

DOWNTOWN AKRON QUARTERLY UPDATE



2ND QUARTER 2020
DOWNTOWN AKRON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

DOWNTOWN AKRON PANDEMIC RESPONSE

2nd Quarter Stay-at-Home Order and Gradual Reopening

Downtown Akron has been resilient despite the challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. Businesses continue to contemplate slow sales, limited supply product availability, and, most importantly, considerations for the health and well-being of their employees and customers. As more about the virus has become known, business owners, organizations and individuals have found ways to safely serve their customers and patrons while maintaining safe environments for employees.

Despite the shutdown of physical spaces and the cancellation or postponement of traditional large summer gatherings, downtown businesses took an array of approaches to maintain connections to customers, including offering online ordering with carry out and delivery options, shifting to online sales through their websites, live-streaming sales, music performances, webinars, panel discussions, story times, lunch and learns, artist profiles, meditation, streaming films, and more. In fact, online events kept pace with live events from previous years (see below), and nearly half of downtown eateries offered some variation of carry out or delivery service in the second quarter. For a partial listing of online offerings created by downtown businesses and organizations, see page 4.

Gradual reopening has brought additional challenges as caution, physical distancing and masks have been required by both state and city leaders. With this in mind, Downtown Akron Partnership (DAP) began and continues to maintain an initiative called *Physically Distanced. Socially Connected. Healthy Downtown.* Working with fabricators at Puzzle Creative, DAP created Healthy Downtown Kits consisting of checkout/reception desk Plexiglas screens, face shields, social distancing floor decals and outdoor sidewalk chalk templates. To date, DAP has distributed 45 Healthy Downtown Kits to businesses to assist them in reopening safely.

With the combination of digital offerings and protective equipment, downtown businesses have continued to find ways to continue to serve and engage their customers. Walk-in businesses have reduced the capacity of their seating and the number of visitors allowed in their spaces,

so physical distancing is easier to maintain. Most provide hand sanitizer in touchless dispensers; nearly all have transparent sanitation protocols that they share with the public, and all have posted clear directives for mask-wearing in their spaces.

Downtown businesses have also found creative ways to support one another. For example, when Akronym Brewing had to close its kitchen temporarily for a repair, they worked with a restaurant across the street, Crave, to get a discount on dinner or appetizers for their customers.

As construction on S. Main St. nears its completion, more businesses have begun to reopen. We look forward to a revitalized S. Main St. that truly establishes downtown as Akron's living room—a place that is safe, healthy, vibrant and welcoming to all.

COVID-19 Resources

DAP maintains a regularly updated webpage with COVID-19 resources listed for downtown businesses, employees, residents and visitors at downtownakron.com/news/covid-19.

For questions about COVID-19, visit the Ohio Department of Health website at coronavirus.ohio.gov. You can also call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.

For timely, accurate and helpful resources for both businesses and employees visit GreaterAkronChamber.org or go directly to their resources page.

Open for business: Cilantro Thai & Sushi was one of 45 downtown businesses who took advantage of Healthy Downtown Kits to keep guests and staff safe as they reopened.



HEALTHY DOWNTOWN KITS

PROGRAM PERIOD: APRIL 7 - JUNE 30, 2020

BUSINESSES SUPPORTED	START DOWNTOWN ALUMNI	TOTAL SPENT ON KITS	PER BUSINESS SPEND	EST. VALUE GENERATED
45	29%	\$9,500	\$230	\$17,000*

**Based on DAP staff hours interviewing businesses, working with equipment fabricators and Safety Kit Delivery*

A DOWNTOWN FOR ALL PEOPLE

On the Civil Demonstrations

The protests and demonstrations that arose nationwide after the killing of George Floyd also touched downtown Akron. We share our city's sadness at the brutal injustices and inequalities born of the racism that we continue to witness in our communities and in our country. We never cease to be inspired by the members of our community who lead the way to improvement, equality and justice.

We believe in the people of Akron, and we are committed to nurturing diversity, equity and inclusion in downtown in everything we do—from start-up assistance and business support to creating and programming public spaces where everyone is welcome.

