

# DOWNTOWN AKRON QUARTERLY UPDATE



4TH QUARTER 2021

DOWNTOWN AKRON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



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# THANK YOU FOR MAKING SO MANY HAPPY MEMORIES DOWNTOWN IN 2021





# WORKING FOR DOWNTOWN

## DAP Is Working for Downtown, 4th Quarter 2021

Despite the effects of the Holidays and growing issues related to the pandemic, DAP continued to support downtown with contributions to marketing efforts, place-making, business development, and clean, safe and welcoming work.

Kimberly Beckett and Suzie Graham participated in all of the 4th quarter Elevate Greater Akron and BRE weekly meetings, with plans for recommendations of businesses that can be added to the EGA portfolio in 2022. Kimberly participated in a panel for Leadership Akron's entrepreneurship day, and is working with the STEM School on an exercise focusing on walkability in downtown. Kimberly and Jane Douglas continued to work to expand Jane's retail assistance to downtown businesses, with emphasis on merchandising and digital marketing.

Dominic Caruso worked with Evolve Marketing to launch a large-scale fall/winter campaign that began on the week Thanksgiving and is on-going. Part of the campaign

involved the Downtown Holiday Hop promotion, to encourage visitors to shop downtown for the chance to win a \$200 gift card. A brief overview and dashboard of the campaign can be found on page 9.

DAP worked with numerous organizations in the 4th quarter to present and accentuate events downtown, including the Zips Programming Network (Zips Fall in Love with Downtown), Lock 3 (Phantasy Fest), Smells Like Snow Coffee Festival, which drew 1,200 visitors, the Tree Lighting Ceremony and Welcome Santa Parade (Lock 3) to name a few.

Along with Clean, Safe and Welcoming projects, the DAP ambassador team partnered with Community Support Services (CSS) to build relationships with the downtown unhoused population which have had noteworthy results. Working together with CSS staff, the ambassadors helped 14 unhoused members of the community obtain permanent housing.

## Downtown Small Businesses and Storefronts in the News

*Cilantro Thai & Sushi Restaurant in downtown Akron offers next-level flavor*, by Mark J. Price, Akron Beacon Journal: When you enter Cilantro Thai & Sushi Restaurant, it's a sensory experience.

The aroma of fine food, the glow of white lights and the hum of dinner conversations all combine to form a welcoming ambiance.

For the first time in a long time, my wife, Susie, and I enjoyed a Saturday night out in downtown Akron. I suggested Cilantro because I really missed the food.

Before the pandemic, I had ordered takeout there dozens of times, enjoying such dishes as Pad Thai, Singapore Noodles, Mock Duck Basil, Cashew Nut Stir Fry, Tofu Rama and various sushi rolls—and never once was disappointed. Yet, I had never dined inside.

Owner Charlie Somtrakool, a native of Thailand, opened the elegant restaurant in 2009 at 326 S. Main St. next to Canal Park. The space previously housed Piatto until chef Roger Thomas moved to the Sheraton Suites in Cuyahoga Falls. Before that, the building operated for more 70 years as the City Loan Co., First Federal Savings & Loan Association and Charter One.

You'd never know it used to be a bank. As a hostess led us through the long, narrow

restaurant, we passed through a front dining area, sushi bar, cocktail bar and bustling kitchen before arriving at our table in an elevated area of the spacious back room. [READ MORE](#)



*Akron's Sweet Modern finds 'sweet' spot for collectors of vintage furniture as sales soar*, by Craig Webb, Akron Beacon Journal: This isn't your grandmother's davenport.

Well actually it just might be your grandmother's sofa or at least someone else's.

Walking into the second-floor showroom of Sweet Modern in downtown Akron is like stepping back in time. The furniture and furnishings in the showroom hark back to the late 1940s to the groovy early '70s.

The furniture is in pristine condition and looks like brand new.

It is brand new—well sort of.

All the furniture and a warehouse full of other relics of a bygone era across town all started as a hobby for an Akron couple.

