

DOWNTOWN AKRON: MYTHS vs FACTS

Myth: Downtown is all under construction. You can't get there.

Fact: Traffic is now open both ways along the entire length of Main Street downtown. Yes, there are occasional disruptions for construction and utility work, but technology can easily support helping you find work-arounds for construction almost anywhere in the nation, including Akron.

Myth: No one wants to live downtown.

Fact: Since 2019, 223 new units have been added to downtown Akron, and another 468 have been renovated. 139 are in process, and 144 more are planned for construction. Much of this occurred amid a worldwide pandemic. With more than \$156M invested in residential development since 2018 and an occupancy rate of 90%, we look forward to additional residents making downtown their home.



When people are relocating to Akron, downtown is an excellent place to start. Although rents are generally higher downtown, so is access to amenities like the Towpath, the RubberDucks, museums, the Civic and Knight Stage, the University, excellent green space, and many employers.

Myth: Downtown has a homelessness problem

Fact: Since 2012, there has been a 52% decrease in the Point in Time count of unsheltered people. Downtown actively works across organizations and sectors to coordinate messaging and service outreach to unsheltered people to help them transition into permanent housing. This can be a thankless, challenging task, but nevertheless, over the past year and a half, close to 20 people have successfully transitioned into housing.

Our small unsheltered population is not the result of luck, but of significant work not to let people go unnoticed, and to do the work of consistent relationship-building, understanding, and guidance toward housing.



Myth: Downtown retail is dead.

Fact: Many downtown retailers have been incredibly entrepreneurial and changed operating models to survive and thrive during the past few challenging years.

From July 2020 to December 2021, downtown experienced a net loss of two retail operations. 14 closed, and 12 opened during that time frame. In 2022, four businesses have closed, with 11 new ones scheduled to be open by this summer.

DAP has been specifically focused on building diverse business ownership downtown and has so far been successful in this endeavor thanks to our Start Downtown program (formerly the Pop-Up Retail program).

The bottom line is that you are a critical key to the success of downtown businesses. Retail responds to rooftops and foot traffic, so come downtown and be part of that foot traffic.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT DOWNTOWN AKRON.



DOWNTOWN
STORIES



MORE THINGS
TO DO



PLACES TO
EAT



DOWNTOWN
GUIDES



DOWNTOWN IS WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING

Downtown Akron is very much alive and is a place in which all of Akron can celebrate their community and aspire for the future. Right now, downtown is evolving, as all successful ecosystems do in response to environmental changes. You can drive this evolution by being the change you want to see in your own city and replacing false perceptions with accurate knowledge and personal action. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Plan one outing each week to a downtown restaurant, arts venue, or public space.
- Check out the downtown guides on our website, and let them inspire you to choose your own adventure. Share these guides with your friends, family, and colleagues.
- Have staff social events or celebrate special occasions with unique downtown experiences at OH SNAP Photo Lab or the Great Escape Room.
- Enjoy patio dining at one of downtown's many outdoor restaurant patios—Cilantro, El Patron, and DBA are just a few of the many options.
- Take a free outdoor fitness class downtown. We've got yoga, line dancing, bootcamp, Zumba, Pilates, and kickboxing happening all summer long.
- Come to a roller skate party, play chess, or simply enjoy a moment on the porch swings on Cascade Plaza.
- Join us for Lunch on Main Street every Wednesday this summer in front of Lock 3.
- Hit the once-a-month happy hour to celebrate and network at Lock 3 on the last Thursday of every month.
- Encourage an on-site work day. Have a brown bag picnic in a public space, cash mob a restaurant, or take a grab-and-go lunch back to the office.
- Enjoy outdoor recreational sports at Summit Sports and Social, or watch a RubberDucks game.
- Make your next movie night a trip to The Nightlight, now featuring closed captioning for a more accessible experience.



- Hang out in the Akronym Biergarten this summer.
- Grab an adult beverage in a DORA cup from Barley House, Baxter's, or the Lockview, and take a stroll within DORA limits.

- Enjoy a show or live music at one of downtown's several music and theater venues such as the Knight Stage, Jilly's, Musica, Baxter's Speakeasy, BLU Jazz, or Lock 3.

- Drink up. Start your Summit Brewpath adventure downtown at Akronym, Missing Falls, or R. Shea Brewing, or just outside downtown at Lock 15.

- Get caffeinated. Start your Drip Drive adventure at Muggswigz, Akron Coffee Roasters, or Evelyn's Coffee & Bahn Mi.

- Enjoy concerts, yard games, bike and scooter tours, and more. Adopt a day with your team at work, and we'll figure out how to recognize your office as a trendsetter.

- Stop the madness. The next time you hear a downtown myth, shut it down with positivity and truth, then invite that person to come see what they've been missing.

Still not sure how to bring your energy downtown? DAP will customize a walking, biking, or scooter tour just for you and your team! Email us at info@downtownakron.com to set it up.

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