
Reimagining the Civic Commons Metrics Report - Final

Akron

Reimagining the Civic Commons

Reimagining the Civic Commons is a national initiative to advance ambitious social, economic and environmental goals through revitalized and connected public spaces.

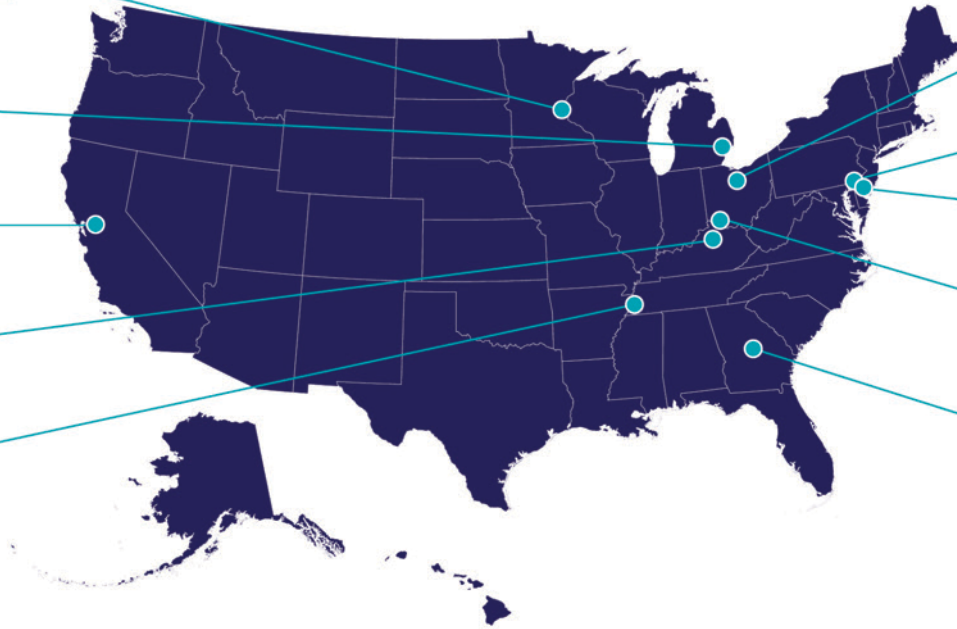
Minneapolis | St. Paul

Detroit

San José

Lexington

Memphis



Akron

Philadelphia

Camden

Cincinnati

Macon

The initiative is a collaboration of The JPB Foundation, Knight Foundation, The Kresge Foundation and William Penn Foundation, alongside local partners to demonstrate the multifaceted value of investing in civic assets.

Launched nationally in 2016 with 5 demonstration cities, including Detroit, the learning network has now grown to 10 cities participating in a robust community of practice.



**Civic
Engagement**



**Socioeconomic
Mixing**



**Environmental
Sustainability**



Value Creation

Outcomes are at the core of Reimagining the Civic Commons.

With a focus on four main outcomes:

- **Civic Engagement**
Building a sense of community that brings people of all backgrounds back into public life as stewards and advocates, shaping their city's future.
- **Socioeconomic Mixing**
Creating places where everyone belongs, and that generate opportunities for shared experience among people of all incomes and backgrounds.
- **Environmental Sustainability**
Increasing access to nature and creating environmentally friendly places, easily reached by walking, biking or transit.
- **Value Creation**
Encouraging additional investments in neighborhoods so that they are better places to thrive.

Cross-sector teams in cities across the U.S. are working to demonstrate that strategic investment in our civic assets is a smart approach to addressing the multiple crises we face.

The outcomes orientation is what defines this work.

Reimagining
the Civic Commons

Measuring the Civic Commons

Reimagining the Civic Commons is a three-year, national initiative that seeks to foster engagement, equity, environmental sustainability and economic development by revitalizing and connecting public places such as parks, plazas, trails and libraries.



Using Data to Illustrate Impact

As we invest in connected sets of public places around the country, we recognize the importance of demonstrating—with data—the outcomes of a reimagined civic commons.

We've designed a measurement system to analyze the impacts of these investments on the sites and in surrounding communities and to track progress toward our four main goals.

This data-driven approach offers a new method for demonstrating the social benefit and value of our investments in public commons.

Goal: Civic Engagement

Signal: Public Life

Metric	Description	Source
Population density	Number of people living in the area	U.S. Census Bureau
Population growth	Change in population over time	U.S. Census Bureau
Population change	Change in population over time	U.S. Census Bureau
Population density	Number of people living in the area	U.S. Census Bureau
Population growth	Change in population over time	U.S. Census Bureau
Population change	Change in population over time	U.S. Census Bureau

Signal: Stewardship & Advocacy

Metric	Description	Source
Number of stewardship organizations	Number of organizations focused on stewardship	U.S. Census Bureau
Number of stewardship organizations	Number of organizations focused on stewardship	U.S. Census Bureau
Number of stewardship organizations	Number of organizations focused on stewardship	U.S. Census Bureau

Signal: Trust

Metric	Description	Source
Trust in government	Level of trust in government	U.S. Census Bureau
Trust in government	Level of trust in government	U.S. Census Bureau
Trust in government	Level of trust in government	U.S. Census Bureau

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Signal: Mixing on Site

Metric	Description	Source
Population density	Number of people living in the area	U.S. Census Bureau
Population growth	Change in population over time	U.S. Census Bureau
Population change	Change in population over time	U.S. Census Bureau

Signal: Reputation

Metric	Description	Source
Reputation score	Score based on reputation	U.S. Census Bureau
Reputation score	Score based on reputation	U.S. Census Bureau
Reputation score	Score based on reputation	U.S. Census Bureau

Goal: Environmental Sustainability

Signal: Access to Nature

Metric	Description	Source
Access to nature	Level of access to nature	U.S. Census Bureau
Access to nature	Level of access to nature	U.S. Census Bureau
Access to nature	Level of access to nature	U.S. Census Bureau

Signal: Ecological Indicators

Metric	Description	Source
Ecological indicators	Indicators of ecological health	U.S. Census Bureau
Ecological indicators	Indicators of ecological health	U.S. Census Bureau
Ecological indicators	Indicators of ecological health	U.S. Census Bureau

Signal: Walkability/Bikeability

Metric	Description	Source
Walkability/Bikeability	Level of walkability/bikeability	U.S. Census Bureau
Walkability/Bikeability	Level of walkability/bikeability	U.S. Census Bureau
Walkability/Bikeability	Level of walkability/bikeability	U.S. Census Bureau

Goal: Value Creation

Signal: Safety

Metric	Description	Source
Safety	Level of safety	U.S. Census Bureau
Safety	Level of safety	U.S. Census Bureau
Safety	Level of safety	U.S. Census Bureau

Signal: Retail Activity

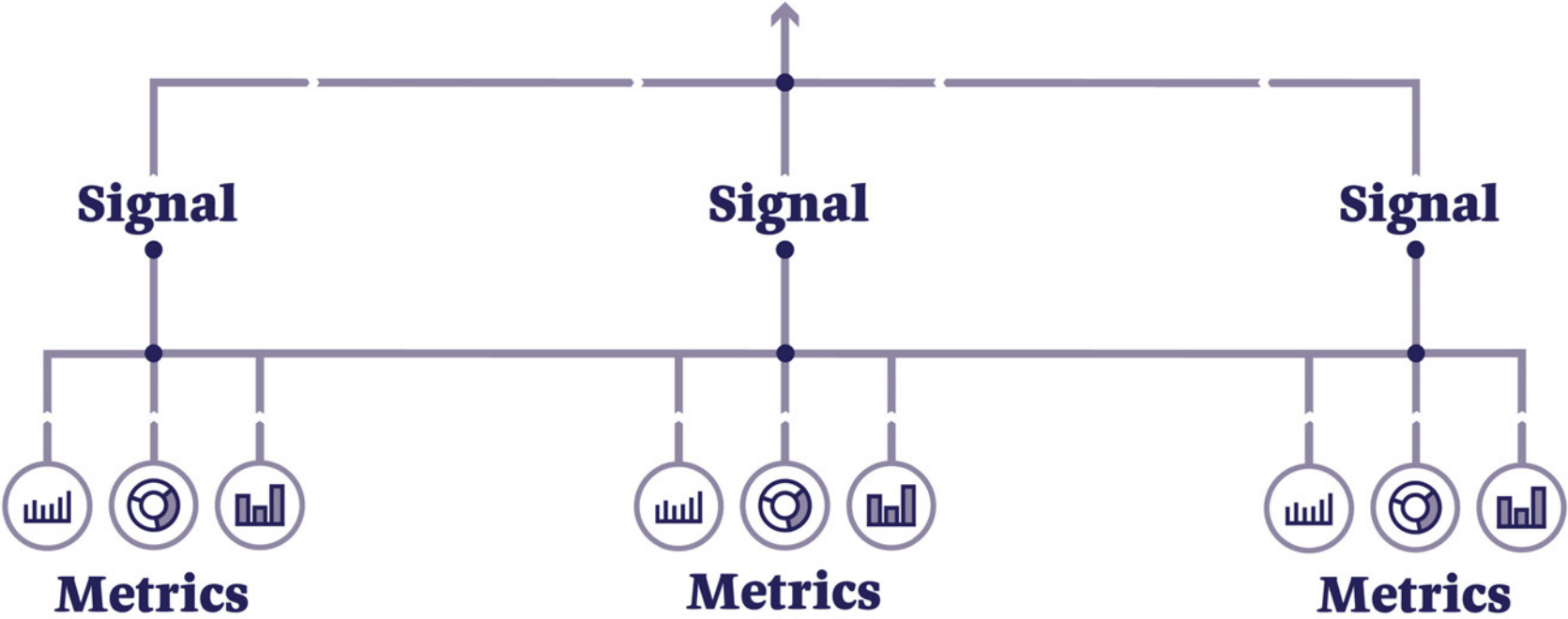
Metric	Description	Source
Retail activity	Level of retail activity	U.S. Census Bureau
Retail activity	Level of retail activity	U.S. Census Bureau
Retail activity	Level of retail activity	U.S. Census Bureau

Signal: Real Estate Value & Affordability

Metric	Description	Source
Real estate value	Value of real estate	U.S. Census Bureau
Real estate value	Value of real estate	U.S. Census Bureau
Real estate value	Value of real estate	U.S. Census Bureau

Reimagining the Civic Commons designed a practical measurement system to analyze the impacts of investments in public spaces and in surrounding communities, and to track progress over time. This data-driven approach offers a new method for determining the multifaceted value of reinvesting in civic assets.

Goal



Metrics

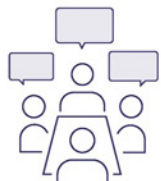
Metrics

Metrics

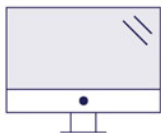
The metrics are organized by the four main goals of Reimagining the Civic Commons: Civic Engagement, Socioeconomic Mixing, Environmental Sustainability and Value Creation.

Within each goal are three to four signals: real-world indicators that relate to the project's overarching objectives. Each signal is associated with one or more metrics designed to measure change on everything from diversity of visitors to tree canopy to perceptions of a neighborhood.

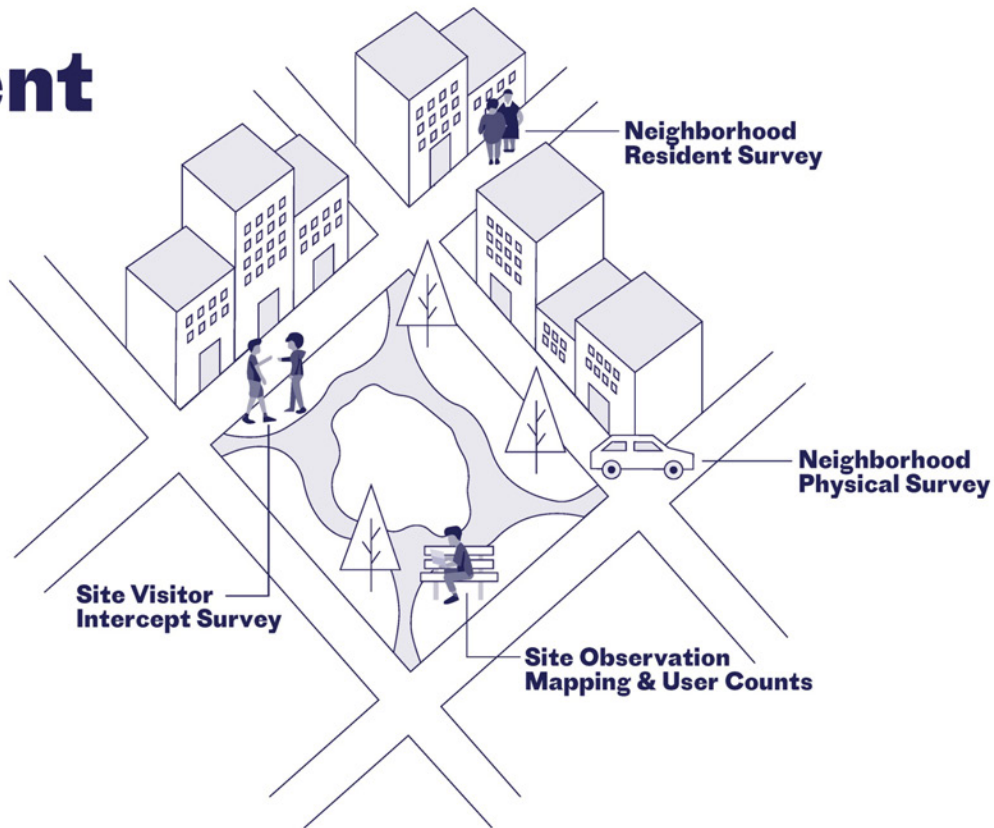
Measurement Tools



Neighborhood Focus Groups



Third Party Research



The following measurement tools are deployed for data collection:

- **Site Visitor Intercept surveys:** Surveys conducted at the project site with people who are engaging with the place
 - **Neighborhood surveys:** Surveys conducted with a sample of community members in a specific neighborhood
 - **Observation mapping:** Visual assessments of how people engage with civic assets
 - **Physical survey:** Visual assessments of the physical conditions of civic assets and surrounding neighborhoods
 - **Neighborhood focus groups:** Qualitative understanding of civic assets of focus and neighborhood conditions via facilitated small group discussions
 - **Third-party data analysis:** Assessment of data collected by outside organizations, such as the U.S. Census
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Ambition

With investments in three neighborhoods and the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail that connects them, Akron is knitting together isolated communities through collaborative reimagining of public places. Temporary and permanent design features and regular programming are reestablishing the 100-acre Summit Lake as a place of civic pride and play, bridging diverse neighborhoods including Ohio & Erie Canal Park and fostering economic development and public life in Akron's downtown.

Through their resident-led work, Akron is restoring trust and building authentic relationships with neighborhood residents to break the legacy of “things being done to and not with,” and “promises made and not delivered.” Working in partnership and collaboration with neighborhood residents, Akron is co-creating, co-designing and co-stewarding accessible, equitable and welcoming parks, trails and public spaces in downtown Akron, Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail.

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Timeline

-
- 2016:** Akron core team monthly meetings established
- 2017:** Summit Lake pop-up nature center opens; Summit bicycle share program starts; Downtown, Ohio & Erie Canal Park, Summit Lake canal clean-ups
- 2018:** Ohio & Erie Canal Park Concert Series begins; environmental study of Summit Lake conducted; Summit Lake guided interpretive canoe trips start
- 2019:** Nick Cave “HEARD” performance at Summit Lake; KABOOM! playground at Ohio & Erie Canal Park built; Summit Lake waterfront improvements; Office of Integrated Development created by City of Akron
- 2020:** Summer on the Plaza reaches 6,000 residents in downtown Akron; inaugural year of the Summit Lake Youth Ambassador Stewardship Program
- 2021:** Summit Lake Nature Center opens; the City of Akron commits \$11.5 million in ARPA Funds to Lock 3 and Summit Lake Parks
- 2022:** Akron Civic Commons raises \$31 million for Lock 3 and Summit Lake Parks
- 2023:** Ohio & Erie Canal Summit Lake Trail opens; groundbreaking of Lock 3 Park (anticipated completion in Fall 2024)
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Downtown

Before

After

Downtown

Through investments in programming and testing public space activations, the Akron's team obtained feedback from residents, downtown workers and University of Akron students about "how might they" design high-quality public spaces that are accessible, equitable and welcoming to all. Utilizing feedback from community surveys, residents guided the redevelopment of Lock 3 Park into a high-quality well-designed public space with landscaped gardens, shaded seating, a world-class designed performance pavilion and ice skating rinks.



Ohio & Erie Canal Park

Before



After

Ohio & Erie Canal Park

Working in partnership and collaboration with neighborhood residents, Alpha Phi Alpha Homes, Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, the City of Akron and the Ohio & Erie Canal Park Steering Committee, the team invested in resident-led programming and public space improvements to promote socioeconomic mixing and improve environmental sustainability. Some of the programming included the Ohio & Erie Canal Park Summer Concert series, Ambassador Stewardship program, Canal Clean-Ups, and KABOOM! playground.



Summit Lake

Before

After

Summit Lake

To address the “gulf of mistrust” with neighborhood residents and fear of Summit Lake, the team focused its strategy on developing authentic and transparent relationships with the community to build trust and address misconceptions about the Summit Lake neighborhood while testing activations based on resident feedback. Some of the activations include benches, swings, grills, a picnic pavilion, and a 2.2 mile multi-use recreational trail linking the neighborhoods around Summit Lake. By “seeking understanding while listening,” and honoring our commitment to residents to co-design, co-creation and co-stewarding of Summit Lake Park, the team is breaking the legacy of “things done to, and not with,” and “promises made and not delivered.”