We are also committed to organizational self-reflection and to doing the work to ensure that each of our efforts and support for downtown moves us closer to a vibrant, equitable downtown for all people.

We are not alone. We are proud of the many downtown businesses who are engaging in sincere reflection, with a commitment to improving their policies and practices and keeping the conversation around race and equity top of mind. Efforts to keep the dialogue about confronting and ending racism top of mind included a series of films whose



streaming rental fees were paid by the Knight Foundation. The Nightlight also screened the films through its Virtual Screening Room, sharing the films with its loyal audience. The films were available on consecutive Sundays and were chosen because they speak powerfully to discrimination and racism and offer paths for creating an anti-racist society.

To commemorate Juneteenth, DAP commissioned Gospel On Deck, a participatory gospel event in Lock 3 on Saturday, June 20. Led by vocalist and teacher Jaron LeGrair, the event attracted about 20 participants and was viewed widely on Facebook. [Gospel On Deck is available to view on Facebook.](#)

A few days later, artists and volunteers painted a massive Black Lives Matter mural on Howard St., between North St. and Cuyahoga St. Akron City Council member Tara Samples commissioned the mural and it was designed with assistance from Mac Love. Artists April Couch, Nicole Epps, Gyasi Jones, April Nicholson-Couch, along with community volunteers, completed the painting. DAP commissioned Pritt Entertainment Group to capture drone footage of the mural's dedication, [which can be viewed on Facebook.](#)



RESILIENT DOWNTOWN AKRON

Akron Civic Theatre Creating a Live Performance Reflecting on Issues of Race in Akron

The Akron Civic Theatre established the Millennial Theatre Project and—combined with its Live Virtually platform—is planning a performance piece constructed from interviews regarding the Black community in Akron and around the country.

The approach is part of the theatre's effort to be an active participant in the community it serves and to be a place where all are welcome, regardless of race, religion or beliefs.

In announcing the Millennial Theatre Project, the Civic added in a Facebook post:

"We stand together not just today, but every day with the Black community and all others in the fight against racism, bigotry, hatred, and violence."

Add your perspective by completing the Akron Civic Theatre's [Millennial Theatre Project survey](#)



Health Care Systems in Region Coordinate Response to Expected COVID-19 Peak

By Betty Lin-Fisher, Akron Beacon Journal, Apr. 1, 2020

Every day at 3:30 p.m., leaders of health care systems in 13 counties around the Akron-Canton region join a phone call to discuss how they are preparing for the upcoming surge of coronavirus patients who will need to be hospitalized.

Their goal is to make sure their hospitals are prepared with enough inpatient beds and ventilators, personal protective equipment and even potentially community sites to be used for the sickest patients in the coming weeks.

The health care system CEOs and top leaders are from what's called the Northeast Central Ohio Region 5, an area stretching from "Youngstown, Akron, Canton, all the way to Mansfield and down to Holmes and Tuscarawas counties," said Grace Wakulchik, president and chief executive officer of Akron Children's Hospital.

Wakulchik is also chair of the Akron Regional Hospital Association, which has 14 hospital members in the Akron-Canton region and is part of the larger, 43-member Region 5 area.

The daily calls started on March 13 with CEOs of the Akron regional group, including the Summit County Public Health Department, but that quickly grew to include partners such as Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan and other regional



leaders. More recently, that daily call now has CEOs from 25 to 30 hospitals, health systems or rehabilitation hospitals in the region, said Wakulchik.

"The cooperation and collaboration from everyone in all the counties and the cities has been phenomenal," Wakulchik said in an interview Tuesday. If another call other than the daily call is needed, "everyone gets on the line. It's been absolutely amazing."

