

Creating Safe & Equitable Access to Cleveland's East Side Lakefront



Safe Routes to Parks Action Plan





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Safe Routes to Parks: Activating Communities

Overview:

Equity is a core planning value in Cleveland, Ohio, a legacy of our nationally recognized Planning Director, the late Norm Krumholz, who evolved the concept of equity planning more than fifty years ago. Unfortunately, though, built environment conditions conspire against a high quality of life in many Cleveland neighborhoods, the result of decisions made decades earlier when the needs of transportation and industry carried sway over all else. A case in point and the focus of the Bike Cleveland-submitted Safe Routes to Parks application is the St. Clair Superior neighborhood, disconnected from Lake Erie, its northern border—and the parks and trail which line it—by industrial land uses, railroad underpasses, and on- and off-ramps to a major interstate highway. The specific purpose of Cleveland’s Safe Routes to Parks work was to elicit community input on their use of the lakefront, how they accessed it if they did, and whether existing conditions along East 55th and East 72nd Streets influenced their park access. From this data, collected via 169 on-line and paper surveys and related community conversations, we hoped to evolve ideas for short-term improvements to these two corridors.

Like our Safe Routes to Parks peer cities, we seek to ensure that all Clevelanders can safely and comfortably access parks within their community and avail themselves of the many physical, social, and mental health benefits which park use affords. Guided by the national Safe Routes to Parks framework depicted below, city planners, bike advocates, park planners, and local community organizers came together to assess how to improve current conditions, many of which are uninviting and dangerous. We also sought to change community perceptions about their neighborhood. Unfortunately, despite being a lakefront community, many residents neither think of their neighborhood in such terms nor feel a connection with the lakefront. We sought to identify the challenges which currently make access to and enjoyment of the Cleveland lakefront parks difficult, and then elicit thoughts on how to overcome these challenges.

As the regional bike advocacy organization, Bike Cleveland saw the St. Clair Superior neighborhood as the ideal candidate for a Safe Routes to Parks application due to the significant planning work that was underway there. The first was the City of Cleveland’s award-winning¹ Midway Cycle Track Network plan, completed in late 2017, which examined the technical feasibility of a city-wide network of physically buffered bike facilities, the first three segments of which would run to and through the St. Clair Superior neighborhood, the near east side community which was the focus of our Safe Routes to parks efforts, including one segment which holds the potential to provide a critically-needed north-south connection to the lakefront. Next was an ongoing major planning study called the Cleveland Harbor Eastern Embayment Resilience Study (or CHEERS), being led by Cleveland Metroparks and funded through a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant and local public sector partners. The CHEERS project team had been working with neighborhood residents to increase their knowledge about the resiliency issues facing their lakefront community and prepare them to become resiliency leaders. Finally, the Cleveland City Planning Commission was in the process of developing a Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) planning grant application which acknowledged the challenges posed by the existing Lakefront East transportation network and focused on creation of neighborhood scale connections such as the East 72nd Street corridor, bicycle and pedestrian enhancements along Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, and improvements to East 82nd Avenue and Broad Avenue. City planners understood the lakefront, Gordon and Rockefeller Parks to be highly desirable ecological,

¹ 2017 APA Ohio Planning Award

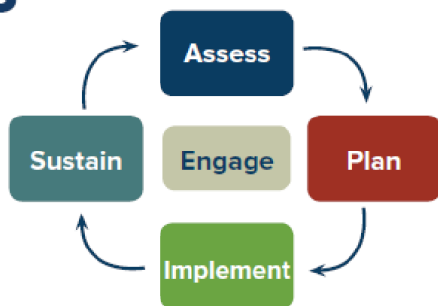
recreational, and cultural amenities which serve nearby residents and visitors, requiring seamless connection.

Additionally, Bike Cleveland and its interdepartmental city peers and community development practitioner partners had been engaged in a multi-year process to develop Cleveland’s Vision Zero plan and thus brought the Vision Zero lens to this initiative. Essentially, Vision Zero is a strategy built on the belief that all traffic deaths and severe injuries are preventable and is committed to eliminating them. The Vision Zero perspective aligns perfectly with Safe Routes to Parks principles. Both recognize that our communities must be designed to safely accommodate our most vulnerable road users and park visitors: young children, senior citizens, parents pushing strollers, wheelchair bound individuals, the visually impaired and persons on bikes generally. The Safe Routes to Parks Partnership’s vision of a built environment where all people can walk, bike, or roll to a park or green space along corridors which are safe, appealing, and truly multi-modal aligns perfectly with that of Vision Zero and provided further fuel for our local efforts. Like the Safe Routes to Parks Partnership, we recognize that barriers to parks take many forms. In some cases, the barriers are purely physical: lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, speed bumps and other traffic speed devices which make walking or bicycling to a park unsafe or, at a minimum, uncomfortable. In other cases, though, perceived or actual violence and crime dissuade potential park users from visiting. Low-income communities and communities of color must also stave off the impact of decades long disinvestment and marginalization which have produced

chronic inequities ranging from homelessness to higher rates of weight-related chronic disease. As an antidote to this historic marginalization, the Safe Routes to Parks Partnership places great emphasis on eliciting the community’s voice both in assessing existing park and park access conditions and identifying improvements which they would welcome. This emphasis on community voice is clearly evident in the Action Framework diagram to the left.



The Safe Routes to Parks Action Framework is intended to provide local governments (park and recreation, planning, transportation and public health) with critical evidence- and practice-based guidance on Safe Routes to Parks best practices that are backed by research and supported by national organizations. This framework is intended to be used as a guide that will engage leaders and community members in an ongoing process to ensure that community policies and practices support safe and equitable access to parks. The framework will be supported by case studies, sample policy language and fact sheets that help agencies implement these best practices.



Goals and Purpose of Safe Routes to Parks:

From a competitive pool of nationwide applicants, the Safe Routes to School National Partnership selected Bike Cleveland to join Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities, a technical assistance program focused on improving safe and equitable local park access. As part of the program, Cleveland was one of seven diverse communities across the country which received training and coaching from the Safe Routes to School National Partnership to develop an action plan for improving active travel to its East Side Lakefront Parks and

implement early actions from the plan. This work was supported by the JPB Foundation. For more information, visit: saferoutespartnership.org/parks

About This Action Plan and How It Was Developed:

This Safe Routes to Parks Action Plan is intended to guide Bike Cleveland and its local Safe Routes to Parks partners as they complete a diverse community engagement process which produces a clear vision for how to safely connect the St. Clair Superior neighborhood with its northernmost boundary: Lake Erie and the East Side Lakefront Parks and Trail which line it. The Action Plan was developed based on data collected from a coalition-developed lakefront access survey, key stakeholder interviews, informal conversations with community members at numerous community events, walk audits of both lakefront connector corridors, and a bike audit of both corridors, the lakefront multipurpose trail, and St. Clair Avenue, the main east-west arterial corridor in the neighborhood.

In addition to the partners whose logos appear on the cover of this Action Plan, Cleveland's Safe Routes to Parks initiative benefited greatly from active participation of Cleveland City Planning Commission staff and Ingenuity Cleveland.

Historical Overview



Gordon Park, view from the bathhouse, circa 1908, courtesy The Smithsonian

Many rightly consider Lake Erie to be our region's most significant asset, but early development patterns treated the lake as primarily a transportation amenity and receptacle for solid waste overflows. Much of Cleveland's waterfront was devoted to port use and shipping-related warehousing purposes, as well as overland transportation uses: railroads from the mid-1850's, the country's first downtown airport in 1947, and a major interstate highway which opened in segments between 1935 and 1951. As the 1905 photos to the left and on the following page show,² Cleveland's oldest lakefront park, Lakeview Park located just west of East 9th Street downtown, was bordered by rail lines along the lake's edge from the 1850's. But even with the rail lines rimming the park's edge, the bluffs above Lake Erie provided scenic views of the

lake and offered a reprieve from the heat and congestion of the city. In fact, during extreme heat events, it was not uncommon for city residents to camp out in their lakefront parks overnight where the opportunity to catch a breeze existed³.