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Period of study:

2017 - 2023

In 2017, the Akron Civic Commons team, with technical assistance from the Civic Commons Learning Network and Interface Studio used the Measuring the Civic Commons framework to collect baseline data on the collection of assets in Downtown, Ohio & Erie Canal Park, Summit Lake, and the nearby neighborhoods.

These same metrics were collected again in 2022-23, using the same methodology (available as an appendix) in order to understand the impact of the investments on the sites and the surrounding neighborhoods over a 6-year period.

Recognizing that the impact of the work spans years, if not decades, the following presentation highlights evidence of change over the study period of 2017 – 2022/23.

We encourage local stakeholders to consider measuring again in 2027 to capture the 10-year story of change.

*Note: Due to well-known abnormalities in the 2020 Census data, we did not provide comparisons on any Census-based metrics at this time. Any Census data referenced in this report is ACS 2015-2019 to avoid questionable data.



Goal: Civic Engagement

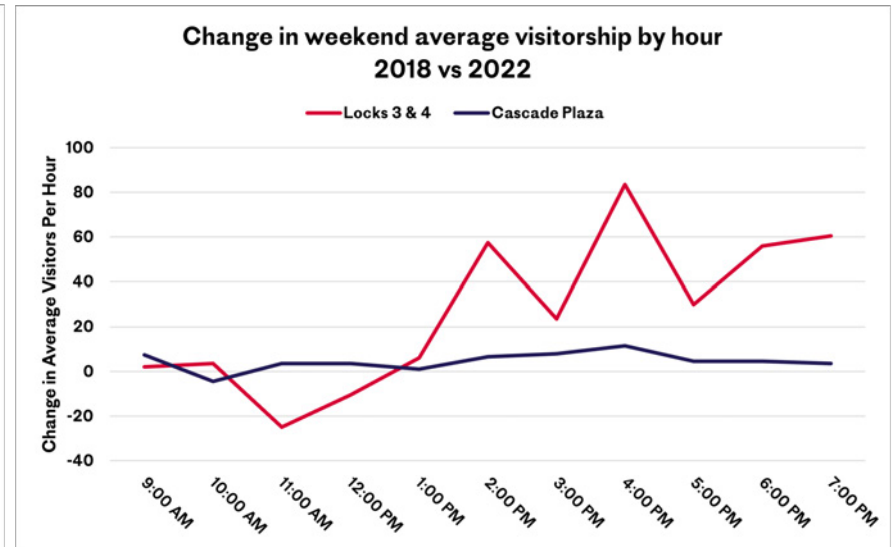
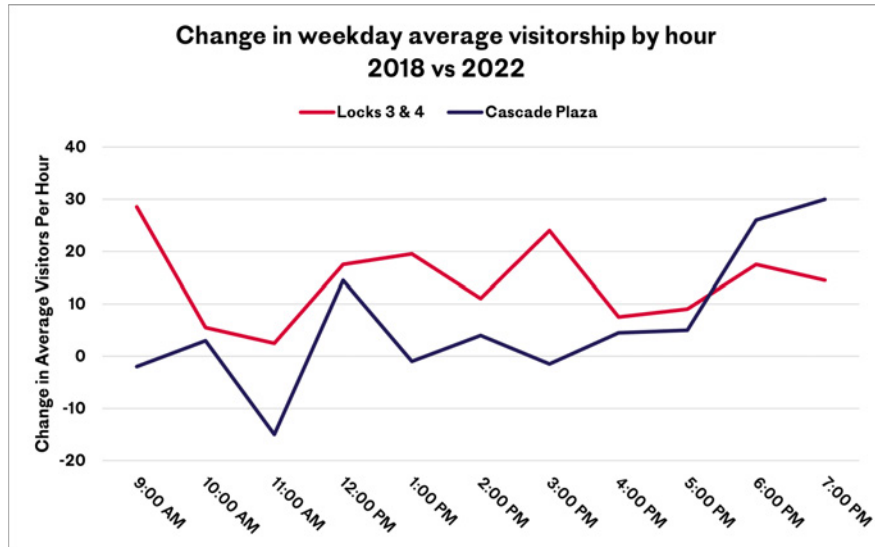
Signal:
Public Life



Goal: Civic Engagement

Civic commons visitorship - Downtown

↑ 225%



Average hourly visitorship of the Downtown civic commons sites (Locks 2, 3, 4 and Cascade Plaza) increased 225% since 2018. This is driven by Locks 3 & 4, which saw more visitors every hour on weekdays and nearly every hour on weekends. Late afternoon and evening visitorship on the weekends improved significantly, and this is before the renovation of Lock 3.

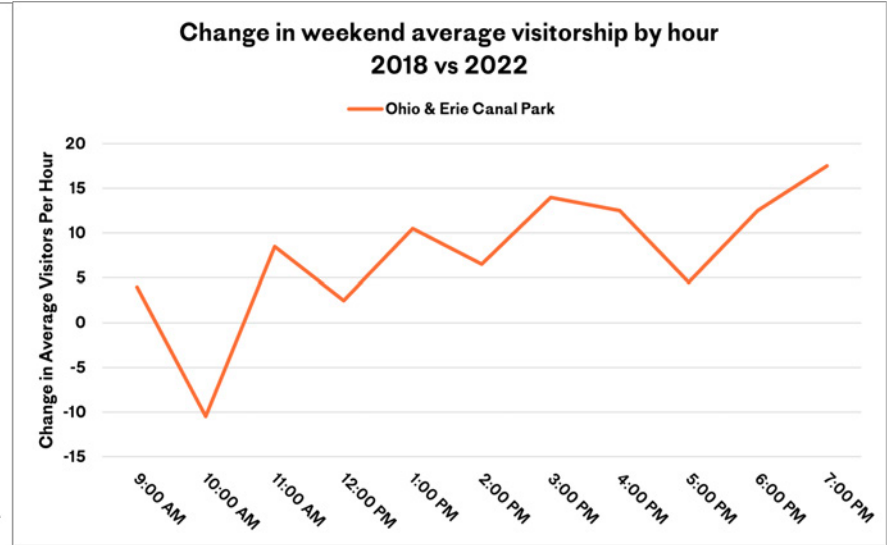
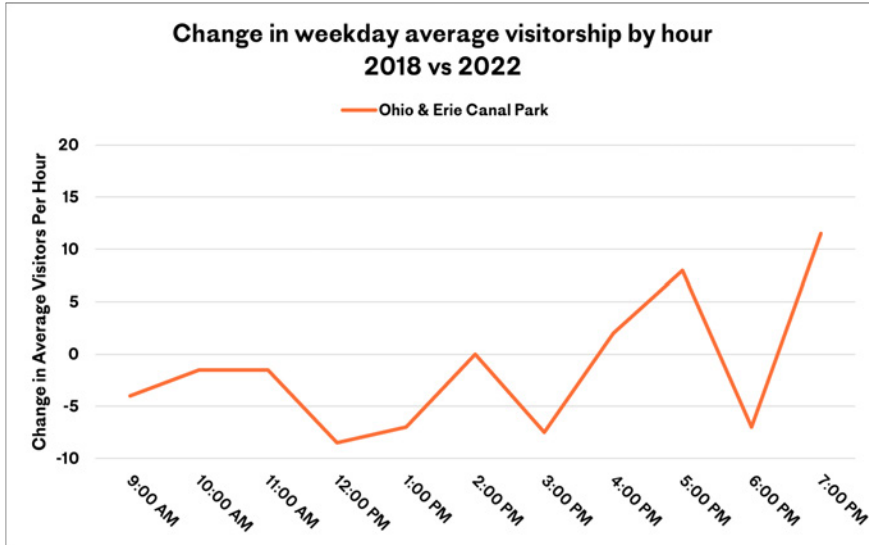
Placer.ai confirms that this trend continued in 2023 for Cascade Plaza, which saw a 165% increase in average weekly visitorship compared to 2018. In 2018, average weekly visitorship at Cascade Plaza never exceeded 1,000, which it did so for 11 different weeks in 2023.

*Note: Placer.ai tracks cell phones, so its data only captures visitors who carry a phone. The weekly counts are likely undercounting children, in particular.

Goal: Civic Engagement

Civic commons visitorship – Ohio & Erie Canal Park

↑ 50%



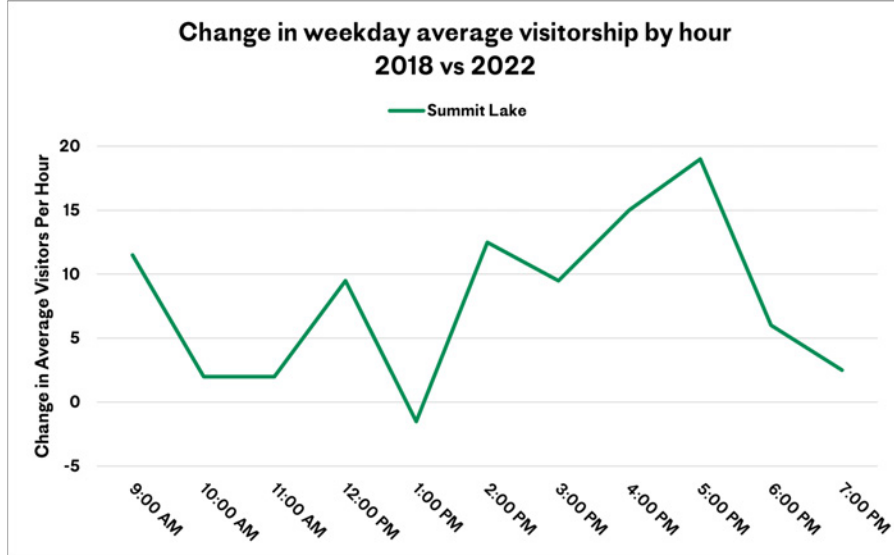
Average hourly visitorship of the Ohio & Erie Canal Park increased 50% since 2018. While weekday average visitorship fell slightly below 2018 levels, weekend visitorship was up significantly—seeing more weekend visitors every hour of the day with the exception of 10 a.m. Late afternoon and evening visitorship on the weekends saw some of the biggest improvements.

*Note: Placer.ai tracks cell phones, so its data only captures visitors who carry a phone. The weekly counts are likely undercounting children, in particular.

Goal: Civic Engagement

Civic commons visitorship – Summit Lake

↑ 70%



Average hourly visitorship of Summit Lake increased by 70% since 2018. The lakefront sites at Summit Lake drove this increase, seeing an increase in average hourly visitors every hour of the day that was measured during both weekday and weekends with the exception of 1 p.m. on weekdays. Average hourly visitorship during weekend afternoons and evenings improved significantly with at times seeing 40 more visitors per hour in 2022 than in 2018.

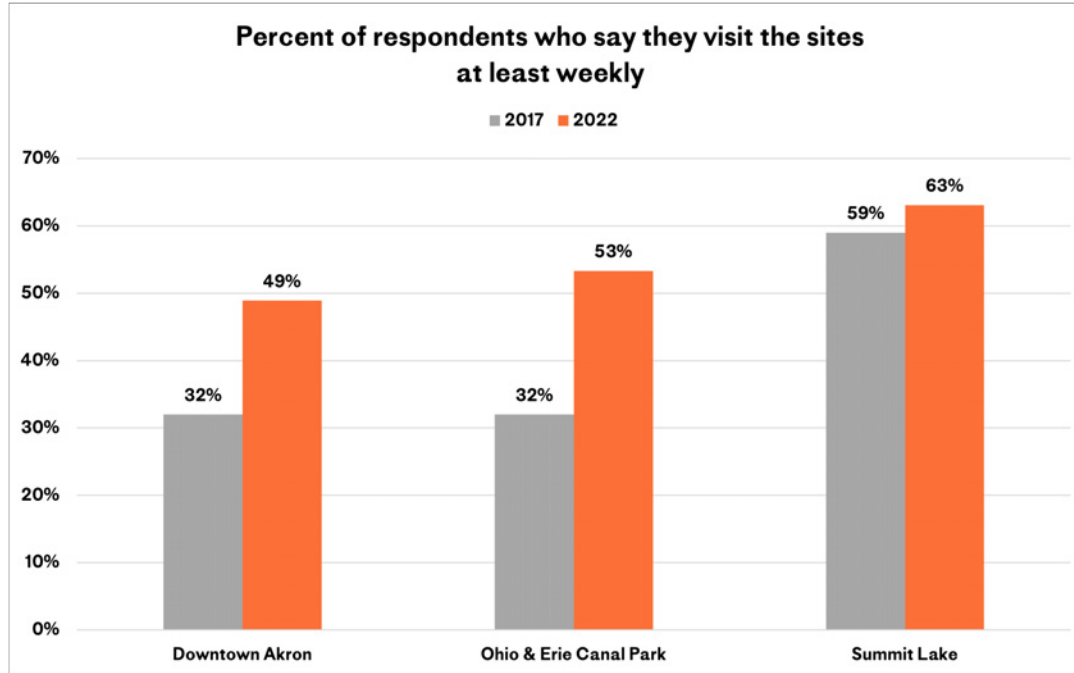
In addition, Placer.ai shows that in 2023 the Summit Lake sites exceeded 1,000 weekly visitors all but 7 weeks in the winter months, compared to 2018 which saw 19 weeks below this visitorship level.

Collectively, these figures seem to indicate that public life at Summit Lake is on the rise and that it is becoming an everyday place for people throughout much of the year.

*Note: Placer.ai tracks cell phones, so its data only captures visitors who carry a phone. The weekly counts are likely undercounting children, in particular.

Goal: Civic Engagement

Frequency of visits: Weekly

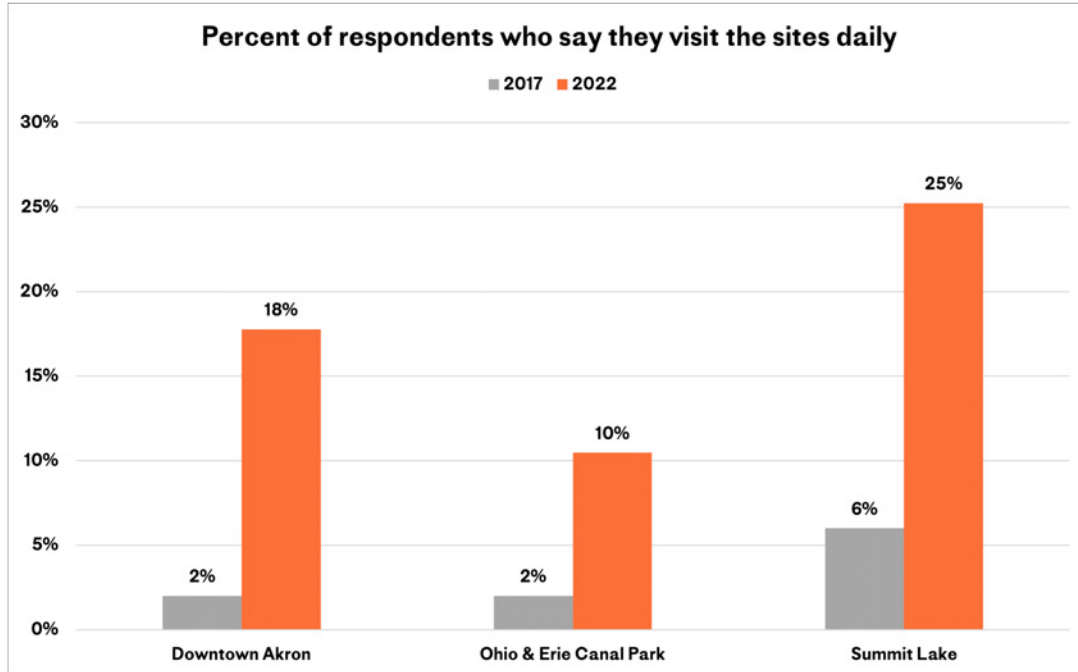


People are visiting all of the sites more frequently than they did in 2017. Nearly half of downtown visitors saying they visit the sites at least weekly (a 17 percentage point increase from 2017), 53% of Ohio & Erie Canal Park visitors saying they visit at least weekly (a 21 percentage point increase from 2017) and 63% of Summit Lake visitors saying they visit at least weekly.

“I think Summit Lake of the three Civic Commons areas has seen the most visible change, and there's more to come which is great. It really feels like that is the one piece of the overall Civic Commons project that has come together the most organically. It really is with the neighbors, for the neighbors, about the neighbors. They've built what's happening there from the neighborhood up, which is really exciting to see. It's just nice to walk or ride your bike through there and see neighbors outside using the pavilion, see the farmers market. I think it's just been an amazing improvement.” - Downtown Employee

Goal: Civic Engagement

Frequency of visits: Daily



While the percentage of folks who say they visit the sites daily has increased exponentially across all three geographies. Now, a quarter of all visitors to Summit Lake say they come every day, up from just 6% in 2017.

In addition, more visitors are lingering in these public spaces. With 84% of downtown visitors, 61% of Ohio & Erie Canal Park visitors and 87% of Summit Lake visitors reporting that they stay for at least 30 minutes each time.



Downtowners who visit a public place at
least once a week

64%

Overall downtown neighbors, workers and visitors are now more likely to visit a public place with nearly two-thirds (64%) saying they go to a park, library, community center or other public place at least once a week (up 16 percentage points from 2017).

Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake saw similar results with a growing portion of neighborhood residents visiting public places at least once a week (from 29% to 43%; and 41% to 50%, respectively).

