

CASE STUDY



159

SOUTH MAIN STREET
AKRON, OHIO 44318

A historic,
11-story
Akron, Ohio
landmark.

Where Brokerage
Meets Vision.

Strategic Solutions Beyond
the Standard Deal.

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CLIENT:

159 Main Development, LLC

BROKER/ADVISOR:

Gerilyn Gleason, CCIM —
Commercial Property Partners (CPP)

ASSET:

159 S. Main Street
Downtown Akron, OH

BUILDING TYPE:

Historic Mixed-Use
Office / Experiential / Retail)

DURATION:

3 Years

ROLE:

Real Estate Strategy, Experiential
Leasing, Design & Operations Lead





Engagement Overview

After an extended period of office vacancy and underutilization, 159 Main Development, LLC engaged Gerilyn Gleason and Commercial Property Partners (CPP) to reposition and stabilize the building through a comprehensive leasing and activation strategy.

The first-floor bank space at 159 S. Main Street presented a classic retail challenge: a large-format, architecturally significant space that was underutilized and not well-suited for traditional soft-goods retail.

The opportunity was to reposition the space as an experiential anchor—one that would generate consistent revenue, increase foot traffic, elevate the identity of the building, and contribute to downtown activation.



Scope of Work



- Increasing office leasing across Floors 2-4
- Repositioning the ground-floor historic bank space
- Creating a viable experiential use to activate the building and enhance long-term value
- The objective was not only to lease space, but to redefine the building's identity, improve tenant demand, and establish diversified, sustainable revenue streams.

GROUND-FLOOR EXPERIENTIAL STRATEGY

Historic Bank Space – Floor 1

The first-floor former bank space presented challenges common to legacy downtown assets: large floor plates, architectural constraints, and limited suitability for traditional retail. Rather than pursue conventional retail tenancy, CPP developed and executed an experiential leasing strategy, culminating in the creation and launch of 159 Events on Main.

Key objectives included:

- Activating the ground floor with a destination-driven use
- Leveraging historic architectural features (bank vault, grand staircase, scale) as experiential differentiators
- Driving consistent foot traffic, visibility, and brand recognition for the building
- Creating a use that complemented, rather than conflicted with, office tenants above
- Gerilyn Gleason led the concept development, space planning, design oversight, construction coordination, branding, marketing strategy, and ongoing venue management.



OFFICE LEASING & REPOSITIONING STRATEGY

Floors 2-4

In parallel with the ground-floor activation, CPP was retained to increase office leasing and stabilize Floors 2-4 following a prolonged period of vacancy.

Gerilyn Gleason led:

- Market repositioning of upper-floor office space to appeal to professional, creative, and service-based tenants
- Strategic tenant mix planning to ensure compatibility with experiential use below
- Office leasing negotiations and deal execution
- Space planning and design coordination to modernize office suites while preserving historic character
- The revitalized ground-floor activation directly contributed to renewed interest and leasing momentum for the office floors, transforming the building into a cohesive mixed-use environment.



Execution Scope

Gerilyn Gleason and CPP provided end-to-end advisory and execution services, including:

- Leasing strategy and tenant mix planning across experiential and office uses
- Office leasing negotiations and transaction execution
- Space planning, interior design, and construction oversight
- Branding, marketing, and go-to-market strategy for experiential use
- Ongoing operations, tenant relations, and performance oversight

Results & Impact

- Successfully repositioned and stabilized a previously underperforming mixed-use asset
- Increased office occupancy following an extended vacancy period
- Created a destination experiential anchor that enhanced the building's visibility and leasing appeal
- Established diversified revenue streams through complementary office and experiential uses
- Demonstrated the effectiveness of experiential activation as a catalyst for office leasing



Key Takeaway for Owners, Developers & Portfolio Teams

This engagement illustrates how strategic advisory, experiential leasing, and disciplined office execution—when aligned—can materially improve asset performance, even in buildings challenged by prolonged vacancy and legacy layouts.



Contact us today to learn more
about this exceptional property
and schedule your private tour.

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