

# Walk a Mile in Their Shoes

## Engaging Communities Feet First

Dave Beal

Age Friendly Olmsted County Coordinator Family Service Rochester  
Rochester City Council Study Session | October 16, 2023



*Thank you!*

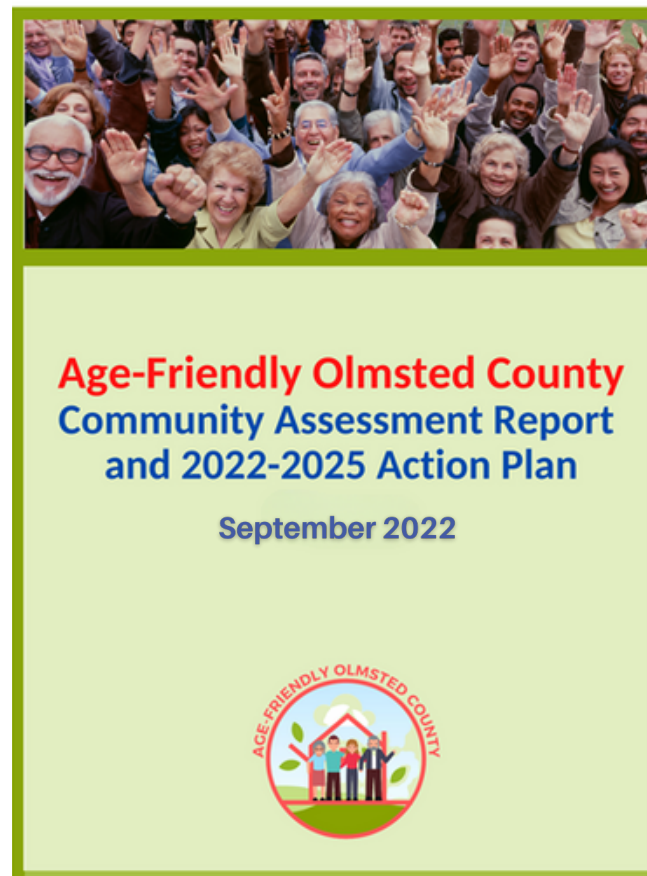


CITY OF  
**ROCHESTER**  
MINNESOTA





- **Olmsted County joined the AARP Network of Age Friendly States and Communities in January 2020. Family Service Rochester serves as the lead agency.**
- **Community assessment completed in 2021. 3 Year Action Plan published in September 2022. Now concluding the first year of the implementation.**
- **Action Plan Year 1:**
  - **State funding revisions for aging in place services.**
  - **Expanding caregiving support and respite.**
  - **State digital inclusion project.**
  - **Proposed sports and recreation center focus groups.**
  - **Housing for older adults.**
  - **Online Olmsted County guide to aging.**



<https://familyservicerochester.org/Age-Friendly-Olmsted-County>





## Community Assessment - 2021

- Issues related to transportation of all types among key findings.
- Findings related to “feeling safe” included safe sidewalks.
  - *More than 98% of age-friendly survey respondents and multiple focus group members noted the importance of having sidewalks in good repair. One-third of age-friendly survey respondents said Rochester does not have safe sidewalks.*



**Age-Friendly Olmsted County**  
Community Assessment Report  
and 2022-2025 Action Plan

September 2022



## Action Area III Age-Friendly Community Engagement - 2022

- **GOAL:** Address age-based barriers to opportunity and access.
  - Built environments are safe and accessible.
  - Promote and support walk audits of neighborhoods and business districts.

<https://familyservicerochester.org/Age-Friendly-Olmsted-County>





## Walk Audit

“A walk audit is an activity in which participants evaluate the walking environment and identify issues that impact their comfort and safety. A walk audit can be used as a community engagement tool.” - MNDHS 2022

### Walk Audit /Participatory Research

- “With or by’ rather than “about or for” subjects.
- “Peer”; “co-production”; “co-research”; “co-design”.
- Part of “age-friendly” community-based research for nearly a decade.
- *Conduct a walk audit that can be replicated in other neighborhoods, the goal is to empower the community to take an active role in shaping their neighborhood's pedestrian infrastructure fostering a sense of ownership and pride, leading to sustained efforts in maintaining and improving walkability over time.*