And this is before the reopening of the transformed Lock 3.



Goal: Civic Engagement

Signal:

Stewardship & Advocacy





Picked up a piece of litter in a Civic
Commons site

60%

People are also caring for the civic commons more. The vast majority of downtowners (84%), Ohio & Erie Canal Park (82%) and Summit Lake (83% — a whopping 40 percentage point increase from 2017) neighborhood residents say they have participated in stewardship or advocacy relating to their neighborhood public spaces.

For instance, at least 60% of respondents across all three neighborhoods reported that they've picked up a piece of litter in the sites. This figure more than doubled since baseline in the Ohio & Erie Canal Park neighborhood.



Posted on social media or talked to friends
about Summit Lake

↑ 38% pts

Meanwhile, more than half of the visitors to these public spaces said they have posted on social media or talked with friends about the sites. Summit Lake saw the most significant growth with a 38 percentage point increase (from 17% to 56%) between 2017 and 2022 in the proportion of visitors posting or talking about the space.



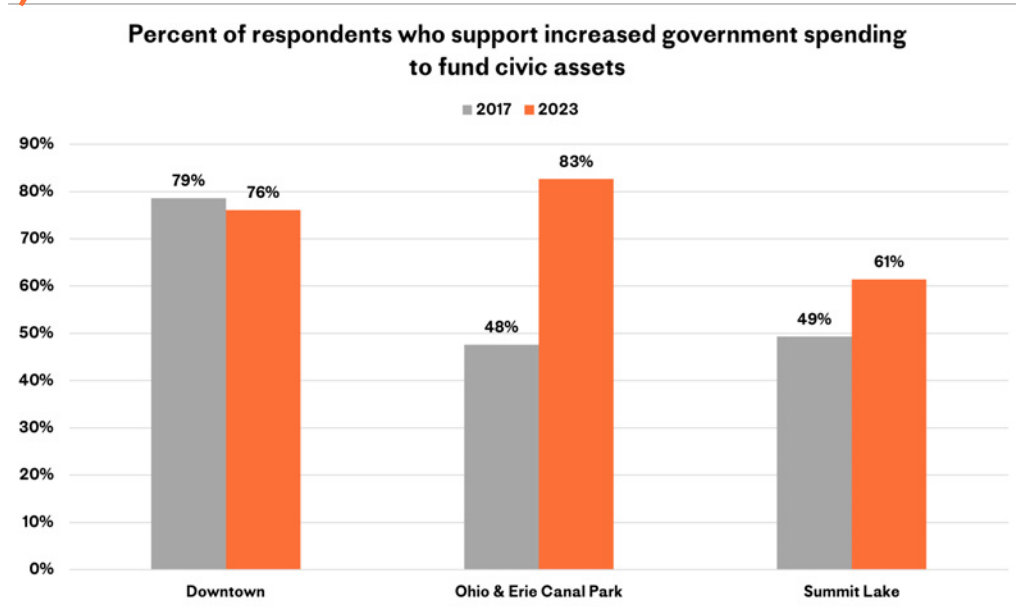
Importance of civic commons sites to them, the community or the city

94 - 99%

It is now almost unanimous among site visitors, across all three geographies, who say the sites are important to them, to their community and to their city.

Goal: Civic Engagement

Support for public spending on the civic commons (2017 vs. 2023)



At the same time, an increasing portion of Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake neighborhood residents are supportive of more government funding of the civic commons. More than 4 in 5 Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents now say that they support increased government spending on these types of assets (up from 48% at baseline), while 3 of 5 Summit Lake residents share the sentiment (up from 49% at baseline).

Downtowners remained strong across the measurement period with three quarters desiring more government spending on civic assets.



The majority of residents surveyed would be more likely to support a politician who advocates for the civic commons

Now, the majority of residents in the three neighborhoods surveyed say they are more likely to support a politician who advocates for policies to better support civic assets, a marked shift from the baseline period. (72% of Downtowners, 85% of Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents and 60% of Summit Lake residents.)



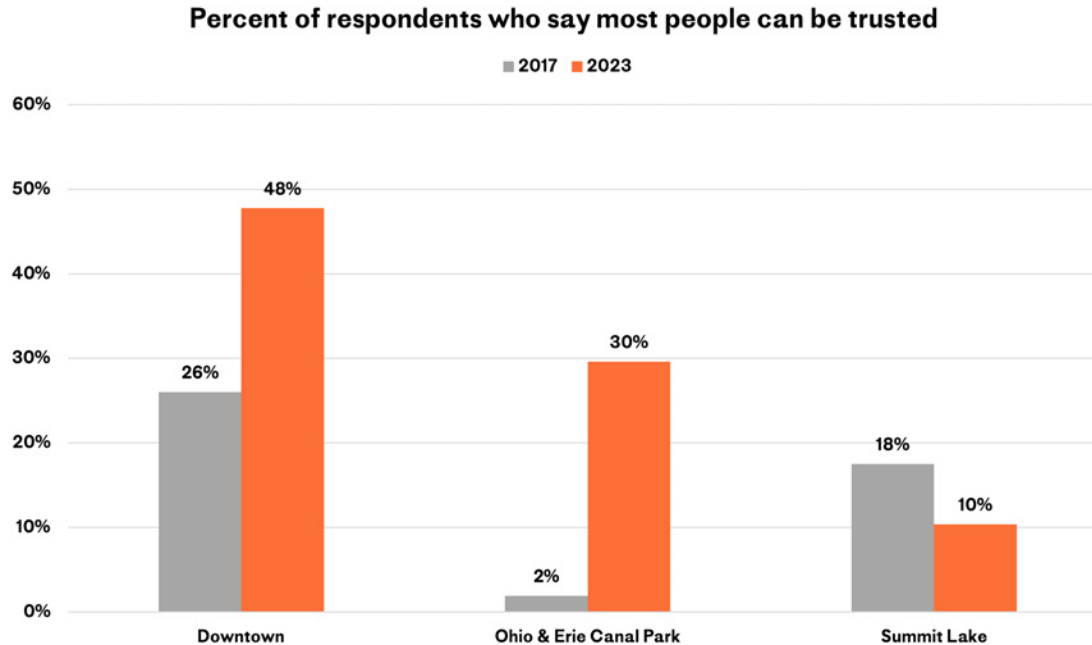
Goal: Civic Engagement

Signal:
Trust



Goal: Civic Engagement

Residents who say most people can be trusted (2017 vs. 2023)



Overall measures of trust performed well among Downtowners and Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents. They saw increases in general trust in other people, with nearly half of Downtowners saying most people can be trusted (up from just 26% at baseline) and a marked increase in trust among Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents who jumped from just 2% saying most people can be trusted to 30%.

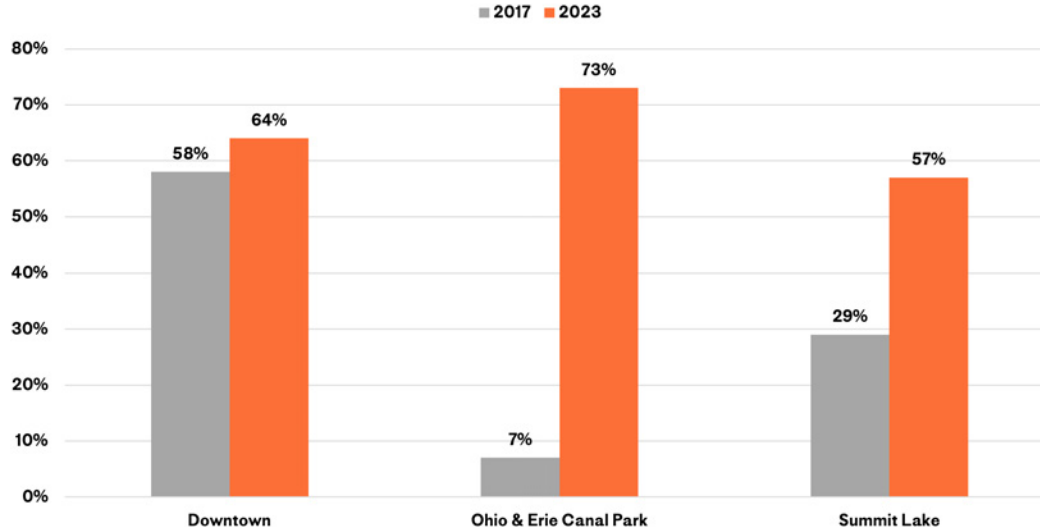
These same geographies also saw increases in trust in local government, with nearly half of respondents in both neighborhoods saying they think they can trust the local government in their city to do what is right almost always or most of the time.

Given that the study period conflated with the COVID pandemic and global increases in distrust, it should not be surprising that not all residents' sentiments around trust improved. General trust among Summit Lake residents and between Summit Lake residents and local government did not improve over this time.

Goal: Civic Engagement

Residents who say local institutions can be trusted (2017 vs. 2023)

Percent of respondents who think they can trust local institutions to do what is best for the local community almost always or most of the time



However, there was a major bright spot on trust across all neighborhoods: Trust in local institutions.

In fact, the Summit Lake neighborhood saw a 28 percentage point increase in residents saying that they trust local institutions to do what is best for the local community almost always or most of the time. Nearly doubling this sentiment among Summit Lake residents between 2017 and 2023.

“I think the language has changed. It’s ‘we will be successful’ and we look at the ‘we’ as everybody. You sit in a meeting with Dan Rice and you hear that. It’s no longer isolated, it’s ‘we will do this.’ That’s a whole other thinking. That’s a lot more inclusive than saying, ‘well this organization is going to...’ Nope, ‘we will do this.’ It just makes sense to me. And that’s one of those evolutions that I’ve seen happen in my time here. And I’m very pleased with it.” – Ohio & Erie Canal Park Neighborhood Resident



Downtown civic commons site visitors who
say most people can be trusted

↑14% pts

In addition, among site visitors, sentiments that most people can be trusted rose to approximately one-third of respondents across all three geographies. Downtown site visitors' sense of trust improved the most, with a 14 percentage point increase since 2018.



Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Signal:
Mixing on Site





The diversity of site visitors to the civic commons increased across all three neighborhoods

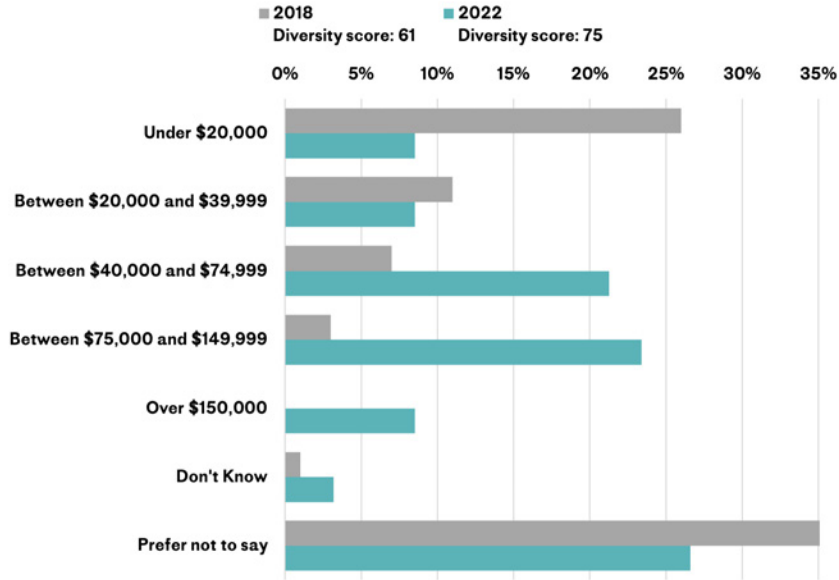
Between 2018 and 2022, the diversity of visitors to the civic commons sites increased across all three neighborhoods. Site visitors became more diverse in terms of both household income and racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

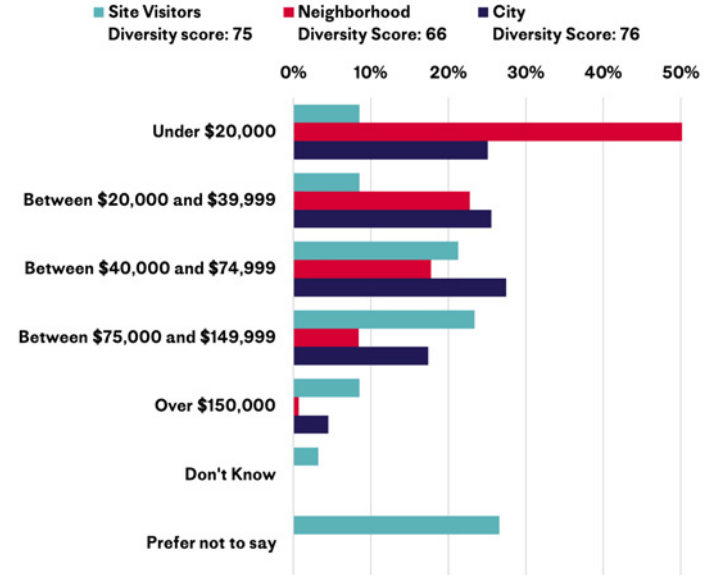
Income diversity of Downtown site visitors

75/80

Household income of Downtown site visitors (2018 vs 2022)



Household income of Downtown site visitors compared to neighborhood and city



The income diversity of site visitors to the civic commons increased across all three neighborhoods. They now stand at nearly the maximum level.

The income diversity score of Downtown site visitors is now 75, up from a score of 61 at baseline. This means that the likelihood of any two random people in the sites being from different income groups is very high and that it has increased substantially since 2018.

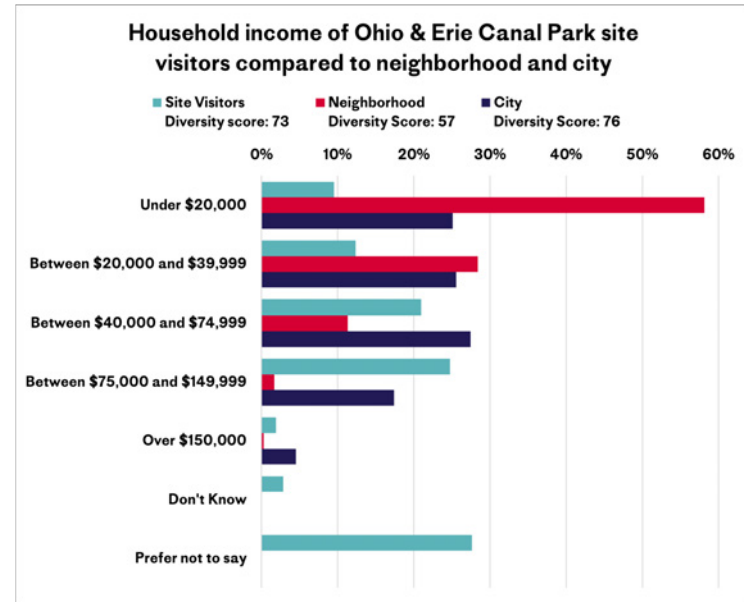
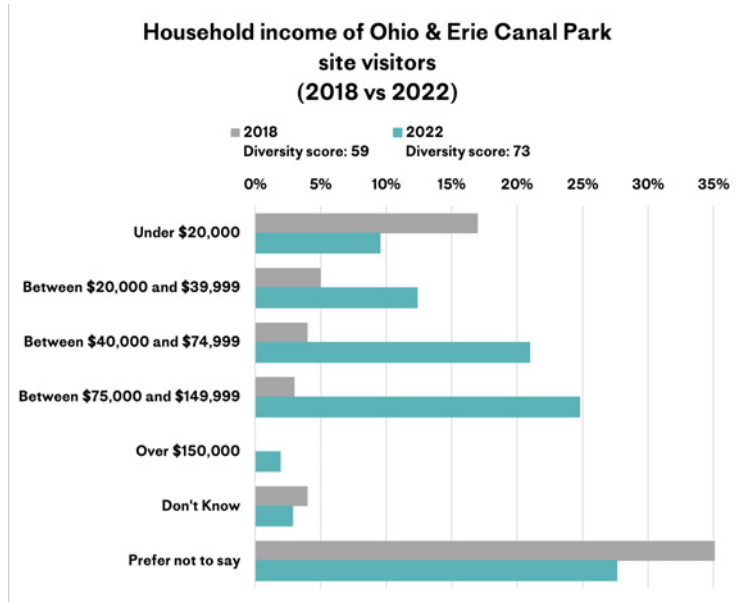
The income mix you see at the Downtown civic commons sites is nearly as diverse as what you see across the city as a whole, with site visitors skewing toward more upper and upper-middle household income levels, which may reflect more downtown office workers out in public space, new higher income downtown residents that have not yet been captured in Census data or regional visitors enjoying public programming in downtown sites.

