

# DOWNTOWN AKRON QUARTERLY UPDATE



Photo: Jeff Klauw



Photo: Togeth



**2ND QUARTER 2018**  
**DOWNTOWN AKRON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Development Fund of the Western Reserve (DFWR) announces its fourth Community Loan Fund project financing

Akron The **Akron Community Revitalization Fund (ACRF)** is announcing its fourth loan for \$580,000, which is being used to build out tenant improvements in the former Advanced Elastomer Systems (AES) Building. Between 1996 and 2016, the property had 90% occupancy rates until Exxon Mobil Advanced



Elastomer Systems (AES) vacated resulting in the loss of 200 jobs and contributing to downtown Akron having an office vacancy in excess of 20%. The new

tenants, **OHM Advisors** and **CommuniCare Health Services**, are expected to bring approximately 70 quality full-time jobs from outside Summit County into downtown Akron. These employees will help to support existing downtown businesses.

The loan was made through the Akron Community Revitalization Fund (ACRF), a \$6.75M community endeavor which was capitalized by over thirty philanthropic foundations,

individual and corporate grants, new markets tax credit equity and private loans and investments. The ACRF was established to assist with financing important community and economic development projects within Akron's most economically distressed neighborhoods, providing more flexible rates and terms than is available through conventional financing. The loan is part of a larger financing package arranged with First National Bank (FNB) and People's Bank. Village Capital Corporation of Cleveland assisted DFWR in underwriting the project.

DFWR Executive Director, Chris Burnham said, "We're very pleased to announce our fourth ACRF loan. We're currently working through credit review of our fifth and sixth loans, which we should be able to announce very soon." The ACRF is impacting the on-going revitalization of Akron's downtown area envisioned by its many community funders.

David Schipper of **The Schipper Group** said, "We appreciate DFWR for its willingness to collaborate with our lender FNB and People's Bank in order to make this loan which helped us bring these new companies into downtown Akron. Schipper Group has been committed to downtown for more than 25 years, and we're proud to have a part in its ongoing revitalization."

## Apartments with a downtown Akron view awarded \$2 million in tax credits

*By Katie Byard, reprinted with permission from Akron Beacon Journal/Ohio.com*

Another 112 apartments could be coming to downtown Akron across the street from where roughly 90 apartments are in the works.

The projects — spearheaded by different developers — are directly across from each other on South Main Street.



On Wednesday, state officials revealed that the new project — which would create apartments in the 100-plus-year old Law Building at 159 S. Main Street —

has landed about \$2.4 million in state historic preservation tax credits.

Tom Rybak is the New Jersey developer and architect who owns the Law Building, at South Main and Bowery streets, north of the Akron Civic Theatre.

He bought the structure, currently an office building that has

suffered from low occupancy rates in the last several years, for \$2 million in late 2016 and plans a project with an estimated cost of \$24.5 million.

He said Wednesday his plan all along was to convert some of the building's 11 floors into apartments.

Across the street is the proposed \$40 million Bowery redevelopment project that would bring 90 to 100 new apartments downtown, as well as add retail and office space.

It involves redeveloping six empty and long-empty buildings, including the vacant 12-story Landmark Building, at Bowery and Main streets.

The two apartment projects are seen as a crucial part of upgrading downtown Akron to attract residents, retailers and other businesses.

During a news conference Wednesday in the Law Building's lobby, Rybak said real estate investors all across the country are turning to downtown housing projects as the market for shopping malls and office buildings has waned.

Read the full story on Ohio.com: <http://ow.ly/MwXI30kPVQr>

# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Several new or existing businesses made the move to downtown Akron over this past quarter ranging from consignment retail, banking, organizations and restaurant/coffee shop.

Downtown Akron Partnership is now in phase four of the pop-up retail program and DAP welcomed Eartha Vision last quarter. Continued interest in storefront locations continue and it's anticipated that more local shops and services will receive funding through the third quarter. This phase is funded by Burton D. Morgan Foundation and focuses on storefronts on Main Street and surrounding corridors.

