemic processes that may impact Black, Indigenous, and People of Color each and every day. Uncomfortable conversations are needed and change is necessary. Being outraged is not enough and silence is not an option

We will listen.

We will speak openly.

We will stand up against racial and social inequities.

We will be intentional in our words and in our actions.

We will not be silent.

[Read more Akron METRO RTA news on akronmetro.org](https://akronmetro.org)



# PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION



## Main Street in Akron Opens to Vehicle Traffic

*by Doug Livingston, Akron Beacon Journal, Oct. 2, 2020*

Main Street from Cedar to Market is finally open for traffic in downtown Akron as sidewalk work continues into October.

Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan announced this week that the last of the asphalt is down. He plans to livestream a ribbon-cutting celebration Oct. 15 to welcome visitors downtown after more than two years of heavy construction.

This first phase of the Main Street reconstruction, a \$31 million renovation funded largely on federal grants, includes wider sidewalks, new underground utility lines, a single-lane roundabout at Mill Street and more.

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

## City of Akron to Begin Roadway Work for Phase II of Main Street Corridor Project on January 4

*City of Akron, Mayor's Office Press Release, Dec. 2020*

In late October 2020, the City of Akron broke ground on Phase II of the TIGER grant funded Main Street Project—starting first with excavation and utility work in the sidewalk. Starting Monday, January 4, 2021, the project will enter its next stage, which includes excavation and utility work in the roadway. Therefore, Main Street (King James Way) from Market St. to Mill Street will be closed to vehicular traffic in both directions, from January 4, 2021 through approximately May 31, 2021.

“The transformational upgrades we are making now in our downtown corridor will benefit Akronites for generations to come,” said Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan. “Phase II will take a considerably shorter period of time to complete than Phase I, which is great news for our downtown businesses, motorists, and residents. And once it is finished, the improvements will create a united, accessible, and beautiful corridor all the way from Cedar Street to Martin Luther King Blvd (State Route 59).”

[Click here to read the release on downtownakron.com](#)

## 2021 City of Akron Capital Budget Outlines \$414 Million of Investments in Neighborhood Streets, Parks, Housing, Safety Facilities, Water & Sewer Infrastructure

*City of Akron, Mayor's Office Press Release, Dec. 30, 2020*

Today, Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan formally submitted the 2021 Capital Investment & Community Development Program, commonly referred to as the “Capital Budget” to Akron City Council. This budget outlines Mayor Horrigan’s plan to invest \$414 million in streets, parks, public facilities, police and fire services, economic development, housing, sidewalks, and water and sewer infrastructure in the Akron community in the coming year.

While the City’s operating budget, which will be passed by City Council before the end of March, outlines spending on City services and operating expenses, the capital budget outlines investments in the City’s physical infrastructure.

Council will conduct hearings and vote on the Capital Budget between January 25 and February 8, 2021.

The budget includes \$271.6 million in state funding and \$37.1 million in federal monies. Local funds of \$99.6 million include \$14.3 million expected to be generated by the 0.25% Safety and Streets income tax increase passed in 2017. These funds are used exclusively to invest in improvements to police, fire, and roadways in Akron. (A full 2021 Safety and Streets budget is [available here](#).)

[Click here to read the release on downtownakron.com](#)

# PICTURE YOURSELF ON MAIN

**Picture Yourself on Main** is your invitation to celebrate and be a part of the reopening of Main Street in Downtown Akron. Look for Picture Yourself on Main programs for everyone coming soon, with opportunities to enjoy new, iconic sights and experiences you can only have downtown. Share your experiences in downtown with **#PictureYourselfOnMain** or **#PictureYourselfAkron**.



The Akronite App rewards you for shopping downtown. Each purchase earns Blimps which can be redeemed at the businesses you love most or want to try out. Find out about your neighbors downtown with City Stories that reveal vibrant and engaging goings-on every day in Akron.

**Download the app**, link your card, and start earning blimps today! Make every action count.

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS ON MAIN

Through Easter   Thursday - Sunday   4 - 9 p.m.	<b>Igloo Rental in Lock 3</b>
Through Easter   Thursday - Sunday   4 - 9 p.m.	<b>Outdoor Arctic Putt Putt in Lock 3</b>
Through Mar. 31	<b>On Your Own Book Club: The Bookish Life of Nina Hill</b> by Abbi Waxman
Wednesdays and Sundays   8 p.m.	<b>Rubber City Comics Live-Streaming Claim Sale</b>
Wednesdays   7 - 9 p.m.	<b>Sporcle Live Trivia at Akronym Brewing</b>
Wednesday, Mar. 3   6:30 - 8 p.m.	<b>In Concert: Jon Waterman</b>
Wednesday, Mar. 3   7 - 8 p.m.	<b>Billy Coakley "From Every Tribe &amp; Every Nation" Livestream</b>
Thursday, Mar. 4   6 p.m.	<b>Contactless Trivia and Drinks at NOMZ</b>
Thursday, Mar. 4   7 p.m.	<b>Virtual Reading with Michael Credico</b>
Friday, Mar. 5   12:30 - 1:15 p.m.	<b>Inside the Dancer's Studio: Bebe Miller</b>
Friday, Mar. 5   7 - 10 p.m.	<b>Guy Randall at Akronym Brewing</b>
Wednesday, Mar. 10   9 - 10:15 a.m.	<b>Spring Forward: Beginning Again and Again</b>
Friday, Mar. 12   12:30 - 1:15 p.m.	<b>Livestream: Detention in Residence</b>
Saturday, Mar. 13   7 p.m.	<b>Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</b>
Wednesday, Mar. 17   7:30 p.m.	<b>Livestream: The Mickeys</b>
Thursday, Mar. 18   6:30 - 7:30 p.m.	<b>AAM After Work: Puzzle Night</b>
Tuesday, Mar. 30   10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	<b>Black Male Summit 2021: Keynote Speaker Dr. Cornel West</b>

To keep up with Picture Yourself on Main programs visit [downtownakron.com/explore/picture-yourself-on-main](https://downtownakron.com/explore/picture-yourself-on-main)

For a comprehensive, regularly-updated listing of events throughout downtown, visit [www.downtownakron.com/calendar](https://www.downtownakron.com/calendar)





#Downtownakron

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