

# NEWS RELEASE

**Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**ILENE SHAPIRO**  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



**DIRECTION HOME**  
AKRON CANTON  
AREA AGENCY ON AGING & DISABILITIES

**Date: November 1, 2023**

**Contact:** Greta Johnson  
Director of Communications  
Office of Executive Shapiro  
[ExecutivePress@summitoh.net](mailto:ExecutivePress@summitoh.net)  
330-643-2656

Matt Reed  
Senior Vice President  
Direction Home Akron Canton  
[mreed@dhad.org](mailto:mreed@dhad.org)  
330-899-5208

## **County provides \$4 million grant to support Aging in Place Program**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council passed legislation on Monday to provide a \$4 million grant to Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities. The grant is the first half of the County's overall commitment of \$8 million to Direction Home's new initiative, the Aging in Place Program. The program is designed to help older adults remain in their homes, navigate the digital world, and provide basic needs like food. The County is utilizing state funds from the Department of Aging and federal American Rescue Plan Act funds for the grant.

Like counties across the nation, Summit County's population of older adults continues to grow, with the portion of those 60 and older expected to exceed 20% by 2030. Older adults participate in their communities and contribute to a vibrant culture. Most older adults wish to remain in place as they age, but face barriers to maintaining their home or accessing critical support services. Many simply cannot afford to privately pay for these services.

"Aging in place is a term we all need to learn. Our older adults have told us loud and clear; they want to age in the place of their choosing. For most, this is their current home. Doing so can be a challenge, however," said Executive Shapiro. "This program will support large improvements like furnaces and windows, as well as smaller, but critical needs, like grab bars or ramps. Our older adults also need help in navigating an increasingly digital world and we are ready to assist. I know this collaboration with Direction Home is going to make a significant difference in the lives of our older adults and their caregivers."

The County's grant will support three primary areas of need for older adults: housing assistance, digital literacy and internet access, and basic needs like food assistance. Direction Home will collaborate with its large network of providers, as well as Executive Shapiro's Department of Community Development, to serve County residents eligible for services.

"Direction Home is very excited about this new opportunity," said Abigail Morgan, Chief Operating Officer. "Through this partnership we are able to ensure older adults in Summit County can age where they want, safe and successful in the place they want to call home. This is another example of how Summit County

comes together to address issues for residents. As Summit County's Area Agency on Aging, we will continue to advocate for programs and services that meet the needs for an Age Friendly community."

Summit County residents aged 60 and up, as well as those with a disability, may apply for the program. Those wishing to enroll in the program will be assessed based on need by Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities.

Residents can call 877-770-5558 or visit [www.dhad.org/refer](http://www.dhad.org/refer) to begin the screening and assessment process. Enrollment in the Aging in Place program will begin in January 2024.

**###**