Sweet Modern's founders, Ronald Higgins and Adam Krutko, started acquiring midcentury modern furniture as a hobby to furnish their own home in Highland Square. [READ MORE](#)



# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



interior: Lofts at the Everett, 39 E. Market St., 330-376-6460

## Residential Development as of Q4 - 2021

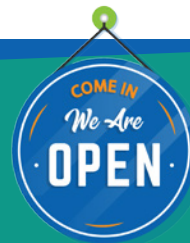
RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY	UNITS OPENED	UNITS IN CONSTRUCTION	UNITS RENOVATED	PLANNED UNITS
90%	121	139	499	200

## 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

Q4 - 2021	CONTACTS MADE*
RETAIL BUSINESS CONTACTS	73
NON-RETAIL BUSINESS CONTACTS	58
RETAIL AND BUSINESS PROSPECTS**	10

\* 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



# OCTOBER – DECEMBER MARQUEE EVENTS



## Phantasy Fest

*October 23, 2021*

Phantasy Fest was a new downtown event, crafted for the Halloween season. It was promoted as a “slightly spooky, otherworldly celebration.” The event was held on the Main St. sidewalk at Lock 3, in Lock 3, and Lock 4, and featured pumpkin decoration, fairy or dragon make-and-take luminaries, a Curiosity Mart in Lock 4, a tesla coil orchestra, and a free screening of Beetlejuice in Lock 3.

DAP partnered with Lock 3, market organizer J Hudson, the Akron Children’s Museum, and Curated Storefront to offer the activities mentioned above. As a component of Phantasy Fest, DAP promoted the Curated Storefront exhibition Clayton Bailey’s World of Wonders, installed in the Landmark Building at 156 S. Main. The exhibition was open during the event, and Curated Storefront screened the short film, Mythical Madness, a mockumentary featuring Bailey’s work by local filmmaker Blue Green. DAP worked with Akron Children’s Museum to offer the Monster Mission course for kids, and Lock 3 gave away after school supply bags to the children. The event was presented with support from the Knight Foundation.



## Zips Fall in Love with Downtown

*November 5, 2021*

DAP worked with the University of Akron Zips Programming Network (ZPN) and the Student Design Society to present Zips Fall in Love with Downtown. The event for UA students was held on Cascade Plaza and included live music, food, firepits, s’mores, games, a Zippy DIY lantern craft and more.

[View additional photos of the event.](#)



## Smells Like Snow Coffee Festival

*November 13, 2021*

Fans of great coffee and the beloved TV show, *Gilmore Girls* braved harsh weather to celebrate the Smells Like Snow Coffee Festival on Cascade Plaza. The festival drew approximately 1,200 visitors and was promoted in concert with GameFest at the Akron Art Museum and Akron Makes (maker faire) at the Akron-Summit County Public Library.

Total number of local businesses featured: 18  
Downtown businesses featured: 8  
Coffee makers featured: 7  
Minority-owned businesses featured: 8

The event included photo opps with *Gilmore Girls*-themed props and backdrops created by Puzzle Creative Solutions, a screening of three classic episodes, a wandering “town troubadour,” (local musician Jeff Klemm) and craft opportunities with Da’Shika Street and Lepley & Co.



# DOWNTOWN PROGRAMS

## Smells Like Snow (continued)

DAP worked with the Barley House to promote two sessions of Gilmore Girls trivia in the restaurant, which drew 300 people. Chill and Indulge crafted a special Luke's Diner Coffee-flavored ice cream and the Peanut Shoppe offered chocolate-covered espresso beans.

*[Find out more about Coffee Fest, participating vendors, and activities offered.](#)*

## Tree Lighting Ceremony and Welcome Santa Parade

November 26 and 27, 2021

The downtown tree lighting ceremony was back in 2021, featuring a new, living tree in its new location, on the Bowery St. side of the canal. The lighting included a visit from Santa, fireworks sponsored by DAP (with support from the Knight Foundation), and a lighted installation of Akron landmarks created by downtown's Puzzle Creative Solutions.

The Welcome Santa Parade drew hundreds of onlookers as local organizations (including DAP), marching bands, local companies, and others marched from S. Main St. at Rosa Parks to Lock 3. The hero of the hour, Santa, arrived to the delight of children along the route.





# CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING

## DAP Ambassador Stats Oct. 1 - Dec. 31, 2021



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 was having some car trouble and Darrell was so helpful and nice!! Thanks again Darrell, you got us out of a jam.”**

**—Kathryn Kleinhans, via Facebook**

**“Thank you for your hard work!”**

**—Jason Miller, via Facebook**

**Great job! DAP & the workers that plant and maintain these beautiful flowers for all to enjoy!**

**—Patty Dill, via Facebook**



# 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 - 2021	Q4 - 2021
FACEBOOK	9,170	9,626
TWITTER	9,321	9,393
INSTAGRAM	5,998	6,187
LINKEDIN	1,575	1,607

WEBSITE TRAFFIC	Q4 - 2020	Q4 - 2021
USERS	39,151	78,740
SESSIONS	46,912	99,405
PAGE VIEWS	102,008	284,390

EMAIL NEWSLETTER	Q4 - 2021
NUMBER PUBLISHED	18
SENDS	75,128
OPENS	17,836
CLICKS	2,018
SUBSCRIBERS	17,016

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

## Fall/Winter Marketing Campaign

Beginning in autumn 2021, DAP contracted Evolve Marketing to create a larger campaign to promote downtown and draw visitors. The work yielded a strategy: to create specific itineraries for things to do downtown that grouped food, drink and shopping options with arts and entertainment events. The [resulting guides](#) are designed to appeal to all people, and to make the case for downtown as a place for all people.

The guides have been promoted electronically, through the DAP email newsletter, Google Ads, and ads on social media platforms, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and TikTok. Evolve also created voice-over ads to run on Spotify and Pandora. All ads pointed people to the guides on the DAP website. What follows is a basic dashboard of only the campaign's effect on the DAP website from the start of the campaign (November 23) through the end of 2021. More comprehensive dashboard will be available in the 1st Quarter 2022 report.

## 2021 Downtown Guide

The 2021 Look Book is an invitation to find yourself among the people, places, culture and the heart of the city. If you would like to distribute the Look Book at your business, please contact Dominic Caruso: [dcaruso@downtownakron.com](mailto:dcaruso@downtownakron.com)

[View the digital copy.](#)



DATE RANGE	USERS	PAGEVIEWS	AVERAGE PAGES PER SESSION	DIFFERENCE (USERS)	DIFFERENCE (PAGE VIEWS)
11/23 - 12/31 2021 (43-DAY PERIOD)	43,209	195,357	3.51	NA	NA
10/9 - 11/22 2021 (PREVIOUS 43-DAY PERIOD)	32,055	78,695	2.07	+38%	+148%
11/23 - 12/31 2020	17,649	45,724	2.20	+145%	+327%



# NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## Chase Bank Unveils a New Community Center (includes a LeBron James Family Foundation Partnership)

"Following an approximately \$1 million renovation of an existing location, Chase Bank has opened a new 'Community Center' branch in Akron designed for what it says are underserved neighborhoods.

The location at 50 S. Main St. marks just the eighth community center opened by Chase across its country-spanning footprint. These branches are one element of the company's five-year, \$30 billion commitment to advancing racial equity." —*Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Sept. 17, 2021*

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

## Portage Path Behavioral Health Gets \$2.3M in Federal Funds to Reach Underserved Communities

"A new grant is helping a local nonprofit extend its behavioral health services into underserved communities and turn its "wish list" into a "to-do list."

Portage Path Behavioral Health is receiving a \$2.3 million federal grant. The plan is to use the money to put clinicians directly in lower-income communities, to build a living-room style drop-in center staffed by peer-support specialists, and to create an educational program that breaks down stigmas surrounding mental health and addiction." —*Sean McDonnell, Akron Beacon Journal, Oct. 14, 2021*

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



## University of Akron, Akron Civic Theatre Announce New Partnership to Support City's Arts, Economy

"The University of Akron and Akron Civic Theatre have announced a new partnership that's expected to bring a larger variety of arts programming to multiple Akron performance venues through a community-wide approach.

The one-year agreement brings Akron Civic Theatre Executive Director Howard Parr on board as an arts and culture adviser to UA President Gary L. Miller, a partnership that also joins the booking operations, operational strategy and event oversight of E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall with those at the Civic and Goodyear Theater. The new collaboration is an outgrowth of the university's faculty-led Akron Arts initiative that was announced by Miller in May." —*Kerry Clawson, Akron Beacon Journal, Nov. 21, 2021*

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





# NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## State & Federal Communications Graduates with the 2021 Cohort of Scalerator NEO

"The fifth cohort of Scalerator NEO—a proven, results-driven program to help entrepreneurial leaders quickly, profitably, and sustainably grow their business—graduated on September 30, 2021, after a six-month virtual experience....