## Welcome new businesses

### Magnet

9 N. Main St. | 216-391-7002 | [www.manufacturingsuccess.org](http://www.manufacturingsuccess.org)

**MAGNET: The Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network** will open a new office at 9 N. Main St and focus on serving the manufacturing community. MAGNET partner with organizations that have strong reputations of helping manufacturer's grow, such as ConxusNEO and BOUNCE, Akron Regional Chamber, Canton Regional Chamber, area economic development boards and county state, community, public and private colleges and universities.

### Northside Cellar

106 N. Main St. | Facebook: [@bluelipsspecials](https://www.facebook.com/bluelipsspecials)

**Northside Cellar** carries both new contemporary fashion, as well as consignment clothing & accessories for every age. A variety of local artwork is available and displayed in a gallery like fashion. Furniture and home accessory offerings cover all the bases. Northside Cellar has something for every budget.

### Rubber City McDonalds

55 Furnace St.

The Akron Community Revitalization Fund issued a loan to finance the construction build-out of a single story commercial building in the Northside District into the headquarters, regional training center and warehousing facility entirely for **Rubber City Arches**, a family-owned franchise of McDonald's Restaurants in Northeast Ohio. It will bring 25 jobs into Akron.

### Wells Fargo

222 S. Main St., 4th floor | 234-226-5045

**Wells Fargo's** business banking and middle market banking teams use a localized approach to deliver a breadth of products and services to help businesses succeed financially, including credit, cash management, risk management, employee benefits, succession and wealth management.

### Wholly Joe Coffee Shop and Cafe

11 E. Exchange St. | Facebook: [@WhollyJoeCoffeehouseandbakery](https://www.facebook.com/WhollyJoeCoffeehouseandbakery)

**Wholly Joe Coffee Shop and Café** offers hot and cold coffee drinks, cold brew, teas and food items for breakfast, lunch and dinner. They roast their own coffee beans and hand makes menu items. It is a family-owned business with David Fertig and his son, Derrick as co-owners.

### Northside Marketplace

21 Furnace St. | 234-226-5045

**The Northside Marketplace** expanded and welcomes 11 new vendors bringing the total number of shops and shopkeepers to 60. **United Disability Services, Nicole Crystal Designs, Bizzy Beads Boutique, Stranded Art, The Alpaca Shoppe, Benjamin L. Manista Original Art, ARTESAN Original Art, The Fleur and Flour, Deborah Shapiro Art, Bessie Hyde Leather Works and UA Press.**



Magnet



Northside Cellar



Wells Fargo



Wholly Joe Coffee

# MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

## DAP and ASCVB announce contest designed to encourage downtown Akron dining

Downtown Akron Partnership (DAP) and the Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau (ASCVB) launched a new program on June 1 designed to encourage community members to explore 50 downtown dining destinations.



Eating Downtown - with a formidable monster mascot - runs through Aug. 31 and intends to reach the community who live or work around the 42-block Downtown Akron Special Improvement District.

"There's a diverse selection in downtown-from boutique ice cream and pastries to quick lunches or four-course meals, and from award-winning, nationally-recognized spots to newly-christened kitchens," said Suzie Graham, Downtown Akron Partnership president. "Join us

as our community uncovers and rediscovers downtown Akron's tastiest places."

This program is simple and easy to begin. Once guests receive an Eating Downtown map and punch card, participants start earning punches with every restaurant visited.

Participants get an Eating Downtown map with punch card at any participating restaurant or cafe, the ASCVB office or the DAP office. Present the Eating Downtown card for a quick hole punch at eight restaurants in Downtown Akron and return the completed card to ASCVB or DAP and be entered to win a \$25 gift card to a downtown restaurant.

Diners completing two or more punch cards will be entered in to the grand prize drawing of \$100 in downtown dining gift cards, an overnight stay at the Courtyard Marriott Downtown and a basket of Akron-centric items.

Visit [www.downtownakron.com/eat](http://www.downtownakron.com/eat) for full details and list of participating dining destinations.

## CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING



13,343

TRASH COLLECTED (LBS)

83

GRAFFITI REMOVED

948

BUSINESS CONTACTS MADE

599

SAFETY ESCORTS



329

MOTORIST/VEHICLE ASSISTANCE

8,453

PARKING ASSISTANCE

2,559

BUS STOPS CLEANED

5,935

HOSPITALITY ASSISTANCE

### DAP Ambassador stats Jan-June 2018

# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

## AKRON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM CO-FOUNDER BETSY HARTSCHUH TO RECEIVE LEADERSHIP AKRON'S DISTINGUISHED LEADER AWARD

The **Leadership Akron Alumni Association** named Betsy Hartschuh this year's recipient of its Distinguished Leader Award. The award recognizes a graduate of Leadership Akron who has contributed to a specific issue or cause in the community in an extraordinary and significant way. The award honors Hartschuh's vision and efforts to bring the first children's museum to the Akron area. The **Akron Children's Museum** has attracted over 80,000 people to Lock 3 and downtown Akron, addressing an unfulfilled need for families, that ultimately resulted in a positive economic impact for the community.

## AKRON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SPRING GALA SUPPORTS EDUCATION AND MUSICAL EXCELLENCE

The **Akron Symphony Orchestra** held its annual Spring Gala on April 21 at the John S. Knight Center. More than 270 guests were welcomed to the event by Honorary Chairs Don and Cindy Misheff, with music provided by Theron Brown and Friends. The gala raised more than \$240,000 to support the orchestra's mission to enrich Northeast Ohio through entertaining music and innovative community outreach programs, including Concerts for Kids, Link Up, Akron Youth Orchestras and mentoring music students at Akron North High School.

## 2018 CORPORATE COLLEGE SMART 50 AWARDS PARR

Corporate College, Cuyahoga Community College and Smart Business News announced recipients of the fifth annual Corporate College Smart 50 Awards, presented by Smart Business. Downtown Akron businesses honored this year include Ken Babby, owner and CEO of **Akron RubberDucks** and Elizabeth Bartz, founder and CEO of **State and Federal Communications**. Their positive impact on employment has reinvented the Northeast Ohio landscape into one of the most up-and-coming business regions in the country.

## METRO'S FREE DOWNTOWN LOOP AND FREE FARES

**METRO's** free downtown Loop runs Wednesday through Sunday, June through October. It starts at the Northside Train Station and rolls by Akron favorites, including Lock 3, the Akron Art Museum, the Akron Zoo, Spaghetti Warehouse and the Mustill Store. Get full details at [www.akronmetro.org](http://www.akronmetro.org). Celebrate summer with METRO by riding free on line-service routes every Friday in July and August.

## OUTERBOX EXPANDING ITS DOWNTOWN AKRON LOCATION

In response to increased demand for its search marketing and website development services, the digital advertising agency **OuterBox** is announcing the opening of a second floor. Currently headquartered in the 6,000-square-foot third floor of the Kaiser building, OuterBox was able to negotiate a deal for the second floor, allowing the business to remain in its current building.

"We love being in downtown Akron and particularly in the Kaiser Building. It's been our home for the last six years and has a lot of character that we worked hard to build into it. Moving is not something we want to do, but the need to expand as we near 50 employees is a pressing issue. The second floor alleviates some of these pains for now, and we'll continue to investigate options for our next expansion, which we know is right around the corner," says Justin Smith, CEO at OuterBox.



Betsy Hartschuh



Akron Symphony Orchestra



Outerbox

# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

**A TEAM OF AMBASSADORS NOW WORK SEVEN DAYS A WEEK TO ENSURE A CLEAN, SAFE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT TO MAKE DOWNTOWN ENJOYABLE FOR EVERYONE.**

## SAFETY AMBASSADORS

- Provide escorts to and from businesses and parking locations.
- Report on potential and actual emergencies.
- Work with street level businesses to address security/safety concerns.
- Work to connect panhandlers to available service agencies

## CLEANING AMBASSADORS

- Provide cleaning services to downtown sidewalks.
- Remove litter and graffiti.
- Identify and complete special projects.
- Maintain downtown planters and hanging baskets.

