CHAT

COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTHY AGING TRANSITIONS

Age-Friendly Action Plan

for the

City of Rochester

2023

Point32Health Foundation

Harvard Pilgrim Health Care

TUFTS Health Plan

STRAFFORD Regional Planning Commission

GREATER SEACOAST COMMUNITY HEALTH

Strafford County PUBLIC HEALTH NETWORK
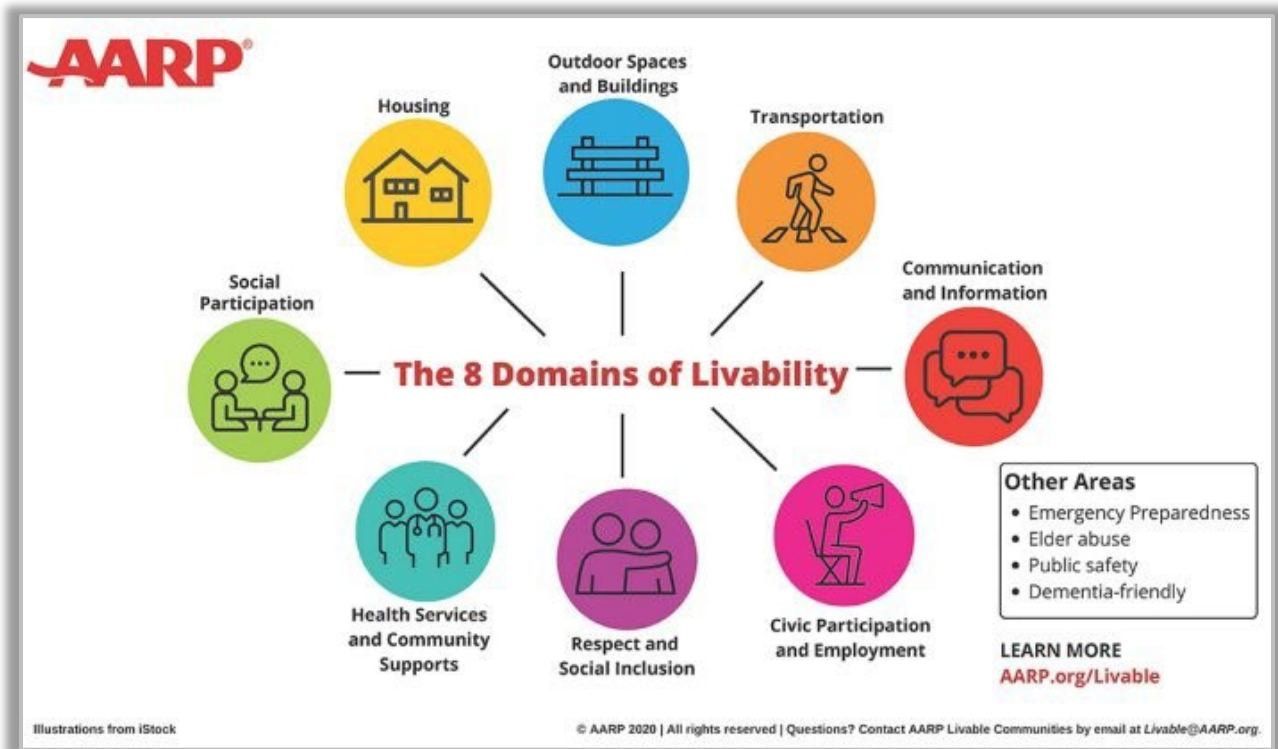
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INTRODUCTION

An age-friendly action plan is intended to convey a clear vision and set of values towards an age friendly community and define goals to make a community a better place for residents of all ages, abilities, racial and ethnic identifications, and socioeconomic levels.[1]

Communities for Healthy Aging Transitions (CHAT), a regional project, examined age-friendliness in Strafford County, as well as Brookfield, Wakefield, Newmarket, Nottingham and Northwood in Carroll and Rockingham counties, respectively. The project was funded by the Tufts Health Plan Foundation and conducted in partnership with Greater Seacoast Community Health (GSCH)'s Strafford County Public Health Network (SCPHN) program.

The project mission was to engage our communities looking at and promoting diverse, equitable, inclusive, livable environments where people can grow and thrive, regardless of age.