Participants from cohort five are already reporting remarkable results. Elizabeth Bartz shared, 'State & Federal Communications, Inc. recently acquired a company in Massachusetts bringing in 50 consulting clients, exceeding our annual goal of 20 consulting clients.'" —*Scalerator Press Release*

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

## GOJO Signs 20-year Lease to Remain in Downtown Akron

"GOJO Industries, the maker of Purell sanitizing products, has signed a 20-year lease to remain in its downtown Akron headquarters.

Samantha Williams, GOJO's corporate communications senior director, said that in August, GOJO agreed to a sale-leaseback arrangement for GOJO Plaza in downtown Akron. As part of that, GOJO sold the property to a buyer and signed a 20-year lease agreement for 1 GOJO Plaza, she said.

'GOJO Plaza is our world headquarters, and we have no plans to move our headquarters from GOJO Plaza,' she said." —*Emily Mills, Akron Beacon Journal, Nov. 14, 2021*

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

## Crave is Moving: A New Space on Main St.

"For owner and chef Aaron Hervey, the invitation to move his Crave restaurant to the Landmark Building in the up-and-coming Bowery development downtown was an offer too good to refuse.

By April, he expects his current E. Market St. restaurant to be in its new home just two long city blocks away at the corner of Main and Bowery in the space that, nearly a century ago, was the two-story lobby of Akron Savings and Loan....

'He [Don Taylor, CEO and president of Bowery developer Welty Building Co.] felt that we would really be the hometown recognizable brand, the right anchor to help fill those buildings and just basically be the cornerstone of the neighborhood,' Hervey said." —*Kerry Clawson and Doug Livingston, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 8, 2021*

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





# 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).

## DOWNTOWN AKRON ANNIVERSARIES

### September

Crave | 16 years

### October

Chameleon Café | 5 years

### November

The Lockview | 14 years

Jilly's Music Room | 8 years

Eddie's on Main | 1 year

Missing Falls Brewery | 3 years

NOMZ | 3 years

### December

Sweet Modern | 3 years

Sweet Mary's Bakery | 6 years

## Knight Arts Challenge Awards Nearly \$400,000 to Support Arts Programs in Akron

"From art workshops to theater, poetry presentations and more, arts and performance are returning to more city venues, and plans are in the works to support creators in bringing their talent to town in coming months.

After a year's pandemic hiatus, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation has announced recipients of the 2021 Knight Arts Challenge Akron awards. The foundation said six area artists and arts organizations will share nearly \$400,000 to bring their work to life." —*Eric Marotta, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 12, 2021*

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

## MAGNET Proposal Advances to Second Phase for Up to \$100M in Federal Funds

"MAGNET's 'Northeast Ohio's Advanced Manufacturing Cluster: Smart Manufacturing and Advanced Materials' was the only application from Ohio out of 529 nationwide candidates to be awarded \$500,000 for Phase 2 of the federal program, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration announced Monday, Dec. 13.

The EDA's Phase 2 will determine if the MAGNET proposal is one of the 20-30 regional coalitions selected to receive between \$25 million and \$100 million to help communities working at 'accelerating economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and building local economies that will be resilient to future economic shocks.'" —*Kim Palmer, Crain's Cleveland Business, Dec. 13, 2021*

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

## Missing Falls Brewery in Akron Embarking on Multifaceted Expansion Plan

"Missing Falls Brewery is embarking on an ambitious expansion plan in its Akron location that affects every aspect of its business: Beer, food, space and distribution.

The four owners of the brewery, which just passed its three-year anniversary in November, felt the timing was right to grow in their Canal Place home on S. Main Street not far from the heart of downtown Akron....

Total area will increase to about 13,000 square feet after the conversion of two adjacent rooms—2,200 square feet for fermenters and about 3,500 more for as event space, stage, bar and lounge area." —*Marc Bona, Cleveland.com, Dec. 14, 2021*

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



# NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## The Akronite App Has Generated \$1.2M in Local Economic Activity Since Aug. 2020

“When the city first launched Akronite, a points-based program that rewards users for shopping locally, it was seeking a quick solution to aid local businesses whose sales suffered during the pandemic. Now, the program is here to stay after generating more than \$1 million in economic activity in a year.

