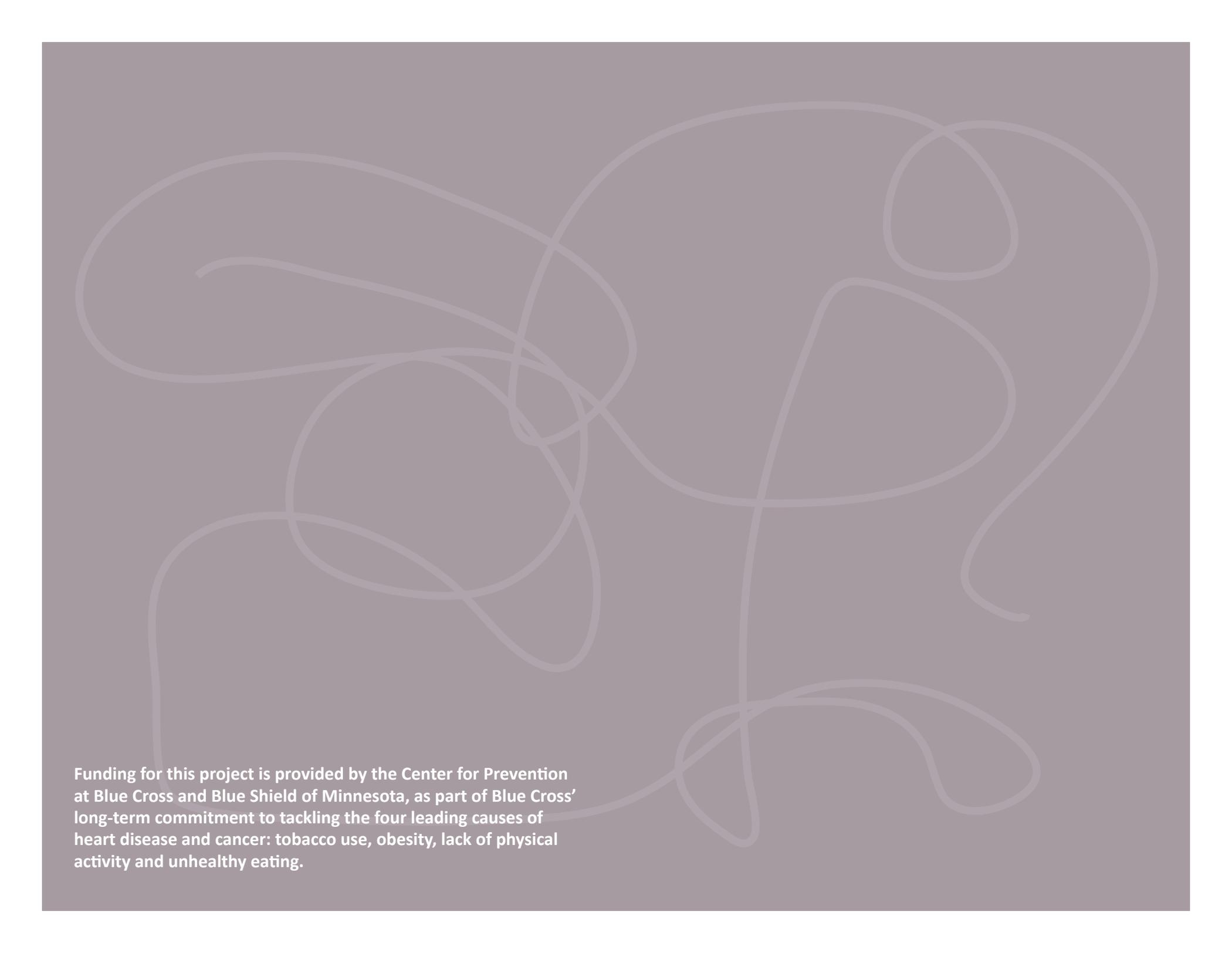


The background is a solid orange color with several large, overlapping, white scribbled lines that create a sense of movement and complexity. The text is positioned in the upper right and lower center areas.

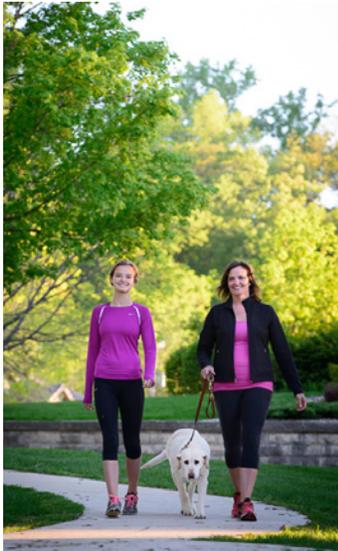
**MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON
STREETS & SIDEWALKS**

PEDESTRIAN PLAN & POLICY REPORT **2014–2016**



Funding for this project is provided by the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, as part of Blue Cross' long-term commitment to tackling the four leading causes of heart disease and cancer: tobacco use, obesity, lack of physical activity and unhealthy eating.