To achieve this mission, SRPC and partners at SCPHN designed engagement activities to understand strengths and opportunities in each community, which were framed within AARP's eight domains of livability from its Livable Communities program: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Housing. Transportation, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, and Health Services and Community Support. The qualitative and quantitative information presented in this Community Assessment was also framed within the eight domains of livability.

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[1] AARP - https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/livable-documents/documents-2019/AARP-NAFC-action-planning-overview.pdf

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Rochester is a part of the Strafford County Tri-Cities and is home to Rochester Opera House and Skyhaven Airport. Rochester is known for its close proximity to the beach, cities and the White Mountains. Additionally, Rochester has an active art community which includes an art commission comprised of local leaders and artists. Residents enjoy the availability of community resources in the city, housing that is more affordable than other cities in the region, and proximity to employment opportunity and family.

The City's economic development initiatives have generated growth in high tech and manufacturing alongside ongoing downtown revitalization. SRPC's offices are located within the James W. Foley Community Center with other entities such as the Rochester Department of Recreation and Arena, Rochester Senior Activity Center, Rochester School Department and Rochester Museum of Fine Arts.

DATA

In the Spring of 2023, the Strafford Regional Planning Commission updated the community profiles for each municipality in the region. The data presented here provides the most up-to-date information on Rochester as of 2023 and provides a snapshot of the demographics, household dynamics, education and employment status for the City. Unless otherwise noted, the data source is the 2016-2021 American Community Survey.

DEMOGRAPHICS

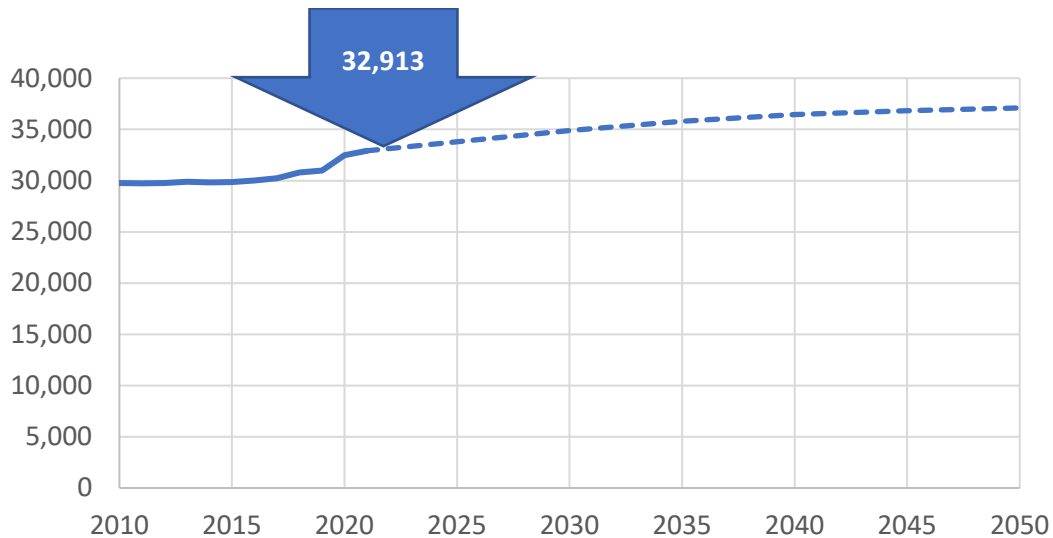**Table 1: Population Trends and Projections: 2010 - 2050**