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

RESILIENT DOWNTOWN AKRON

Creative Digital Approaches to Overcome Physical Distancing

By DAP Staff, Jun. 2020

The stay at home order necessitated by the coronavirus pandemic resulted in the cancellation of hundreds of events and activities planned in downtown Akron. Businesses and organizations responded by planning more than 150 events online, to bridge the physical distances between us with downtown experiences we could share in our homes. A selection of the digital events includes [Ohio Shakespeare Festival's](#) (OSF) Zoom production of *Romeo & Juliet* for Akron students who would otherwise be studying the play in school. Scenes were released in chronological order on Mondays and Fridays and OSF hosted live Q & A sessions on Facebook for students and viewers. OSF went on to post their radio-play productions of *Dracula* and *Robin Hood: an Adventure with Music*. All three productions can be viewed on their website: <http://www.ohioshakespearefestival.com/dracula-zoom>

[Rubber City Comics](#) enhanced their online, curbside and delivery sales with live-streaming claim sales nearly every week. The casual, humorous approach they took during these sales proved to be highly entertaining, as well as profitable. They continue to host the sales on Facebook on Wednesdays and Sundays at 8 pm. The live streams consistently receive upwards of 2,000 views, and close to 1,000 comments.

Nightlight Cinema continued to bring the best in contemporary and classic film to Akron with their [Virtual Screening Room](#), making it possible to rent and view films at home, while supporting the theater and filmmakers.

Akron Zoo offered daily "Lunch and Learns" with zoo keepers and staff visiting with the animals, presenting fun facts, looks behind the scenes, scientific concepts and more. The zoo produced 61 Lunch and Learns in all, covering Lions to Creepy Crawlers, and rainforests to wildlife in your own backyard, all of which are available to view: <https://www.akronzoo.org/lunch-and-learn>.

Other downtown organizations and businesses that offered online programming include

3rd Thursday	Community Legal Aid Services
Akron Art Museum	Curated Storefront
Akron Children's Museum	DAP
Akron Civic Theatre	Greater Akron Chamber
Akron RubberDucks	Hopson Communications
Akron Soul Train	Jilly's Music Room
Akron Symphony	Lock 3
Akron-Summit County Public Library	Musica
ArtsNow	Summit Artspace
Brouse McDowell	Summit County Historical Society
City of Akron	SYLC Consulting

DOWNTOWN EVENTS

Q2 - 2020	Q2 - 2019	Q2 - 2018
165 (DIGITAL)	171	202



RESILIENT DOWNTOWN AKRON

Akron Summit County Emergency Support Fund to Award \$415,000 in Pandemic Relief Funding

By Megan Becka, Cleveland.com, Jun. 17, 2020

The Akron Summit County COVID-19 Emergency Support Fund on Wednesday announced nine organizations will receive grants totaling \$415,000 in its fourth round of relief funding related to the coronavirus pandemic.

The fund was created through a collaboration between the United Way of Summit County, the city of Akron, the County of Summit, Akron Public Schools, the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, Summit County Public Health and Job & Family Services. In the past few months, the fund has raised more than \$1.7 million and distributed more than \$1.2 million to area organizations.

Grants awarded this round include a \$50,000 grant to the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank for food acquisition and distribution.

Akron Public Schools received \$125,000 to promote

student and family engagement during the pandemic. The funding will also help support United Way's Family Resource Centers, which offer information, assistance and referrals to community resources, including health and social services, academic enrichment and more.

Barberton City Schools received \$40,000 to pay for increased safety measures for the upcoming school year.

The Akron Area YMCA will receive \$20,000 to support its child-care programs.

\$100,000 will go to the Downtown Akron Partnership (DAP) to aid efforts by businesses to recover from the economic downturn caused by the pandemic.

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



It's All in the Cards: Summit court Exceeds Goal for Collection for Seniors

By Stephanie Warsmith, Beacon Journal, May. 28, 2020

When Summit County Probate Court had a clothing drive for seniors in 2017, the court far surpassed its goal of 1,000 pieces.

The court's newest effort to collect and distribute cards to seniors in nursing homes has also exceeded expectations.

The court was hoping for 1,000 cards to buoy the spirits of area seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic but has already collected nearly 3,000. And this number could grow, with the effort running through Monday.

"I have met the most incredible people with huge, generous hearts," said Lisa Mansfield, the community outreach specialist for probate court. "They're so happy to have a way to connect. They wanted to do it. They didn't have a conduit."

The court also has begun a community art project that will involve help from local seniors, with Mansfield dropping off materials for the project while delivering cards to nursing homes. The project, called Birds of a Feather, will feature cut-out birds colored by seniors.