Nearly 7,000 users and 277 local businesses have participated in the system for spending dollars locally. Customers are rewarded for each in-person and online purchase they make at participating local businesses using linked credit or debit cards through points, or ‘blimps.’ Each blimp is worth \$1 that can be redeemed at any participating location. At the end of each month, the city reimburses merchants for rewards they accepted. It is free for businesses to use....

‘At the time [the app was launched] with COVID, all the small businesses were hurting,’ said Sean Vollman, deputy mayor for integrated development. ‘There was a great need when we rolled this out, and it’s gone really well to the point of continuing the program for at least a few more years.’” —*Abbey Marshall, Akron Beacon Journal, Jan. 6, 2022*

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

## Akron Developer Tony Troppe Has Big Plans to ‘Densify’ Downtown Block Dedicated to Culture

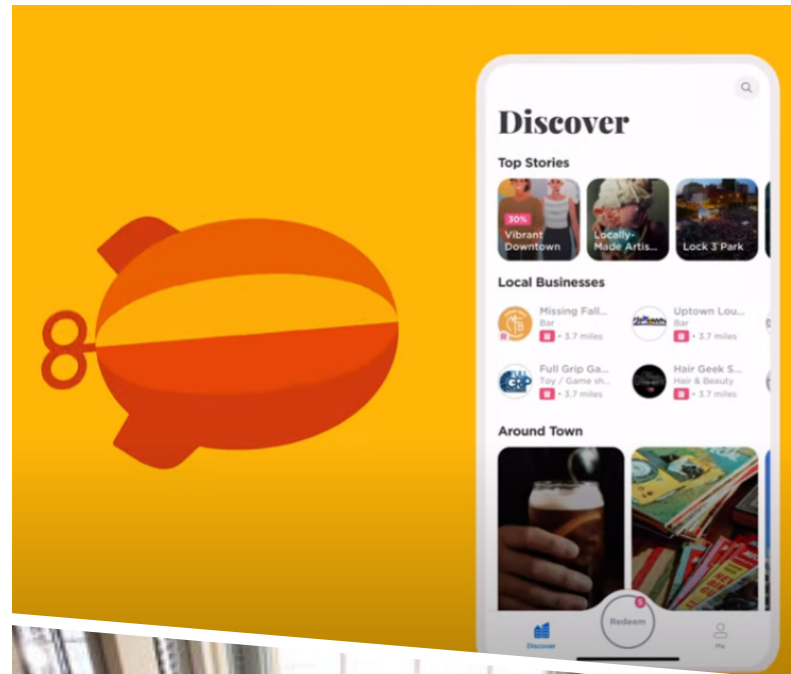
“No one can see it, but there’s a 28-unit apartment building with a glass-topped atrium funneling sunlight down five stories onto the floor of 250-seat banquet hall beside a new distillery and restaurant.

Now that Crave is moving out of Castle Hall at the busy corner of Market and High streets, Akron developer Tony Troppe can really get going on the \$5 million project.

With a second new apartment building planned just feet away, Troppe and his Everett Group are planning to honor the architecture of a city block he mostly owns and, with an array of commercial tenants, is dedicated to arts, entertainment and culture....

While most developers are converting old office space into apartments, new residential construction downtown since 2000 has involved student housing south of Exchange or townhome apartments in the Northside District above MLK Boulevard. Troppe would be building up, adding tenants to Akron’s central location for downtown arts and entertainment.” —*Doug Livingston, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 17, 2021*

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





# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS



## AKRON SELFIE MUSEUM OWNER AIMS TO ENGAGE CITY YOUTH THROUGH ART, ENTREPRENEURSHIP

There's a new museum in Akron dedicated to the art of the selfie, but the owner's vision goes beyond the creative sets inside....