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Prepared by Live Healthy Red Wing for the Mayor’s Task Force on Streets and Sidewalks, June 2016 / Red Wing, MN.

Layout/Design by Kirsten Ford/Focus Design.

TASK FORCE MISSION & GOALS

Mission: Strengthen City sidewalk policies and practices to help create a system in which every resident including the young, old, and physically challenged can walk safely to daily destinations.



THE TASK FORCE FOLLOWS THROUGH ON GOALS SET FORTH IN THREE KEY CITY PLANS APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL.

All three documents name increasing walkability as goals. They are Red Wing's Comprehensive Plan (approved in 2007), the Complete Streets Policy Resolution (approved in January 2011), and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (approved in November 2011).

Red Wing Comprehensive Plan Outlines steps to “make existing areas of the community more walkable” and “ensure that future development places walkability at the forefront of the design process.” This Plan directs the City to build a community-wide sidewalk network that links households, schools, parks, trails, and activity centers.

Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan Charges the City to “enhance the bicycle and pedestrian environment so Red Wing will be known as an active, fitness-friendly, bicycle-friendly, walkable community throughout the region and the state of Minnesota.” Key objectives are to “complete gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle network” and “create a complete and connected network of bicycle and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure for all abilities and user types.”

Complete Streets Policy Resolution Focuses on infrastructure decisions and says future decision-makers need to give due consideration to bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities from the very start of planning and design work. Transportation and development projects will be treated as opportunities to make complete streets improvements, and the design of new or reconstructed facilities should anticipate future demand for bicycling, walking and transit facilities.

Background

In March of 2014, Mayor Dan Bender convened the Mayor's Task Force on Streets and Sidewalks to research and analyze street and sidewalk issues and form recommendations for city policy and procedure improvements. The Task Force has been facilitated by Live Healthy Red Wing with funding from an Active Living for All contract with the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. From the beginning, the Task Force has included committed city staff leadership so final recommendations are feasible and realistic to implement.

Short-Term Goals of the Task Force

- Increase accessibility and safety for all walkers and bicyclists
- Improve city plans, policies, and procedures related to pedestrian activity
- Build a criteria system for prioritizing streets, sidewalks, and routes so improvements are based on data and objectivity
- Develop sustainable ways of gathering more residents' input into the planning and decision-making process
- Create necessary tools and processes so changes can be implemented consistently over time

Long-Term Goals of the Work

- Increase the number of walkers in Red Wing
- Improve residents' overall health and well being
- Raise residents' satisfaction with their neighborhoods and community
- Make Red Wing attractive for new businesses and families who value walkability, thereby improving the economic development, growth, and vitality of our city

TASK FORCE'S PROCESS FOR TACKLING PEDESTRIAN ISSUES:

- Reviewed current local policies and procedures
- Researched best practices & compared them to Red Wing
- Collected updated local data
- Listened to residents' opinions through surveys, social media, public events, and other methods
- Developed criteria system to prioritize areas and projects
- Tested out tools and procedures and made adjustments where needed
- Made recommendations to City staff and City Council
- Maintained open dialogue with City Council



MAYOR'S TASK FORCE

Members

Dan Bender, Mayor
Rose Burke, Community member
Sean Dowse, Biking commuter
Carol Duff, Community member
Ruth Greenslade, Goodhue County Health and Human Services
Tina Grinager, Walking commuter
John Guerber, Community member
Randal Hemmerlin, Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Pam Horlitz, Mayo Clinic Health System—Red Wing
Marilyn Meinke, City Council (2014)
Roger Pohlman, Police Chief
Ralph Rauterkus, City Council
Mark Ryan, School Board
Dustin Schulenburg, City Council

Support Staff and Liaisons

Dean Chamberlain, City of Red Wing Staff Engineer
Alex Johnson, City of Red Wing Infrastructure Asset Specialist
Michelle Leise, Live Healthy Red Wing Coordinator and Mayor's Task Force Facilitator
Leanne Knott, City of Red Wing GIS Systems Specialist
Lynn Nardinger, City of Red Wing Deputy Director
Anthony Nemcek, Live Healthy Red Wing Active Living Assistant
Gary Morien, Stantec consultant (2014)
Jay Owens, City of Red Wing Engineer
Brian Peterson, City of Red Wing Planning Director
Fay Simer, Stantec consultant (2014)
Eric Weiss, Center for Prevention-Blue Cross and Blue Shield of MN



The image features a dark gray background with a light gray, scribbled line pattern that resembles a hand-drawn doodle or a complex, abstract shape. The lines are thick and fluid, creating a sense of movement and spontaneity. The text "TOPICS WE TACKLED" is centered in the middle-right portion of the image.

