

# Impacting a Community through Christian Community Development

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## Objectives

- Participants will learn the basic principles of Christian Community Development as applied to the Summit Lake neighborhood of Akron over the past 18 years.
- Participants will learn how to develop a community impact assessment to assess community development efforts.
- Based on the outcomes of the community impact assessment, participants will be able to apply strategies of community development.

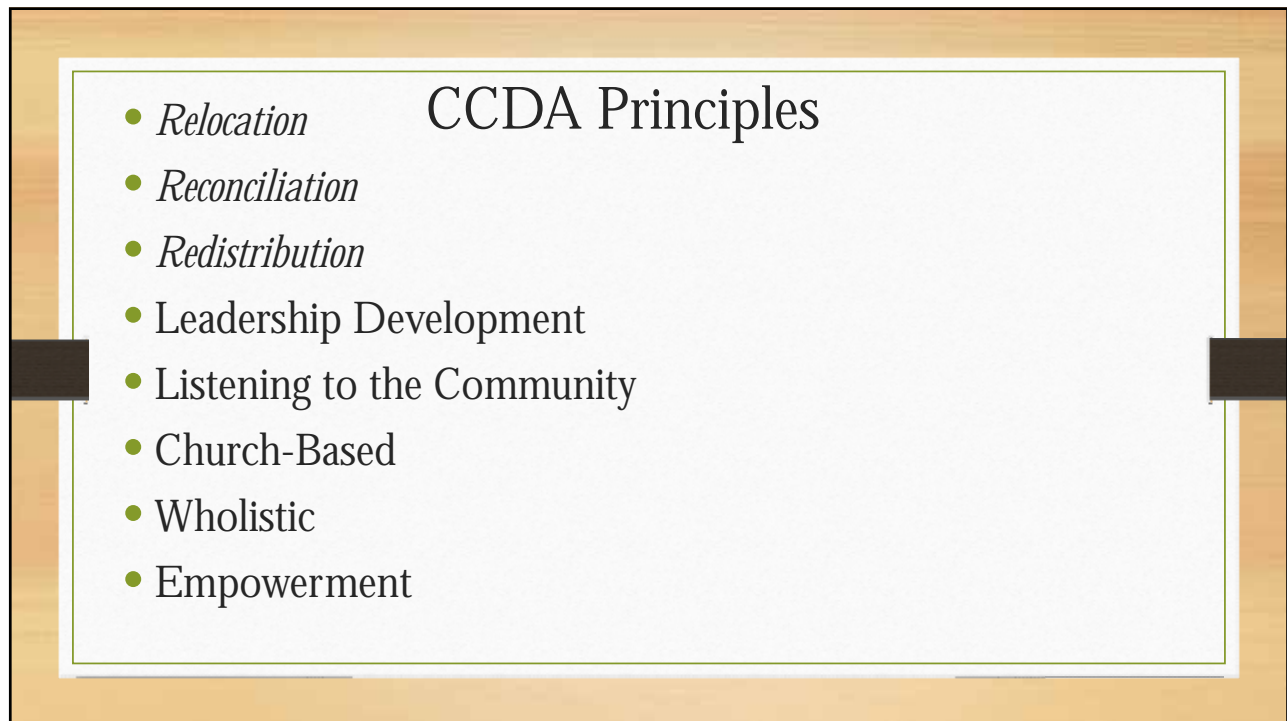


### Memories of Summit Beach Park



### Summit Lake, area community centers





## Christian Community Development Association Principles (CCDA)

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### Philosophy

*Go to the people*

*Live among them*

*Learn from them*

*Love them*

*Start with what they know*

*Build on what they have:*

*But of the best leaders When their task is done*

*The people will remark "We have done it ourselves."*



**Mission:** Unlikely Partners Taking Shared Risks to  
Renew Our Community for Christ's Sake

South Street Ministries'  
Front Porch Café

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## South Street Ministries Activities Early Years

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- The Crabbs Family Living in community
  - They moved intentionally from a more affluent neighborhood in Akron to an under-resourced neighborhood in the same city—in line with CCD principle of Relocation
  - Walking the Streets to know the Community
  - Children's Programs
  - Neighborhood Coalition-Building

## South Street Ministries Today

- Approximately 20 Staff and Volunteers have relocated
- Front Porch Fellowship
- Front Porch Café
- Recovery Groups
- Medical Clinic
- City-Wide Community Organizing
- Robust Youth Programming (an Afterschool/Summer camp program, Bike Shop, teen girls Studio, Closely Knit circle)
- Kingdom Leadership Alliance Training Program
- Business and Employment Incubator- in Process of Development!

## Erin's Involvement

- Background – 10+ years of kids ministry leadership, studied & practices macro social work (MSW), crafting, & home arts
- 2014-2015 – Practicum at South Street Ministries, volunteering towards general organizational & developmental support
- 2015-Present – Moved intentionally to Summit Lake following CCD model, hired initially as café support, then as development director – created teen knitting group in Summit Lake, Closely Knit (see right)



## Elizabeth's Involvement

- Background- Lived and served in Romania for over 6 years. Christian community development model of practice. Worked myself out of a job.
- Since 2007-Teaching community development at Malone U. and facilitating related internships.
- 2015-Moved intentionally to South Akron to be involved in South Street Ministries; 2017-Purchased a home in Summit Lake.
- Currently-Building relationships, volunteering in community, facilitating community development internships and community workshops through the Kingdom Leadership Alliance.



## Development of Community Impact Assessment

**Goal:** Qualitative Study, Asset Based

1. What is the perceived impact that South Street Ministries has had on the community?
2. How can South Street Ministries improve their work and move forward in their goals?