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

VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Agencies Team up to Distribute Thousands of Cloth Masks in Akron Area

By Akron Beacon Journal staff, May 11, 2020

Local agencies are teaming up to distribute another 24,700 washable and reusable cloths masks across the Akron area.

Goodwill Industries of Akron said in a news release that it will produce the masks with its industrial sewing team.

The Centers for Disease Control and other public health experts have released guidelines recommending cloth face coverings in public. Many families, however, do not have access to protective masks, the agency said.

“Goodwill and its industrial sewing team are honored to be able to supply face coverings to the community through this award,” said Nancy Ellis McClenaghan, president and CEO of Goodwill Industries, serving Summit, Portage, Medina, Ashland and Richland counties. “We are very proud to be able to help keep people in our community safe through the use of face coverings.”

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

City of Akron Announces Temporary Summer Patio Permit Program

By City of Akron – Mayor’s Office, Jun. 9, 2020

Mayor Horrigan has announced a new Temporary Summer Patio Permit, in partnership with Summit County Public Health, to assist local establishments in welcoming patrons back safely. The permits enable restaurants and bars to expand or create temporary outdoor spaces to encourage physical distancing.

The City’s Office of Integrated Development worked across departments to establish a single application for businesses to use. The applications will open on June 9, 2020, and can be found by visiting www.akronohio.gov/tempsummerpatio. There is no charge to apply. Temporary permits issued through September 23, 2020 will be valid through November 4, 2020.

While the City will not be closing streets for this permit, businesses can apply to utilize sidewalks, alleyways, public parking lots, or street parking spaces for their temporary patio. The proposed location must be adjacent to the property.

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



VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Rewarding Civic Pride and Boosting the Local Economy? Akron, Ohio is Trying Out a Start-Up for That

By Jonathan Shieber, *Techcrunch*, Jun. 15, 2020



Akron, Ohio, the hometown of LeBron James; the seat of the U.S. tire industry; the 127 largest city in the U.S.;

and the home of America's first toy company, is now the latest site of a global experiment in whether cities can use behavioral economics to help foster good citizenship.

Thanks to the work of the city's deputy mayor for integrated development, James Hardy, Akron is the first city to roll out services from an Israeli-based company called Colu. A startup backed by just over \$20 million in financing from American and Israeli investors, the company has developed an app-based rewards service that cities can roll out to provide perks to users.

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



Downtown Beautification

During the warmer days of spring, DAP staff, ambassadors and volunteers worked to replant downtown planters, flower boxes and flower beds. Despite a reduced downtown population due to the pandemic, the public spaces of downtown are uniquely beautiful, important areas of respite during a time when the traditional use of downtown is impossible. Beautiful public spaces emphasize the importance of downtown as a destination, and they support the business ecosystem by encouraging foot traffic, expanding the possibilities for visitors to enjoy carry out food and safe social interaction, and maintaining a high quality of life experience for downtown workers and residents.

The Thoughtful Investment Our Cities' Public Spaces Need

By James J. Hardy, Deputy Mayor, Akron, Ohio, Jun. 22, 2020

There is bipartisan agreement among nearly every member of Congress that America's infrastructure is in dire need of attention. But while "infrastructure" usually invokes roads, rails and airports, we also need investment in a different kind of infrastructure: our communities' public spaces. These parks, trails and other open spaces that bring people together make up a crucial part of our cities' civic infrastructure. In a time of pandemic, economic disruption and growing rage over police brutality and systemic racism, public spaces are more important than ever.

President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal included programs like the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps that, in providing millions of jobs, not only built or rehabilitated hundreds of thousands of structures but also created more than 75,000 acres of park land. It's time for us to consider what modern, equitable versions of these programs could do for our economy, for unemployed Americans and for the well-being of the communities we call home.

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



VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Residential Development

Q2 - 2020	UNITS	% LEASED	% OCCUPIED
THE BOWERY	92	62%	41%
LAW BUILDING*	107	NA	NA
ASCEND AT CITICENTER*	147	NA	NA

*under construction

New Businesses

Elk & Elk, Ltd.