### HOURS OF OPERATION:

Mon-Wed, 7 am-8 pm; Thurs-Fri, 7 am-11 pm  
Sat, 11 am-11 pm; Sun. 8 am-8 pm

**FOR AMBASSADOR SERVICES OR TO REPORT A PROBLEM, CALL THE ON-DUTY SUPERVISOR DURING HOURS OF OPERATION AT 330-706-7383.**

## QUARTERLY DISTRICT MTGS

Quarterly meetings for downtown stakeholders are held the second Thursday of the month. RSVP at [www.downtownakron.com/district](http://www.downtownakron.com/district)

### Canal District:

Aug. 9, Nov. 8  
2-3 p.m. | Barley House

### Northside:

Sept. 13, Dec. 13  
1-2 p.m. | Jilly's Music Room

### Historic Arts:

Oct. 11  
10-11 a.m. | Main Library

## OHM ADVISORS RELOCATES TO DOWNTOWN AKRON LOCATION



Community advancement firm **OHM Advisors** now proudly calls downtown Akron “home”, having recently relocated from Brecksville to the former Advanced Elastomer Systems building on South Main Street. The office of 30 multidisciplinary employees is led by David Krock, PE, principal and managing partner, who accredits the move to the firm’s desire to be part of the growth and part of the

downtown economic revival.

“We’re ecstatic about locating, and growing, an office in downtown Akron to better serve our Northeast Ohio clients, and look forward to being an involved member of the community,” Krock comments.

OHM Advisors, specializing in award-winning work across the architecture, engineering, and planning spheres, also operates Ohio offices in Cleveland’s MidTown corridor and downtown Columbus – supported by 14 offices across Ohio, Michigan and Tennessee, and 450+ industry-leading experts committed to Advancing Communities. Learn more at [www.ohm-advisors.com](http://www.ohm-advisors.com).

## OSWALD COMPANIES MOVES INTO NEW DOWNTOWN AKRON SPACE



**Oswald Companies** is very pleased to continue its commitment to downtown Akron as they moved into expanded space on the 1st floor of the Everett Building. Having been in the United Building for the last three years, Oswald didn’t move far, but is excited about the many new neighbors and organizations settling in and around the corner of Market and Main St. Oswald Companies is one of

the largest privately owned full service risk management and insurance brokers in the country, employing over 450 employee owners with offices in Cleveland, Akron, Columbus, Toledo, Cincinnati and Birmingham, Michigan.

## DRIPS ANSWERS CALL TO REACH PASSIVE CUSTOMERS

*By Judy Stringer, Crain’s Cleveland Business, reprinted with permission*



A funny thing happened on the way to the smartphone. People stopped answering calls.

Aaron Christopher “A.C.” Evans has a theory on why. In the contemporary on-demand economy, he said people have more choices than ever when it comes to how we work, play and connect with others, and we are accustomed to calling the shots. When someone fills out a form on a website, emails a colleague or posts a tweet, it’s done on their time. In this environment, an incoming call has evolved from a thrilling opportunity to break the boredom to an unwelcomed intrusion of your time.

And that perception is a mounting roadblock for service businesses that rely on call centers to interact with their customer base.

Evans’ Akron startup, **Drips**, provides what he calls a “conversational text messaging” platform to help build a new bridge to customers. Read the full article at: <http://ow.ly/j6tw30kT1UM>.

# CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT

## City to begin work on Main Street Corridor project

The city of Akron will begin construction activities for the first phase of the Main Street Corridor Project on Monday July 9, 2018. All southbound lanes of Main Street from East Market Street to University Avenue will be closed starting on that date. Northbound traffic on Main Street will be maintained throughout these limits. Users who normally travel south on South Main Street should use South High Street to access Mill Street or Bowery Street. Mill Street and Bowery Street will be open east and west through Main Street.



For those interested in learning more about the construction activities related to the project, the Main Street Corridor Project team will host a **stakeholder meeting for the public on July 17** in Cascade Plaza from 4 to 6 p.m. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the improvements to Main Street, which will be built over the next two years, along with how access will be maintained through this area while the improvements are

under construction.

Plans are underway for a formal groundbreaking ceremony in late August. Additional information about the project will be announced soon.

For more information about the Main Street Corridor Project and to stay up-to-date on street closures, please visit [www.driveakron.com/projects/main-street-corridor](http://www.driveakron.com/projects/main-street-corridor) or contact Heather Bolestridge, Main Street Corridor Project Communications Manager at [hbolestridge@gstephensinc.com](mailto:hbolestridge@gstephensinc.com) or (330) 375-2501.

