Welcome!

Today’s Agenda

- Choice Neighborhoods update
- Akron Civic Commons update
- Land Use Plan update
Choice Activities to Date

- Field survey in April
- Launch of Summit Lake Apartments survey - Neighborhood survey coming soon
- Launch of People’s History of Summit Lake
- 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.
Today, the neighborhood is isolated from the rest of the city.
But Summit Lake is 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.”

THE PAST

“I remember back in 19____, the Summit Lake Neighborhood was Fun & Educational ___. We used to swim and learn ___ at Lincoln Elementary ___ My fondest memory from that time is every other Friday we ___ went swimming ___

THE PAST

“I remember back in 2009__, the Summit Lake Neighborhood was very active _____. We used to ride bikes around in the neighborhood ___ My fondest memory from that time is going to play in the ____ woods by the trail ___. Playing in the kitchen and house ___”
Since 1940, Summit Lake has lost 70% of its population compared to Akron’s decrease of 19%.
In 1921, Summit Lake was almost fully built out with 2 schools, Summit Beach Park and commercial services.

1921 Land Use

- Choice Study Area
- Current Curb Lines
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutions
- Parks and Recreation
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].
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%
“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...
...and services are spread out across the neighborhood.
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
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