Welcome!

Today’s Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Assessment of Neighborhood Conditions
- Summit Lake Apartments Resident Survey
- Neighborhood Survey
- Service Partner Interviews
- Resident interviews
- Next Steps
Choice Activities to Date

- Assessment of neighborhood conditions in April
- Launch of People’s History of Summit Lake
- Launch of Summit Lake Apartments survey - Neighborhood survey coming soon
- Interviews with residents and service providers
Summit Lake today is an asset but it wasn’t always
Industry brought growth but also pollution to Summit Lake

**EARLY 1900s**

The Big Four rubber and tire companies brought jobs and growth to the area.

They drew water from Summit Lake for industrial use, but also dumped effluent into the lake.

**1917-1958**

Summit Beach Park was Akron’s “Million Dollar Playground”, and featured the country's largest funhouse as well as its largest mosaic pool. The amusement park attracted huge numbers of pleasure-seekers in its hey day.

But while they frolicked on the shores, the lake waters were considered unsafe and remained so until a 2017 assessment found the water to be safe for recreational activities.
Over time, the loss of industry, highway construction and urban renewal contributed to the neighborhood’s decline.

**1960s**
Highway construction split the Summit Lake neighborhood in two and displaced hundreds of households. The highway also cut the southern portion of Summit Lake off from the rest of the city.

**1970s**
The Big Four companies began closing down or relocating plants, resulting in mass job loss for Summit Lake residents.
The neighborhood is isolated from the rest of the city

Neighborhood Barriers
- Choice Study Area
- Lake/River/Pond
- Parks/Open Space
- Existing Towpath Trail
- Proposed Summit Lake Trail
- Railroad
But it’s also a tight-knit community
We are filling out our understanding of the neighborhood through interviews & personal histories

“It’s a safe place. That’s gone from a lot of neighborhoods – kids being able to go to your neighbors for help.”

“It’s small enough here, I know who the kids belong to, I do like that.”

“When I moved here, this was a neighborhood, streets were filled with homes, children, schools, now we just see buses, everything is outside.”

“I used to put my baby in a stroller and bring them to Lincoln – all my kids went there. They had a pool... I want that for the next generation – you can walk to that school and get to your child.”

“I remember back in [year], the Summit Lake Neighborhood was [adjective/description]. We used to [activity] at Lincoln Elementary [place/street intersection]. My fondest memory from that time is every other Friday we [description] went swimming.”

“I remember back in [year], the Summit Lake Neighborhood was very active [adjective/description]. We used to [activity] in our neighborhood [place/street intersection]. My fondest memory from that time is going to play in the [description]. Playing where the kitchen and house...”
Since 1940, Summit Lake has lost 70% of its population compared to Akron’s decrease of 19%.
46% of the land is vacant
There are 83 acres of vacant land [63 football fields] & 54 vacant buildings in the Study Area [44 are residential]
“There used to be a pharmacy where Save-A-Lot is, a meat market on Main, cleaners on Old Main, Banks, lots of things that were once here....”

Services are limited in the neighborhood
The area is home to just one supermarket and five corner stores.
Houses in the neighborhood are old and large, making them difficult and costly to maintain.

- Overall good condition: 26%
- Requires minor repairs: 57%
- Requires major repairs: 16%
- Appears unsafe: 1%
Most of the neighborhood is disconnected from the lake.
On the west side, streets continue to the lake.
On the east side, the street grid ends at Lake Shore Blvd

"Summit Lake feels so far away. If you don’t live a block away it feels so far away."
- neighborhood resident
Most sidewalks are in need of repair.

“A lot of the community walks in the streets, the sidewalks are terrible.”
Positive developments are happening
Summit Lake Apartments Resident Survey

- **Final survey tool** - thank you for your feedback
- **Launched May 7th** - 26+ surveys to date
- **Goal** - 146 surveys (~65% response rate)
- **Multiple ways to take it** - on-line, hard copy, in-person
- **Incentives** - $10 Walmart + $10 cash, $50 gift card raffle for first 50 to complete
- **Targeted outreach** - mail, events, survey parties, door-to-door
- **Close of survey** - end of June if possible, end of July if needed
- **Interest among task force members to assist?**
Neighborhood Survey

- **Final survey tool** - based on resident survey
- **Launch** - by May 27th
- **Goal** - 200 surveys
- **Multiple ways to take it** - on-line, hard copy, in-person
- **Incentives** - $25 Visa card raffle every two weeks
- **Outreach** - social media, events, mail, neighborhood partners
- **Close of survey** - end of July if possible, end of August if needed
Partner Interviews

16 interviews with service partners to date

Key themes:

• Challenge of resident participation & engagement
• COVID + stimulus payment impacts across the board
• State and Local policy decisions have very real impact on resident lives (ex. access to Medicaid, building inspections, pro-landlord)
• Need for systems change - collective impact model
• Open to doing something different
Resident Interviews

- First round - today through Friday
- Sit downs with Summit Lake Apartments residents
- Attending Salvation Army hot lunch at Summit Lake Community Center
- Walking the neighborhood with South Street Ministries and Summit Lake BuildCorps
- Friday Community Camp Fire program
Choice Next Steps

- More interviews
- Completion of Summit Lake Apartments resident and Summit Lake neighborhood surveys
- Collection and analysis of additional community indicators
- Community workshop this summer
Questions?
Thank you!