TOPICS WE TACKLED

WINTER SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE



ISSUES PRIOR TO 2015

- Lack of communication meant some residents were unaware of the City's policy and billing process.
- Slow communication resulted in multiple fees being billed to property owners before owners realized the city had cleared their sidewalks.
- Complaint-based snow removal system resulted in the same sidewalks getting cleared because they received complaints, while other sidewalks, many of them heavily used by students or the elderly, were not getting cleared at all. Many uncleared walks were on school routes within the school district's designated walk circles.
- Sidewalks that are the responsibility of landlords were often not cleared, putting renters in an unfair situation.
- Residents who live in neighborhoods with sidewalk gaps were frustrated by having to shovel "sidewalks to nowhere" because their sidewalks didn't connect to the rest of the sidewalk system.



RESEARCH & ACTIVITIES

- Developed criteria that identifies streets of priority for pedestrians such as school zones, activity centers, and parks; created Snow Removal Priority Map. (See Appendix A.)
- Discussed with Public Works the cost and scope of implementing a city-coordinated system of clearing all sidewalks.
- Researched how other communities handle snow removal, including those that clear all sidewalks as part of a citywide system.
- Learned how "sidewalks to nowhere" create a large portion of resident frustration.
- Researched new snow removal equipment options and financial feasibility.
- Helped plan and evaluate a pilot program (during the first five snow events of 2014) to test a priority-based snow-removal system.
- Created communication items (posters, letters, online resources) to increase awareness on new priority-based system. (See Appendix A.)

ANALYSIS

The Task Force started working on this topic with an end goal in mind--ensuring sidewalks are safe and accessible through winter, especially for residents who use their feet as their main transportation. Students who walk to and from school and elderly residents, particularly those who live downtown and walk or use wheelchairs to get to services, were a focus.

The Task Force concentrated on two areas: 1) Building an effective, consistent system; and 2) Creating a stronger communication plan so residents were aware of the policy and program.

Property owners (including landlords) are responsible for shoveling their own sidewalks. In the past, City crews shoveled sidewalks on a complaint basis only, but many of Red Wing's most used sidewalks (in school zones and private sidewalks near downtown) never got shoveled. To remedy this, the Task Force recommended staff move to a priority-based snow removal system. We created a street priority map and tested out a system of inspecting and shoveling high-priority streets first. After piloting the system, City staff continued through the season.

One of residents' main frustrations in the past was not being aware of the current policy and how it was enforced. The Mayor's Task Force worked with staff to create a communication plan with materials. Door hangers remain critical to the new procedure. Staff use them to inform residents they must shovel within 24 hours if the walk is in violation, and staff deliver a second door hanger if crews need to shovel and charge for the work. We tried communicating only once but found a second door hanger was key.

The Task Force discussed other options for snow removal, including charging a citywide fee and local contractors shoveling snow instead of residents. Based on the City's cost of new equipment, the staff time to organize, and local contractor feedback that didn't support this option, the Task Force decided this option wasn't viable at this time.

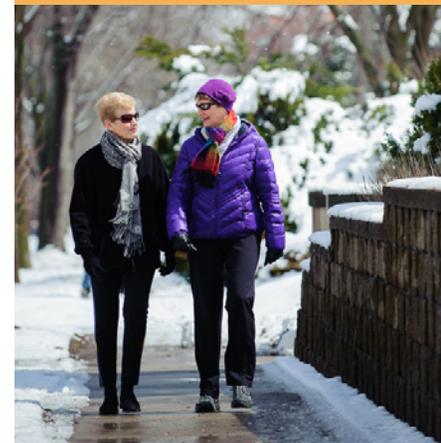
The Task Force feels strongly that a priority-based snow removal system with robust communication is crucial to maintaining walkable winter sidewalks for everyone.

RECOMMENDATIONS: APPROVED FALL 2015

Adopt priority-based snow removal system that prioritizes the order in which sidewalks are inspected and cleared. (See Appendix A.)

Use the new communication tools and strategies to increase knowledge and awareness in the community. (See Appendix A.)

Continue to hold property owners responsible for clearing their own sidewalks.



SIDEWALK INSPECTION & MAINTENANCE



ISSUES PRIOR TO 2015

- Sidewalk inspection procedure collected incomplete data that only noted extreme vertical misalignments and did not include important details like cracking, spalling, and substandard cross-slope.
- Inspections did not include a ranking system so sidewalks weren't prioritized in a consistent manner.
- ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance wasn't recorded.
- Data was recorded on paper instead of an electronic system and took too much staff time.
- Annual repairs handled only the worst tripping hazards, leaving a backlog of sidewalks in poor condition for long periods of time.