² *Cleveland Lakefront Reservation: The Long Struggle to Maintain the City's Lakefront Parks* by Connor Kenney, May 13, 2017. (<https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/796#&gid=1&pid=6>)

³ *Dianna Tittle, A Walk in the Park: Greater Cleveland's New and Reclaimed Green Spaces*, Ohio University Press, 2002



While the St. Clair Superior neighborhood’s northern boundary extends to Lake Erie, many built environment conditions conspire against safe and convenient lakefront park access. Historically, recreational access to Lake Erie received short shrift relative to commercial use accommodations along this major waterway. The beginning of the St. Clair Superior neighborhood’s

disconnection from its lakefront dates to the opening in 1852 of the **Cleveland, Painesville and Ashtabula (CP&A)** when rail lines were installed along the bluff overlooking Lake Erie. But despite this intrusion, ample land remained from the former 122-acre Gordon estate, deeded to the city of Cleveland as permanent park space, to accommodate an elegant, multi-use park and beachfront.



According to *Cleveland Historical* and depicted in the photos on this and the preceding page⁴, “A grand bathhouse catered to the multitudes who crowded onto the park’s beach, and the city also provided facilities for boaters, fishermen and picnickers. Meanwhile, further inland and south of the beach, wooded areas and formal gardens provided quiet retreats for those seeking a more relaxed atmosphere.”

Over time, though, industrial land uses sprouted up between the rail lines and the heart of the neighborhood, St. Clair Avenue, its main commercial corridor, and lakefront connections along East 55th and East 72nd Streets became less inviting. But it was the 1951 construction of the missing leg of the Memorial Shoreway between East 55th and East 72nd Streets which permanently ensured lakefront disconnectedness. Unlike the railroad lines of a century earlier, this 8-lane interstate highway (the route for which is shown as dashed lines on the aerial photo on the following page from the 1940’s) was constructed at the base of the bluff, bisecting Gordon Park, eliminating its beach, and leaving only a narrow strip of lakefront access at its northern edge.

⁴ Michael Rotman, “Gordon Park,” *Cleveland Historical*, accessed June 29, 2021, <https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/143>



Within the space of one decade, as shown by the photos below, Gordon Park use plummeted, shifting from packed beaches in the early 1940's to stagnant, polluted water and hazardous waste barrels bobbing in the harbor in the mid-1950's. By 1953, Cleveland's new interstate highway link was complete, providing improved access for motorists driving *through* Cleveland, but greatly inconveniencing—and even endangering—city residents intent on using their once beloved lakefront park.

These photos reveal another critically important dynamic at play in Cleveland during the 1940's and 1950's: racial segregation. Note that the packed beach with the lovely amenities below left appears to be serving only white users while the photo from Mr. Rotman's *Cleveland Historical* article of a contaminated beach taken just a decade later is the first to include Black lakefront users, albeit with contaminated, washed-up barrels in their foreground.⁵



The interplay between highway construction and racially segregated housing patterns has been well-established, but “separate and UN-equal” practices persisted in park planning, education, and certainly lending as well. According to a 2017 *WVIZ/Idea Stream* special entitled *Divided by Design: Tracking Neighborhood Racial Segregation in Cleveland* “The Federal Highway Act enabled white, **working-class** residents to relocate to the suburbs, people who wouldn't even consider owning a home prior to these New Deal reforms.” Todd Michney, author of the 2017 book *Surrogate Suburbs: Black Upward Mobility and Neighborhood Change in Cleveland, 1900-1980*, explained that the new highways which were built provided modest-income whites a means to get to the suburbs and purchase a home for less than it would cost to rent a house in the city, facilitating the outward population flow which has defined Greater Cleveland for the past seven

⁵ Michael Rotman, “Gordon Park,” *Cleveland Historical*, accessed June 29, 2021, <https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/143>

decades⁶. The impact of this outmigration was substantial, taking a toll on Cleveland’s tax base and inching it toward the notable distinction in 1978 of being the first city to default on its financial obligations since the Great Depression.

The Situation Today

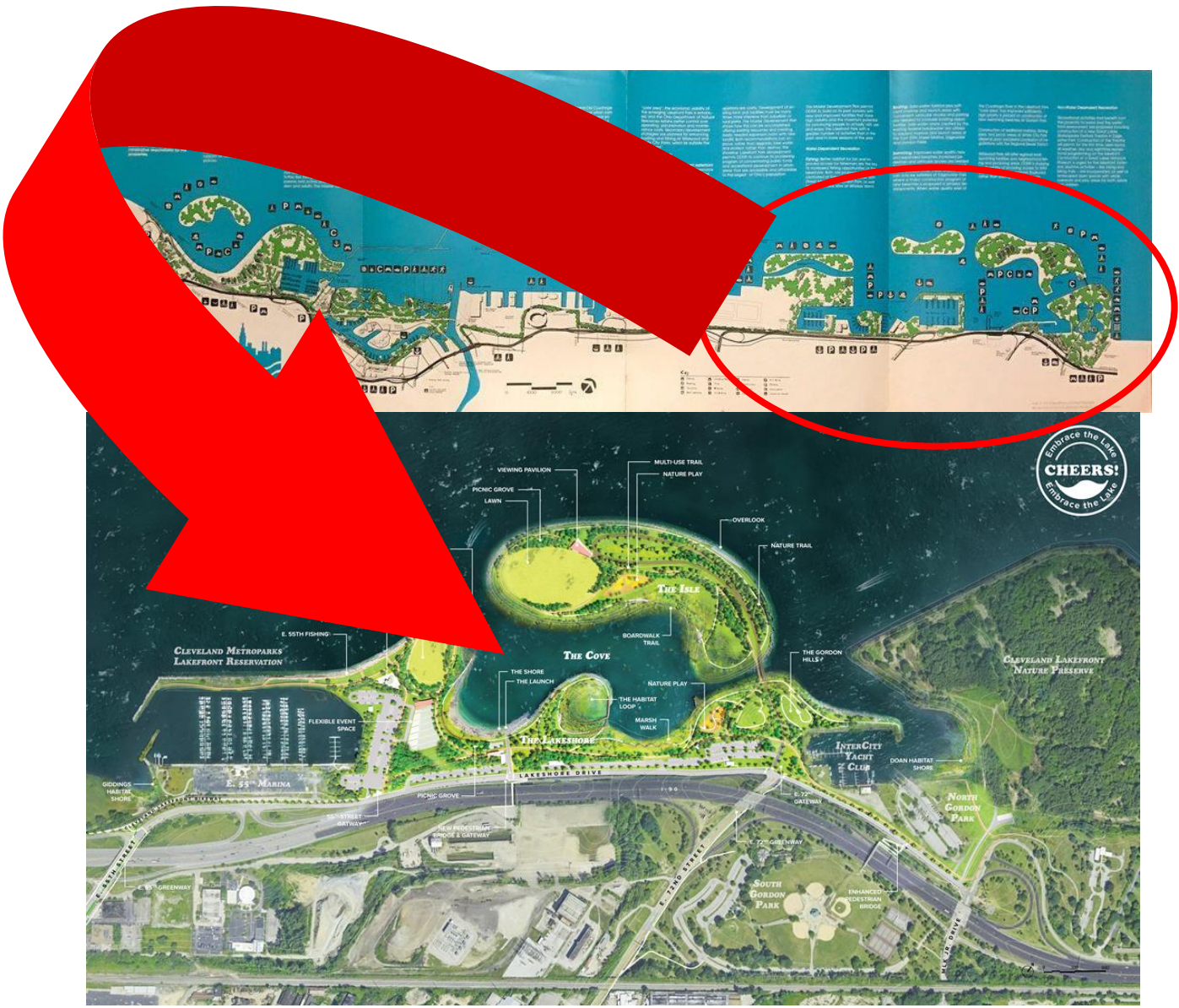
The photo below shows the remnant of lakefront access which runs between the East 55th Marina and what remains of lower Gordon Park. While just a slender ribbon of waterfront, even this narrowest point, this portion of the East Side Lakefront Parks is highly used by fishermen, walkers and bicyclists. Since 2013, Cleveland Metroparks—Cuyahoga County’s single-purpose park district with bonding and taxing authority—has been slowly upgrading all of Cleveland’s lakefront parks, doing what it can with the parkland which remains, including upgrading the narrow lakefront multipurpose trail, clearly demarcating the fishing pier and trail portions, and increasing maintenance and security staffing. Over each of the eight years of lakefront parks management, park usage has increased and user survey-reported satisfaction with the park has improved as well.