12 E. Exchange St., 2nd Floor | elkandelk.com

SaaS Factory

17 S. Main St., Suite 201 | saasfactory.capital

New Investment in Downtown

Downtown is critical to the identity and success of our city and region with programs, events, communications and strategy focused on the success of Akron's urban core. Our downtown property owners are key stakeholders. Their investment in the neighborhood helps strengthen downtown's position as a hub for employment, arts and culture throughout the county. Congratulations to our newest downtown property owners:

Full Grip Games.com LLC

115 E Market St. | fullgripgames.com

Business Outreach

Q2 - 2020	CONTACTS MADE*	CONTACT GOAL
RETAIL OUTREACH	84	90
BUSINESS OUTREACH	39	32
RETAIL AND BUSINESS PROSPECTS**	30	25

* 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 promotes 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	WEBSITE TRAFFIC	Q2 - 2020	YTD	EMAIL NEWSLETTER	Q2 - 2019	Q2 - 2020
FACEBOOK	7,459	7,580	USERS	20,375	64,575	NUMBER PUBLISHED	12	8
TWITTER	9,069	9,092	SESSIONS	25,020	78,358	SENDS	52,455	67,716
INSTAGRAM	4,338	4,448	PAGE VIEWS	47,033	158,139	OPENS	10,096	15,005
LINKEDIN	1,236	1,287				CLICKS	1,287	1,389
						SUBSCRIBERS	—	16,820

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

CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING

DAP Ambassador Stats Apr. 1 - May. 31, 2020

7,103
TRASH COLLECTED (LBS)

24
MOTORIST/VEHICLE ASSISTANCE

46
GRAFFITI REMOVED

87
PARKING ASSISTANCE

265
BUSINESS CONTACTS MADE

634
BUS STOPS CLEANED

89
SAFETY ESCORTS

849
HOSPITALITY ASSISTANCE

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

SIGNET LLC APPOINTS MARK CORR AS CEO

By Crain's Cleveland Business Staff, Jun. 4, 2020

Signet LLC, an Akron-based private investment firm with a busy real estate operation, has named Mark Corr as president and CEO.

Corr stepped in last summer as acting CEO after the unexpected death of longtime CEO and partner Ken Krismanth, according to a news release. Corr previously had served as Signet's president and chief operating officer. [Read the full story on Crainscleveland.com](#)

AKRON JUDGE RECEIVES KSU'S ALUMNI AWARD

By Beacon Journal Staff, Jun. 11, 2020



Akron Municipal Court Judge Annalisa Williams has received the Kent State University Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award for 2020.

The award honors alumni who have made outstanding contributions in their profession and the community. [Read the full story on Ohio.com](#)

JEFFREY PRITT NAMED ONE OF CRAIN'S CLEVELAND BUSINESS 20 IN THEIR 20S

By Crain's Cleveland Business Staff, Jun. 13, 2020

Jeffrey Pritt wasn't going to wait to rise up through the ranks of someone else's company. Heck, he didn't even wait until he finished high school to start his own business with his older brother, Ryan.



Perhaps more impressive still, more than a decade later that business is still around and has grown into the Pritt Entertainment Group that the two brothers still own and run, with Ryan as president and Jeffrey as creative director. The firm has eight employees, a slew of clients, accolades that include multiple Emmy nominations, and is redeveloping its own building on Main Street in downtown Akron to facilitate future growth. [Read the full story on Crainscleveland.com](#)

KINGSBURY TO LEAD SUMMIT EDUCATION INITIATIVE'S RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS

Summit Education Initiative News, Jun. 18, 2020



Dr. Diana Kingsbury will soon join the Summit Education Initiative team as the Director of Research and Analytics. Dr. Kingsbury will lead SEI's data team to inform and inspire continuous improvement in educational outcomes and equity for all students in Summit County. She will replace Dr. Matthew Deevers, who recently transitioned to the role of Executive Director.

Dr. Kingsbury earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in political science at the University of Akron, where she also served as a research associate and a graduate instructor at the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics. [Read the full story on Seisummit.org](#)

DID YOU KNOW THAT EVERY DOWNTOWN AKRON BUSINESS HAS THEIR OWN PAGE ON DOWNTOWNAKRON.COM?