RESEARCH & ACTIVITIES

- Held focus group at Jordan Towers to listen to the concerns of elderly residents who use the downtown sidewalks often. Conducted written survey with same residents to gauge perceptions of sidewalk accessibility and safety and to identify areas of concern.
- Hosted walks with wheelchair-bound residents and elderly residents, and Task Force listened to the concerns about safety, accessibility, and geographic locations that wheelchair users deemed high priority. Task Force members also used wheelchairs and walkers around downtown to learn what it's like to use sidewalks in this way and understand that perspective.
- Researched MnDOT best practices for assessing sidewalk conditions and ADA compliance.
- Built a data field system in the City's new Cartegraph electronic survey tool to collect more detailed information and improve efficiency when recording inspections.
- Conducted in-depth inspections of all 3,606 sidewalk segments within the city limits. (Each property constitutes one segment.)
- Analyzed results and created a rating system to rank high-, middle-, and lower-priority

Condition Category	Rating	Score
Cracking	☆☆☆☆☆ (1 star)	Failed 0
Gaps	☆☆☆☆☆ (1 star)	Failed 0
Ramp Condition	☆☆☆☆☆ (5 stars)	Good 80
Spalling	☆☆☆☆☆ (5 stars)	Excellent 100
Traverse Slope	☆☆☆☆☆ (5 stars)	Excellent 100
Truncated Dome	☆☆☆☆☆ (0 stars)	Not Inspected ⚠️
Vegetation Overgrowth	☆☆☆☆☆ (3 stars)	Average 60
Vertical Misalignment	☆☆☆☆☆ (1 star)	Failed 0

sidewalks that need fixing. Mapped findings to help with future project planning. (See Appendix B.)

- Discussed financial options for how the community could pay for repairing sidewalks. Discussed city sidewalk fees where everyone pays a portion of the cost versus the current resident-responsibility system in which residents pay for their own sidewalk repairs.

- Created an annual inspection and maintenance procedure and timeline so process is consistent and takes into account the needs of staff and residents in planning projects and paying for repairs.

- Revised letter to residents to better explain the need for the repair, the overall scope of the work citywide, and the payment options.



ANALYSIS

One thing became clear to the Task Force after all its research and activities: Fixing and maintaining Red Wing's current sidewalks should be the highest priority. We learned early on that we needed a new system for inspecting the sidewalks and a new process to ensure the sidewalks in poor condition get repaired in a systematic, timely basis. We also had to consider the needs of residents more, giving them better information, more time, and multiple payment options when their sidewalks need repair. (See Appendix B for documents.)

After inspecting all of Red Wing's 3,606 sidewalk segments, we learned that 30% of Red Wing's sidewalk segments (1,084 of them) had one or more panels that rated poor, very poor, or failing in at least one category. We measured categories for vertical misalignment, cracking, spalling, gaps, and vegetative overgrowth. Each category was rated from 0 to 5 stars (see Appendix B for rating system). Results found that of those 1,084 sidewalks, 170 of them are in the worst conditions.

Based on current ordinance, all sidewalk repairs (except those necessitated by boulevard trees) are the property owner's responsibility. The Task Force considered various

payment options for fixing private sidewalks, including adding a city fee so all residents would help pay for sidewalk improvements. In the end, the Task Force decided to recommend continuing with the current resident-responsibility system for now. The Task Force did not feel there was adequate political will or resident support for adding a citywide fee at this time. However, this could be a future opportunity and should be reviewed again at a later date.

The Task Force created a new procedure, timeline, and communication letter (see Appendix B) that informs residents early on about the repairs needed and gives people more time to plan and pay for them. The letter also explains to residents the "big picture" of the project, why it's happening, and their payment options. We understand the costs will be a greater financial hardship to some residents than others.

Because of the large percentage of sidewalks that need fixing, the Task Force is recommending an aggressive program for the next 5 years. Between 50 and 75 sidewalks will be fixed annually and paid for by property owners, following the new timeline and procedure. In subsequent years, staff will plan to fix any sidewalk when it falls into the poor, very poor, or failing status of one or more categories, based on annual inspections.

The City is responsible for fixing broken sidewalks due to boulevard trees and these often go unrepaired. There are 21 sidewalks like this in 2016, and staff will repair these this year. In future years, the City will continue to fix sidewalks damaged from boulevard trees and budget accordingly on an annual basis.



Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Standards and Upgrades

ADA standards have become more stringent in the last few years (see Appendix B), and these improvements are the responsibility of the City, not property owners. Therefore, ADA improvements will take City resources to upgrade to standards. Curb ramps and their percentage of slope, condition, and width are the primary areas affected by ADA standards. These improvements make sure that anyone who is physically or visually impaired can navigate a curb ramp safely. After walking and talking with residents who would benefit most from these improvements, the Task Force feels strongly these improvements are needed.