**Dave Beal**  
*Age Friendly Olmsted County*

**Brenda Chilman**  
*Family Service Rochester*

**Cathy Clermont**  
*Slatterly Park Neighbor Association*

**Rene Halasy**  
*RNeighbors*

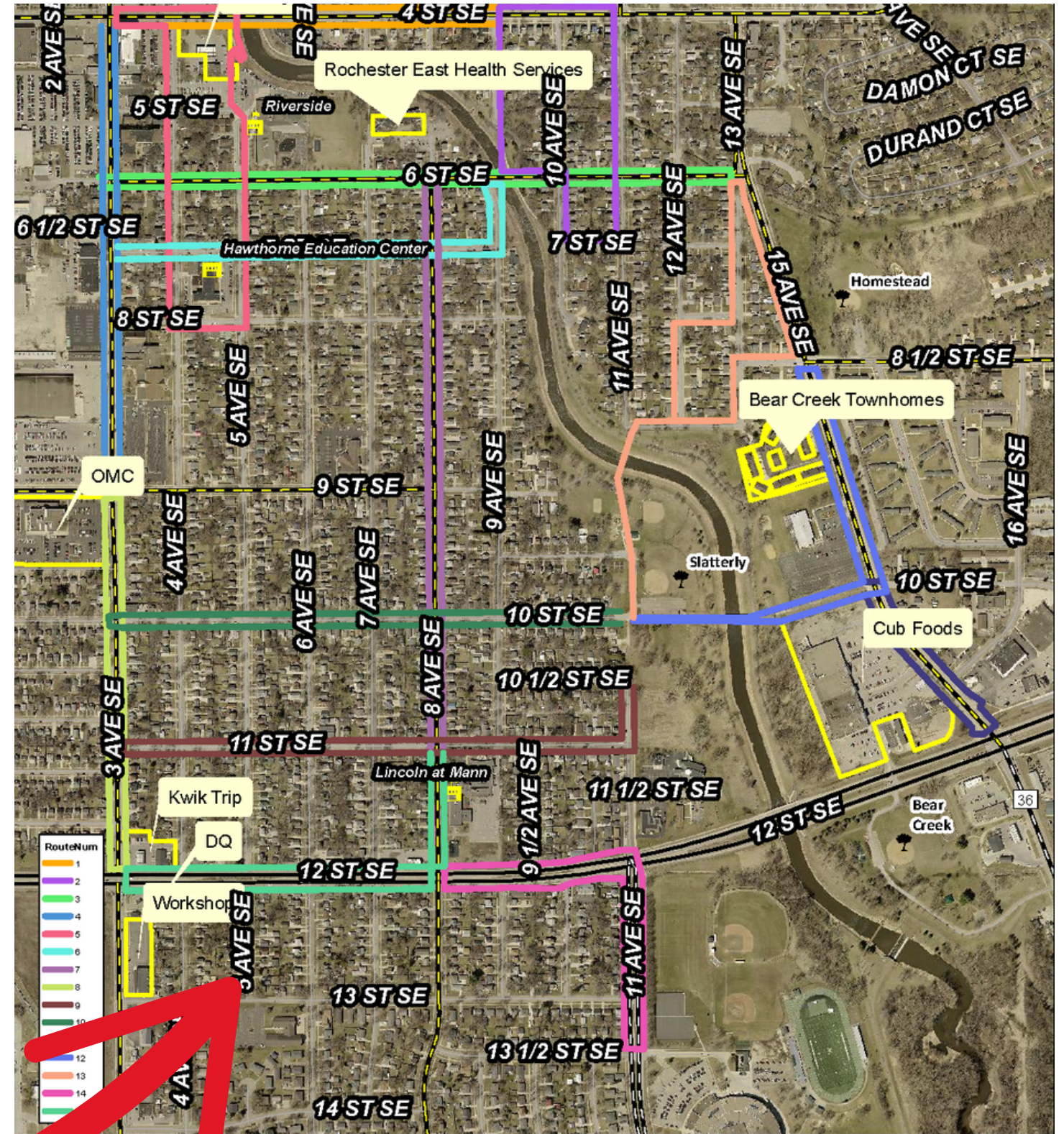
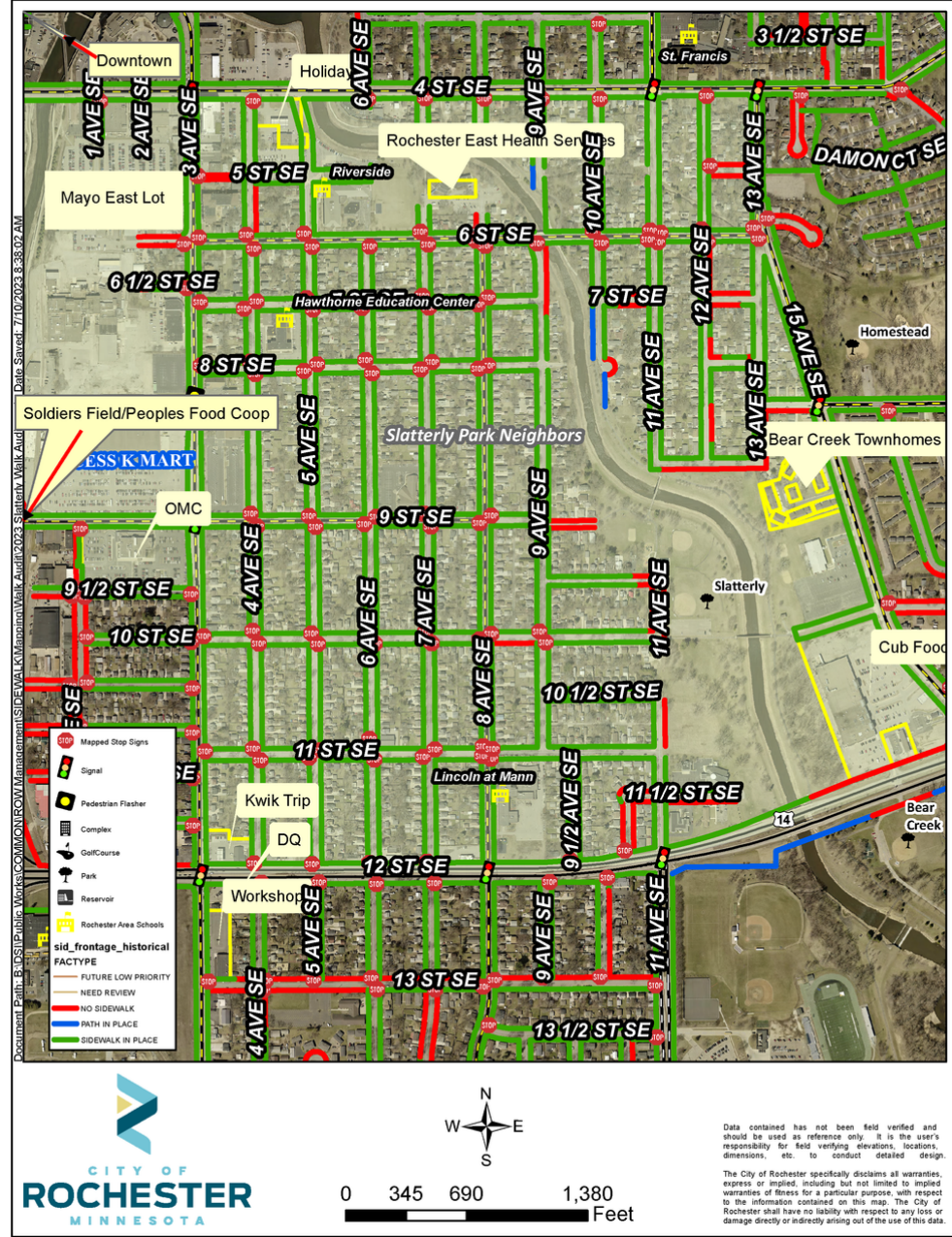
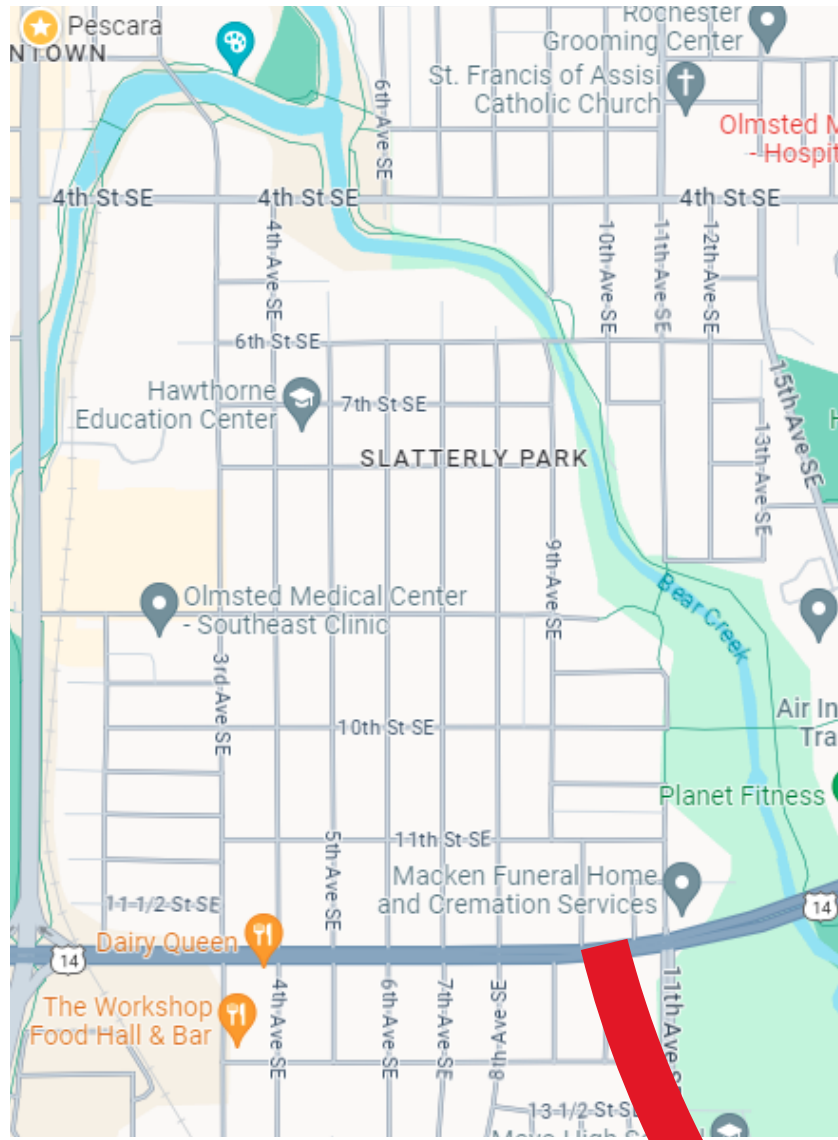
**Tyler Spies**  
*Rochester Public Works*