COMPANY PROFILE

Each business page consists of the following elements:

- Company name, address, phone, website and social media links.
- Up to three photos of interior, exterior and/or product, and a company logo.
- Company description.
- Location generated on a map.

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

SUBMIT AN EVENT TO DAP'S EVENT CALENDAR

Use our online form (**NOTE: your event must take place within DAP's 42-block Special Improvement District in downtown Akron**).

We reserve the right to edit submissions for grammar, style and accuracy. Photos accompanying your event may also be submitted and must be sized 600 x 400 pixels.

QUARTERLY DISTRICT MEETINGS

During the pandemic, DAP is working to host district meetings digitally. For up-to-date information, visit www.downtownakron.com/district

Canal District: Aug. 13, 2020
2 p.m. | This meeting will be digital. Contact DAP for meeting information.

Northside District: Sep. 10, 2020
1 p.m. | This meeting will be digital. Contact DAP for meeting information.

Historic Arts District: Oct. 8, 2020
10 a.m. | This meeting will be digital. Contact DAP for meeting information.

Contact Kimberly Beckett at 330-374-7676 or kbeckett@downtownakron.com if you would like to be added to the meeting invitation list for your district.

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS



ATTORNEY HARRY MCKEEN AMONG NORTHEAST OHIO ATTORNEYS RECOGNIZED COMMUNITY LEGAL AID FOR PRO BONO SERVICE

By Community Legal Aid Staff, May 18, 2020

Each year, Community Legal Aid honors attorneys who demonstrate a commitment to serve and strengthen our community by their involvement in the Volunteer Legal Services Program.... Attorney Harry McKeen joined Legal Aid's volunteer program in November of 2011. He is also a faithful volunteer for the VALID clinic offered through the University of Akron School of Law, which helps individuals overcome barriers to employment through record sealing and clearing drivers' license suspensions. [Read the full story on CommunityLegalAid.org](#)

LEADERSHIP AKRON SELECTS 39 FOR NEW CLASS, INCLUDES LEADERS FROM AKRON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, BROUSE MCDOWELL, CLEVELAND CLINIC AKRON GENERAL

By Beacon Journal Staff, Jun. 24, 2020

Leadership Akron on Wednesday announced that 39 applicants have been selected for its 2020-21 Signature Program.

The class includes participants from Greater Akron's business, government, and nonprofit sectors.

Participants will become involved in an array of experiences to set the stage for further involvement as civic-minded leaders. [Read the full story on Ohio.com](#)

AKRONYM BREWING

Akronym marked their 2-year anniversary with a weekend celebration June 19 - 21 that included live music, special beer tastings and giveaways. [Read about it on Down-townAkron.com](#)

CUMMINGS CENTER FOR THE HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY

Marked their 2-year anniversary on June 25 and announced a new interdisciplinary graduate certificate program in Public Humanities. [Read about it on Facebook.com/CCHPsych](#)

AKRON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, ACU-SERVE AMONG CLEVELAND.COM'S 2020 TOP WORKPLACES LIST

by Laura Johnston, Cleveland.com, Jun. 29, 2020

A record number of Northeast Ohio employers are being honored this year in cleveland.com and the Plain Dealer's annual Top Workplaces rankings: a record 175 companies, nonprofits, schools, firms and organizations. [Read the full story on Cleveland.com](#)



TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

THE PARADOX PRIZE AND METRO RTA: CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

By Paige Freel, Greater Akron Chamber
#ChooseGrowth, May 28, 2020

Public transportation plays a key role in Greater Akron, particularly relative to its connection to workforce. Without reliable and easily accessible public transportation, the workforce cannot access jobs and employers are unable to access their employees. Fortunately, Northeast Ohio is home to one of the most innovative transportation projects, aiming to solve the 'transportation paradox' in a sustainable manner through The Paradox Prize. And here in Summit County, our local METRO RTA is working towards to the same goal. As the climate around COVID-19 requires increasing attention and care, METRO RTA continues to play a lead role in ensuring that people can not only access transportation reliably, but also in as safe of an environment as possible.