"We've worked with several different local artists all around the community to make my vision come to life," said [Owner, Tiffany Roper]. "And so from the moment you get off the elevator you're immersed in this world of art and photography and positivity, and so that was really important in that we use every inch of this space to its best advantage." [Find out more.](#)

## DEBORAH HOOVER ANNOUNCES 2022 DEPARTURE AS PRESIDENT, CEO OF BURTON D. MORGAN FOUNDATION

Upon her departure at the end of June 2022, she will be a consultant at her own firm, Feldspar Consulting Group, which will work at the intersection of entrepreneurship and philanthropy to help nonprofits, philanthropy, educators and communities support entrepreneurs and ecosystem builders, according to a news release on Monday, Oct. 4. [Find out more.](#)



## ROETZEL & ANDRESS RECRUITS NEW CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

Roetzel & Andress named a new chief marketing officer in Seth Apple, who will oversee firmwide marketing and business development across the Akron-based firm's nine offices. [Find out more.](#)

## UNIVERSITY OF AKRON ENGINEERING PROFESSOR DEVELOPS 3D PRINTED SMART SENSOR TO IMPROVE A RUNNER'S PERFORMANCE

Dr. Jae-Won Choi recently received a \$1 million grant from the National Science Foundation to develop a soft pressure sensor for a shoe insert that can improve a runner's performance. [Find out more.](#)



## GREATER AKRON CHAMBER ELECTS TIA RAMLOW AS BOARD CHAIR

Today the Board of Directors of the Greater Akron Chamber elected Tia Ramlow, President of Great Work! Employment Services as Chair of the Board. It is expected that Ramlow will serve through March 2024 in that role. [Find out more.](#)

## WHO'S NEXT: [WE ARE](#) ARTIST ALEXANDRIA COUCH IN CANVAS MAGAZINE

At 23, Alexandria Couch already has a relatively prolific career—including painting a mural in Public Square downtown [Cleveland] and beginning a Master of Fine Arts program at Yale University. But for Couch, connecting herself and her work to her community and other artists in it is one of the best parts. [Find out more.](#)



# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

## ARTIST DERIN FLETCHER FINDS HER OWN PATH WITH AKRON STUDIO

After earning a degree in industrial design, Derin Fletcher shifted to portrait art and says her new downtown studio is a dream come true....

After a few months in her downtown studio, Fletcher is taking a limited number of commissions, in addition to offering classes for children and adults.

She also hosts “Paint and Sip” programs, where she leads a group in creating their own art on a theme, with a little adult beverage thrown in to liven things up. [Find out more.](#)

## AKRON RUBBERDUCKS RECEIVE A 2021 PILLAR AWARD FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

After hiring a community relations coordinator in mid-February, the Akron RubberDucks have done whatever it can to give back to the community that it says has done so much to support the organization. The Akron RubberDucks have volunteered for several organizations around the Greater Akron area, including The Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, Habitat for Humanity of Summit County, Ben Curtis Family Foundation, One of a Kind Pet Rescue, Salvation Army, Akron Marathon, and Haven of Rest Ministries. [Find out more.](#)

## METISENTRY RECEIVES A MEDICAL MUTUAL SHARE AWARD FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

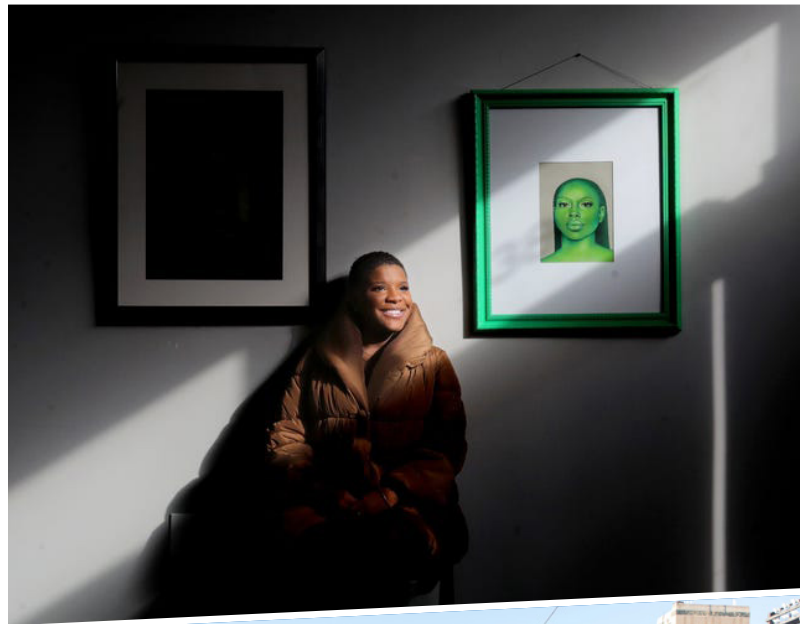
[Metisentry] strives to be active in the local community and to support and work with local businesses. Metisentry realizes the importance of being involved in the community, especially from a philanthropic perspective. As a small business with limited resources, it has discovered it can have a greater impact by involving other local businesses in its efforts. [Find out more.](#)