*Note: Using ACS 2019 5-year data for neighborhood and city demographics due to 2020 Census data peculiarities

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Income diversity of Ohio & Erie Canal Park site visitors

73/80



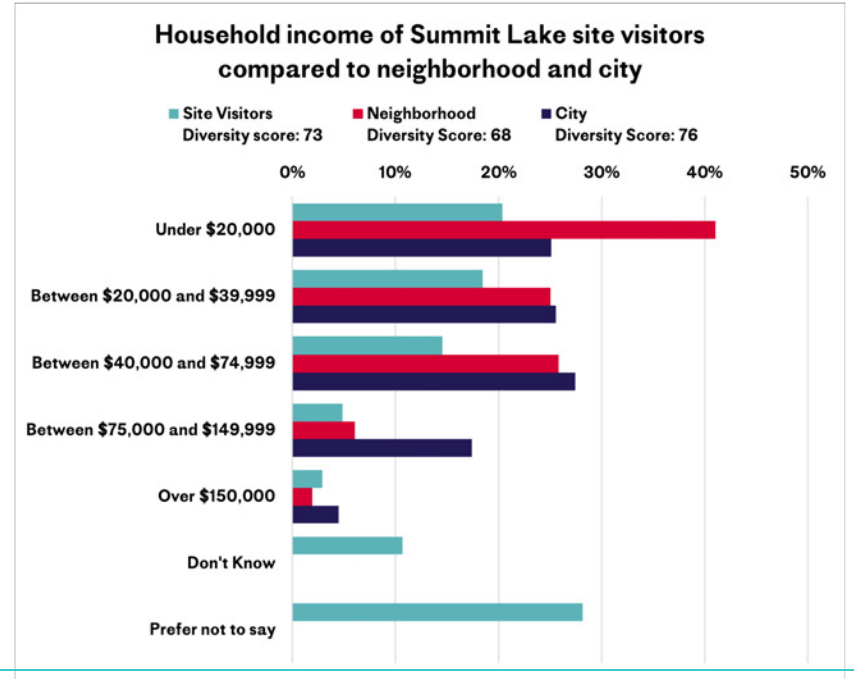
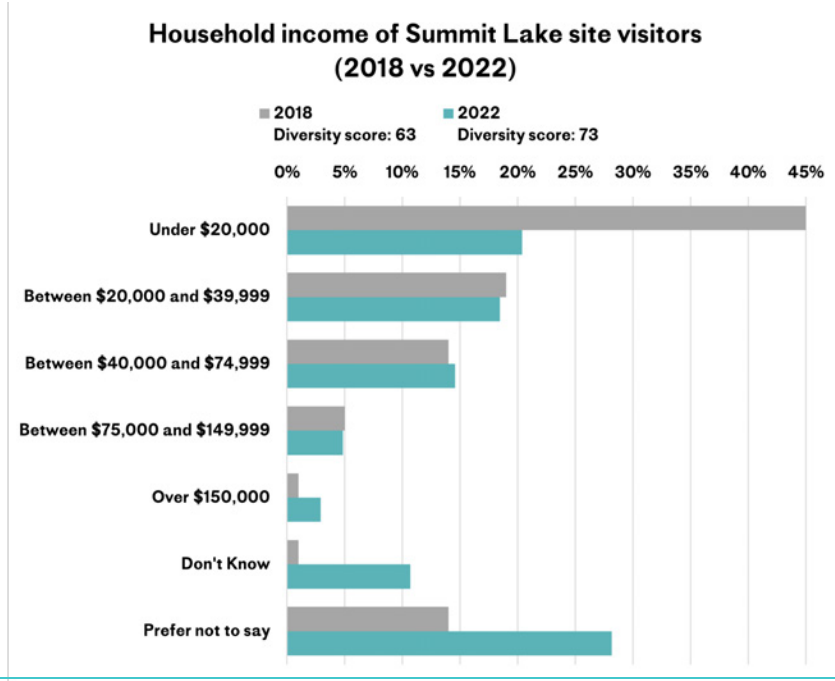
Ohio & Erie Canal Park has also seen a growth in the income diversity of its visitors with a score of 73, up from 59 at baseline.

The income mix you see in the civic commons sites far exceeds the income diversity in the neighborhood and is nearly as diverse as what you see across the city, with site visitors skewing toward more middle and upper-middle household income levels, which may reflect programming attracting people from a variety of neighborhoods to the sites.

*Note: Using ACS 2019 5-year data for neighborhood and city demographics due to 2020 Census data peculiarities

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Income diversity of Summit Lake site visitors **73/80**



Summit Lake civic commons site visitors are also more diverse in terms of income than they were in 2018, with a diversity score of 73, up from 63 at baseline.

The income mix you see among site visitors to Summit Lake has become much more similar to the city's overall income mix, which may reflect more citywide visitorship to Summit Lake.

“There's probably more socioeconomic mixing going on at Summit Lake than there ever was in a week, than there was in a year. There's more people that look different and are from different areas and different backgrounds there than there ever was before.”
– Downtown Employee

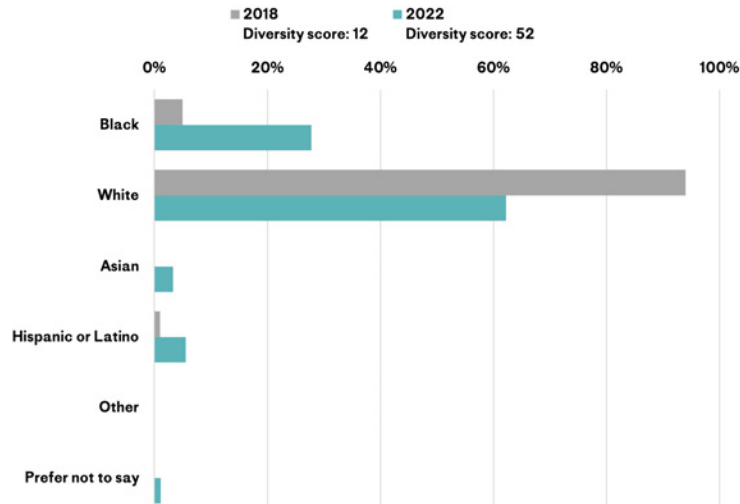
*Note: Using ACS 2019 5-year data for neighborhood and city demographics due to 2020 Census data peculiarities

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

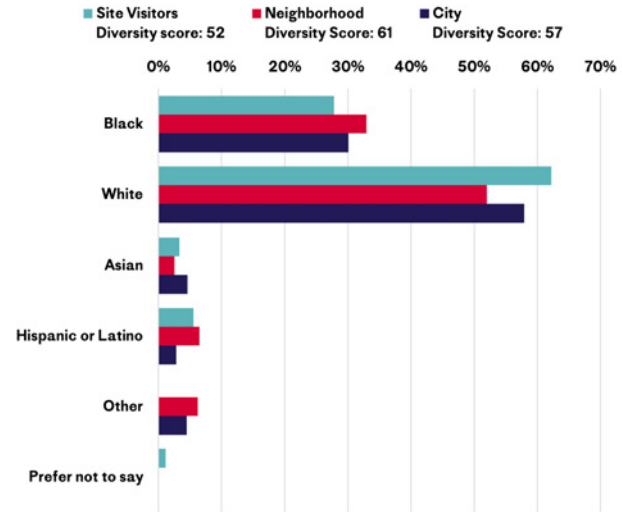
Racial and ethnic diversity of Downtown site visitors

52/80

Race or ethnicity of Downtown site visitors
(2018 vs 2022)



Race or ethnicity of Downtown site visitors
compared to neighborhood and city



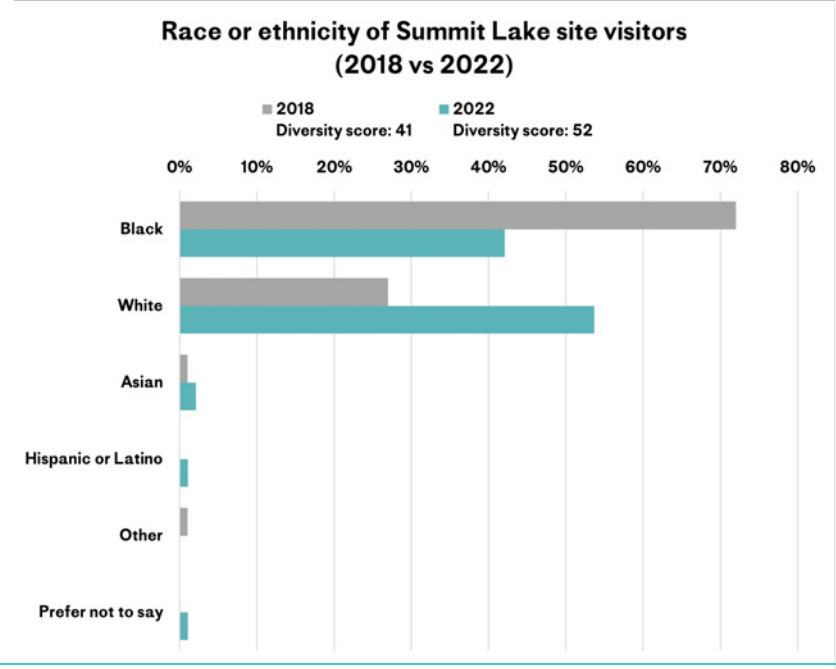
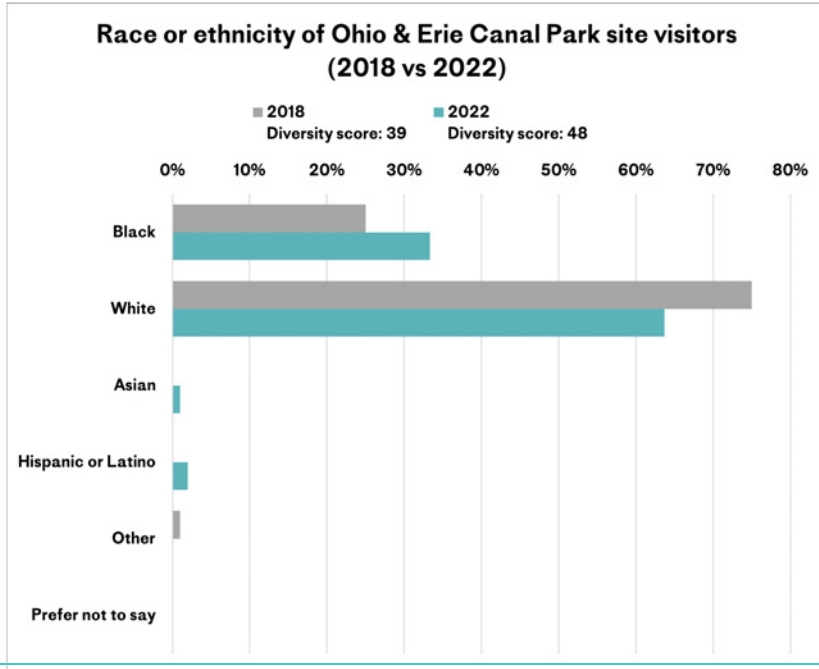
The racial and ethnic diversity of the Downtown sites has improved significantly since 2018. With the diversity score increasing from 12 to 52, out of a perfect score of 80. Downtown civic commons sites have seen large growth in Black visitors (from 5% to 28%) and more modest growth in Asian (up 3 percentage points) and Hispanic or Latino visitors (up 5 percentage points) in recent years.

The racial and ethnic diversity of visitors to downtown sites very closely resembles the diversity of the city overall. An encouraging development as the Akron team has intentionally focused on fostering a downtown that reflects Akron's diversity and is welcoming to all.

*Note: Using ACS 2019 5-year data for neighborhood and city demographics due to 2020 Census data peculiarities

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Racial and ethnic diversity of site visitors



The racial and ethnic diversity of visitors to Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake also increased over this time period. With Ohio & Erie Canal Park gaining Black, Asian and Hispanic or Latino visitors; and Summit Lake gaining white, Asian and Hispanic or Latino visitors.

*Note: Using ACS 2019 5-year data for neighborhood and city demographics due to 2020 Census data peculiarities



**Citywide site visitorship is on the rise at
Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake**

Overall, civic commons sites have become citywide destinations.

Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake have both seen tremendous growth in citywide visitorship. The percent of city-resident visitors who report living outside of the neighborhood increased 29 percentage points for Ohio & Erie Canal Park and 17 percentage points for Summit Lake. Approximately two-thirds of visitors to these sites who live in Akron, are coming from other neighborhoods. While Downtown sites continue to be citywide destinations with 72% of local visitors coming from other parts of the city.

With the level of diversity increasing, the civic commons sites are becoming gathering places for people of all backgrounds from all different neighborhoods and who together represent a true cross-section of Akron.



Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

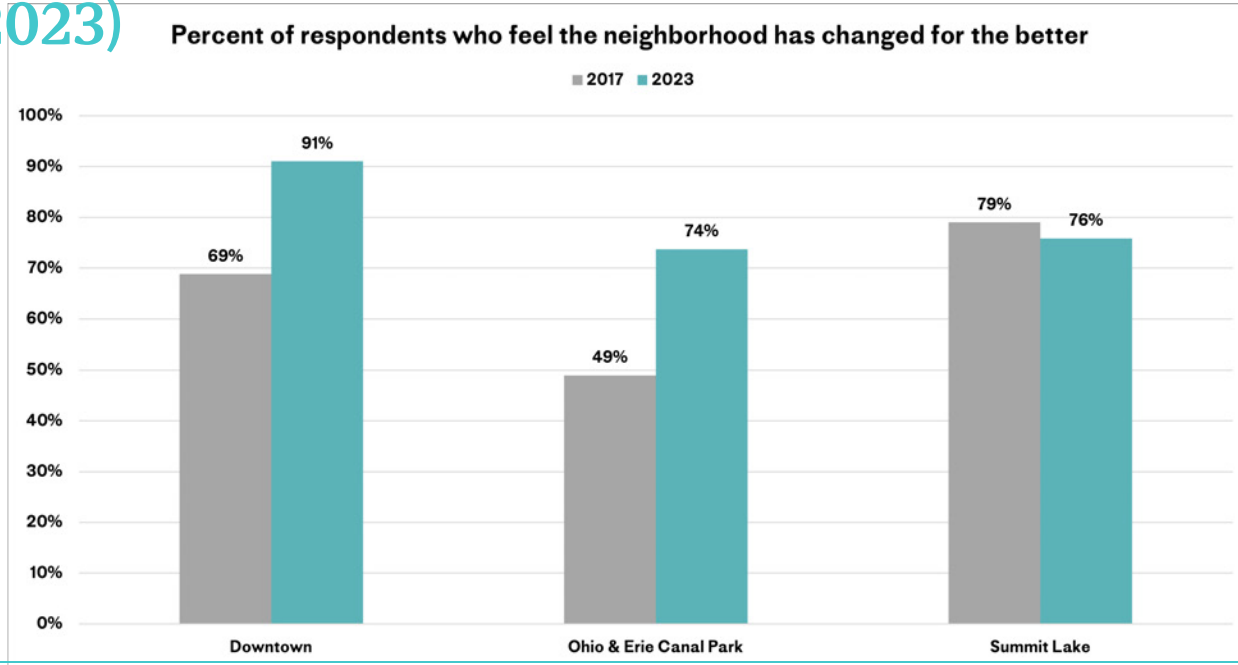
Signal:

Reputation



Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Perceptions of neighborhood change among residents (2017 vs 2023)

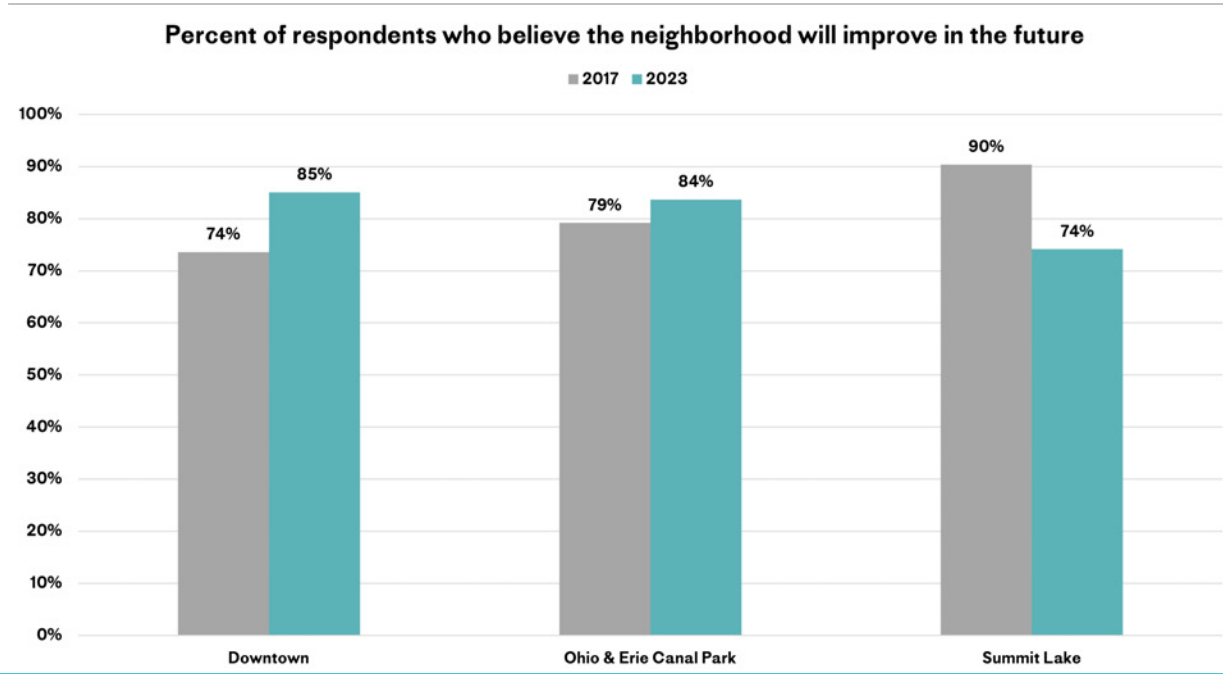


The majority of residents in civic commons geographies feel their neighborhood has changed for the better in recent years.

There was marked improvement among Downtowners on this metric between 2017 and 2023 with a 22 percentage point increase in those who say the neighborhood has improved. The percent of Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents with positive perceptions of recent neighborhood change grew from less than half (49%) of respondents at baseline to nearly three-quarters (74%) in 2023. Summit Lake residents' positive perceptions of recent neighborhood change remained high during the study period.