Significant to our “*Creating Safe & Equitable Access to Cleveland’s East Side Lakefront*” Safe Routes to Parks initiative, however, is the bold, multi-stakeholder planning effort which Metroparks launched in 2019 aimed at applying nature-based solutions to improve the environment, reconnect communities to the lake, enhance public health and wellness, bolster the economy, and improve aquatic and terrestrial habitats. Climate resiliency, including protecting the Shoreway from increasingly dramatic wave action, is another key consideration. While their efforts formal name, the Cleveland Harbor Eastern Embayment Resilience Study, doesn’t exactly roll off one’s tongue, it’s acronym—CHEERS—certainly does and suggests the cordial and collegial process underway to “Embrace the Lake” as an asset for future generations. The CHEERS study has built upon and enhanced prior lakefront planning efforts including previous city-led lakefront planning studies. Over the past year, Metroparks has endeavored, even when challenged by COVID, to provide opportunities for community and stakeholder input through on-line surveys, park-based Walk-Shops, and in-person surveys.

The plans which appear on the following page illustrate the maturation of thinking in terms of approaches for creating additional lakefront land through fill and establishment of man-made islands. The top illustration shows the Ohio Department of Natural Resources 1979 Lakefront State Park plan which included several embellishments that were never created while the bottom illustration is an early conceptual idea from the year-long CHEERS planning process.

⁶ Todd Michney, *Surrogate Suburbs: Black Upward Mobility and Neighborhood Change in Cleveland, 1900-1980*, University of North Carolina Press, 2017



While Metroparks CHEERS study is mainly focused on creating new land north of the Shoreway using dredge material, the agency is also committed to finding ways to extend a park-feel into the St. Clair Superior neighborhood as well. In the short-term, continued, ongoing upgrades to existing facilities and the addition of new amenities like sand volleyball courts are making the modest East Side Lakefront Parks an attraction once again. As the picture which follows illustrates, Cleveland Metroparks East 55th Marina bar and restaurant offer some of the best views of downtown and closest proximity to Lake Erie on the east side.

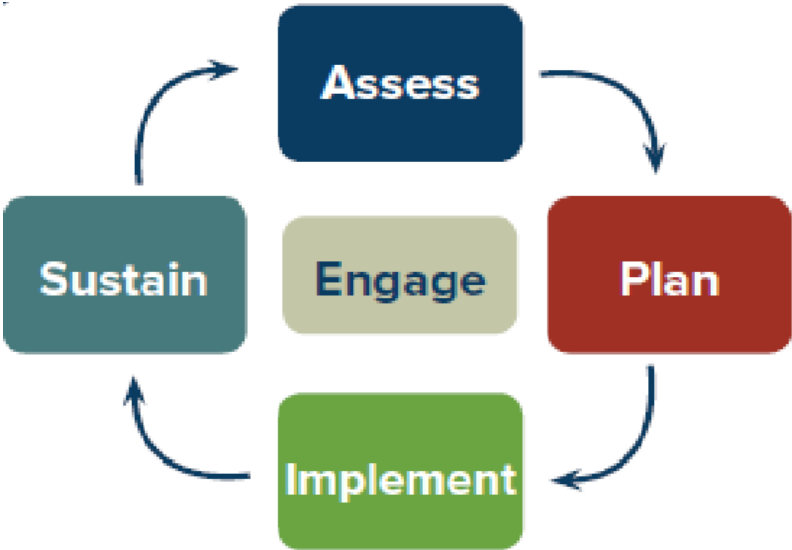


Upgraded East 55th Marina Bar & Restaurant

Engage Who is Involved

Consistent with the goals of the Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities grant, the “*Creating Safe & Equitable Access to Cleveland’s East Side Lakefront*” initiative collaborated with local partners toward the goal of ensuring that all children and adults will one day have safe and easy access to walk, bike or roll to their neighborhood parks and greenspaces, in this case to Cleveland Metroparks East Side Lakefront Parks and Multi-Purpose Trail. Key team members included:

Entity/Member	Member	Primary Role
Bike Cleveland	Jacob Van Sickle Barb Clint	Coordinating bike activities Consultant Coordinator
Cleveland City Planning	Nickol Calhoun Calley Merrsman Kim Scott Sharonda Whatley	Neighborhood Planner Bike-Pedestrian Coordinator Assistant Planning Director Neighborhood Planner
Cleveland Metroparks	Kelly Coffman Sara Maier	Sr. Strategic Parks Planner Sr. Strategic Parks Planner
Cleveland City Council	Anthony Hairston	Councilman, Ward 10
Famicos Foundation	Charlie Townsend	Events & East 72 nd Street Mural
Ingenuity Cleveland	Emily Applebaum	Coordinate Neighbor Nights, Ingenuity Festival
Kent Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative	Terry Schwarz Katie Slusher	Executive Director Urban Designer
St. Clair Superior Development Corporation	Kaliya Smith	Community Outreach
Willson Elementary School	John Dorotics	Physical Education Teacher



Due to the fortunate confluence of the work of our Safe Routes to Parks team members, the task of forming a steering committee consisting of professionals committed to equity principles in park access was an easy task. Engaging actual community members in the process, however, was not. If the Covid pandemic taught us anything, it is that life does not always show up in the way in which we “planned” that it would. Shortly after launching our local Safe Routes initiative, we learned that the Executive Director of our on the ground grassroots partner, the St. Clair Superior Development Corporation, had left, shifting not only the work of this grant but several other initiatives in which the organization was engaged to the two remaining staff members to complete, one of whom had joined the organization only weeks before. The implications for this grant were extensive as it takes time to build relationships and develop the kind of neighborhood community capital needed to attract folks to meetings, walk audits and other events. Unfortunately, time was not an asset which we possessed given the condensed grant period. As a result, most of the data collected came from individual surveys conducted at community events, not from Safe Routes to Parks-convened meetings and work sessions.

Assess East Side Lakefront Access

Community Outreach: Surveys & Audits

One of the first tasks undertaken by our Safe Routes to Parks Coalition was developing and extensively distributing a Lakefront Access Survey (see survey results tables in Appendix G) which sought to determine whether folks were using their lakefront parks and trail and, if so, what mode of transportation they were using to get there. We also were interested in their level of comfort with the existing park access routes. The roll out was clumsier than anticipated, however. We initially began collecting surveys in person, at community events which we attended, but discovered that—once the Covid mask mandate was lifted in early June—people simply seemed to withdraw back into their homes. Despite improving weather as the summer wore on, event attendance dwindled, so not nearly as many surveys were collected per event as anticipated, necessitating that we increase the number of events which we attended. Likewise, our retail “Survey Ballot Box” distribution also yielded few surveys. In hindsight, the static survey drop box concept may simply have been ill-conceived. To begin with, the size of the drop box was just too large, forcing even generally cooperative business owners to decline placing them within their establishment as they simply lacked ample space. Second, this was a mayoral election year with seven candidates in the primary run-off. As a result, where counter space did exist for our cumbersome display, it was in very high demand and, based on the very few surveys collected via this method, people just didn’t seem to see them or want to invest the time to complete our survey, lost as it was amid the mountain of political and other advertisements. While an on-line survey option did exist, at the end of the day, the vast majority (157 of the 169 completed surveys) were filled out as paper surveys, with only 12 being completed on-line. The lack of on-line engagement for this survey tracked with something we had been told about the St. Clair Superior neighborhood even as we worked on our grant submission. This community suffers from a low rate of households having internet access and what access does exist is often unreliable. As a result, we were advised to use the “old school” paper and pen approach, a method which, in the end, proved successful. The list on the following page shows that persistence and just getting out there ultimately pays off. From mid-April through late September, our Safe Routes to Parks initiative participated in fifteen events, listed alphabetically below, and bordered by the front and back of our half page survey.