## DEBORAH HOOVER NAMED PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR BY SBN ONLINE

Deborah D. Hoover has been serving the Northeast Ohio community through the entrepreneurship-focused philanthropy of Burton D. Morgan Foundation since 2007 as president and CEO and, before that, as program officer. She says it has been an honor to lead and advance Burt Morgan’s vision for assisting entrepreneurs with their dreams and strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports entrepreneurs on their journey. [Find out more.](#)

## 30 BROUSE ATTORNEYS NAMED 2022 OHIO SUPER LAWYERS AND RISING STARS

Super Lawyers represents only 5% of Ohio attorneys while Rising Stars represents less than 2.5% of attorneys who are under 40 or have been practicing law for ten years or less. Lawyers are recognized through peer nominations based on their professional achievements. The list includes 13 Akron-based Super Lawyers and 5 Akron-based Rising Stars. [Find out more.](#)





# TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

## FEATURED PROPERTY

### Hermes Building | 43 E. Market St.

Beautifully renovated office space in the historical heart of downtown. Walking distance to nearby amenities that include dining, residential, and entertainment providing the opportunity to experience all that downtown Akron has to offer. Formerly occupied by historical architects and engineers, this unique space is for innovative companies and thinkers alike.



For more information, contact  
Kimberly Beckett  
330-374-7676  
kbeckett@  
downtownakron.com

## FEATURED BUSINESS

### Vantage Aging 388 S. Main Street, Ste 325

"We are all going to be at the age where we might need a helping hand, where we might need a friend to rely on, or where we might need resources from our community," says Amina Hall, Director of Community Engagement at Vantage Aging. "We want to make sure that individuals age with dignity and that their caregivers have a peace of mind." Vantage Aging, founded in 1975 as Mature Services, promotes a positive perspective on aging and focuses on serving the senior population. Headquartered in Akron, the nonprofit accomplishes its mission through its four core programs. —CVCA's Katherine Downing, Max Pastoria, and Alicia Chamberlain meet with Vantage Aging's Amina Hall and Ted Watko

[Click here to read the entire article.](#)



### FIRST PHASE OF REIMAGINE METRO COMPLETE

Reimagine METRO is a new plan to provide more useful transit service to residents and visitors of Summit County.

The first phase of Reimagine METRO is the Transit Service Plan, a draft fixed-route bus network for Summit County that seeks to make transit more useful to more people, by expanding access to more destinations and opportunities.

METRO has designed a Draft Reimagined Network based on feedback that was gathered as part of the Strategic Plan in 2020.

The first public outreach period on this new network took place in the fall of 2021. A revised version of the Draft Reimagined Network, as well as scenarios for how METRO's network could look with more funding is currently in the works and will be shared with the public in late January. Updates will be available at [reimagine-metro.com](https://reimagine-metro.com).

METRO will complete the study by the summer of 2022 and anticipates that new service will begin in the spring of 2023.

[find out more about Reimagine Metro.](#)

### 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)

### SUMMIT STORIES

"Timothy B. has lived in Summit County for 30 years and has relied on METRO RTA to get him to work, home, and other destinations in the county. He recently purchased a scooter to get around and is happy to know he can bring the scooter on board the bus as long as it is folded and properly stored."

Summit Stories are stories of the people, places and things encountered in and around public transit that travel back and forth and up and down Summit County.

[Read more Summit Stories at summitstories.org.](https://summitstories.org)



# INFRASTRUCTURE

## PROGRESS ON CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE IS EVERYWHERE IN NORTHEAST OHIO

"Maybe you haven't noticed—or maybe you're the swear-behind-the-windshield type with images of tiny flashing red lights burnt into your brain—but there are more bicyclists on the road than there were just a few years ago.

And around Northeast Ohio, like much of the rest of the country, there are more places for them to ride and more still on the way, whether they be dedicated bike paths through bucolic environments or lanes on existing roads dedicated to cyclists.

