

Economic Development / Facilities Executive Summary

General Update since last Assembly Meeting:

- Lock3Amphitheatre Work Group and Arts Incubator Work Group have been merged into the Cultural Facilities Work Group.
- Added a new work group – Job Creation / Retention – the long term success of the entire Akron 2025 Project hinges on retaining and creating high quality white collar jobs in downtown Akron.
- Work Groups remaining: Cultural Facilities; Housing; Job Retention / Creation

Work Group Participants:

- Joe Albrecht – Albrecht, Inc.
- Bob Cooper – CB Richard Ellis
- Jack Crews – The Ferchill Group
- Brian Cummins – Akron Civic Theatre
- Brenda Cummins – Akron Civic Theatre
- Steve Hammersmith – Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs
- Angela Krantz – Millers Presort, Inc.
- Dave Plusquellic – FirstEnergy Corp.
- Joe Sieferth – Summit Education Initiative / NEOLA, Inc.

Cultural Facilities Update:

- What's the definition of "Cultural Facilities"?
- Examples of Cultural Facilities:
 - Facilities already in place
 - Potential facilities of the future
 - Cultural Facilities include or are central to:
 - Housing
 - Specialty Retail
 - Restaurants (including gourmet delis, coffee houses, etc...)
 - Grocery Stores (higher end stores / specialty stores)
 - Night Life
 - Exercise Facilities
 - Parking
 - Green Space / Parks
 - Utilization of the Canal Corridor / Towpath
 - Dry Cleaning Facilities
 - Drug Stores / Pharmacies

Conclusions to date:

- **The need for an “Urban Plan” – The success of the Downtown Akron 2025 Project (Infrastructure/Facilities) is dependent on the development of a strategic Urban Plan that encompasses the greater downtown area.**
- Keys to the long term success of Downtown Cultural Facilities:
 - Critical Mass
 - Housing
- Lock3 Park
 - The Lock3 Park area should be the focal point / epicenter of downtown Akron.
- Establishment of a major entertainment attraction
- Cultural Coordinator (Events)
- University of Akron
- Other topics of discussion that directly or indirectly impact Cultural Facilities:
 - Arts Incubator .
 - Focus Groups (potentially part of the urban plan)
 - Hospitals / Residency Programs
 - Graduate Assistant Housing
 - Ease of moving / traffic flow / parking / foot traffic
 - Downtown Lighting
 - Bus Transfers
 - Parking
 - Downtown Trolley / Transportation
- **In conclusion:**
 - **The timing is right!!**
 - **Our work group has come to the conclusion that Akron has the bigger chance to make a significant impact in Northeast Ohio than Cleveland or any other surrounding municipality.**
 - **The opportunities are there – we need to immediately take advantage of those opportunities, continue to be proactive, not reactive, and move forward with the ideas and action plans put in place by the Akron 2025 project.**
 - **We don’t recommend another study – due to critical timing we cannot afford to start over from scratch. A facilitator may be required to move the project along and assist with public/private interaction.**
 - **The window of opportunity is small – and closing fast – Let’s move on it!!**