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Perceptions of the neighborhood's future (2017 vs 2023)



Downtowners and Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents believe that good things are coming for their neighborhoods. 85% of Downtowners and 84% of Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents said they believe their neighborhood will improve over the next few years, up from 74% and 79% respectively at baseline. It is particularly notable that downtown residents' views of their neighborhood and its future have grown more positive over recent years, despite the narrative of downtowns across the country struggling post-pandemic.

Summit Lake's baseline figure of 90% having a positive view of the future decreased by 16 percentage points, but that still meant nearly three-quarters of Summit Lake residents remain hopeful about the future of their neighborhood.



Local news articles with positive narrative
about Summit Lake

75%

This is also reflected in the larger media coverage with 75% of local news articles about Summit Lake were positive (7/1/2022 – 6/30/2023) compared with 61% during the baseline period, and this news coverage has grown with 84 additional positive articles.



Awareness among residents of the civic commons sites has grown

The majority of residents surveyed are aware of and have visited the civic commons sites in their neighborhood. Every single site listed (Downtown: Cascade Plaza, Lock 4, Lock 3, Lock 2; Ohio & Erie Canal Park paths; Summit Lake Park and Summit Lake Nature Center, formerly the Pump House) saw growth in the percent of respondents who have visited the site. Cascade Plaza (85%) and Summit Lake Nature Center (69%) saw the biggest growth with 41 and 38 percentage point increases respectively in awareness between 2017 and 2023.

“I ride my bike a lot on the Towpath, and when I’ll post pictures from Summit Lake while we’re riding through, I have people sending me messages on social media and Facebook asking, ‘Where is that? That looks gorgeous. Can we go there? Are there things to do there?’ They would have never heard of or even been interested in going to Summit Lake before. I do think it’s definitely made the biggest visual impact. It’s very different than it was in 2016.” - Downtown Employee



Residents agree that the civic commons sites have a positive impact on their neighborhood

Across the board, Akronites believe the civic commons assets have a positive impact on their neighborhood. Lock 3 was unanimously recognized for its positive impact. Cascade Plaza and Summit Lake Nature Center (formerly the Pump House) saw the greatest gains on this metric — an increase of 39 percentage points and 38 percentage points, respectively.

At 63%, Lock 2 was the only site of the 7 listed on the survey that had fewer than 3 out of 4 respondents stating that it had a positive impact on its neighborhood.



Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Signal:

Bridging Social Capital





Opportunities for meeting new people in
the civic commons sites at Summit Lake

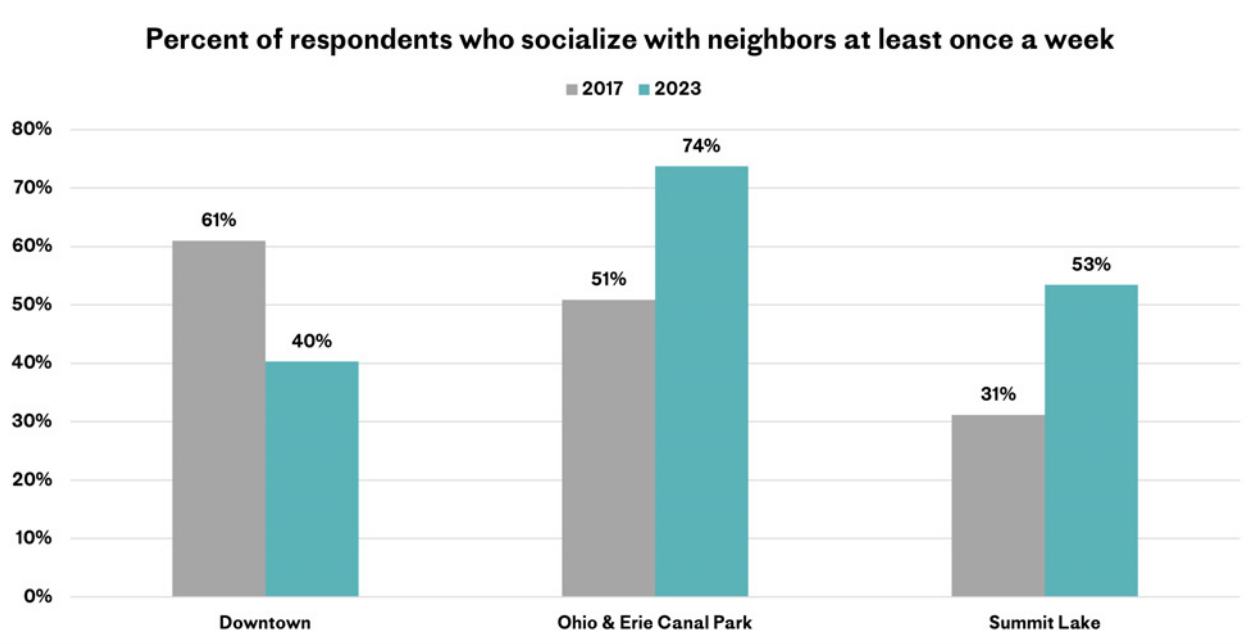
78%

Opportunities for meeting new people in the civic commons sites has improved in Downtown and Summit Lake. Nearly 8 in 10 site visitors in Summit Lake said that they have made a new acquaintance while in the public space, while more than 6 in 10 have done so in the Downtown civic commons sites. Both of these represent approximately 20 percentage point improvements in this metric between 2017 and 2022.

Ohio & Erie Canal Park saw a drop in this figure, falling from approximately two-thirds of visitors just under half saying they met someone new while visiting the civic commons sites.

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Time spent with neighbors (2017 vs 2023)



However, Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents and Summit Lake residents both reported sizeable increases in time spent with neighbors. Both neighborhoods saw double-digit improvement in the percent of residents who socialize with neighbors at least once a week. Furthermore, 31% of Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents and 22% of Summit Lake residents said they interact with their neighbors every day, nearly doubling those reporting daily time spent with neighbors from 2017.

One concerning note is a marked decrease in the portion of Downtown neighborhood residents, workers and visitors who report regularly spending time with neighbors. This fell 21 percentage points from 61% at baseline to 40% at this reporting period. It may be that the pandemic shifted neighborhood social behaviors in the overall city or region that are being captured in the Downtowners responses.



Collectively, these metrics seem to make the case for strong public spaces as increasingly filling the human need for socializing.

This is particularly urgent given the U.S. Surgeon General's recent advisory on social isolation that points to research on the negative impact of loneliness and disconnection on our health and wellbeing.

“The whole process has really made me feel like I know so many people now through being involved. It just makes me feel so comfortable. I'll be out running around the lake and I'll see one neighbor walking down by the apartments down there and I'll run by and say 'hey.' Or I'll be down here and see another neighbor working in the garden. I've just met a lot of people through this project, and it's really made me feel comfortable with both neighborhoods.” – Summit Lake Neighborhood Resident



Goal: Environmental Sustainability

Signal:

Access to Nature



Residents in walking distance to a park
or open space

100%

Akron's Downtown, Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake neighborhoods offers residents easy access to nature. A full 100% of residential parcels in the study areas are within a half mile walk of a park or public open space.



Perception of access to nature

92 - 98%

And residents recognize this access more and more. Now 93% of Downtowners, 92% of Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents and 98% of Summit Lake residents say they live within walking distance of a park, trail, playground, or public garden. This represents an increase over the study period of 15 percentage points among Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents and 21 percentage points among Summit Lake residents in recognizing this opportunity to connect with nature during everyday life.

“I think that COVID did one good thing. Many people found green space. That was one place you could go outside of your home. Many people never hiked, never went to any parks, and all of a sudden, that was the one place you could go during COVID. So I think that in a way it was an unintended boon for exactly what the Civic Commons project has done. Maybe that's why so many more people have visited too. You start to tell your friends, oh I went down there, it's really cool.” – Downtown Resident



Goal: Environmental Sustainability

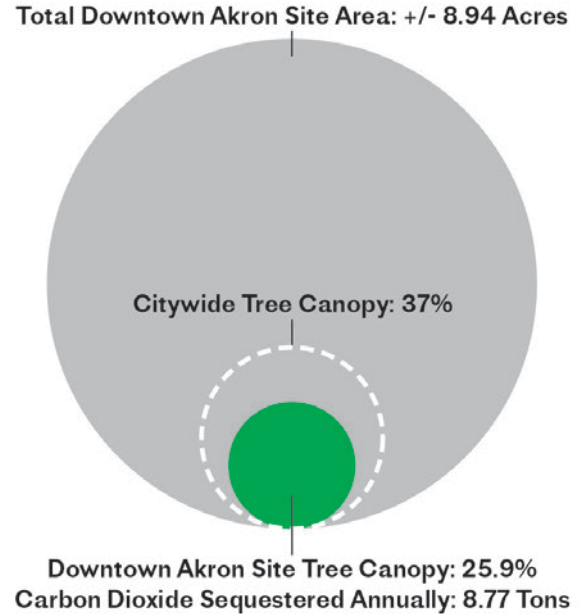
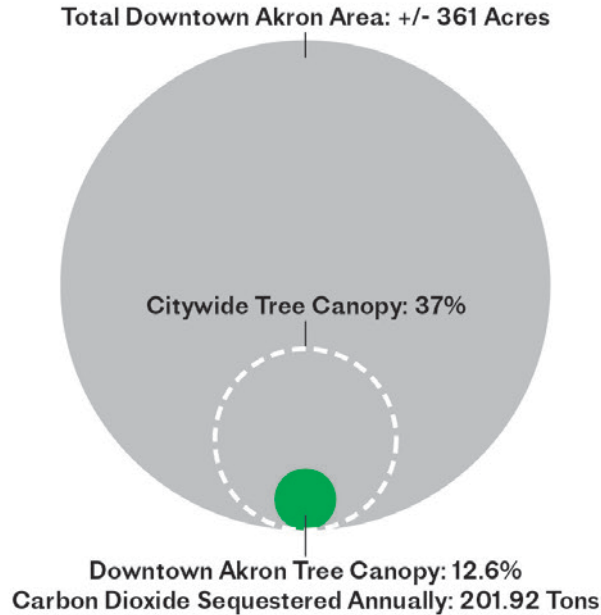
Signal:

Ecological Indicators



Goal: Environmental Sustainability

Downtown tree canopy



Across all three neighborhoods the tree canopy increased over the study period.

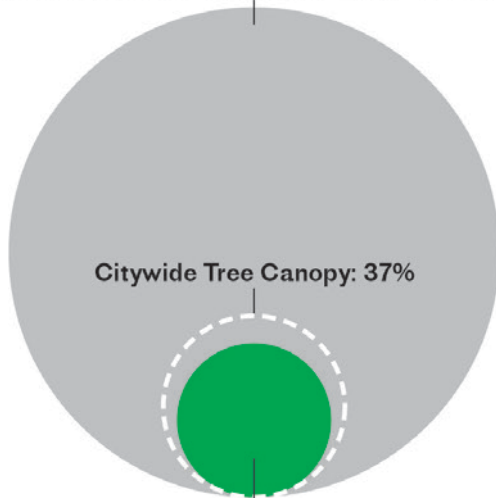
In Downtown Akron the estimated tree canopy increased from 9.1% to 12.6% and at full maturity these trees will sequester approximately 202 tons of carbon dioxide annually.

Within the downtown sites, the total number of trees nearly doubled (111 to 212) and the tree canopy increased from 13.6% to 25.9%. These trees are projected to sequester 8.77 tons of carbon dioxide annually when they reach full maturity.

Goal: Environmental Sustainability

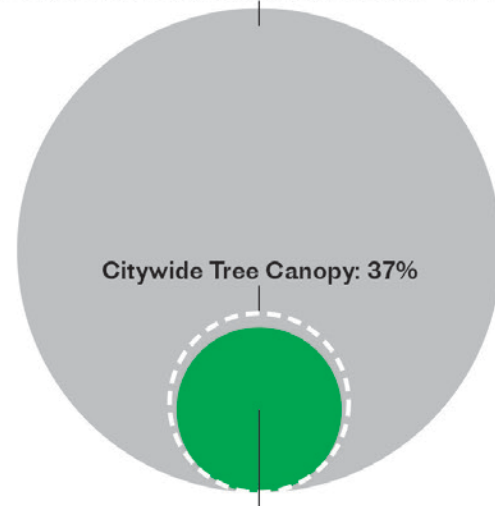
Ohio & Erie Canal Park tree canopy

Total Ohio & Erie Canal Park Area: +/- 103 Acres



Park East Tree Canopy: 31.4%
Carbon Dioxide Sequestered Annually: 144.04 Tons

Total Ohio & Erie Canal Park Site Area: +/- 13.2 Acres



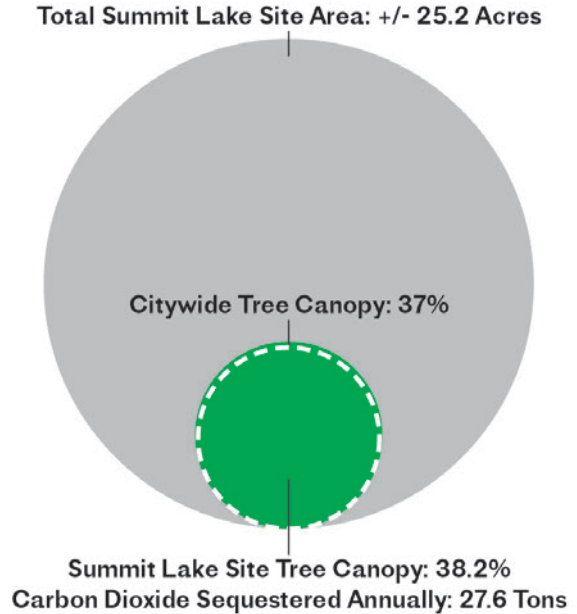
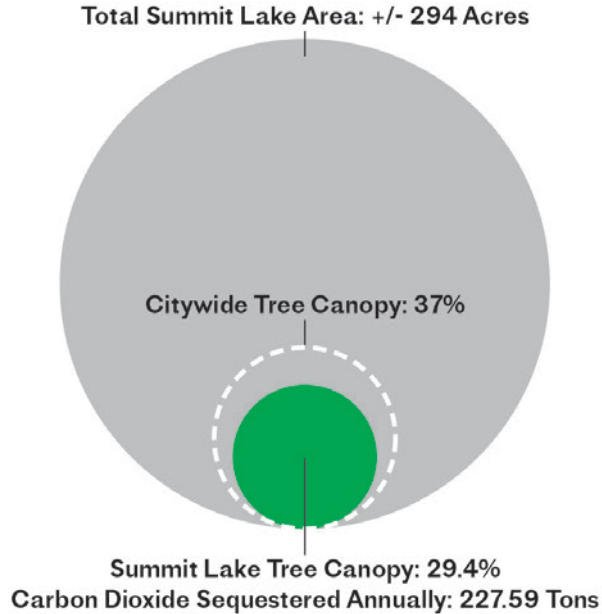
Park East Site Tree Canopy: 34.1%
Carbon Dioxide Sequestered Annually: 19.66 Tons

In Ohio & Erie Canal Park the estimated tree canopy increased from 25.6% to 31.4% and at full maturity these trees will sequester approximately 144 tons of carbon dioxide annually.

Within the site, the total number of trees remained unchanged as no additional tree plantings were undertaken given that the site has an existing dense tree canopy.

Goal: Environmental Sustainability

Summit Lake tree canopy



In Summit Lake the estimated tree canopy increased marginally from 28.9% to 29.4% and at full maturity these trees will sequester approximately 228 tons of carbon dioxide annually.

Within the site, the total number of trees increased from 171 to 260, and the tree canopy increased from 25.1% to 38.2%, which is slightly higher than the tree canopy citywide. These trees are projected to sequester 27.6 tons of carbon dioxide annually when they reach full maturity.



Perception of street trees by Summit Lake residents

↑ 27% pts

Meanwhile the overwhelming majority, 94%, of Downtowners, 90% of Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents and 86% of Summit Lake residents say street trees are beneficial to the neighborhood, up from 87%, 72% and 59%, respectively, at baseline.



**Green stormwater management
features in square feet**

60,000

The civic commons sites incorporated a number of sustainable materials and features including 124 LED lights, more than 60,000 sq ft of native landscaping. In addition, 14,844 gallons of stormwater capacity were added to the sites from newly planted trees (calculation based on trees at full maturity in 20 years).



While not adequately captured in the metrics, through Akron’s civic commons efforts, an environmental assessment of Summit Lake was completed. It showed that water quality improved over the past few decades and is now similar to any other inland lake in Ohio. This opened doors for the expansion of programming including canoeing, kayaking and fishing at the lake, and in turn provided many Akronites with their first opportunity to interact directly with the 100-acre lake and the wildlife sustained by this natural habitat.