Figure 1: Population by Sex: 2021

Male: 50.58%   Female: 49.42%

Table 2: Population by Age: 2011, 2016 and 2021
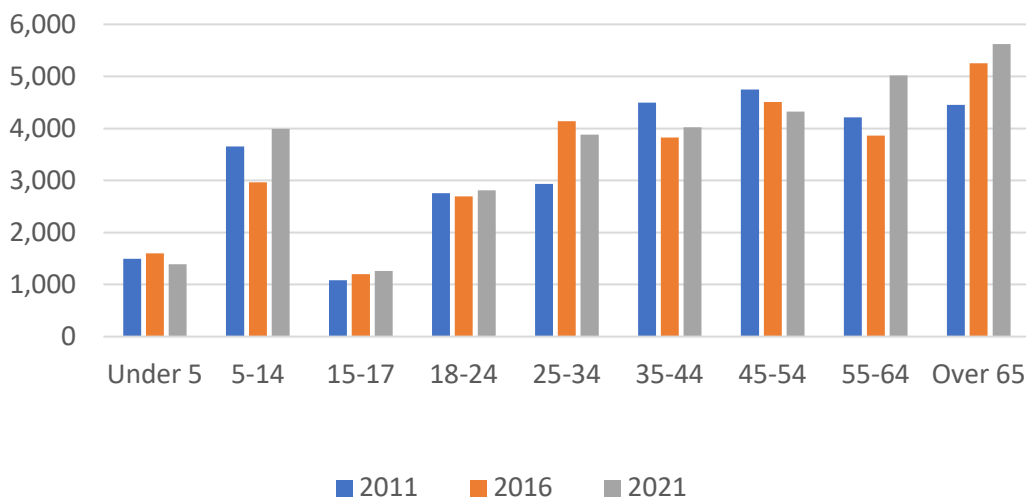
Table 3: Race and Ethnicity: 2011, 2016 and 2021

Race or Ethnicity	2011	2016	2021
Total Minority	5.5%	5.9%	9.0%
Black Alone	0.9%	0.6%	1.0%
Native American Alone	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Asian Alone	0.7%	1.2%	1.7%
Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Alone	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Some Other Race Alone	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Two Or More Races	1.8%	2.0%	3.3%
Hispanic or Latino	2.0%	1.9%	2.5%

Table 4: People with a Disability*: 2016 and 2021

Location	2016	2021
Rochester	16.81%	16.31%
Strafford County	12.85%	12.85%
SRPC	12.98%	12.26%

*People who reported a qualifying disability when taking the ACS

Table 5: People Residing in Shared Living Units: 2010 and 2020

Group Quarters	2010	2020
Correctional	11	0
Nursing Homes	181	271
Other Institutionalized	0	24
College Dorms	0	0
Other Non-Institutionalized	48	118
Total	240	413

HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS

Figure 2: Household Tenure: 2021

65% Owner	35% Renter

Figure 3: Households by Size: 2021

5+ people 8%

4 people 10%

3 people 14%

1 person 29%

2 people 39%
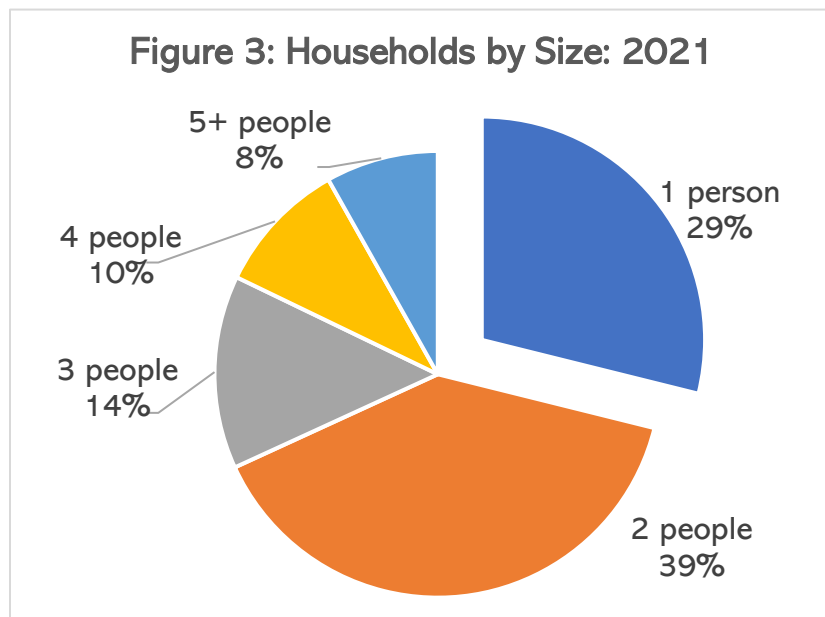
Figure 4: Parent Marital Status: 2021