Safe Routes to Parks

How do you get to the E. 55th Marina & the E. 72nd Lakefront Parks?

1 Keep this top half; tear off the survey below and turn in

Through Bike Cleveland's recently launched **Safe & Equitable Access to Cleveland's East Side Lakefront Parks, Marinas & Trail** initiative, we are checking in with folks like you who live in the St. Clair Superior neighborhood to discuss if and how you use Cleveland Metroparks East Side Lakefront Parks, how you get there, and how the conditions along existing neighborhood connectors—East 55th and East 72nd Streets—impact your park use.

Help us gather ideas to make neighborhood park connections safer and more inviting!

Do you visit the E. 55th Marina and/or E. 72nd Street Lakefront Parks?

Daily Weekly Monthly A few times a year Not at all

What prevents you from visiting them? Check all that apply

- Lack of transportation
- Routes feel unsafe due to...
- Park feels unsafe
- No free time for visiting
- Don't feel welcome
- Difficult for people...
- Other:

- Bad lighting
- Bad sidewalks
- Dangerous traffic
- Other
- Using a wheelchair
- With kids' strollers
- With low-vision
- Other

How do you get there? Check all that apply



Walk Audit – East 55th Street (Sept. 8)
Willson School Bike Rodeo (May 12)

The largest number of survey respondents (73, or 45%) said that they visited the lakefront parks a few times a year, while 36 (or 21%) said they visited monthly. In terms of frequent visitors, 29 (or 17%) reported that they visited weekly, and another 7 (or 4%) said that they were daily park visitors. 18 respondents (or 11%) said that they do not visit the park and another 6 skipped the question.

The main reason cited for not visiting, noted by 51 respondents (or 35%), was that the routes to the park feel unsafe due to dangerous traffic, followed by the “other” (50 responses, 34% of respondents), but most often without explanation as to what “other” meant. The third most cited barrier to people visiting the parks was simply that they had no free time for visiting (39 respondents, 27%). Bad lighting and bad sidewalks were also cited by a combined 64 respondents, or 43%. The full results for this question appear below.

Survey Collection Events

- AsiaTown Children's Day Event (June 6)
- Bike Audits (July 15, August 19)
- Cleveland Air Show – North Gordon Park (Sept. 4)
- Community Bike Ride (May 15)
- East 72nd Street Mural Community Engagement Event (Sept. 19)
- Famicos Mini-Glenville Festival Kid's Day (June 26)
- Ingenuity Neighbor Nights (April 15, May 20, June 17, July 15, August 19)

Ingenuity Festival (September 25)
Walk Audit – East 72nd Street (Sept. 1)

2 Encourage others to complete the digital version of this survey

Access the survey using this link: [surveymonkey.com/r/SRTPLC1E1](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SRTPLC1E1)

Or use this QR Code:



3 Join us for engagement events around the neighborhood

For event schedules, project updates, and more information visit us online at: BikeCleveland.org/SRTP

4 Stay in touch and get involved!

If you have questions or ideas, contact: Kaliya Smith, Community Engagement Specialist @ St. Clair Superior Development Corp. 216-881-0644 ext. 103, ksmith@stclairsuperior.org



How satisfied are you with...	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Unsure / Neutral	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Strongly Dissatisfied
how easy it is to get to these parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
how safe you feel getting to these parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the condition/upkeep of streets & sidewalks on your route?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the appearance of the areas on your route to the parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your zip code: Add comments, and/or your contact info to get project updates:

ANSWER CHOICES				RESPONSES	%
Lack of Transportation				14	9.52%
Routes Feel Unsafe due to Bad Lighting				33	22.43%
Routes Feel Unsafe due to Bad Sidewalks				31	21.09%
Routes Feel Unsafe due to Dangerous Traffic				51	34.69%
Parks Feel Unsafe				20	13.61%
No Free Time for Visiting				39	26.53%
Don't Feel Welcome				5	3.40%
Poor Accessibility for Wheelchair Users				2	1.36%
Poor Accessibility for Low-Vision People				6	4.06%
Other				50	34.00%
Total Responses				251	
Total Respondents				147	

In terms of how folks reported that they traveled to the park, the vast majority, 128 respondents or 80%, said that they came by car *as at least ONE of their modes of travel*. Many respondents indicated that they came by car, bike and walking; others indicated they came by bus, but as the bus routes end on the south side of the freeway, these respondents were completing their trips either on foot or by bike or possibly scooter.

Responses to questions about ease of access and safety met with mixed results, but generally leaned favorably. For example, a combined 71% (110 respondents) were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with how easy it was to reach the parks, twenty respondents (or 13%) were neutral on the question, while another 24 respondents (or nearly 15%) felt that there was room for improvement. In terms of safety along the route, 90 respondents (or 58%) felt either very safe or somewhat safe traveling to the parks, with an additional 33 respondents (or 33%) being neutral on this point. However, 20% of respondents, or 31 individuals, said they felt either unsafe or very unsafe. This last category represents one in five respondents.

Finally, in terms of appearance of the routes to the parks, 31 respondents (or 20%) reported being very satisfied, with another 45 respondents (or 29%) being somewhat satisfied and an additional 31 (or 20%) being neutral. However, for 31 respondents (or 20%) the routes were somewhat unsatisfactory and for an additional 35 respondents (or 23%) the appearance was very unsatisfactory.

We also went beyond traditional surveys, conducting three bike audit rides in conjunction with Ingenuity Neighbor Nights and other events, as well as two walk audits coordinated by St. Clair Superior Development Corporation (photos of these activities are included in Appendix E). Through these additional data collection efforts, we were able to obtain real-time feedback from participants, including:

East 72nd Street:

- Concerns from both pedestrians and bicyclists about the dangerous freeway on- and off-ramps that bisect the pedestrian crosswalk and bike lanes on E. 72nd Street
- Dissatisfaction with paint-buffered bike lanes on E. 72nd which afford no protection from fast moving vehicles
- Worry about high speed of traffic coming off the freeway in this area and the “mixing lanes” where cars and bikes trade places.
- Observations about water drainage issues on E. 72nd Street just north of the entrance to Gordon Park which make the sidewalk slippery and unsafe for pedestrians.
- Pedestrians-noted concerns about the lack of a continuous sidewalk on the west side of E. 72nd St. between the railroad tracks and the park, which forces pedestrians to cross the street mid-block where there is no marked crosswalk and high-speed traffic.
- Cyclist observations of considerable debris in the bike lanes on E. 72nd, causing unsafe riding conditions.
- Pedestrians also noted very tall phragmites (tall grasses) growing along the hillside on E. 72nd St. north of the Gordon Park entrance which totally obscure pedestrian in their designated cross walk through the eastbound freeway on-ramp.

