



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Rick Armon
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Summit County and Akron are now part of OhioCheckbook.com.

The public website and database, run by the state treasurer's office, allows citizens to examine government spending right down to individual checks.

The county and Rubber City, which had pledged to participate earlier this year, were added to the database Thursday.

"The people of Summit County have a right to know how the county money and the city money is being spent," Treasurer Josh Mandel said. "And OhioCheckbook.com will put that power in the hands of the people and the hands of the citizens. ...My mission here is to transfer the power from the politicians to the taxpayers."

Nearly 900 counties, cities, villages, school districts and other entities are participating. There is no cost for the local governments.

The database is filled with graphics and a Google-like interface. It displays more than \$540 billion in spending, including more than 148 million transactions.

The data for Summit, available at SummitCounty.OhioCheckbook.com, includes more than 62,200 individual transactions that represent more than \$258 million in spending from fiscal year 2015.

The Akron data, available at Akron.OhioCheckbook.com, highlights more than 26,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$252 million in spending from fiscal year 2016.

Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan welcomed joining the database, saying he wants to promote transparency.

"This is just one leg of it and we'll continue to work on ... how we better inform the public on all the decisions we make," he said.

Mandel launched the website in late 2014 and has been adding local entities since. Summit is the 24th county in the state to participate, while Akron is the sixth city in Summit to post its spending.

Akron Public Schools will be joining soon, officials said.

Akron-area entities already on the website include Alliance, Barberton, Cuyahoga Falls, Massillon, New Franklin, Stark County, Stow, Streetsboro, Tallmadge and Wayne County.



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For more details, go to OhioCheckbook.com.

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