Married 62%	Unmarried 38%

Legend:
- Married
- Unmarried

Figure 5: Housing Types: 2021

53% Single-family	29% Multi-family	18% Mobile Home

0%　20%　40%　60%　80%　100%
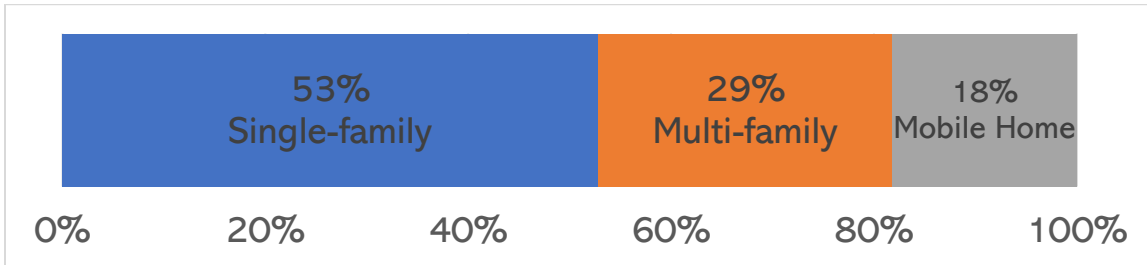
EDUCATION

Figure 6: Educational Attainment of Adults Over 25: 2021

No High School Diploma
7.9%

College (4-Year Degree or Higher)…

High School Diploma or equivalent
34.6%

Some College, No 4-Year Degree
33.1%

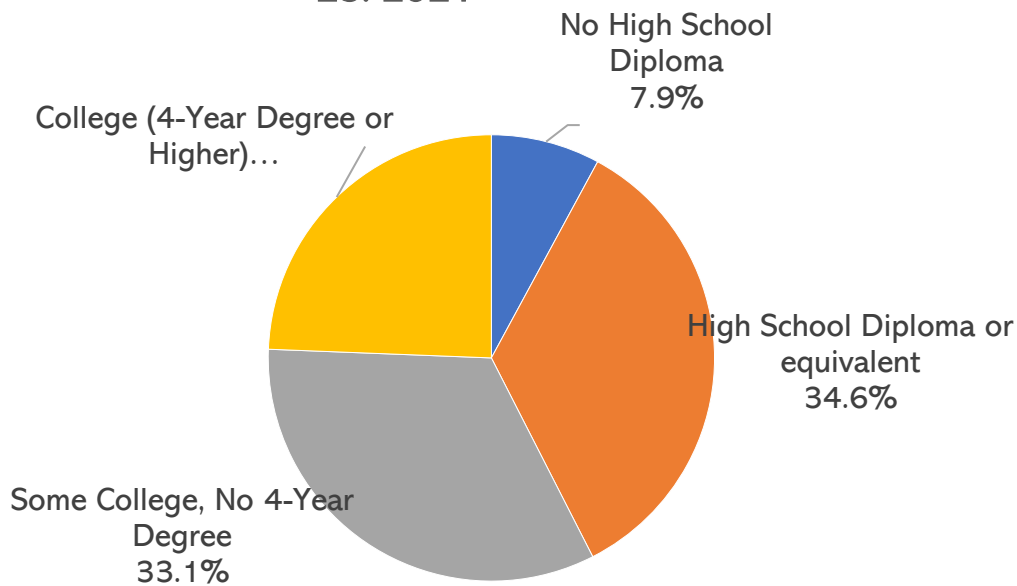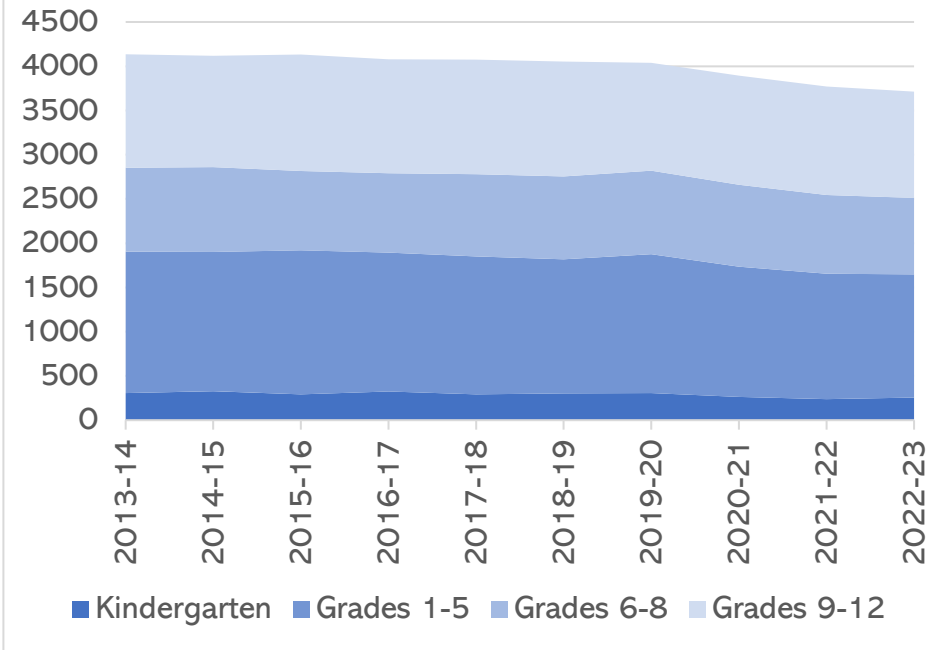## Figure 7: Public School Enrollment