Red Wing has roughly 920 curb ramps, and those that were replaced during the Main Street project are likely the only ones that meet standards. All the rest are considered substandard. Even without the new standards, our citywide sidewalk survey found many ramps are in poor or very poor condition.

Because of the large percentage of curb ramps that require repair and need to be brought up to ADA standards, the Task Force recommends a consistent, dedicated, long-term approach. The City's Engineering department estimates an average corner will cost around \$3,000, and a regular intersection (which includes four corners)



will cost roughly \$12,000. The Task Force was surprised at the expense and acknowledges that upgrades will need to be made over a period of years, using the Sidewalk Priority Map as a guide, beginning with the downtown core (see Appendix B).

We need better information, however, on curb ramp conditions. While the 2015 sidewalk inspection provided details on regular sidewalk segments, it didn't gather enough information on curb ramps. For that reason, we're recommending a more thorough inspection be done of all curb ramps during summer 2016 by Public Works, and more data fields added such as cross-slope, traverse slope, condition, and width. When City workers begin their regular annual inspections again in summer 2017, they will have a comprehensive inspection system for both sidewalk segments and curb ramps.

The State of Minnesota sees ADA improvements as necessary but it also realizes that upgrades put a financial burden on cities. Minnesota cities are not required to upgrade everything immediately, but they are required by the state to have an ADA Transition Plan by 2018 or lose eligibility for some grants.

Completing an ADA Transition Plan is a good-faith effort that shows our community is headed in the right direction with a plan to reach ADA standards over time and help provide better service to our residents and visitors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Repair 50 to 75 sidewalk segments per year for the first five years that are the responsibility of property owners. (2017-2021)

Start repairing the worst sidewalks in 2017, based on data provided by the 2015 citywide sidewalk inspection.

Continue with resident-responsibility sidewalk projects each year based on annual inspections, to ensure all sidewalks in all areas of town stay in good condition.

Staff will use new timeline, procedure, and communication documents (see Appendix B) to ensure residents are informed of the sidewalk program, and staff and residents have more time to plan for repairs.

Annually repair all sidewalks that rate poor, very poor, or failing due to damage from boulevard trees. This is the City's financial responsibility.

Continue surveying one-third of the City's sidewalks each year, starting with the east side of town and moving to the west, beginning 2017.

City will use the electronic Cartegraph system with new detailed data fields (see Appendix B) to gather more indepth information during annual sidewalk inspections.

Infrastructure Asset Analyst will present an annual Sidewalk Survey Report to the Complete Streets Committee (see "Sustaining the Work") to provide data and analysis so staff can make informed decisions on projects and budget decisions.



Public Works will conduct a thorough inspection of Red Wing's curb ramps in summer 2016 with more detailed data fields to account for new ADA standards. Prioritize the intersections that need upgrading in late 2016.

Complete ADA Transition Plan by July 2017. Staff will consider the implications of making ADA improvements on curb ramps during overlay projects during the creation of this Plan.

Include \$100,000 in the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) every year for the next 10 years to upgrade sidewalks and curb ramps to ADA standards. (2016-2026)

WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?

Complete Streets are designed to enable safe access for ALL users, including drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to walk, roll, and bike to destinations like work, school, parks, shops, and services, and also allow for traffic to flow safely and efficiently.

Complete Streets is for everyone.

Complete Streets solutions are different for every situation. Possibilities include options such as a narrower road, sidewalks, wider boulevards, benches, brighter street lighting, shade trees, ADA-accessible curb ramps, speed bumps, curb extensions, painted lines, additional signs, and more. Often the best solution is a combination of one or more of these.



Examples of Complete Streets Improvements in Red Wing

- West Avenue (2014)
- Highway 61 / Main Street (2015 - 2016)
- Levee Road & Trail Project (2016)
- Pioneer Road & Twin Bluff Road Intersection (2017)
- Mississippi River Bridge Project (2018)

STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS



ISSUES

- Engineering staff does not have a data-driven, objective tool for helping determine if Complete Streets improvements are needed during a street reconstruction project.
- Lack of an objective tool causes some residents to not understand why they were chosen for an improvement they may find unworthy or unnecessary.
- Without an objective tool, some high-priority projects may unintentionally get overlooked.



RESEARCH & ACTIVITIES

- Researched other communities' criteria sheets and methods of gathering data.
- Discussed with Engineering Department how project components are currently determined and what new data might be measured and analyzed.
- Worked with Stantec consultants to choose and weigh areas of importance for walkability, then divided list by topics of planning, connectivity, and safety.
- Piloted a criteria sheet and used it in the field. After testing out the first draft, Task Force revised it twice to reach the final product.