In June 2019, the Fund for Our Economic Future, along with the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, Greater Cleveland Partnership, The Lozick Family Foundation, Cuyahoga County, the Cleveland Foundation, and Drive-Ohio, launched The Paradox Prize, a \$1 million public challenge to invest in big ideas that improve the mobility of Northeast Ohio's workers. The Paradox Prize stemmed from the need to create sustainable solutions that can eliminate the 'transportation paradox' in Northeast Ohio: no car, no job; no job, no car. In less than a year, they have provided over \$1 million in funding to three rounds of eight winners. This funding supports pilot programs and projects, testing mobility solutions that will improve transportation access for local people and connect them directly to jobs and training, solving a key workforce need in the economy. In light of COVID-19, The Paradox Prize has launched a new matchmaking service to support non-profits that may have experienced a surge in mobility needs. This service matches non-profits with public transportation resources that may be able to support to them due to a reduction in services for the time being.

METRO RTA has been working to create a more sustainable workforce mobility system in Summit County as a first round winner of the Paradox Prize. This allowed them to test their pilot FlexRide program in conjunction with ConxusNEO. This is a door-to-door service connecting workers to job hubs in northern Summit County. As COVID-19 became both a major health concern and economic strain, the staff at METRO quickly adjusted in many ways to ensure that the population who was relying on their services, could continue to do so. [Read the full story on GreaterAkronChamber.com](#)

FEATURED PROPERTY

The Bowery 156 S. Main Street

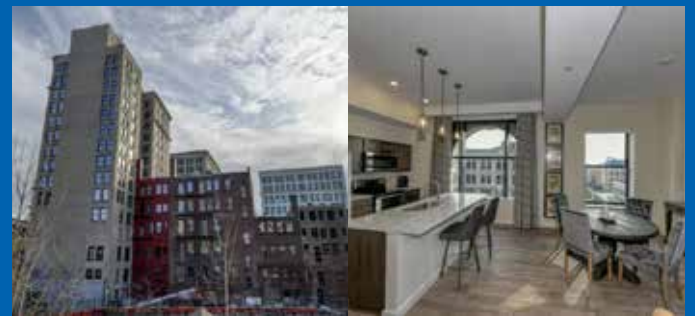
Studios, 1, and 2-Bedroom apartment homes

- Modern interiors in a historic building
- Located in the heart of downtown Akron

On-site Amenities include

- Amazing views of Downtown Akron and the Canal
- Secure, keyless entry
- High open-air ceilings
- Stainless steel appliances, including dishwasher
- In-suite washer and dryer
- Plank luxury flooring with carpeted bedrooms

For more information, visit bowerydistrict.com



FEATURED BUSINESS

Barley House 376 S Main St

Located in the historic O'Neil's building in downtown Akron, The Barley House isn't just a pub, sports bar or nightclub. It truly caters to everyone. Located in the heart of downtown, Barley House often opens its front doors to give a relaxed, cafe-style lunch to patrons from area businesses.

Featuring

- sandwiches
- pizzas and appetizers
- specialty cocktails
- dancing
- nightlife
- live performances
- trivia nights



PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION



Get a Sneak Peek at Akron's New Rubber-Worker Statue

By Sue Walton, Crain's Cleveland Business, May. 29, 2020

Akron is giving folks a glimpse of a future project that will honor the city's past.

Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan on Thursday, May 28, released new pictures of a statue of a rubber worker being created by Northeast Ohio sculptor Alan Cottrill. The 12-foot bronze statue will serve as nod to Akron's Rubber City heritage and stand in a new roundabout at Main and Mill streets that's part of the city's overhaul of Main Street. An unveiling is planned for early September, the city said.

"This statue will stand as a lasting testament to the sacrifices of every worker in the tire and rubber industry in Akron," Horrigan said in a statement. "These men and women — who served as janitors, engineers, office staff and laborers — became the bedrock of the Akron community, and helped our nation win two world wars. These workers built and sustained our city for generations, and their stories and legacies live on in us. We are excited to watch this project come together and we look forward to dedicating it in a way that honors their memories."