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Table 6: Changes in Employment 2020-2023

Month/Year	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
Jan '20	17,921	2.9%
Apr '20	17,523	16.7%
Apr '21	17,760	4.1%
Apr '22	17,685	1.8%
Feb '23	17,968	2.1%

Table 7: Employees by Age in Strafford County: 2019-2022

Legend: 2019 Q1, 2020 Q1, 2021 Q1, 2022 Q1

Figure 8: Household Incomes: 2021

Legend: <$10K, $10K-$15K, $15K-$25K, $25K-35K, $35K-$50K, $50K-$75K, $75-$100K, $100K-$150K, >$150K

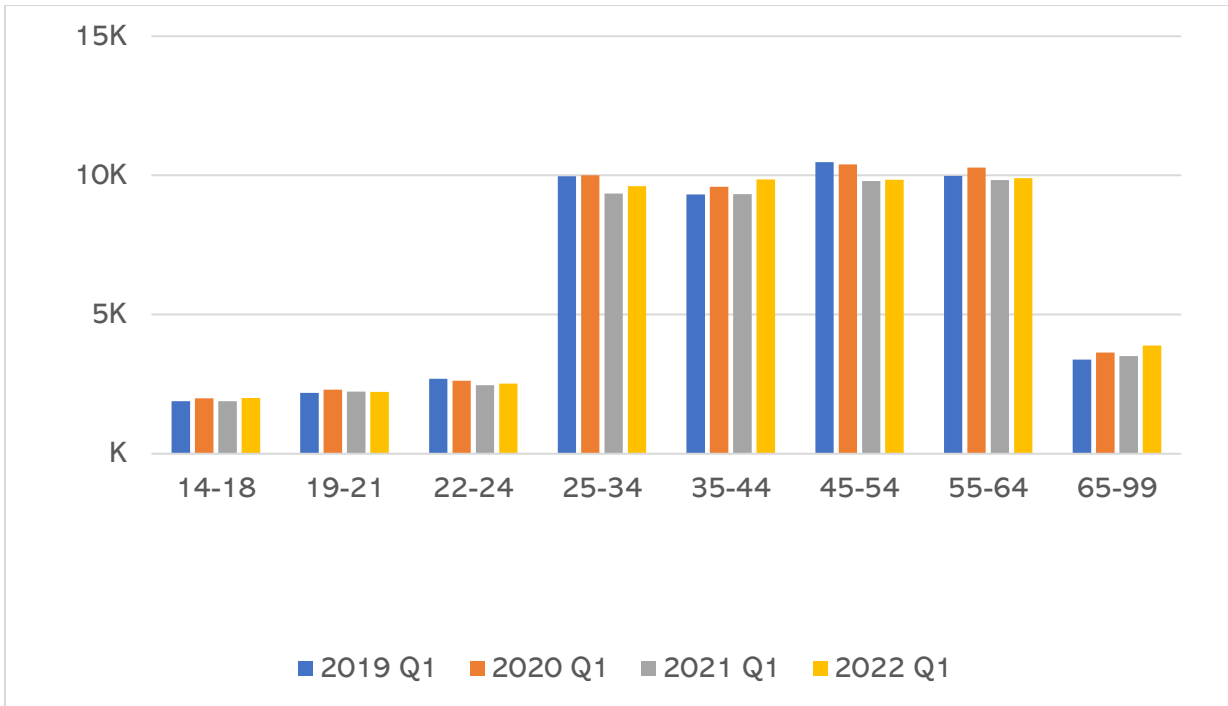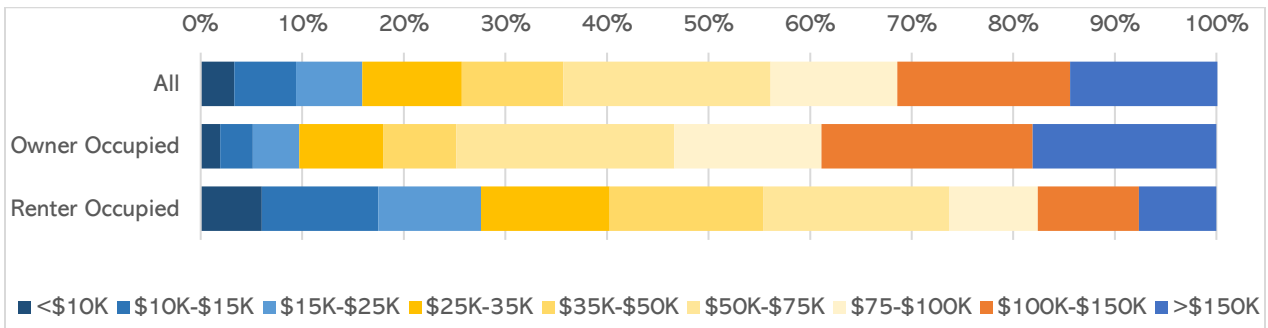## TOWARDS AN AGE-FRIENDLY ROCHESTER