“Walking the trail, I started noticing a whole lot of wildlife. I would see otters and beavers and muskrats, all kinds of stuff. In my mind, I knew that if the lake wasn’t getting healthier, you would not have all this wildlife. I never paid attention to birds before, but there’s a whole lot of birds down here. All kinds of different birds. One day, I was walking the dog in the evening and I stopped by the wetlands. I think I stood there for about 15-20 minutes listening to a concert because there were all these different birds singing.”
– Summit Lake Neighborhood Resident



Goal: Environmental Sustainability

Signal:

Walkability | Bikeability





**Downtown biking
infrastructure**

↑ 7% pts

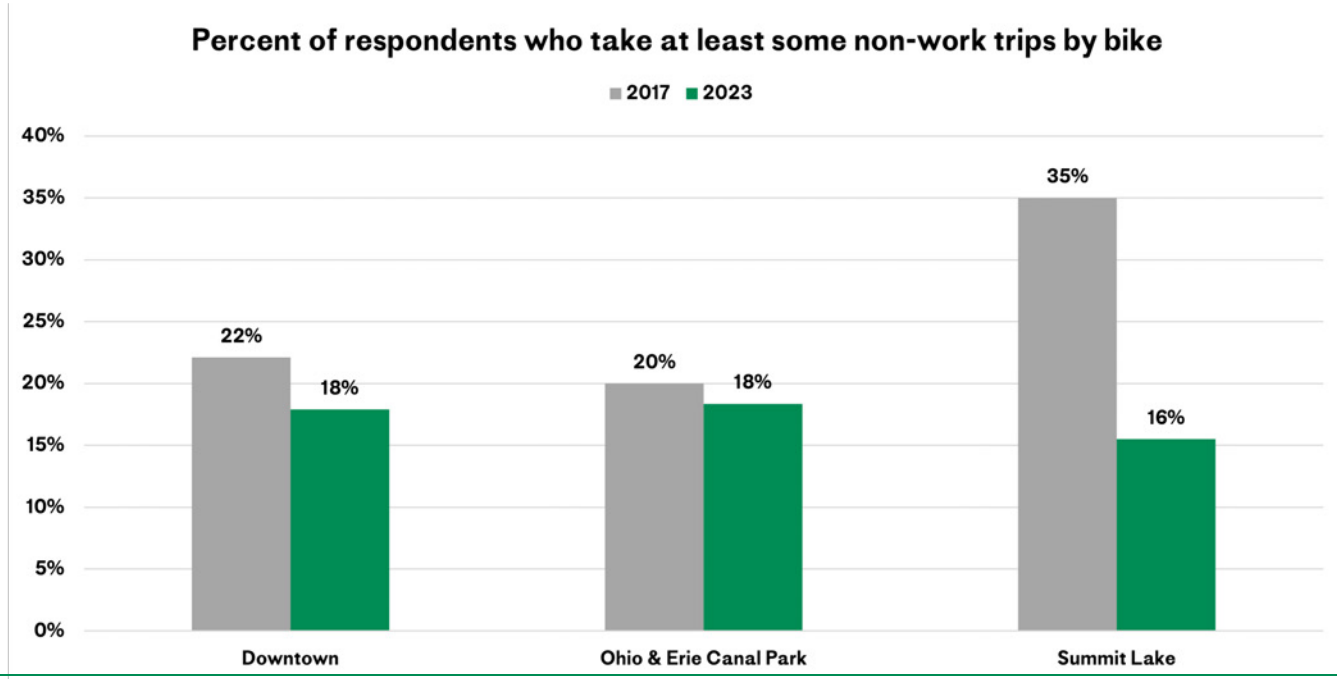
While neighborhood walking infrastructure stayed fairly flat, bike infrastructure improved in both Downtown and Summit Lake neighborhoods. Downtown saw a 7% point increase from 6% to 13% in the percent of neighborhood street lengths with bike lanes (dedicated or shared), and Summit Lake saw a 10% point increase from 28% to 38% over the study period.

“I just appreciate being able to walk just about anywhere, go to a restaurant, go to work. Everything's just very accessible.”

– Downtown Resident

Goal: Environmental Sustainability

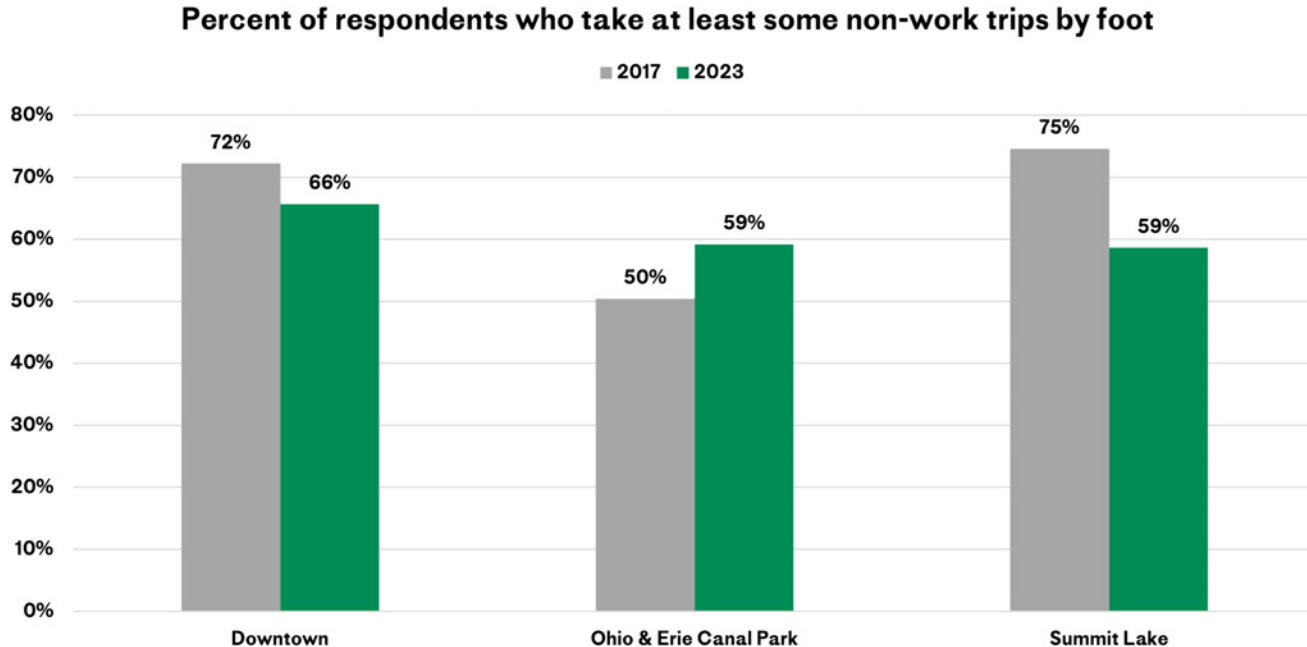
Neighborhood biking behavior



Despite this, fewer Downtowners, Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake residents are biking in 2023 than they were in 2017.

Goal: Environmental Sustainability

Neighborhood walking behavior



Similarly, fewer Downtowners and Summit Lake residents reported walking for non-work trips. Though you do see a slight increase in the percentage of people who make some non-work trips by foot among Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents.



Walking, biking and transit access to
Summit Lake

↑ 10% pts

Despite the fact that overall walking and biking behavior did not improve across the civic commons neighborhoods, there was a slight increase in the percent of site visitors who walked, biked or took transit to Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake sites. At Ohio & Erie Canal Park this metric rose from 80% to 85% of visitors, while at Summit Lake it increased from 34% to 44% of visitors between 2018 and 2022.

However, these stats collectively indicate a likely need for better pedestrian, bike and transit connections across these neighborhoods.



Goal: Value Creation

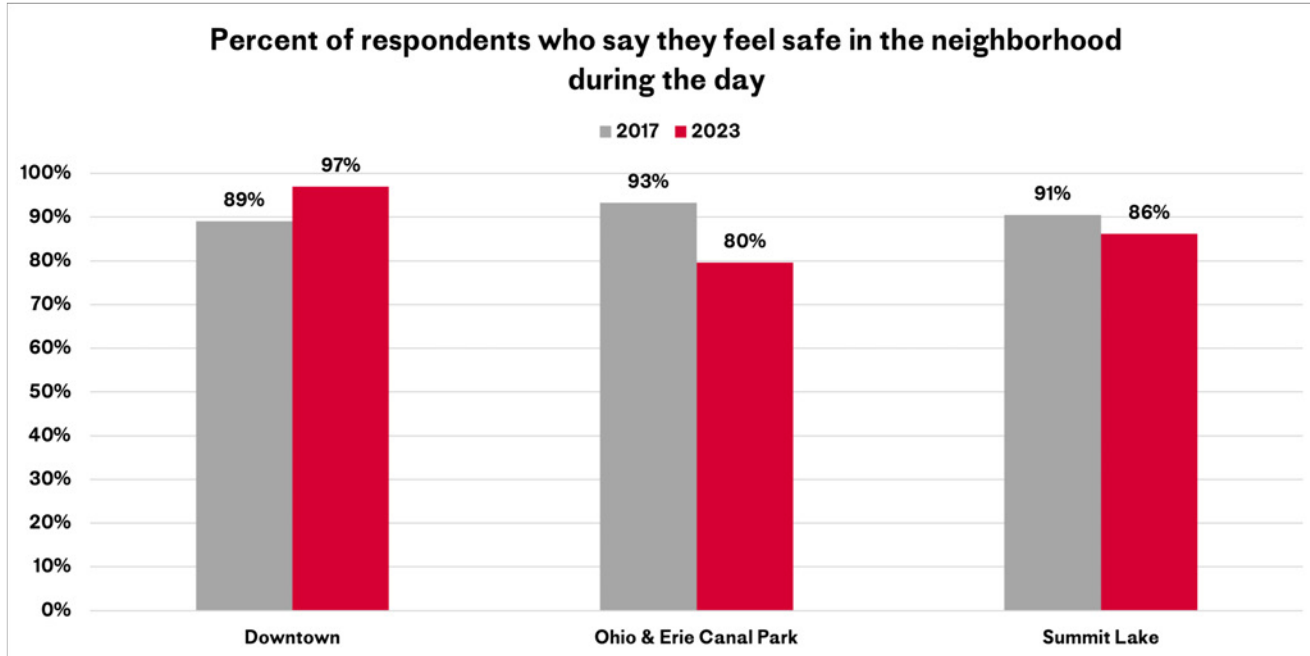
Signal:

Safety



Goal: Value Creation

Perception of neighborhood safety in the daytime



Perceptions of daytime neighborhood safety were very good with the vast majority of respondents saying they felt safe in their neighborhood during the day.

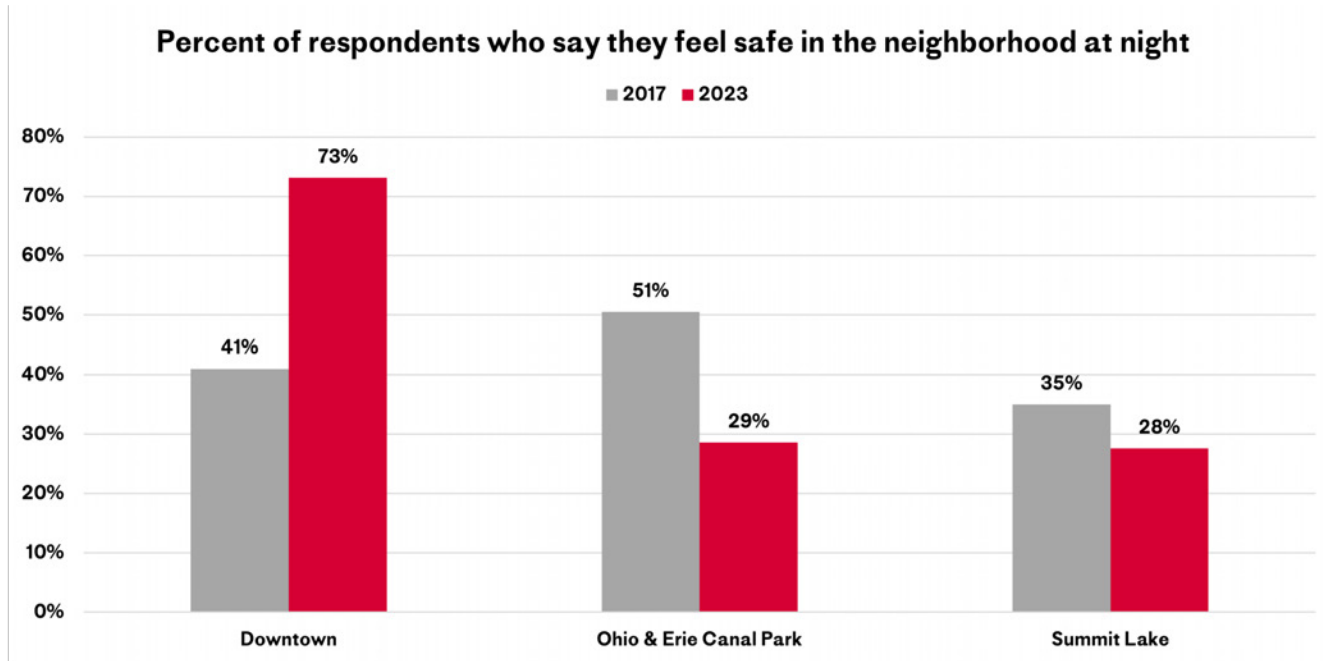
Among Downtowners, this increased 8 percentage points between 2017 and 2023. And a larger proportion of respondents now say they feel “very safe” in the neighborhood during the day — up an impressive 32 percentage points over this time period.

This feels particularly important given that it flies in the face of the narrative of unsafe downtowns that has emerged post-pandemic.

Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake saw an overall decrease in perceptions of daytime safety among residents (down 13 percentage points and 5 percentage points, respectively). However, they still have 80% or more residents who say they feel safe.

Goal: Value Creation

Perception of neighborhood safety at night



A similar trend is observed with nighttime safety as captured by the neighborhood survey.

We saw marked improvement in the perception of neighborhood safety at night among Downtowners. This increased by 32 percentage points over the study period.

While Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake residents saw a different trajectory on perceptions of safety at night falling by 23 percentage points and 7 percentage points, respectively.

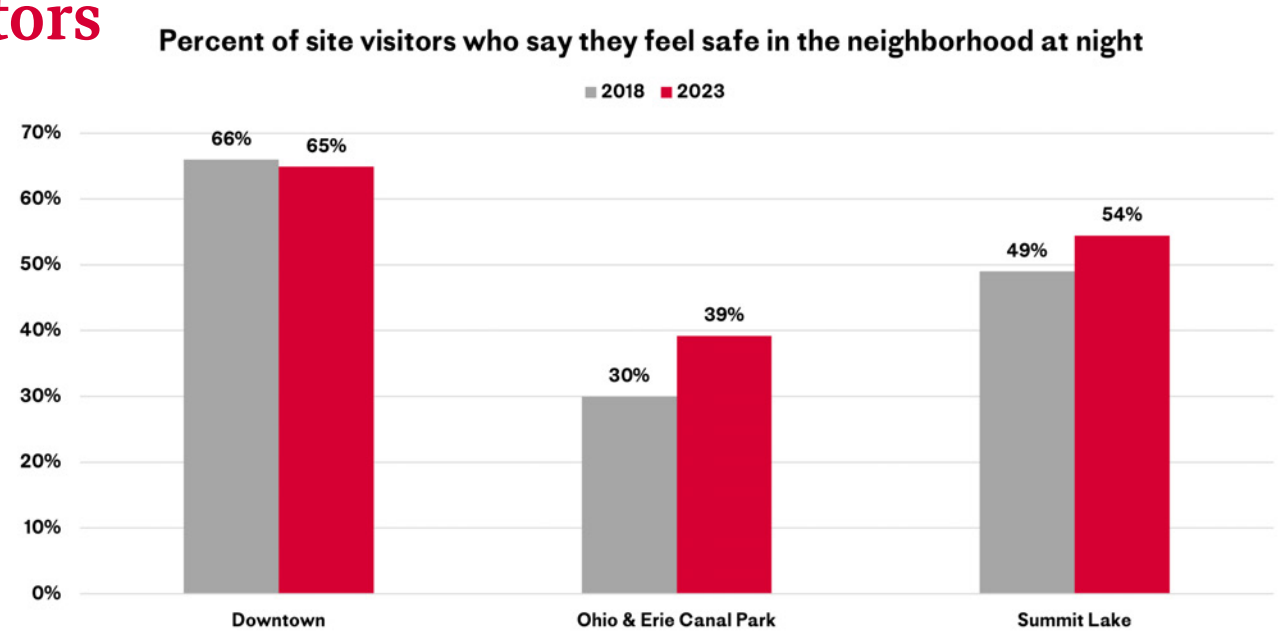


The significant change in attitude among Downtowners on their sense of safety at night can likely be attributed to changes to design, such as new lighting and better defined gathering spaces, public space staffing such as Downtown Akron Partnership’s ambassadors, as well as evening activities such as Wellness on the Plaza and Skate Nights in Downtown, that regularly draw people out in the evening hours.

“I think the Downtown Akron Partnership ambassadors do an amazing job helping to promote downtown as a safe environment, whether it's day or night.” – Downtown Resident

Goal: Value Creation

Perception of neighborhood safety at night among site visitors



Interestingly, site visitors have reported a different experience of nighttime safety in Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake.

While Downtown site visitors' perception of nighttime safety stayed fairly constant from 2018 to 2023. We saw improvement in the perception of neighborhood safety at night among site visitors to Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake. Up 9 percentage points and 5 percentage points over the study period. Both of these figures seem to indicate that those actively in the Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake public spaces feel safer at night in the neighborhoods than those who live in the neighborhood as a whole.



The improved level of safety among site visitors at Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake may reflect on programs such as the Summer Concert series at Callis Tower, and activities like Summit Lake Farmer's Market and Sunset Kayak.

Given the level of investments in Downtown and the impact on perceptions of safety, and the high level of support among Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake residents for more public spending on the civic commons, this may provide rationale for making additional public realm investments in programming in these two geographies. As well as point to strategies the city may want to consider for increasing the public's sense of safety in other parts of the city.