[Click here to read the full story on Crainscleveland.com](https://www.craincleveland.com/story/news/local/akron-rubber-worker-statue/2020/05/29/akron-rubber-worker-statue/3222222002/)

Akron Sewer Link is Finally Complete

By Alan Ashworth, Beacon Journal, Jun. 19, 2020

Akron's 6,300-foot tunnel project reached another milestone this week when the final sewer connection was completed, the city announced Thursday.

Construction on the 27-foot diameter Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel began in 2016.

In August 2018, "Rosie," a boring machine used to plow a path underground, finished its work. About \$200 million in the project's contract value went into design and construction work, much of that to local companies.

The latest milestone means that 100% of downtown Akron sewers flow to and through the tunnel — including nine combined sewer overflow structures — for treatment at the city's water reclamation facility.

"This is a truly significant milestone," Mayor Dan Horrigan said in a news release. "A fully operational Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel will improve the water quality of our local waterways, including the Cuyahoga River, for generations to come."

[Click here to read the full story on Ohio.com](https://www.ohio.com/story/news/local/akron-sewer-link/2020/06/19/akron-sewer-link/3222222002/)



WHAT'S GOING ON IN DOWNTOWN

Note: Due to the pandemic, many programs have been moved online, as virtual events

AGING IS AN ART FORM (4 DIFFERENT CLASSES)

Saturdays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays in August



Each instructor will host 4 classes in August:

Poetry with Greg Milo
Cell Phone Photography with Yoly Miller
Sketching with Danette Rushboldt
BalloFlex with Julie Buckeye

[See ArtsNow for details.](#)

SUNDANCE FESTIVAL FILM SHORTS TOUR 2020

Available beginning Friday, August 14, 2020



Screen the 80-minute program of 6 shorts from this year's festival from [Nightlight's Virtual Screening Room](#).

New films are added regularly, and your online rental helps support the Nightlight in this time when it is not possible to screen movies in person.

LIVE STREAMING CLAIM SALES

Sundays and Wednesdays at 8 p.m.



Check out Rubber City Comics' [Facebook page](#) for live streaming claim sales online Wednesdays and Sundays at 8 p.m. Crazy prices on comics, Funko pop toys, and online fun with your favorite local comic shop staff.

DTC ORGAN TRIO

Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.



Every Tuesday, DTC Trio (Jazz guitarist Dan Wilson, organist Clifford Barnes and drummer David Throckmorton) presents a live streaming concert on DAP's [Facebook page](#) (among others), courtesy of *Live at AV Club* and other sponsors.

DOWNTOWN@DUSK

Thursdays, August 20, 27



An online version of the Akron Art Museum's popular summer concert series continues through August 27, 2020.

8/20 - Sammy DeLeon
8/27 - 15 60 75 The Numbers Band

NEXTSPACE DANCE PERFORMANCE FROM GROUNDWORKS DANCE THEATER

Saturday, August 22, 2020 at 8:30 and 10 p.m.



This drive-in performance will feature the world premiere of "Jigsaw" a new duet choreographed by Executive Artistic Director, David Shimotakahara. Takes place in the parking lot S. Broadway/E. Market/Summit St. [Register here.](#)

STREAMING SATURDAYS

August 15, 22, 29 2020

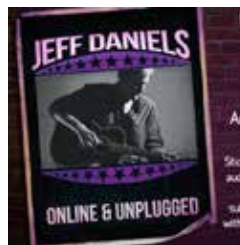


Enjoy live streaming concerts from [Jilly's Music Room](#), featuring your favorite Northeast Ohio acts, broadcast in high-quality sound.

8/15 - Kathy Johnson Group
8/22 - Swizzle Stick Band
8/29 Tracey Thomas CD release

JEFF DANIELS PRESENTED BY AKRON CIVIC THEATRE AND KENT STAGE

Sunday, August 23, 2020 at 7 p.m.



Join Emmy award-winning actor, director, singer/song-writer Jeff Daniels for an intimate online concert experience full of original songs, personal stories from his stage and movie career. [Purchase tickets here.](#)

This photo was taken a couple years ago, but it is also a photograph of the future.

Someday soon, we will be able to do all the things we love to do together in Akron and MUCH more. In the meantime, we can do our best to stay healthy and support one another.



#Downtownakron

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