This plan builds upon the community assessment completed for the City of Rochester in Phase I of the CHAT project by providing goals and actions that can be implemented by various entities, officials, and volunteers over the next 6-10 years. The contents of this plan were guided by Rochester citizens and municipal officials in the outreach process detailed below.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

SRPC, with support from partners at GSCH, leveraged the input of Rochester residents and municipal staff, officials, and volunteers to create a plan with implementable goals and actions for the City.

For Phase I of the CHAT project, SRPC launched a survey which was taken by 87 Rochester residents in addition to facilitating a Community Zoom forum in April 2021. The feedback was documented in the Rochester Community Assessment, which informed this Action Plan.

To breakdown the Community Assessment as a guiding tool for this plan, SRPC formed a small, steering committee including Lauren Krans (Recreation Director for Rochester), Barb Holstein (Rochester Resident, SRPC Commissioner, and volunteer on various boards), Laura Davie (Director of the Long Term Care and Aging focus area at the Institute for Health Policy and Practice (IHPP)), Wendi Aultman (Bureau Chief, Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services) and Ryan O' Connor (Senior Planner for the City of Rochester). This group met with SRPC and the Greater Seacoast Community Health Network to develop the goals and actions in this plan.

The Action Plan includes the actions, associated livability domains, timeframe for implementation, the responsible party(ies), and the resources and partners necessary to implement the actions. The timeframe for implementation is broken into long-term (5-10 years), medium-term (1-4 years), and short-term (<1 year). We hope this plan can be a living document which is revisited annually to track progress, celebrate successes, and update as necessary to reflect current priorities and resources available.

This Action Plan should be used in conjunction with other state and regional plans for age-friendly strategies, such as the New Hampshire State Plan on Aging. The City can supplement this Age-Friendly with local public health and safety protocols or programs. These can include regular check-ins with people who have mobility issues to ensure they are safe in their homes (i.e., their smoke detectors are working) and they have access to food and running water.

ROCHESTER AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

Goal 1: Expand the knowledge and use of existing recreational programming for all age groups				
Action Items	Livability Domains		Timeframe/ Progress Notes	Responsible Party	Partners, Resources, and Ideas

Action Items	Livability Domains		Timeframe/ Progress Notes	Responsible Party	Partners, Resources, and Ideas
Incorporate an outreach plan into Rochester's Recreation Master Plan that addresses strategies for reaching older adults	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	x	Timeframe: Short-term Progress: starting Recreation Master Plan with SPRC spring/summer 2023	Department of Recreation (Rochester Senior Activity Center), Public Information and Community Engagement Manager	Partners: Conservation Commission, SRPC Resources: Easter Seals (open land) Ideas: Feature a recreation space a month at the Senior Activity Center in a 'Did You Know' series: information on parking, accessibility, difficulty, amenities. This could be a feature in the Senior Activity Center newsletter.
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation	x			
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			
Install uniform signage at all city-owned recreation spaces	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	x	Timeframe: Short-term Progress: Current effort on wayfinding	Department of Recreation, Department of Economic Development Department of Public Works	Partners: DPW, Conservation Commission, Riverwalk Committee Resources: Rochester Main Street (for connections to downtown signage) Ideas: Check out National Recreation and Parks Association: Wayfinding: Navigation and Site Planning | Open Space | National Recreation and Park Association (nrpa.org)
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information				
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			