## Developing Assessments

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- Malone University Community and Organizational Development Social Work Internship
- South Street Ministries Director requested two Community Assessments Developed in Collaboration
  - Business Assessment
  - **Community Impact Assessment**

## Utilizing Principles: Qualitative Research & Asset-Based Community Development

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- Macro practice course instructor and South Street Ministries Director met to develop goals, timeline and initial questions
- South Street staff gave feedback and Student Interns finalized survey (while learning principles of asset based assessment in their macro-practice class)
- Obtained IRB approval
- Literature Review/Demographical Assessment
- Students and South Street Director Developed list and contacted stakeholders to interview
- South Street Staff, Volunteers and Students Surveyed Community Stakeholders
- Data compiled and themes developed
- Strategic planning still in process

## Developing Community Impact Assessment

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- Literature Review/Demographic Data Assessment
- Develop goals for the study
- Develop Timeline for Project
- Formulate Questions- with, not just for the community
- Obtain IRB approval (if associated with an institution)
- Recruit and Train Interviewees
- Compile Results (train participants in how to do this)
- Develop Meaning from Results and How Results will be Utilized
- Strategic Plan

## Results: Community Leaders

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### Demographics

- White-50%
- Black/African American-50%
- Age range
  - 18-24- 10%
  - 25-35-30%
  - 45-54-20%
  - 55-64-40%



- 90% live in the area
- 90% work in the area either part or full time. One volunteers in the area.
- 80% involved in faith community (Worship and volunteer service)
- n=10

## Results

### South Street Involvement

- After school program-50%
- Re-entry recovery-50%
- Summer Camp-40%
- Other-40%
- Bike Shop- 30%
- Youth Gardens- 30%
- Studio (girls group)- 30%
- Front Porch Fellowship-30%
- Bible Studies/Discipleship Group- 30%
- Christmas Store- 30%
- Open Gym- 20%
- Football-20%
- Wrestling-10%
- Thanksgiving baskets-10%

## “How has South Street Impacted you Personally?”

- Impacted my move to South Akron/Summit Lake (30%)
- Authentic Spiritual Experience (20%)
- Changed the way I live my life, sense of purpose and belonging (30%)
- Become a community/family (20%)
- Provided employment, personal support (20%)

***“South Street has changed the way I describe my faith and the way I view my work...my faith is more active.”***

***“The ministry has served as a guideline for my vocational life during a difficult season.”***

## “How do you feel that SSM has impacted the neighborhood?”

- Children’s lives, brings kids together
- Less abandoned homes
- Sustained local church/provided worship environment
- Employment Opportunities/Positive Financial Impact
- Prison support
- Spiritual Support to the Community
- Given the community/local people a voice
- Hard to judge as it is so subjective



## “What changes in the neighborhood have resulted from the ministry?”

- Less abandoned homes, more kids programming – more active kids
- People are more open for ministry now (it’s helped change the perception of the community to outsiders)
- Physical changes and quality improved (to neighborhood)
- Relationships are being built
- Joy in children
- Freedom in people
- People moving in to make a difference
- Neighborhood was in decline—and still is—but (founders) Duane/Lisa—they’re loving it through as a hospice patient

***“People now have a chance to not be reflections of the perception of the community but to be something different”***

## “Where do you see South Street Ministries going in the future?”

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- Expand to other parts of the city and become model of ministry/community development
- Continue to grow
- Expanding – involve more aspects of community development, moving to more holistic development of communities in Akron
- Storytelling as a catalyst or transition to activism
- Being disciplined, mentored, and ministered intentionally enough to grow collectively
  - Seeing SSM Outgrow the cafe, doing more to reach out to the younger population, being a safe haven for younger people, and people who will poor back into the community
- Another phase of the head pastor’s leadership – maybe some branching of ministries
- Remain grassroots in nature, and community development corporation-oriented

## “Do you have any ideas that would improve SSM’s work?”

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- Nothing to improve/Keep Doing What Doing- 2
- Do more with more staff
- Keep moving to spread across the city
- Connection of other ministries together to SSM/other congregations
- Increase inmate outreach
- Due to operation model (“Unlikely Partners...”) chaos and friction are likely so growth/restructuring of leadership or the infrastructure may be necessary

***“Another Duane, another Lisa, another Long Street” (community house)—another generation of people intentionally engaging the community for its growth...present, incarnational, missional activity”***

## Community Strengths(N=64)

Access to food Area businesses Belonging better community communication  
 Churches Clean water  
**Community Connectedness**  
 Community leadership County resources Desire for success Diversity  
 Good neighbors  
 Increasing community services  
 Location Natural beauty Neighborhood histories  
 New development housing Police surveillance  
 Recreational activities Respect water system Young families  
 Youth activities

## Community weaknesses?

Abandoned access activities aid anxiety area attention Childcare children  
 civic communication **Community**  
 Construction coping **Crime** culture desert  
 development disconnectedness documents  
**Drug** dwellers Economic Employment faith family food  
 gentrification guns homes Hopelessness housing injustice institutions involvement  
**issues lack lake legal local contribution**  
 Neighborhood Over-policed **Overdoses** Panhandlers  
 parental police poverty presence programming programs  
 property risk roadways **safety** schools services social spiritual Stress  
 Systemic Transient transportation urban values **violence**  
 Weapons Whole



## Student Learning Outcomes

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- How to Develop a Community Assessment
- How to Develop Assessment Questions
- Who to Interview
- Interviewing Skills
- How to Aggregate Qualitative Data and find meaning from this data
- Learning comes through the process, not just at the end.
- Things often take longer than expected!

## What we learned through the process and would do differently

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- Shorter Survey
- More community stakeholder surveys
- One survey at a time
- Tighter timeline
- Train interviewers more thoroughly
- More time delegating responsibilities