**Pedestrian access will be maintained during construction and Main Street shops, restaurants and venue will be open for business.**

## City plans \$2 million investment to replace aging water mains

The city of Akron has obtained funding to replace more than a dozen water mains across the city, which will help to ensure continued operation and prevent costly and inconvenient failures. The \$2 million project will be funded through an Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) grant for annual water main construction, and a low-interest loan through the Ohio EPA's Water Supply Revolving Loan Account.

In recent years, the city has only been able to replace a few thousand feet of water main each year. Thanks to the OPWC grant, the city plans to replace 3.5 miles (20,300 feet) of water mains in 2018. A map showing the locations of the water mains included in the 2018 program is available at:

<http://ow.ly/LfCx30kT7HI>

## FEATURED PROPERTY

**ABIA (Austen Bioinnovation at Akron)**  
47 N. Main St. | 914-708-6754

ABIA offers an innovation and collaborative setting. It offers an excellent location, comprising of two corners, facing N Main and backing up to N High Street along Perkins. Entertainment and dining opportunities cater to the business crowd and to the vibrant nightlife of the city. Multifamily housing developments both new and old are close. The internationally acclaimed University of Akron, Akron Art Museum, Akron Civic Theatre are all within a mile radius. For lease: Up to three floors and 31,000 square feet.



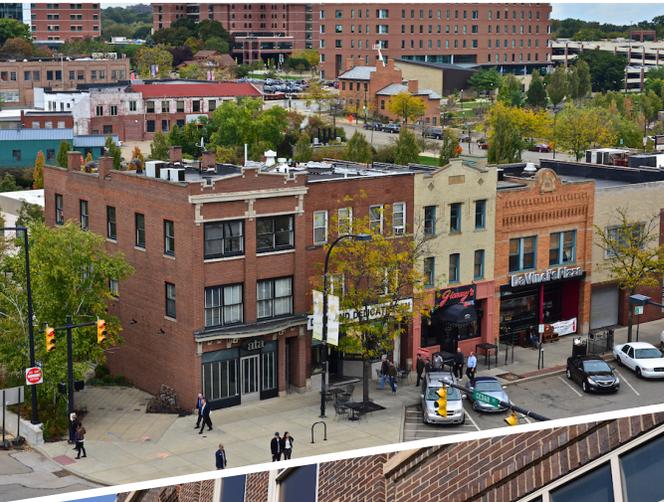
## FEATURED BUSINESS

**Roadrunner Transportation Systems**  
388 S. Main St. | AES Building

Roadrunner Transportation Systems is dedicated to a customer-focused culture that provides flexible, responsive and comprehensive supply-chain and logistics solutions. A major part of the unparalleled Roadrunner customer commitment is employees devoted to fulfilling that company mission. They pride themselves on fast and friendly customer service.



# PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION



## Complete street renovation of Cedar and Exchange Streets will result in safer, smoother pavement and pedestrian-friendly design

As part of the **Cedar and Exchange Complete Streets Project**, the city began resurfacing Exchange Street, between Route 59/Rand Avenue and S. Portage Path on Monday May 14. The city will then resurface Cedar Street between Route 59/Rand Avenue and Rhodes Avenue, which is scheduled to begin within the next month and be completed by mid-July. The city will make adjustments to traffic light timing in an effort to minimize traffic congestion.

For the convenience of motorists, a minimum of one lane of traffic will be maintained during all paving operations. However, motorists should expect delays during the resurfacing and should take caution to watch out for operating construction equipment, raised manhole castings, and bumps/dips in the roadway. Dart Avenue will remain open to West Market Street for westbound motorists electing to avoid the area.

“The pavement in this area is in dire need of replacement, and we are pleased that the newly constructed roadway will result in significantly improved traffic flow and design, Mayor Dan Horrigan said.”

Access to driveways will be maintained throughout construction, but side streets may be closed when work is in the area. Akron METRO will have temporary bus stops and motorists are encouraged to be patient while passengers are being picked up and dropped off.

Please visit [www.DriveAkron.com](http://www.DriveAkron.com) for more information about current construction work in Akron.

## AWR! Construction Site Trolley Tours

The **Akron Waterways Renewed!** program is offering several two-hour bus tours of the completed and active sewer construction projects around the city of Akron in 2018. The tours will start at the Mustill store (57 W. North St., Akron, Ohio 44304), where attendees will learn all about its significance and the history of the canal, as well as the ongoing Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel (OCIT) work. Immediately following a short video about OCIT and a question and answer period, everyone will board the trolley, and we will visit a variety of basins and green infrastructure sites.