It's about more than just pleasing prolific pandemic pedal pushers. Ask those who work to build cycling infrastructure, and even some area developers, and they'll tell you that good bicycling infrastructure is key to attracting the best and brightest new residents and employees—which means it's also key to retaining and rebuilding populations and driving growth." —*Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Nov. 12, 2021*

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

## WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN TO THE INNERBELT? AKRON TO SEEK PUBLIC INPUT ON FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT

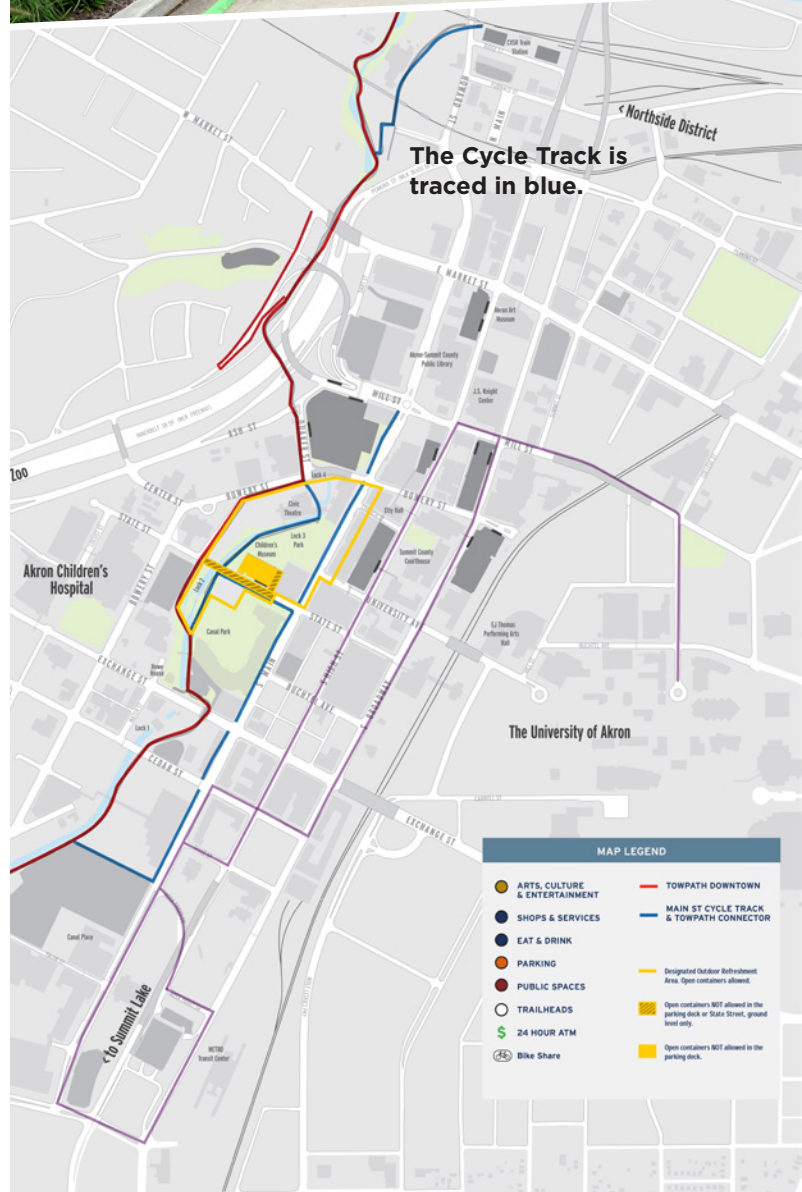
"The city of Akron is launching a public engagement process in the new year to invite input from residents about the future of the Innerbelt.

Originally built in the 1970s as a way to connect downtown Akron to the suburbs, the Innerbelt never lived up to expectations. Since 2017, the Ohio Department of Transportation has been decommissioning a 30-acre stretch of the highway north of Exchange Street...

Earlier this year, the Office of Integrated Development formed the Innerbelt Advisory Committee, which is tasked with exploring future redevelopment options. The informal committee meets on a monthly basis and is composed of 13 members, including people whose lives had been impacted by the construction of the highway.

The committee is led by Liz Ogbu, a nationally recognized spatial justice activist, urbanist and designer whose expertise lies in 'engaging and transforming unjust urban environments.'" —*Seyma Bayram, Akron Beacon Journal, Nov. 28, 2021*

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







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