**Matthew Tse**  
*Rochester Community Development*

**Engage Community Participation: Involve residents, local organizations, and stakeholders to foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for improving walkability in the neighborhood.**







**City and neighborhood work out the routes.**







**12 routes of roughly 1 mile.**



**Team Leaders**

- Dave Beal**  
*Age Friendly Olmsted County*
- Cathy Clermont**  
*Slatterly Park Neighbor Association*
- Emily Doskey**  
*We Bike Rochester*
- Rene Halasy**  
*RNeighbors*
- Genevieve Hulsing**  
*Slatterly Park Neighbor Association*
- Jo Anne Judge-Dietz**  
*Olmsted County Public Health*
- Lindsey LeGette**  
*Charter House*
- Nick Miller**  
*We Bike Rochester*
- Erik Noonan**  
*We Bike Rochester*
- Jennifer Pinske**  
*Family Service Rochester*
- Ian Thomas**  
*America Walks*
- Jessica Thornton**  
*Age Friendly Pine Island*

**AARP Sidewalks, Streets and Crossings**

**AARP Street Safety and Appeal**

**AARP Summary**

WALKABILITY	WELL-DESIGNED	NO RESPONSE	RATING





SATURDAY  
September  
9



photo credits:  
Rosie Skipper

**74 participants. 12 groups. Ages 1 - 80+. Many couples. Several families. A girl scout troop. Strollers. Wheel chairs. Mobility and visual impairments. Residents from throughout the city and beyond. Spent about an hour walking around a mile along a variety of routes. Making observations. Discussing what they saw. Coming to a general view as to the walkability of their walks. Then, gathered to share with other participants. We will share on what they reported in a few weeks.**



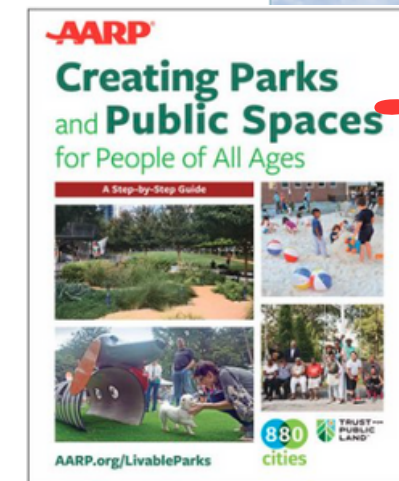
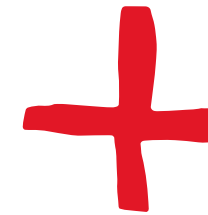


## Next in engaging communities feet first ...?

- Two neighborhoods have expressed interest.
- One neighborhood to launch a new association.
- Walk audit of BRT transit stop walk sheds.
- Sidewalk Improvement District Walk Audits.
- Safe Routes to School.



NEW!



Rolling Green Park



COMING SOON!

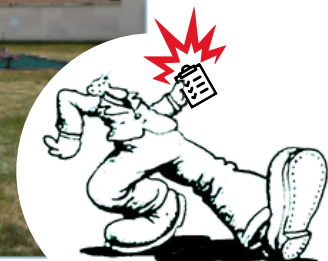






photo credit: Rosie Skipper



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