This is a first-come, first-serve opportunity. The tour will be primarily by bus, with an opportunity to get out of the bus at construction sites that are not active, weather and time permitting. For groups of more than 5, or to make accessibility accommodations, please contact Heather Bolestridge at (330) 375-2501.

Current tour dates are July 13, July 20, Aug. 3 and Aug. 17 from 1-3 p.m. Register for your space at: <http://ow.ly/yUxx30kUieQ>

# WHAT'S GOING ON IN DOWNTOWN

## NORTH HIGH SPACELIFT KICK OFF

Thursday, July 19 | 6-8 p.m.

19 Maiden Lane | <http://ow.ly/FMCQ30kQOZX>



Come enjoy the North High Street block painted mural designed and implemented by the Art Bomb Brigade and Arts LIFT as well as new lighting, seating and a parklet fabricated by Dominic Falcione of Krunchworks DESIGN+BUILD. The event features live music, food and a chance to meet

the artists involved in the project

## 37TH ANNUAL AKRON AFRICAN FESTIVAL

Saturday/Sunday, July 21 & 22 | 12-9 p.m.

Lock 3 | <http://www.akronafricanculture.com>



The Akron African American Cultural Association (AAACA) was organized to promote the educational, civic and cultural needs of the Akron community. Get ready for a family filled weekend to remember with vendors, food, drum making workshop, games and prizes, music and more..

## ROLLER DANCE PARTY - I LOVE THE 90S

Friday, Aug. 10 | 8-10 p.m.

Cascade Plaza | <http://ow.ly/hrLI30kQ3bY>



Lace up your skates for an old school action with a DJ at Cascade Plaza. Skates available to rent for \$2 or bring your own. A dance party on the inside of the "rink" with food trucks and beverages is also be available. Skating is on the concrete of Cascade Plaza.

## THE SIGNAL TREE FESTIVAL

Saturday, Aug. 11 | 8:30 a.m.-midnight.

Lock 3 | [www.signaltreefest.com](http://www.signaltreefest.com)



Signal Tree Festival celebrates Akron food, music and culture. An all day celebration with the very best of Akron's past, present and future, presented by The Devil Strip and Lock 3. Wash down your pizza, jo-jo's and sauerkraut balls with some of the Blimp City's tastiest craft brews and

incredible live, local music.

## UNITED WAY SUMMIT FOR KIDS

Saturday, Aug. 18 | 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

John S. Knight Center | [www.summitforkids.net](http://www.summitforkids.net)



Summit for Kids is an annual family expo. Parents and children are invited to the John S. Knight Center in downtown Akron to enjoy fun and educational activities, free back-to-school items and more.

## 2018 WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S

Saturday, Sept. 15 | 8:30 a.m.

Canal Park Stadium | <http://ow.ly/tfdi30kQ4OG>



Held annually in more than 600 communities nationwide, the Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's® is the world's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. This inspiring event calls on participants of all ages and

abilities to join the fight against the disease.

## 2018 SUMMA HEALTH SAPPHIRE BALL

Saturday, Sept. 22 | 6 p.m.

John S. Knight Center | [www.summahealth.org](http://www.summahealth.org)



The 17th Annual Sapphire Ball is masked in mystery and gleaming with grandeur. The event will be masquerade ball, dazzling and magical themed for an elegant evening of fine food and fun times.

The Sapphire Ball is a black tie event

that raise proceeds to benefit Summa Health Cardiovascular Services and other key clinical areas of the health system.r.

## WILLIAM SHATNER: LIVE ON STAGE FOR CONVERSATION AND Q & A AFTER SCREENING OF STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN

Sunday, Sept. 23 | 5 p.m.

Akron Civic Theatre | [www.akroncivic.com](http://www.akroncivic.com)



Set phasers to stun and beam yourself here for an unforgettable night with the one and only WILLIAM SHATNER, live on stage. Audiences will enjoy a screening of the classic film "Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan" on the big screen, followed by a live conversation

with the one and only "Captain James T. Kirk."



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**#DOWNTOWNAKRON**

*Dirty River Bikes photo by Shane Wynn*