East 55th Street:

- Both cyclists and pedestrians noted the high speed of traffic on E. 55th Street, especially at the freeway ramps.
- Pedestrians also noted that the sidewalk simply disappears on the west side of E. 55th at North Marginal Road, forcing pedestrians to cross the street quite close to the westbound freeway on-ramp ¼-mile up the street without benefit of a crosswalk

All feedback from the survey, the bike/walk audits, and our engagement events will inform our action plan and next steps going forward.

Plan: Improving Safe Routes to Parks

As has been discussed above, several planning studies have either been completed, are underway or are about to commence which address the question of how to improve access from the St. Clair Superior neighborhood and Cleveland's Lakefront Parks. As these plans are completed, opportunities to pursue implementation funding will be pursued. We are optimistic that, with good coordination between these respective efforts, residents of the St. Clair Superior neighborhood will find themselves benefiting from greatly enhanced, truly multimodal corridors which will encourage and increase lakefront park usage.

Going forward, for future planning efforts, we will use the community feedback gathered through the Safe Routes to Parks process to ensure resident input is incorporated. For the near-term we've identified two priorities that are currently in progress, they include:

1. Improve signage within the park to inform park users of the amenities within the Lakefront Park.
2. Improve neighborhood branding through pole banners to reinforce neighborhood identity as a lakefront community.
3. Continue to work with artists to improve the visual experience of E. 72nd by evolving a concept for the massive railroad underpass walls on both sides of the street and, ultimately, installing murals there.
4. Requesting improved and regular maintenance of overgrowth along the sidewalks and debris in the bike lanes on E. 55th and E. 72nd.

Future actions we will ensure are addressed as the City of Cleveland kicks off a larger planning initiative for the community include:

1. Implementing traffic calming on E. 55th and E. 72nd to address safety issues for bicyclists and pedestrians using the corridors to access Cleveland's Lakefront Parks.
2. Improving sidewalk continuity along the corridors to prevent unnecessary pedestrian crossings along E. 55th and E. 72nd.
3. Improved maintenance of the corridors to address storm water run-off and excessive overgrowth.
4. Advocating for improved crossing of the freeway ramps along E. 55th and E. 72nd.
5. Ensuring that previous planning efforts, like the E. 55th St. Midway (protected bike lane), are prioritized to increase connectivity from the neighborhood to the Lakefront Parks.
6. Advocating for adding physical protection along the E. 72nd St buffered bike lane to accommodate bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

Sustain: Creating Safe Routes to Parks

The partners engaged in this Safe Routes to Parks initiative possess the commitment and know-how to move their respective planning efforts to conclusion, lacking only the short-term resources to do so. Metroparks will continue to work on its Cleveland Harbor Eastern Embayment Resilience Study (CHEERS) and will integrate survey and audit data obtained through this Safe Routes to Parks initiative. Likewise, the Cleveland City Planning Department will also use collected project data to inform the early stages of their Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative Study.

Several ideas have emerged from conversations and meetings over the past six months which suggest both short and long-term strategies for making the East 55th and East 72nd Street corridors safer and more inviting. Whether removing six foot tall phragmites which obscure a pedestrian crosswalk through a highway on-ramp or eliciting community ideas on the community vision and priorities which should be reflected in any future murals installed along the high railroad underpass walls, the St. Clair Superior Development Corporation, Bike Cleveland, and our partners are committed to continuing to advance safe routes to the lakefront and branding the neighborhood as a lakefront community.

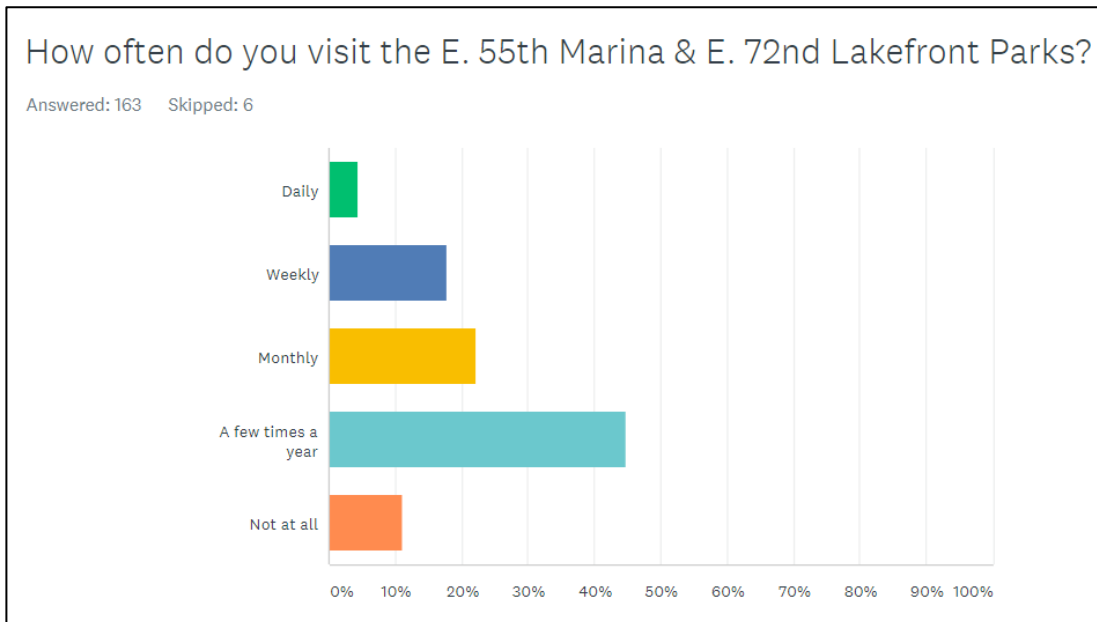
Appendix A: Partner Contact Information

Partner Contact Information		
Agency/Business/Organization	Primary Contact Name	Primary Contact Email
Ingenuity Cleveland	Emily Applebaum	emily@ingenuitycleveland.org
Cleveland City Planning	Nickol Calhoun	ncalhoun@city.cleveland.oh.us
Bike Cleveland (Consultant)	Barb Clint	bclint@clevelandersinmotion.com
Cleveland Metroparks	Kelly Coffman	kbc@clevelandmetroparks.com
Cleveland Metroparks	Sara Maier	sbm@clevelandmetroparks.com
Cleveland City Planning	Calley Mersmann	cmersmann@city.cleveland.oh.us
Kent State Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative	Terry Schwarz	tschwarz@kent.edu
Cleveland City Planning	Kim Scott	kscott@city.cleveland.oh.us
Kent State Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative	Katie Slusher	kslushe4@kent.edu
St.Clair Superior Development	Kaliya Smith	ksmith@stclairsuperior.org
Famicos Foundation	Charlie Townsend	ctownsend@famicos.org
Cleveland City Planning	Sharonda Whatley	swhatley@city.cleveland.oh.us
Bike Cleveland	Jacob Van Sickle	jacob@bikecleveland.org