ANALYSIS

Since the passing of the Complete Streets Policy Resolution in 2011, the Engineering Department fills out a Complete Streets Report every time a reconstruction project is being planned in order to determine if bike, pedestrian, or transit improvements are necessary. The engineer writes a narrative that includes details such as width of road, volume of traffic, parking availability, and whether or not sidewalks are present. This is a great step in making sure bike, pedestrian, and transit concerns are being considered.

In talks with the Engineering Department, however, the Task Force learned that engineers feel they would benefit from

having a specific, data-oriented tool to bring consistency to the process. This objectivity would also help residents who live on affected streets understand the reasons why they may (or may not) be getting a new sidewalk or other pedestrian improvement as part of a reconstruction project.

The Task Force looked at the ways other communities analyze reconstruction projects. The group also weighed in during multiple meetings on the importance of items to include on the criteria sheet that weren't specifically measured in the past, such as the distance to schools, parks, and city or neighborhood bus stops.

The Task Force benefitted tremendously from multiple staff departments working together as part of the Task Force, and the group sees how positive it would be for multi-departmental collaboration to continue in planning and preparing for future street and sidewalk projects. For that reason, the Task Force recommends a new Complete Streets Committee made up of a department member from Public Works, Planning, Engineering, and Police, to collaborate on reconstruction planning and projects from the beginning. (See the section "Sustaining the Work.")

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Engineering Department will use the new criteria sheet (see page 54) as an objective tool in helping decide what, if any, Complete Streets improvements should be made.

The staff Complete Streets Committee will be involved in reconstruction planning and projects from the very beginning.

Part of its role will be to use the Health, Equity, and Excellence in All Policies [HEEAP] approach to advise on long-term planning and prioritizing, community input, data-collection, communication, and evaluation. (See "Sustaining the Work" and Appendix G.)



SIDEWALK CONNECTIONS ON VACANT LOTS



ISSUES PRIOR TO 2016

- A local ordinance written years ago directed that sidewalks should eventually be built on vacant lots so sidewalk networks within the city would be completed over time. However, that ordinance had not been enforced for many years because the methods outlined in it made it unusable and unenforceable.
- Vacant lots stand in some neighborhoods for years, and because the ordinance was unenforceable, these lots remained without sidewalks and the sidewalk network continued to be unconnected.
- Long-term gaps encourage residents to walk in the street or force some to not walk at all.
- Some residents feel safety is compromised for themselves and their children.
- Some neighbors who already have sidewalks are frustrated when they have to maintain and shovel their own “sidewalks to nowhere.”
- Local housing developers felt a change in the system would be a financial hardship all at once since some of them own multiple vacant lots.

RESEARCH & ACTIVITIES

- Delved into details of the current ordinance to understand reasons why the ordinance was not enforced.
- Investigated other communities' practices.
- Collected data and mapped how many vacant lots would be affected now and in the future.
- Collected input from homeowners in the three main affected neighborhoods via mailed surveys in which residents could remain anonymous. (See Appendix D for survey and letter.)
- Met one-on-one with local housing developers who own vacant lots and documented a collective list of their concerns (see Appendix D).
- Conducted walking tour led by local housing developers to two neighborhoods that have vacant lots in order to see developers' concerns first-hand. Members of the Task Force and City Council attended.
- Held Open House at the Public Library to share survey results and ask for more neighborhood input. Personal postcard invitations or letters were sent to residents in the neighborhoods that would be most impacted. The general public was invited through the newspaper and social media. (See Appendix D.)
- Presented material and recommendation at Council-Staff Workshop and answered questions.
- Produced new procedure and timeline for implementation (see Appendix D).
- Received approval in March 2016 of Ordinance 83, Fourth Series, which makes recommended changes. (See Appendix D.)