As well as point to strategies the city may want to consider for increasing the public's sense of safety in other parts of the city.



Goal: Value Creation

Signal:

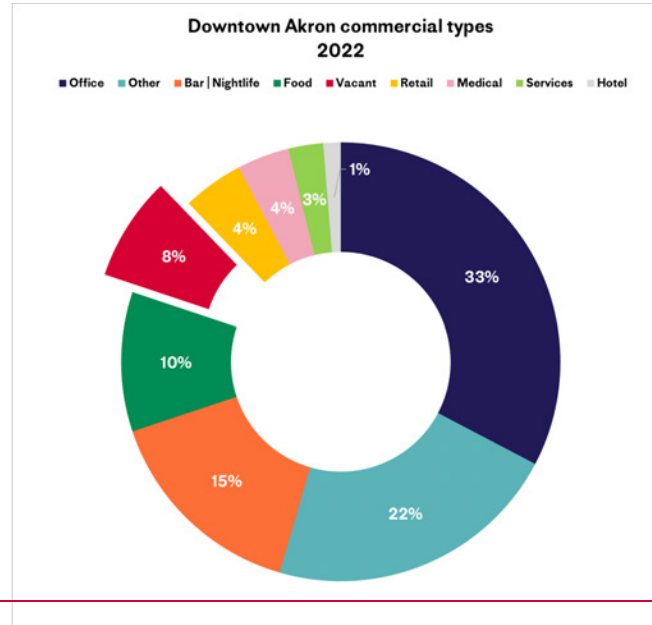
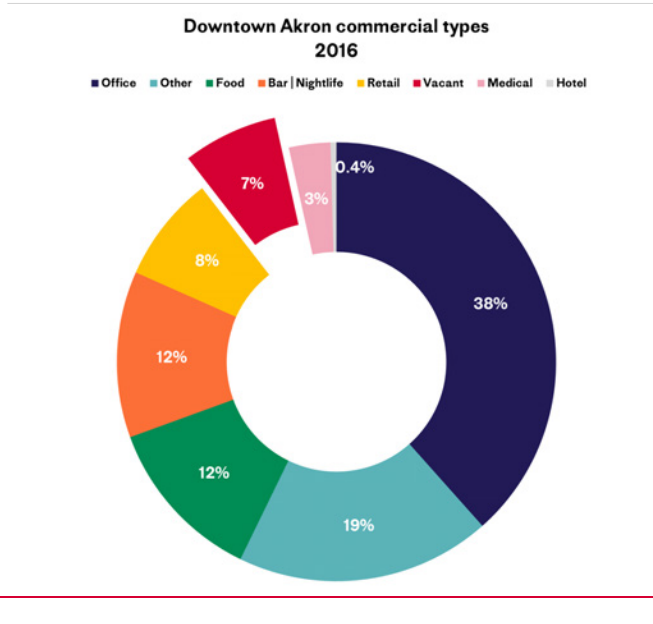
Real Estate



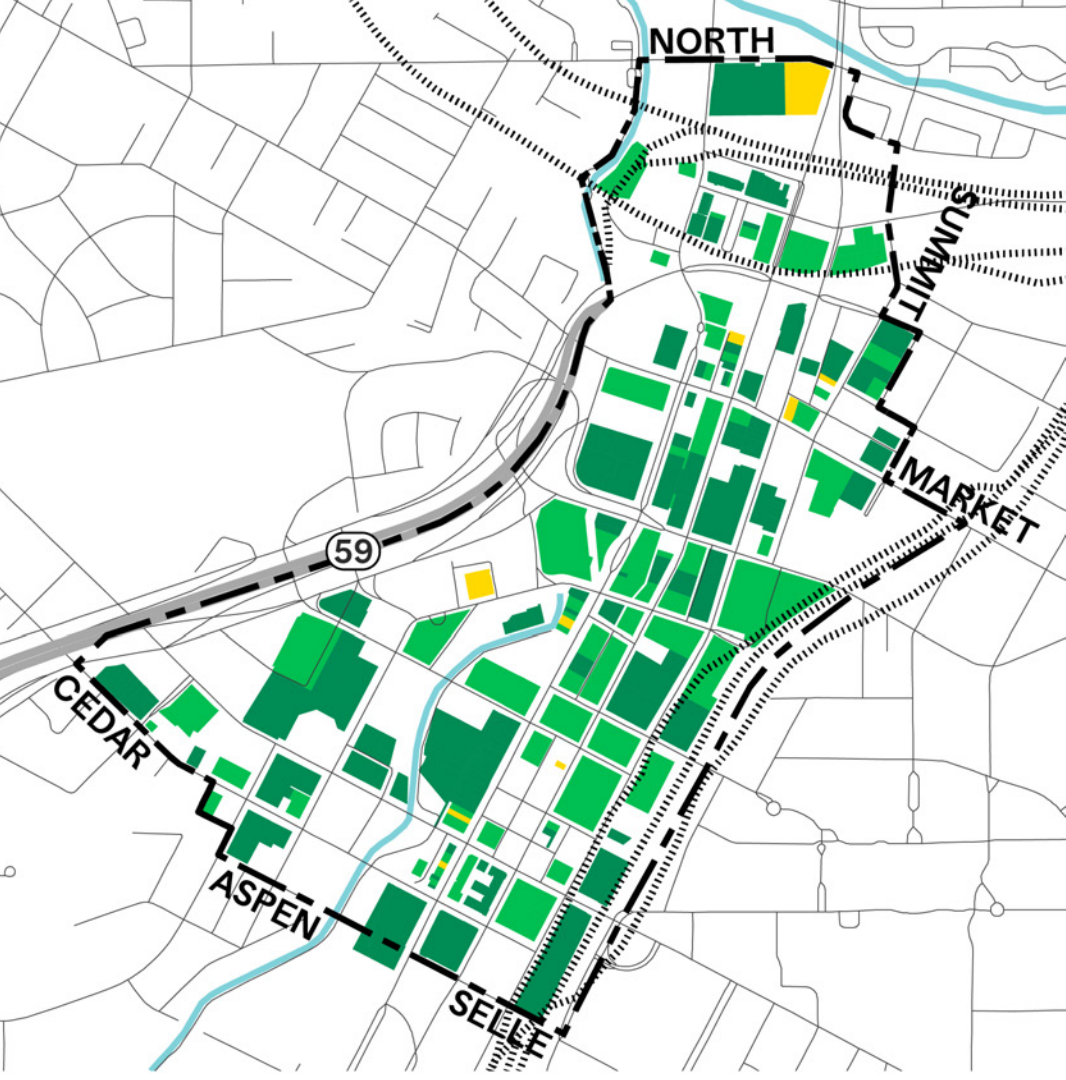
Goal: Value Creation

Downtown commercial buildings that appear vacant (2016 vs 2022)

8%



The proportion of commercial property that appeared vacant increased by just 1 percentage point 7% to 8% over the study period. Indicating that despite the pandemic, downtown Akron commercial buildings appeared to stay active.



Downtown
buildings that
appear in good or
excellent condition

96%

- A - Excellent
- B - Good
- C - Fair
- D - Poor
- F - Very Poor

Neighborhood building conditions in Downtown also remained steady over this time period with the percent of buildings that appear in good or excellent condition staying at 96%.

Underutilized land in the neighborhood, such as vacant lots or surface parking lots, also remained at 24% of the parcel area.



Typical home values in the Downtown
zip code

↑ 114%

Meanwhile, typical home values in the downtown zip code increased by more than \$57,000 or 114% from June 2015 to June 2022. During this same time period, typical home values across the city of Akron increased by approximately \$53,000.

“Physically, downtown looks better than it ever has. The road dieting, the plants, the lighting, the connectivity with State Street, the cleaning up of all of that has been tremendous. Opening the boutiques. It looks completely different.” – Downtown Employee

*Data from Zillow calculated as a weighted average of the middle third of homes in a given geography.



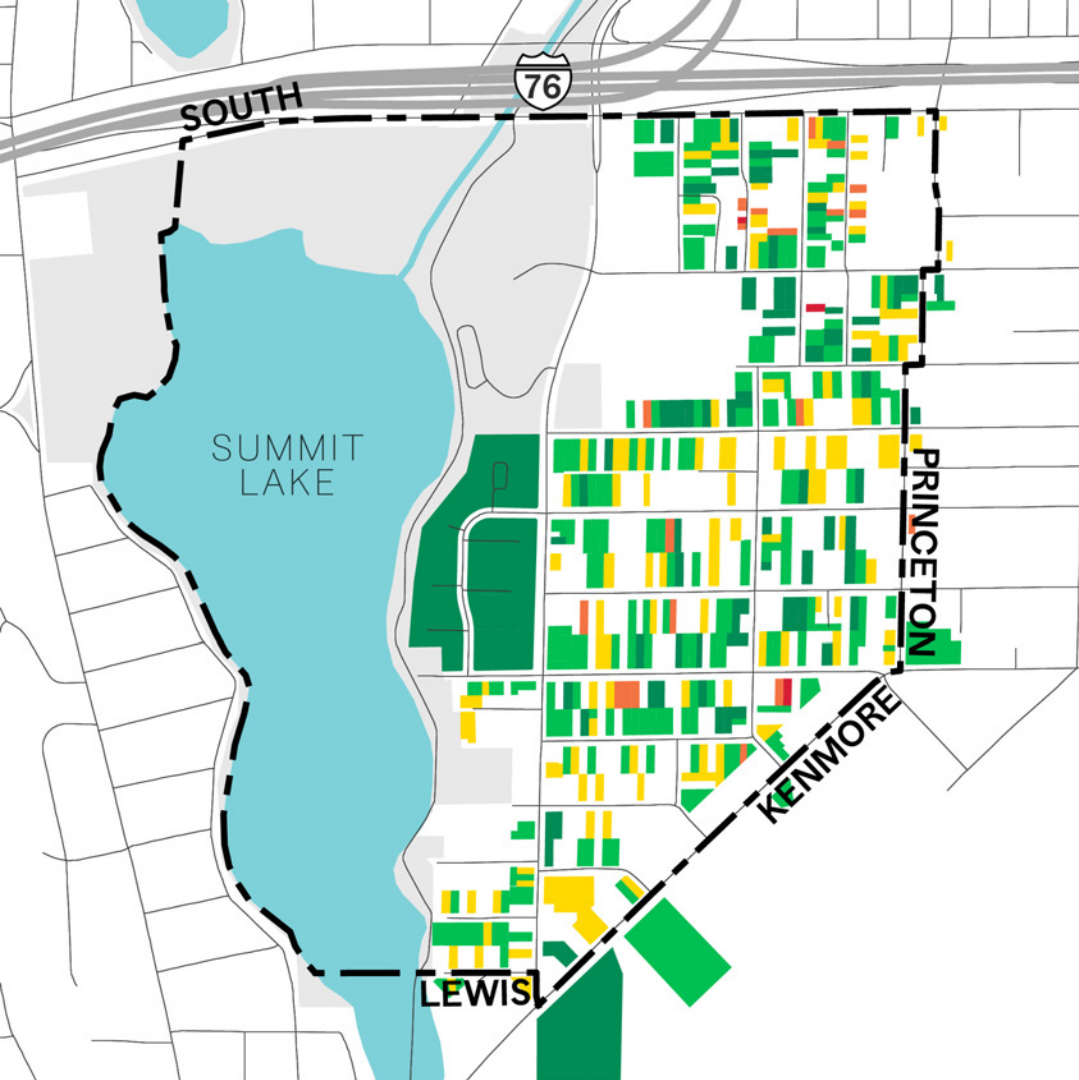
**Ohio & Erie Canal
Park buildings that
appear in good or
excellent condition**

99%

- A - Excellent**
- B - Good**
- C - Fair**
- D - Poor**
- F - Very Poor**

Neighborhood building conditions in Ohio & Erie Canal Park also remained steady over this time period with the percent of buildings that appear in good or excellent condition staying at 99%.

There was no substantial change in underutilized land in the neighborhood, such as vacant lots or surface parking lots, and not enough data to analyze home value changes over this time period.



Summit Lake
buildings that
appear in good or
excellent condition

64%

- A - Excellent**
- B - Good**
- C - Fair**
- D - Poor**
- F - Very Poor**

Neighborhood building conditions in Summit Lake declined over this time period with the percent of buildings that appear in good or excellent condition falling to 64% in 2022 from 81% in 2017.

However, underutilized land in the neighborhood, such as vacant lots or surface parking lots, decreased from 31% to 22% of the parcel area over this same period.



Typical home values in the Summit Lake zip code

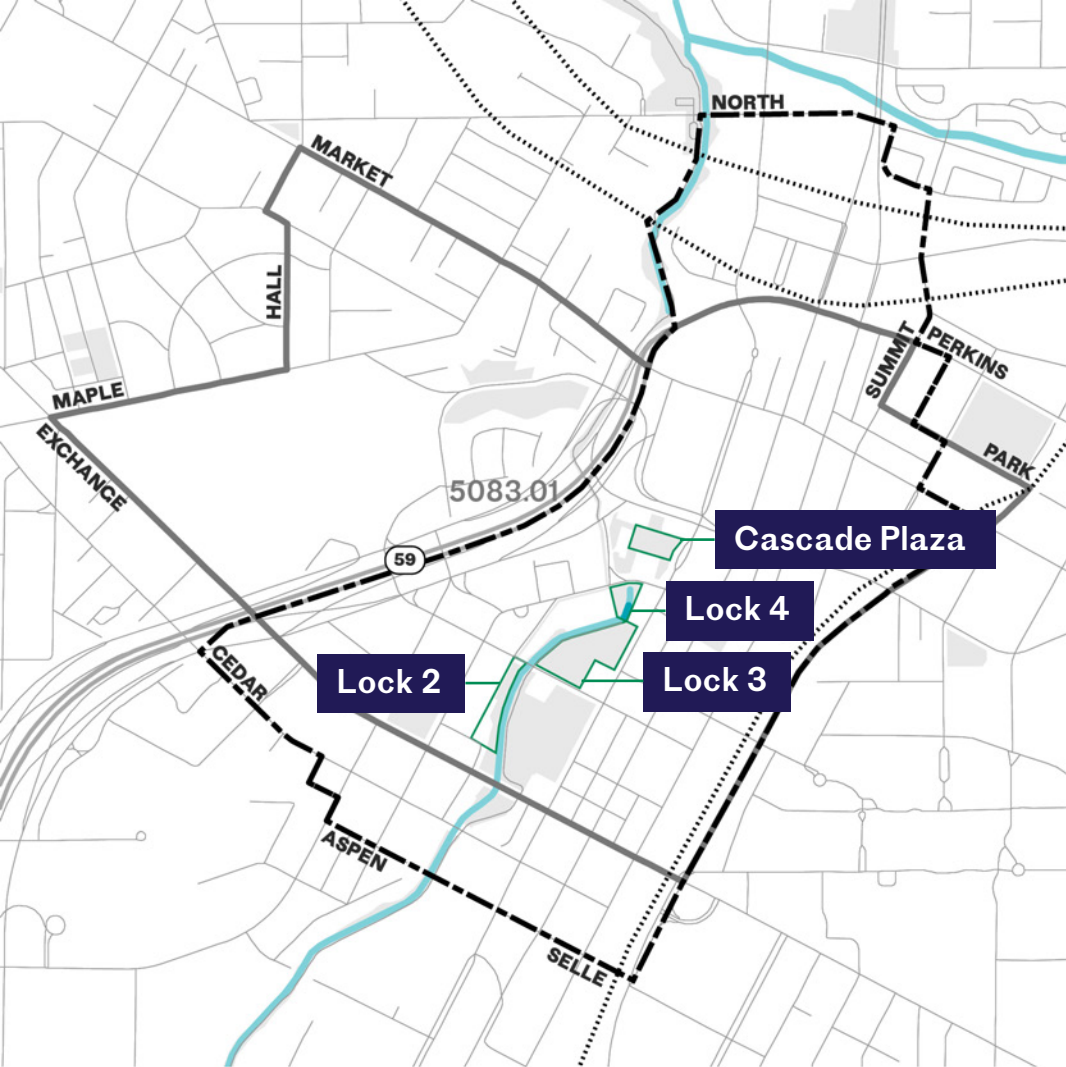
↑144%

Meanwhile, typical home values in the Summit Lake zip code increased by nearly \$29,000 or 144% from June 2015 to June 2022. During this same time period, typical home values across the city of Akron increased by approximately \$53,000 or 92%.

*Data from Zillow calculated as a weighted average of the middle third of homes in a given geography.