Goal 1: Expand the knowledge and use of existing recreational programming for all age groups

Action Items	Livability Domains		Timeframe/ Progress Notes	Responsible Party	Partners, Resources, and Ideas
Share external recreational resources with area older adults	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	x	**Timeframe:** Short-term **Progress:** Leveraging existing partnerships for communication and coordinating events	Department of Recreation (Rochester Senior Activity Center), Public Information and Community Engagement Manager	**Partners:** Conservation Commission, Rochester Public Library, Cornerstone, Easter Seals, YMCA, Conservation Commission, Public Information and Outreach Officer, new Senior Advisory Committee, border communities, SELT **Resources:** **Ideas:** SRPC's POP! Viewer via the NH Recreation and Arena website
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion				
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			
Create a list of local entities that would include recreational opportunities in their monthly newsletter to display for increased reach to older adults	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		**Timeframe:** Short-term **Progress:** Rochester Senior Activity Center currently distributes monthly newsletters	Rochester Department of Recreation (Rochester Senior Activity Center)	**Partners:** Rochester Public Library **Resources:** **Ideas:** Create a distribution list for various channels (i.e., churches, libraries, doctor's offices) that could display monthly newsletters for increased reach to older adults.
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion				
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			

Goal 2: Improve accessibility for those with mobility impairments due to age, injury, or disability				
Action Items	**Livability Domains**		**Timeframe/ Progress Notes**	**Responsible Party**	**Partners, Resources, and Ideas**
Understand access issues to facilities for those that are mobility impaired by auditing local businesses and community spaces	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Medium-term

Progress: CIP for FY 2025 – City - owned facility assessment should include accessibility | For public facilities: Department of Recreation, Department of Public Works, Fire Department | Partners: local businesses, Rochester Main Street, Chamber, SCPHN

Resources: Access Navigators, Capital Improvements Project Plans

Ideas: Have students conduct the Access Feasibility study, include examples of audit templates (San Diego Walk Audit) |
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation	x			
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information				
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			
Incorporate access planning for community events and happenings so that all community members feel they can participate	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Medium-Term

Progress: | Department of Recreation (Rochester Senior Activity Center), Rochester Main Street, Rochester Public Library, Planning Department | Partners: Emelia Poehlman UNH Disability of Health Program
Resources: City's Special Event Licensing Program and Technical Review Group, Topsfield Fair: Alzheimer/ Dementia-Friendly Event
Ideas: Create a checklist with considerations for access |
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation	x			
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			

Goal 2: Improve accessibility for those with mobility impairments due to age, injury, or disability

Action Items	Livability Domains		Timeframe/ Progress Notes	Responsible Party	Partners, Resources, and Ideas
Encourage and incorporate sidewalk improvements that are ADA-compliant	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Progress: Route 108 Complete Streets project, Riverwalk Committee, Parking Review Committee	Department of Public Works, City Public Safety Committee, Planning Department	Partners: Department of Recreation, Rochester Senior Activity Center Resources: Complete Streets Ideas: Incorporate into design review process Walkability Audits – way to get the community involved, San Diego
	#2 Transportation	x			
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation	x			
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			
Create (or Revise) a long-term plan for ADA accessibility for all city facilities and resources	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Medium Progress: Use ADA strategies for individual facility upgrades using CDBG funds	Department of Public Works, Planning Department, Department of Recreation	Partners: CDBG program Resources: Ideas: Include virtual meetings, websites and documents
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation	x			
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement	x			
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			