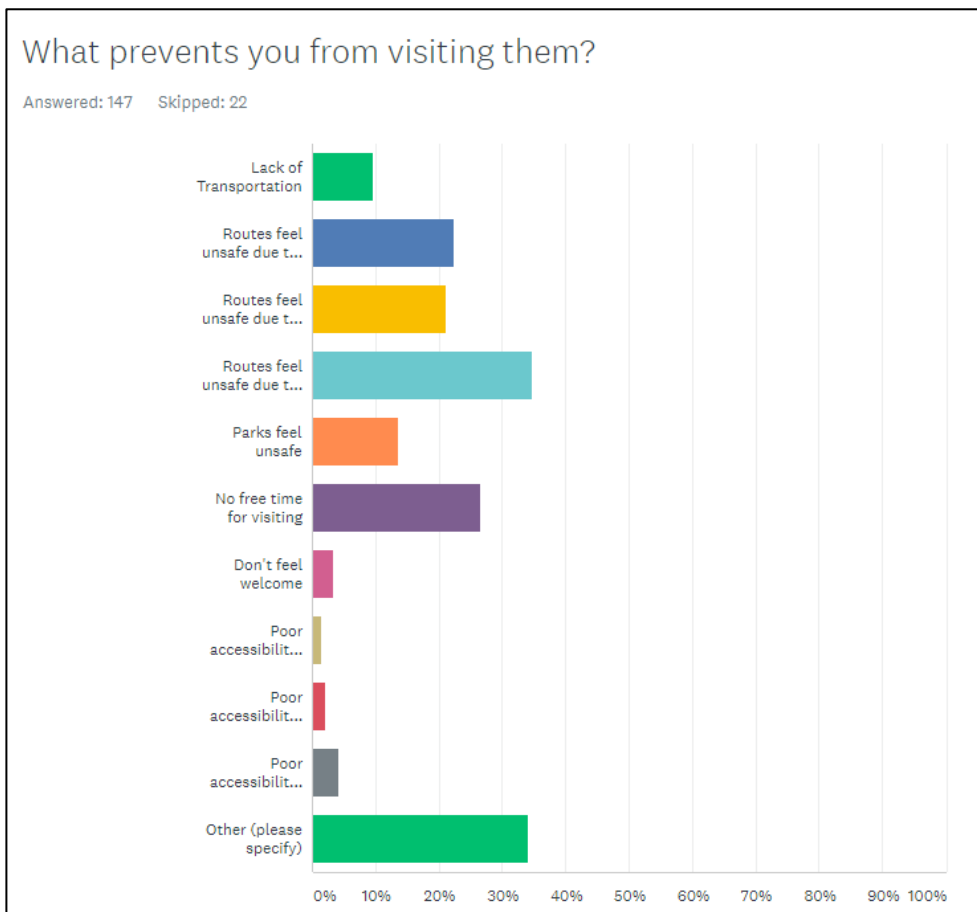
Appendix B: Data Collection Methods

Data Collection Methods				
Data Collection	Data Collection Dates	# of participants	Resources Needed	Lead Responsible Party
Lakefront Access Survey	4/15, 5/12, 5/15, 5/20, 6/6, 6/17, 6/26, 7/15, 8/19, 9/1, 9/4, 9/8, 9/19, 9/25	169	Surveys, pens, clip boards, survey deposit boxes, SRTP background info	Bike Cleveland
Walk Audits	9/1, 9/8	5 & 3	Walk audit form, pens, clip boards	Bike Cleveland, St. Clair Superior Development
Bike Audit	7/15, 8/19	7 & 2	Pens, map w/section rating, survey on back	Bike Cleveland
Street Team Discussion	ongoing	3 - 12	Zoom access, staff convener	St. Clair Superior Development

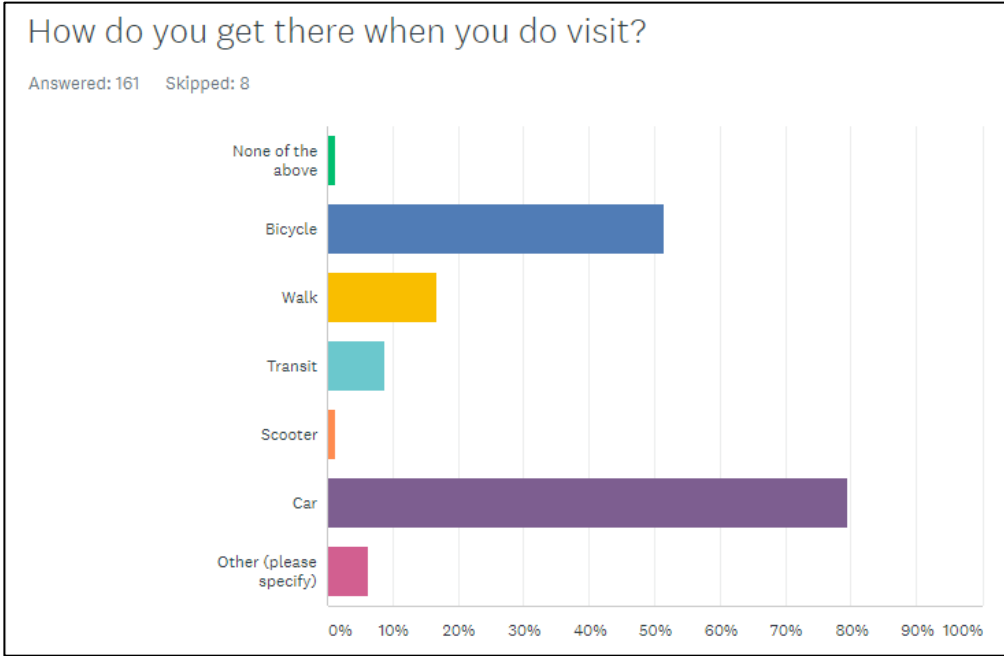
Appendix C: Survey Results, by Question



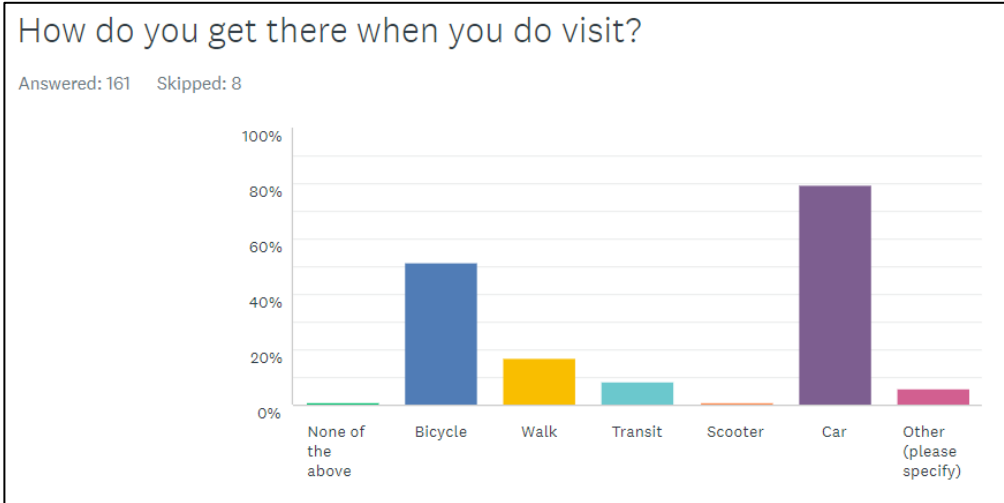
Question 1



Question 2



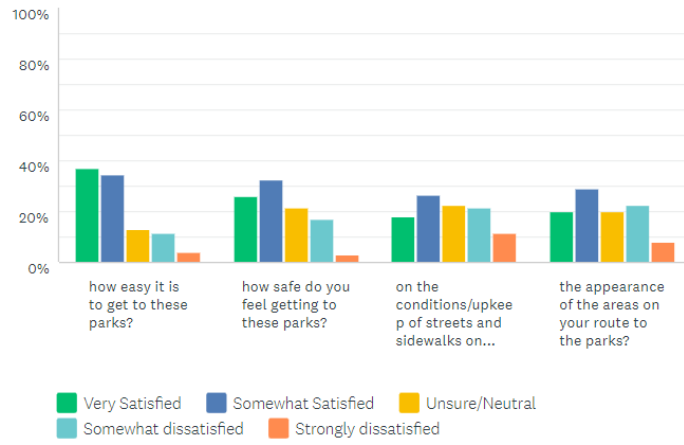
Question 3



Question 4

How satisfied are you with the

Answered: 156 Skipped: 13



Question 5

Appendix D: Walk Audit Flyer & Routes



*How Safe and Comfortable do
E. 72nd & E. 55th feel to you as a walker?*

Walk Audit Checklist

You know our neighborhood better than anyone. That's why St. Clair Superior Development wants to hear directly from you—our resident expert—on how you feel walking along East 72nd and East 55th to the lake.