Reimagining the Civic Commons Metrics Report - Final

Methodology



Geographic Study Area: Downtown

 Civic Commons site

 Core study area

 Core Census tract

 1/2 Mile

Civic Commons Sites

- Cascade Plaza
- Lock 2
- Lock 3
- Lock 4

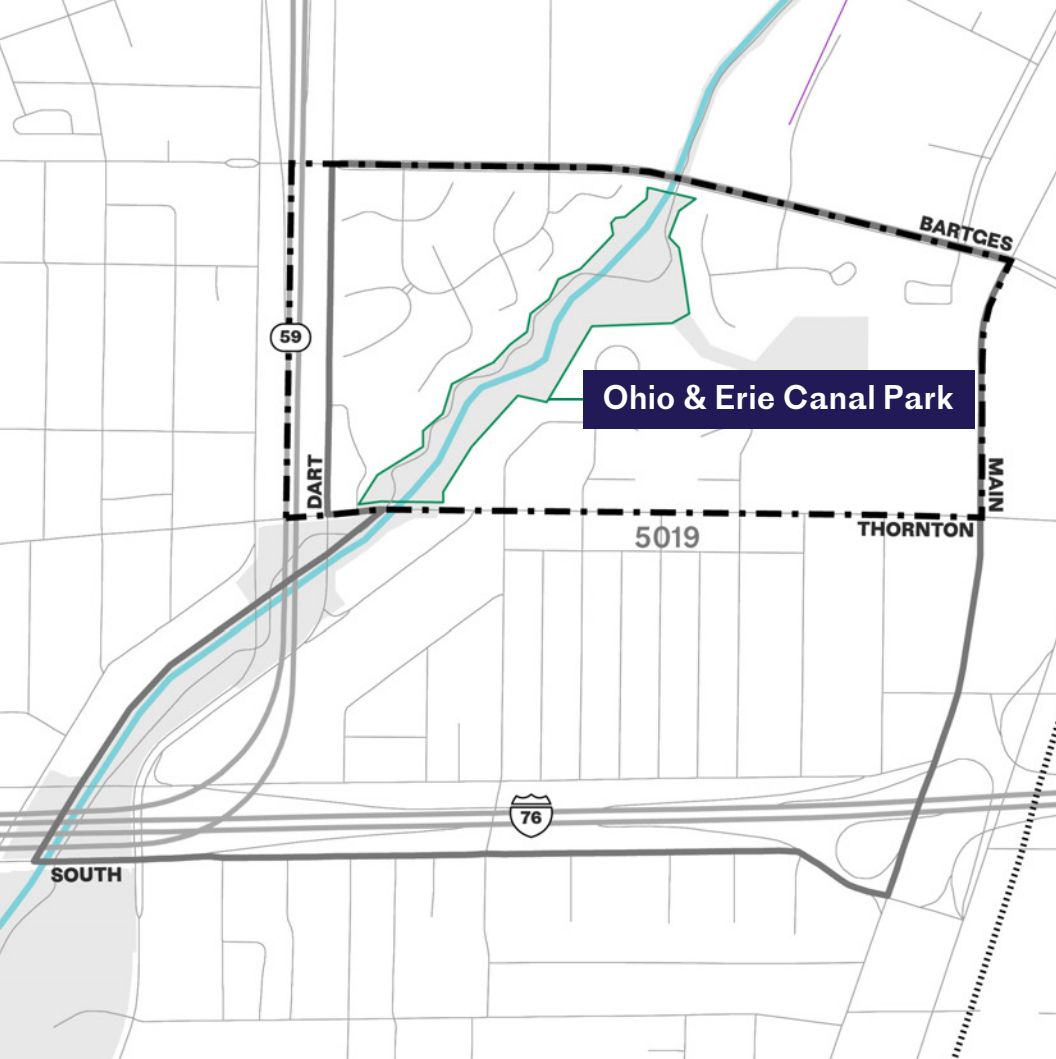
Core Study Area

- Approx. 1/4 mile radius around sites

Census Tract: 5083.01

Zip Code: 44308

Geographic Study Area: Ohio & Erie Canal Park



 Civic Commons site

 Core study area

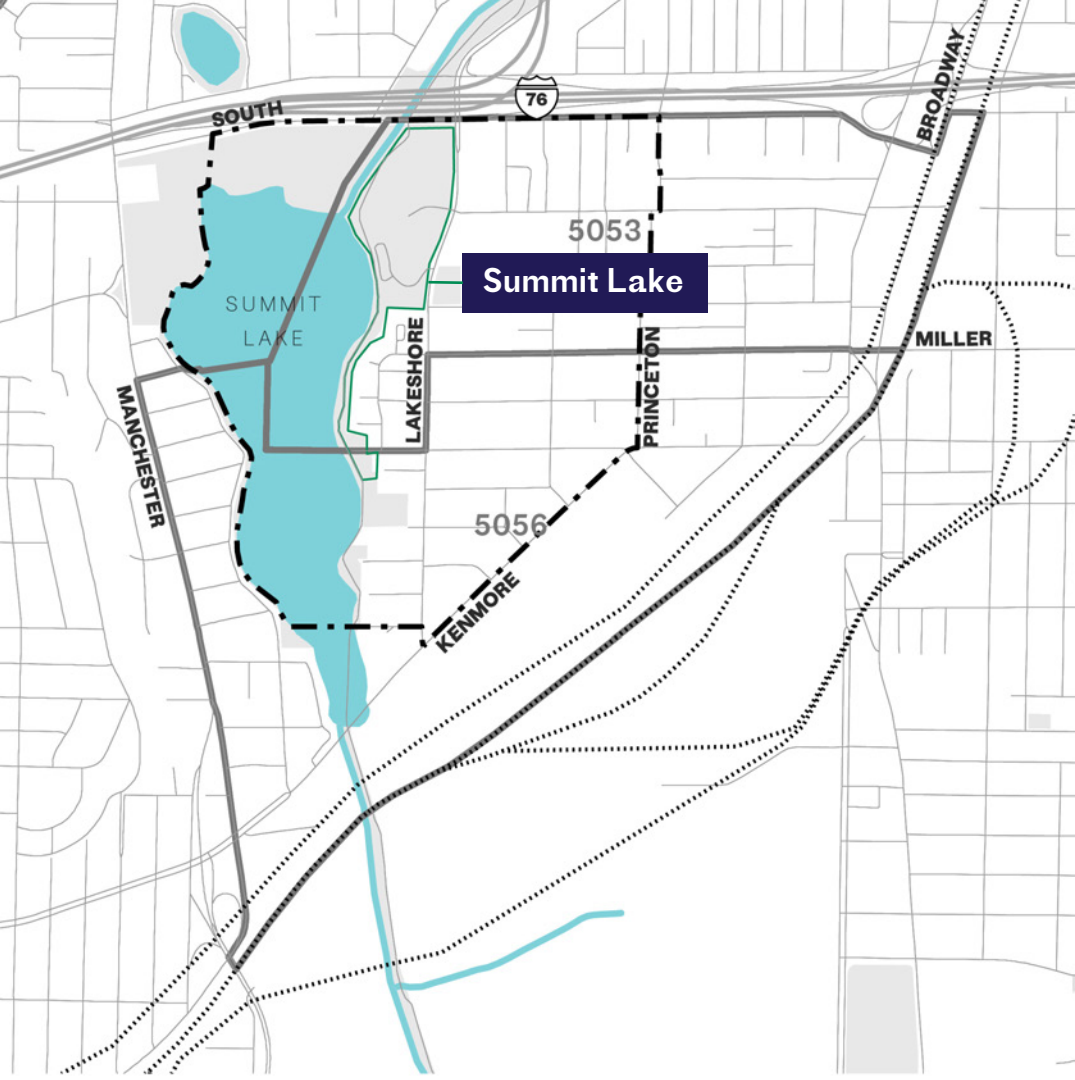
 Core Census tract

 1/4 Mile

Civic Commons Sites
• Ohio & Erie Canal Park


Core Study Area
• Approx. 1/4 mile radius around sites

Census Tract: 5019
Zip Code: 44311



Geographic Study Area: Summit Lake

 Civic Commons site

 Core study area

 Core Census tract

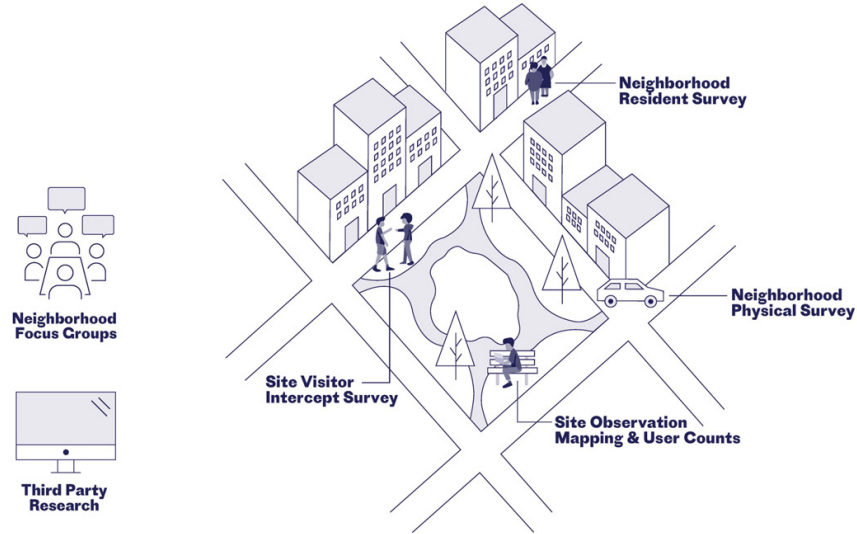
 1/2 Mile

Civic Commons Sites
• Summit Lake

Core Study Area
• Approx. 1/4 mile radius around sites

Census Tract: 5053 | 5056
Zip Code: 44301

Reimagining the Civic Commons Metrics Report - Final



Data Collection Tools

The following measurement tools were deployed for data collection in Akron using the methodologies summarized below:

Neighborhood Physical Survey: Visual assessments of the physical conditions of civic assets and surrounding neighborhoods

Neighborhood Resident Survey: Surveys conducted with a sample of community members in a specific neighborhood

Site Visitor Intercept Survey: Surveys conducted at the project site with people who are engaging with the place

Site Observation Mapping & User Counts: Visual assessments of how people engage with civic assets

Third Party Research: Assessment of data collected by outside organizations, such as the U.S. Census

Neighborhood Focus Groups: Qualitative understanding of civic assets of focus and neighborhood conditions via facilitated small group discussions

Reimagining the Civic Commons Metrics Report - Final

Neighborhood Physical Survey

Neighborhood Physical Survey

The physical survey of the Downtown, Ohio & Erie Canal Park, and Summit Lake neighborhoods was fielded from November 22, 2022 to November 30, 2022 and recorded conditions of 674 parcels downtown, 262 parcels in Ohio & Erie Canal Park, and 907 parcels in Summit Lake. The boundaries of the neighborhoods used for the physical survey generally followed:

- Downtown: North Street to the north, Route 59 to the west, Cedar Street to the South, and the rail line to the east.
- Ohio & Erie Canal Park: Bartges Street to the north, Route 59 to the west, Thornton Street to the south, and Main Street to the east.
- Summit Lake: I-76 to the north, the lakefront to the west, Kenmore Boulevard to the south, and Princeton Street to the east.

For streets that defined the boundaries of the study, parcel conditions were recorded on both sides of the street centerline. Surveyors collected data on a range of topics, including: land use, building and yard condition, street trees, tree canopy, transportation infrastructure, defensive design measures, and any activity related to sale, construction, or condemnation. The survey was completed by two staff members trained to recognize applicable physical conditions from a windshield survey.

Reimagining the Civic Commons Metrics Report - Final

Neighborhood Resident Survey

Neighborhood Resident Survey

The Downtown, Ohio & Erie Canal Park, and Summit Lake Neighborhood Surveys were fielded from September 20, 2022 to September 22, 2023 in each respective neighborhood. The survey was conducted in several ways to reach a broad spectrum of the population in each neighborhood, and included administering surveys in-person by going door-to-door, popping up a large residential buildings, and distributing the survey online. Residents were the primary audience targeted in Ohio & Erie Canal Park and Summit Lake, while the Downtown survey sought to reach residents, workers, and students. 225 total respondents completed the surveys; though the total number of respondents for each question may vary slightly, as respondents were excluded from the data when they chose not to answer a question, unless otherwise noted.

Site Visitor Intercept Survey

Site Visitor Intercept Survey

The Akron Civic Commons Intercept Survey was fielded from September, 9 2022 to October 26, 2022 in Lock 2, Lock 3, Lock 4 and Cascade Plaza in Downtown Akron; in Ohio & Erie Canal Park; and at Summit Lake Park and at the Pump House. 94 respondents completed the survey in Downtown Akron, 105 respondents completed the survey in Ohio & Erie Canal Park, and 103 respondents completed the survey at Summit Lake; though the total number of respondents for each question may vary slightly, as respondents were excluded from the data when they chose not to answer a question, unless otherwise noted. Surveyors were instructed to circulate through the sites and approach all visitors to the sites as they observed them. Surveyors were instructed not to approach individuals outside the sites on adjacent sidewalks or properties. Visitors to the sites were offered the option to enter a raffle for a \$100 gift card as incentive to take the survey.

Site Observation Mapping & User Counts

Site Observation Mapping & User Counts

Observation mapping and user counts were conducted on two weekdays and two weekend days in July and August 2022 in Cascade Plaza, Lock 4, Lock 3, Ohio & Erie Canal Park, and Summit Lake. A user count was conducted within the interior of the Summit Lake Community Center noting gender, age, activity type, and total number of visitors. Observation mapping and user counts were generally conducted from 9:00 AM until 7:00 PM, and surveyors performed the two tasks described below:

Observation mapping. At the top of each hour, surveyors marked on paper maps the location and general activity of all people within the sites at the moment the surveyor observed them. Observation mapping data in this report were tabulated using predefined activity categories that surveyors used to mark down individuals' locations. Data for a small number of hours were incomplete when surveyors failed to complete the task; for those times, data was duplicated from equivalent times during the corresponding weekday or weekend day when possible. The final weekday and weekend day observation mapping data presented in this report are composite counts from the two weekdays and two weekend days on which data was collected.

User counts. At the top of each hour, surveyors proceeded through a series of assigned points around the Civic Commons sites, at each of which they counted, for one minute, the number and general demographics of all individuals who crossed an imaginary line into or out of the site. User count data in this report were tabulated using predefined demographic categories that surveyors used to tally passing users; these include: total count, gender, general age, and whether the user was on a bicycle. Data for a small number of hours were incomplete when surveyors failed to complete the task; final analyses include no data for those times. The final user count data presented in this report are composite counts from all four days on which data was collected.

Reimagining the Civic Commons Metrics Report - Final

Third Party Research

Third Party Research

A range of third party data sources were collected and analyzed for this report including:

- American Community Survey, 2011-15 | 2015-2019
- Placer.ai, 2023
- Reference USA business database, 2015
- Zillow, 2016 | 2023

Public perceptions of sites and of the neighborhood

For Akron and its Civic Commons sites, mentions in general circulation papers, identified by Brink Communications, were tracked and identified by whether the article expressed an overall positive or negative sentiment. To track appropriate mentions, a list of keywords was developed relating to each neighborhood and site. A custom Google search was then created for each news publication to catalog local news mentions. Article sentiments were tallied on a monthly basis. Tabulation was first automated through the artificial intelligence platform ChatGPT, with each result checked by a member of our team who is familiar with the sites and neighborhood. The number of positive mentions was divided by the total inventory to produce the average percentage of local news articles with positive narratives about the sites and neighborhoods.

Sentiments were analyzed on a yearly basis, starting on July 1, 2022 and concluding on June 30, 2023. The news publications tracked in Akron included the Akron Beacon Journal and the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Income diversity of neighborhood residents

This income diversity index is computed as follows: Census data from the 2015-2019 American Community Survey on household income is used to divide the population into five income groups. We compute the share of the population in each census tract that is in each of these groups. The index is computed as 1 minus the sum of the squared shares of the five groups, and corresponds to the probability that any two randomly selected persons in the neighborhood would be from different groups.

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Third Party Research (cont.)

Third Party Research

Racial and ethnic diversity of neighborhood residents

This racial and ethnic diversity index is computed as follows: Census data from the 2015-2019 American Community Survey is used that reports the number of persons in each of five racial ethnic groups (white, Black, Latino, Asian, and all other). We compute the share of the population in each census tract that is in each of these groups. The index is computed as 1 minus the sum of the squared shares of the five groups, and corresponds to the probability that any two randomly selected persons in the neighborhood would be from different groups.

Tree canopy

The USDA Forest Service's i-Tree Canopy tool was used to estimate tree cover for Akron's Civic Commons sites and the Downtown, Ohio & Erie Canal Park, and Summit Lake neighborhoods. The i-Tree tool uses a random sampling process of publicly available imagery from Google Maps to classify land use types and calculate environmental and economic benefits from the percentage of tree canopy found in a given area.

For the neighborhoods and their respective sites, a set of points for each geography were sampled using the i-Tree tool with a sampling goal of achieving an overall Standard Error of less than 3% for all land cover types. The number of points sampled for each geography included:

- Neighborhoods: Downtown Akron: 1,000 points | Ohio & Erie Canal Park: 1,000 points | Summit Lake: 500 points
 - Civic Commons Sites: Cascade Plaza: 500 points | Lock 4: 500 points | Lock 3: 250 points | Lock 2: 500 points | Ohio & Erie Canal Park: 502 points | Summit Lake: 500 points | Summit Lake Pump House: no tree canopy visible via satellite aerial
 - Citywide tree canopy estimates were drawn from third party sources.
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Neighborhood Focus Groups

Neighborhood Focus Groups

Four focus groups were held during the week of November 28 – December 2, 2022 with Summit Lake residents, Ohio & Erie Canal Park residents, Downtown residents, and Downtown workers. The goal of the focus groups was to gain a qualitative understanding of changes (real and perceived) that have occurred in the civic commons since baseline.

Local demonstration teams were asked to recruit 10-12 participants over the age of 18 for each focus group. Census data for the neighborhood was used to provide demographic recruitment targets with regards to age, race, and gender to ensure that participants were reasonably representative of the neighborhood population.

Focus groups were facilitated by 2 staff members for approximately an hour and a half without other members of the Civic Commons team or local partners present. Participants were provided with a brief introduction to the Civic Commons project and the purpose of the focus group before discussion started. At the outset of some focus groups, local partners provided a brief introduction before departing.

Quotations from the focus groups presented in this report are edited for clarity.