Goal 3: Engage older adults in various parts of community life in Rochester				
Action Items	**Livability Domains**		**Timeframe/ Progress Notes**	**Responsible Party**	**Partners, Resources, and Ideas**
Create a Senior Advisory Committee for the City	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Short-term Progress: Identified as a recommendation in 2011 Master Plan. Could be implemented with new Senior Services Coordinator position.	Department of Recreation (Rochester Senior Activity Center)	Partners: Housing Authorities (including Service Coordinators), Public Relations and Community Involvement Manager, community agencies Resources: AARP and other communities that have similar committees Ideas: Work with the housing authority to connect with older adults
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation	x			
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement	x			
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services				
Connect older adults with younger generations via events or training opportunities	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Short Progress: Putting in a new childcare facility and exploring ways to connect them to older adults	Department of Recreation (Rochester Senior Activity Center), Rochester Senior Center	Partners: New childcare facility, Rochester School Department, Rochester area schools, COAST Resources: NH Veterans Homes Ideas: Host board games or trivia nights, cultural education events.
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation	x			
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services				

Goal 3: Engage older adults in various parts of community life in Rochester

Action Items	Livability Domains		Timeframe/ Progress Notes	Responsible Party	Partners, Resources, and Ideas
Identify barriers to participation in community and municipal meetings and events	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Short-term Progress: Actively working on this for all residents as part of the Master Plan update	Public Relations and Community Engagement Manager, Department of Recreation (Marketing Program Coordinator)	Partners: Planning Department Resources: Senior Advisory Committee Ideas: Via a survey. (i.e., What policies/ procedures of City departments might be limiting)
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services				
Share information on how older adult groups can become more active in city meetings and boards (Planning Board, Council, sub-committees, etc.)	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Short-term Progress: Civics 101	Public Information and Community Engagement Manager	Partners: Planning Board, Senior Center, Rochester Senior Activity Center Resources: Ideas: Identify, create & share volunteer opportunities.
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation	x			
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement	x			
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			

Goal 4: Ensure a variety of communications channels are being used considering how different people and ages access information differently				
Action Items	Livability Domains		Timeframe/ Progress Notes	Responsible Party	Partners, Resources, and Ideas
Create a communications plan for the city	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Ongoing Progress:	Public Relations and Community Engagement Manager, Department of Recreation (Marketing Program Coordinator)	Partners: Resources: Ideas: Alternate channels outside the city that can be leveraged to reach older adults? Standardize the message in all locations. How do we reach people who are not currently engaged? Engage with older adults that are still working, or volunteer regularly.
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services				

Goal 5: Increase outreach and engagement surrounding housing options for older adults

Action Items	Livability Domains		Timeframe/ Progress Notes	Responsible Party	Partners, Resources, and Ideas
Consider updates to the City zoning ordinance that encourage mixed use housing or age diverse housing	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Long-term Progress: working on Conservation Subdivision ordinance (mix of type and affordable) and after Master Plan update broader look at ordinance	City Council, City Planning Board, City Zoning Board, City Planning Dept.	Partners: Realtors Association, Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce Resources: Ideas: Consider creating a long-term campaign for zoning change that builds partnerships, creates educational items, etc.
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing	x			
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion				
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information				
	#8 Community and Health Services				
Publicize resources that direct older adults and family members to housing options in and around the city	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Medium-term Progress:	Public Relations and Community Engagement Manager and Community Action Partners (CAP)	Partners: NH Care Path, Senior Activity Center, Rochester Housing Authority Resources: Ideas: Promote services like: Unite Us – NH, ServiceLink, 211.
	#2 Transportation				
	#3 Housing	x			
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services				

Goal 6: Widespread promotion of transportation options

Action Items	Livability Domains		Timeframe/ Progress Notes	Responsible Party	Partners, Resources, and Ideas
Understand transportation needs of older adults	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Short-term Progress: Route 108 corridor project is identifying needs of older adults and pedestrian access	Planning Department, Department of Recreation (Senior Activity Center	Partners: COAST, Ready Rides, TripLink, SRPC Resources: Ideas:
	#2 Transportation	x			
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion				
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information				
	#8 Community and Health Services				
Standardize communication around transportation options so that everyone who needs to know has the most updated information to then share out	#1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings		Timeframe: Ongoing Progress:	Public Relations and Community Engagement Manager, Department of Recreation (Rochester Senior Activity Center)	Partners: Welfare Department, Planning Department Resources: Ideas: Define where there is information about the City's transportation options. Link in with Communications Plan.
	#2 Transportation	x			
	#3 Housing				
	#4 Social Participation				
	#5 Respect and Social Inclusion	x			
	#6 Work and Civic Engagement				
	#7 Communication and Information	x			
	#8 Community and Health Services	x			