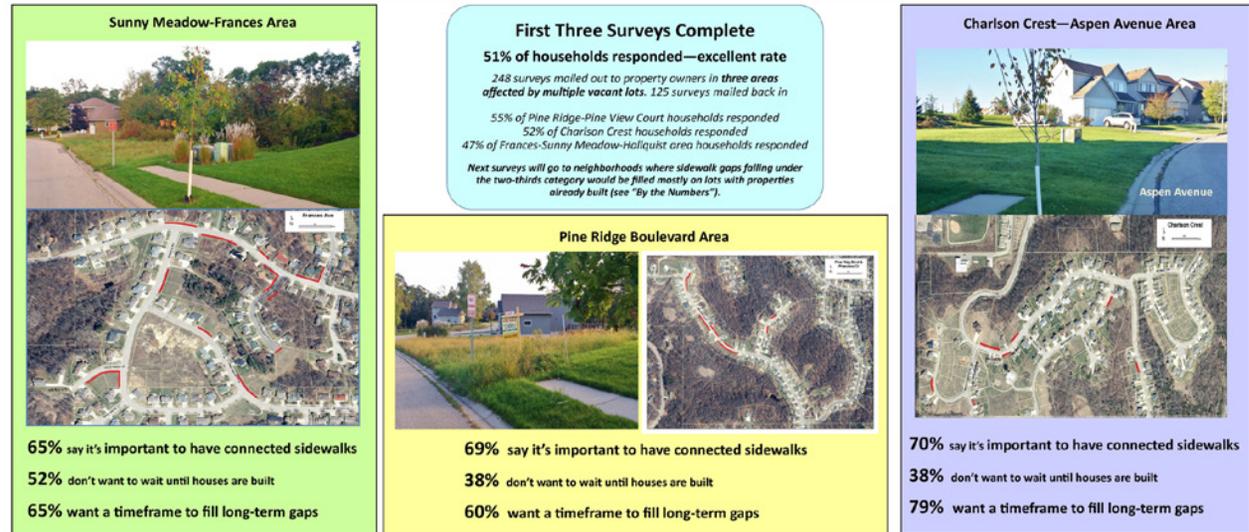


Gaps In Newer Neighborhoods: Listening to the Community

ANALYSIS

Since 1989, every time a property is built in Red Wing, a sidewalk is installed on that lot. In fact, City ordinance requires that a sidewalk be installed with every property before a Certificate of Occupancy is issued. However, sidewalks had not been built on vacant lots for many years, even though the intention of making sidewalk connections along vacant lots was made by a previous City Council and staff. We know that intention because a City ordinance already stated that when two-thirds of the lots on a block or block face have sidewalks, then the owners of the remaining one-third undeveloped properties on that block face must install sidewalks at the owner's expense. Unfortunately, the wording of that ordinance (commonly called Red Wing's "two-thirds" rule written years ago) made it completely unworkable and unenforceable. Property owners requested variances to this ordinance and they were almost always granted. Eventually, the ordinance was no longer heeded or enforced at all.

The Task Force wanted to know if this was an issue of any importance to residents, so surveys were written and mailed to all residents in the three main neighborhoods with multiple gaps in the sidewalk network. Survey participation was high: 52%. Results revealed a majority of citizens said a connected sidewalk network was important or very important to them. Likewise, a majority said they were willing to wait awhile for their sidewalk network to get completed, but they were not willing to wait indefinitely. Between 60 and 79 percent of households said they wanted a timeline instituted so they would not have to live with



“sidewalks to nowhere” forever. (See graphic above.) The Task Force researched and learned that 50 lots fell immediately into the two-thirds rule, and an additional 44 lots could someday be impacted once the block faces in those areas meet the two-thirds number. (See Appendix D for maps.)

Through personal interviews and a walking tour, the Task Force learned about concerns from local housing developers who had multiple vacant lots. (See Appendix D.) The biggest concern was financial—both in having to build multiple sidewalks at once and being required to maintain them year-round.

The Task Force felt strongly that a compromise was needed. It was the only way to complete the sidewalk networks that homeowners wanted and still be conscious of the financial hardships some developers and other owners might face. The final recommendations revise the current ordinance to take all perspectives into account and will eventually connect sidewalk networks in neighborhoods where sidewalk gaps exist.

RECOMMENDATIONS: APPROVED MARCH 2016

Approve the revised ordinance: Ordinance 83, Fourth Series (see Appendix D).

Language is now clear and enforceable. It states that when two-thirds of the properties on a block face have sidewalks, the remaining one-third of the undeveloped properties must have a sidewalk installed within a designated time period at the owner's expense.

Staff will use the newly created Sidewalk Street Classification Map (see Appendix D) to define time periods for sidewalk installation.

Collector streets (higher traffic)
Sidewalks installed within 3 years of reaching 2/3 level

Local-use streets (medium traffic)
Sidewalks installed within 5 years of reaching 2/3 level

Low-use/access streets
Sidewalks installed within 10 years of reaching 2/3 level

The time frame for installing sidewalks on vacant lots will start from the date the ordinance is officially approved by Council (March 2016).

Staff will mail out letters annually informing or reminding property owners of their responsibility and the time parameters so vacant lot owners are aware of the situation.



SUBDIVISION CODE



ISSUES

- Because sidewalks in subdivisions are installed only after a house is built on a lot, these neighborhoods usually end up with multiple gaps in the sidewalk network until every lot has a house.
- Vacant lots in subdivisions remain for years when the housing market isn't strong so sidewalk gaps are often an issue for a long time.
- Sidewalk gaps in subdivisions cause some people to walk in the street until the sidewalk network is complete.
- Some residents feel safety is compromised for themselves and/or their children.
- Residents in neighborhoods with sidewalk gaps sometimes don't shovel their "sidewalks to nowhere" because the walks don't connect to anything, then get frustrated when they get billed for not removing snow and ice from those sidewalks.
- Because sidewalks are often installed in a piecemeal approach, there can be a large difference in the age and quality of sidewalks within the same neighborhood.