We believe walking in our neighborhood should be safe and easy. To figure out how to get there, though, we have to know where we are starting. We invite you to take a walk with fellow residents and describe what you see using this form which lists some items to think about on your walk. When doing so, please be sure to consider other potential walkers like older adults, children, and people with limited mobility and vision issues. Your thoughts will be shared with city planners as they develop recommendations on how best to connect our neighborhood to the Cleveland Metroparks-managed lakefront parks.

These walk audits are one part of a larger effort which has been underway over the past six months to explore how safe and inviting the East 72nd and East 55th Street corridors feel to walkers and bicyclists from our neighborhood. It is part of a Safe Routes to Parks initiative which is gathering information on current conditions of and perceptions about how safe and inviting it is to get to the Cleveland Lakefront Parks from our neighborhood. We are aware that Cleveland Metroparks has big plans to greatly upgrade the parks along the St. Clair Superior neighborhood's north coast and we want to ensure that residents without access to a motor vehicle are able to safely and comfortably reach Cleveland's greatest asset: our lakefront.

Our thanks to our funder, the Safe Routes to Parks partnership, and local partners including the city of Cleveland, Cleveland Metroparks, Bike Cleveland, the Kent State Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative. We also thank Famicos and Ingenuity Cleveland for providing opportunities to collect survey data on folks' perceptions about how it feels getting to and from our lakefront, as well as providing a launching point for "bike audit" rides to explore the same questions on bikes. In the coming months, the Cleveland City Planning Commission will begin examining access to the lakefront questions in a focused manner thanks to a recent Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative grant which they received from NOACA, and we will be sure to share the data which we have collected. There will also be future public engagement activities associated with the next phases of Cleveland Metroparks CHEERS lakefront planning study. Your voice is always welcome and appreciated so please plug into these discussions as you can.

PLEASE USE THE CHECKLIST ON THE FOLLOWING 2 PAGES TO DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SEE & FEEL ALONG YOUR WALK.

WE WANT YOUR THOUGHTS!

COME "WALK AND TALK"

...AND LET US KNOW HOW TO MAKE E. 55 & E. 72 SAFER AND MORE INVITING CONNECTIONS TO THE LAKEFRONT.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 1 | 6-8PM
East 72nd Street — Angela's Back Parking Lot

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 8 | 6-8PM
East 55th Street — Diner on 55th Parking Lot









SIDEWALKS

East 55th Street Walk Audit/9-8-21/**St. Clair to Hamilton Avenue**

Item Being Examined	West Side			East Side		
	POOR	AVG.	GOOD	POOR	AVG.	GOOD
What is the sidewalk condition? (Poor: broken, trip hazards, narrow; Average: a few small cracks; Good: new or like new condition)						
Do the sidewalks run from the street to where you are headed? (Poor: no, there are missing sidewalk segments; Average: some utility cuts; Good: run continuously)						
Is the sidewalk a comfortable width? (Poor: too narrow to walk side by side with a companion or push a stroller past another walker; Average: feels a little tight, but possible to walk side by side; Good: comfortable width for walking, stroller pushing)						
Do the sidewalks seem car-dominated with a lot of driveways or loading docks and/or lots of car/truck activity? (Poor: many driveways, loading docks or lots of vehicular traffic; Average: a dozen or so driveways or loading docks, modest vehicular traffic; Good: limited number of driveways or loading docks, low vehicular traffic)						
Do intersections and medians have ramps for wheelchairs, strollers and carts? (Poor: no ramps or ramps in disrepair; Average: ramps at most locations and in pretty good condition; Good: ramps at all intersections and medians in good repair)						
Do ramps direct walkers directly toward the crosswalk and receiving ramp and do ramps have detectable warning strips? (Poor: no, ramp directs away from crosswalk and lacks warning strip; Average: most ramps line up with crosswalks and include warning strips; Good: all ramps direct to crosswalk and have warning strips)						
Are there barriers that make walking difficult? (Poor: poles, signs, shrubs, trash cans, low tree limbs in the way; Average: a few obstructions in the way; Good: a designated strip exists for poles, signs, shrubs, trash cans outside walking area)						
Do intersections have marked crosswalks? (Poor: no; Average: most do; Good: all do)						

STREETS

Item Being Examined	West Side			East Side		
	POOR	AVG.	GOOD	POOR	AVG.	GOOD
Are there safe places to cross the street? (Poor: no 4-way stops or signalized intersections; Average: occasional 4-way stops or signalized intersections; Good: 4-way stop or signalized intersection at every crossing point)						
If a traffic light is present, is the crossing signal long enough for all users, including children and older adults, to cross? (Poor: no crossing signal; Average: long enough to make it most of the way across; Good: long enough to fully cross street regardless of age)						
Can children and wheelchair users reach and hear pedestrian push button at crossings? (Poor: no push buttons available or mounted too high; Average: most push buttons within reach of wheelchair; Good: buttons properly placed at all crossings)						
Does vehicle traffic move at a speed that feels safe to walk alongside or when crossing the street? (Poor: vehicular speeds are well-above posted speed limit; Average: occasional high speed vehicles make crossing uncomfortable; Good: speed limits enforced and comfortable)						
Are sidewalks separated from traffic by parking, trees, grass buffer? (Poor: sidewalks right next to traffic lane; Average: some parked car or tree lawn barriers between moving traffic; Good: comfortable distance between sidewalk and moving traffic)						
Do drivers yield to persons crossing the street? (Poor: no, drivers seem unaware of persons crossing the street; Average: occasional driver will yield to person attempting to cross the street; Good: most drivers yield to pedestrians)						
Are there bike lanes? Would children be safe biking here? (Poor: either no bike lanes or poorly maintained bike lanes; dangerous conditions for children; Average: paint-marked bike lanes decently maintained, conditions mostly suitable for children; Good: physically buffered bike lanes safe for inexperienced cyclists and children)						
Do intersections have marked crosswalks? (Poor: no marked crosswalks; Average: cross walk markings faded; Good: well-marked crosswalks)						
Do streets have medians and, if so, do they include trees, pedestrian waiting areas, and are they raised? (Poor: no or concrete only medians, raised without ramps; Average: at-grade median with paint-protected pedestrian refuge; Good: raised median with ramp, trees and clear pedestrian crossing refuge)						

Modified audit

Appendix E: Walk Photos

East 55th Walk Audit Photos



Sidewalk ends, forcing crossing in high speed road segment



Curb cuts and tactile markers not aligned to safely assist a visually-impaired pedestrian

East 72nd Walk Audit Photos



Example of debris from adjacent parking lot



Non-walk audit participant neighbor sharing insights on road use and conditions



Small business person and community development practitioner participate in walk audit along E.72nd

Appendix F: Ride Audit Routes & Photos

SRTP Thursday Night Ride

Ride the route and share your experience biking to and from the Lakefront Parks.

On a scale of 1 to 5 rate your experience biking in each section. (1 poor, 5 excellent)

A 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____

B 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____

C 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____

D 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____

Front side

Bike Cleveland Road Audit:

[Street Name]

Some streets or neighborhood are easier to bike than others. This tool provides an outline to assess how bike friendly your neighborhood is. Read the questions, then take a bike ride. After your ride answer each question based on your opinion. You can also note any problem you encountered that relates to each question. The rating scale is (1) Awful, (2) Many problems, (3) Some problems, (4) Good, (5) Very good, (6) Excellent. Info you provide will help Bike Cleveland identify improvements to advocate for in the studied area.

<p>1. Did you have a place on the road to bicycle safely?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> Some problems (note locations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> No space for bicycles to ride <input type="radio"/> Bicycle lane disappeared <input type="radio"/> Fast moving traffic <input type="radio"/> Too many crosswalks <input type="radio"/> No space for bicycles on bridge/tunnel <p>Other problems/Notes: _____</p> <p>Overall safe place to ride rating? (see rating scale above)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 2 3 4 5 6</p>	<p>2. How was the surface you rode on?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Some problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Potholes/cracked pavement <input type="radio"/> Debris (gravel, glass, etc.) <input type="radio"/> Dangerous drain grates <input type="radio"/> Uneven surface/grit <input type="radio"/> Swampy/angled railroad tracks <p>Other problems/Notes: _____</p> <p>Overall surface rating? (see rating scale above)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 2 3 4 5 6</p>
<p>3. How were the intersections you rode through?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Some problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Had to wait too long to cross <input type="radio"/> Signal didn't give enough time to cross <input type="radio"/> Signal didn't change for bicycle <input type="radio"/> Unsure where or how to ride through intersection <input type="radio"/> Swampy/angled railroad tracks <p>Other problems/Notes: _____</p> <p>Overall intersection rating? (see rating scale above)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 2 3 4 5 6</p>	<p>4. In the area you rode, how were the drivers?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Some problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Drove too fast <input type="radio"/> Passed me too close <input type="radio"/> Harassed me (yelled, honked, etc.) <input type="radio"/> Cut me off <input type="radio"/> Ran red lights/stop signs <p>Other problems/Notes: _____</p> <p>Overall driver rating? (see rating scale above)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 2 3 4 5 6</p>

Did the route link with other bike routes? Yes No

Did you notice sufficient bike racks at neighborhood businesses or institutions? Yes No

Did you see other cyclist using the route? Yes No

Overall how would you rate the area you rode as being a safe place to ride a bike?

Please rate on this scale: 1 Awful, 2 Many problems, 3 Some problems, 4 Good, 5 Very good, 6 Excellent

1 2 3 4 5 6

Help about your riding:

Which phrase best describes your bike riding experience?

- An advanced, confident rider who is comfortable riding in most traffic conditions
- An intermediate rider who is comfortable riding in some traffic situations
- A beginner rider who prefers to stick to the bike path or trail
- I don't ever ride

Which seasons do you typically ride in? (check all that apply)

Fall Winter Spring Summer I don't ride

Contact info (optional):
To receive follow-up info about the road audit and info about future audits.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address (street, city, state, zip): _____

Back side



Bike Audit participants



Appendix G: Miscellaneous Event Fliers



Ingenuity CLEVELAND Presents:

Part of a season-long collaboration to rediscover waterfront public places and highlight exciting plans coming to a coastline near you!

Ingenuity at the Lake!

Embrace the Lake a Whole 'nother Way!

South Gordon Park | NORTH GORDON PARK | 72nd St Reservation

September 25, 2-8 PM!
FREE! Family Friendly!

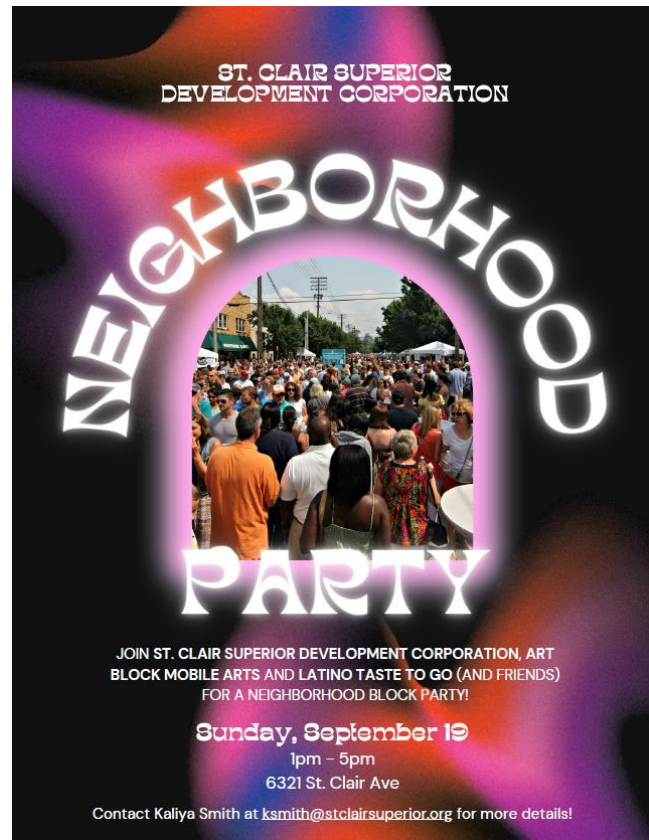
FUN BEATS!

- Food Trucks | Beer Garden | Kids Crafts
- RollinBuckeye Foundation Pop-Up Roller Rink
- Recess Cle Play Area | Pop Up Performances |
- Splice-Cream Truck: Treats, Tunes n' Storytelling
- Walking Paths + Scavenger Hunt | Live Painting |
- Nature + Sustainability Exhibitors | Artisans
- Community Partners | Neighborhood Planning |
- CHEERS Information | Installations & Activities

by the Ingenuity Cleveland Engineers!

www.ingenuitycleveland.org/Lake
(716) 589-9444

Major Supporters: Ohio Arts, arts & culture, CHEERS!, Cleveland Metroparks, fabricos FOUNDATION, Anthony T. Hairston, THE GEORGE GUND FOUNDATION, ceph, stclair superior



ST. CLAIR SUPERIOR DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTY

JOIN ST. CLAIR SUPERIOR DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, ART BLOCK MOBILE ARTS AND LATINO TASTE TO GO (AND FRIENDS) FOR A NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY!

Sunday, September 19
1pm - 5pm
6321 St. Clair Ave

Contact Kaliya Smith at ksmith@stclairsuperior.org for more details!



Ingenuity at the Lake!

PARK HERE! & TAKE A STROLL!
Park for free and follow signs along activated pathways to experience art & learn about our lakefront resources, ecology and exciting future plans!

INGENUITY @ THE LAKE END HERE!
Limited Parking @ North Gordon Park

PARK HERE!
Limited Parking @ North Gordon Park

Additional Parking:
Park at City of Cleveland South Gordon Park, Intersection of E 72nd St & Gordon Park Blvd. Enjoy a Mile Strail & Scavenger Hunt Across Pedestrian Bridge to North Gordon. (Estimated Time less than ~10 Minutes.)

Additional Parking at Metroparks:
72nd Reservation Fishing Area, Intersection of E 72nd St & W Marginal. A 3 Mile Walk gets you to North Gordon Park. (Estimated Time about ~10 Minutes.)

Limited Parking is available directly at North Gordon Park Event Site near E 72nd St Boat Launch. If you have limited mobility or stroller use, park here. Otherwise, please use the above routes. Be prepared to yield to boats.

Music & Performance, Food & Bar, Crafts & Kids Area, Fun & Games Plus! Exhibits by Neighborhood, Sustainability & Waterway Partners

www.ingenuitycleveland.org/Lake



COMMUNITY BIKE RIDE

Join us for monthly Thursday night bike rides all summer! Rides will be about 3 miles and be an opportunity to share ideas on better connecting the St. Clair Superior Neighborhood to the Lakefront Parks.

When:
Thursday, June 17th @ 6pm
Thursday, July 15th @ 6pm
Thursday, August 19th @ 6pm

Where: Meet-up at Marquette and St. Clair

stclair superior, SAFE PARKS, Ingenuity, Cleveland Metroparks, fabricos FOUNDATION

Appendix H: Miscellaneous Event Photos



Neighborhood Party 9/25/21



Glenville Kids Fest 6/26/21



Glenville Kids Fest Tabling 6/26/21



Glenville Kids Fest – Bike Repairs 6/26/21



Ingenuity Event-North Gordon Park 7/24/21



Ingenuity Fest – Smoothie Bike 9/25/21



Ingenuity Fest 9/25/21