RESEARCH & ACTIVITIES

- Researched what other communities do, including Duluth, Hastings, Northfield, Cottage Grove, and River Falls. Task Force member Engineer Jay Owens visited subdivisions in River Falls, talked with a builder and contractor, and took photos.
- Learned about ADA standards and how installing sidewalks at the same time as streets ensures ADA standards are upheld.
- Discussed sidewalk design standards with City staff so sidewalks could be built away from curb stops and made stronger to hold up to periods of construction.
- Planned communication strategies so developers have a chance to talk openly and ask questions of builders and engineers who work in communities where sidewalks are installed with streets.

ANALYSIS

After listening to residents, gathering data, and completing research on sidewalk gaps in vacant lots, the Task Force realized the only way to avoid this issue in the future is to amend the subdivision code. If sidewalks are installed at the same time as the streets, sidewalks will be connected from the beginning and neighborhoods will be immediately more walkable.

The Task Force learned that numerous towns and cities install sidewalks at the same time as the streets in their subdivisions. This has a number of positive effects. Residents who move into the subdivision immediately have a connected sidewalk network, homeowners don't have to shovel "sidewalks to nowhere," and sidewalks always follow ADA standards instead of slanting on a potentially steep grade of a driveway.

Engineers and builders we talked to say they use a number of tactics to avoid breaking the sidewalks during home construction. They use tracking pads, plywood, and erosion-control methods so machinery is able to drive over the sidewalks. A 6-inch depth also allows for a stronger sidewalk and a driveway that can go in anywhere homeowners like when they build. All the cities we interviewed do not offer waivers in order to avoid setting a precedent in future subdivisions.

River Falls builds an average of 50 homes annually and over the last five years, an average of only two sidewalks break per year. Engineers there say this is not an issue for their community or for the developers they work with. Developers are responsible for summer and winter maintenance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Planning Commission, with assistance from the Engineering Department and the Complete Streets Committee, will host an informational public meeting between River Falls and our local developers, Council members, Planning Commission members and any interested member of the public. The goal is for River Falls to explain in person and answer questions about their policy of building sidewalks with the streets in subdivisions.

Complete Streets Committee will introduce an amendment to the subdivision ordinance to require that sidewalks be installed with the streets in subdivisions.

Complete Streets Committee will update sidewalk construction standards based on recommendations from the Engineering Department to mitigate potential damage during home construction. The Mayor's Task Force recommends sidewalks be 5 feet wide and 6 inches deep.



WALKABILITY IMPROVEMENTS IN DEVELOPED AREAS

ISSUES

- Inconsistencies in city code over the decades have left substantial gaps in the current sidewalk network along major roadways and neighborhood streets.
- Occasionally a gap remains on just one or two properties on a street, so almost every homeowner along that road has and maintains a sidewalk except one or two houses. That

situation breaks up the sidewalk connection for the whole neighborhood.

- The process for choosing neighborhoods and retrofitting sidewalks has often appeared unclear and subjective.
- The City has heard strong objections from some neighborhoods during previous attempts to install new sidewalks as part of the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. In some

instances, the City has not been successful in overcoming objections and justifying the reasons a street should receive a sidewalk.

- Residents who feel uneasy expressing opinions different from vocal neighbors don't have a simple, accessible way to provide feedback and their own ideas for the pedestrian improvements they want (or don't want) in their area.

RESEARCH & ACTIONS

- Conducted field work by visiting streets that were identified by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and designated those that should be further analyzed.
- Created a criteria sheet to use as a tool in helping identify the priority level of streets that may benefit from pedestrian improvements. Criteria sheet uses data and scores it against a matrix the Task Force researched and created.
- Collected data to see how 21 identified streets ranked based on criteria matrix.
- Conducted a pilot neighborhood survey as a test method of gathering input from residents most affected by a potential change.
- Documented data and held Open House at Public Library to share the neighborhood results and listen more to residents.
- Outlined a process for planning and implementing future street and sidewalk projects that combines multi-departmental collaboration, data collection, and community feedback.

ANALYSIS

During a span of time from the early 1940s to the beginning of 1989, Red Wing's city code did not require sidewalks to be built with new properties. (Before and since that time period, sidewalks have been required.) For that reason, there are gaps in the sidewalk network throughout the city. Some of these are short gaps between individual residences on the same street (see sidebar on page 27). Some are longer gaps along major connector roads that never had sidewalks but now see more pedestrian use, such as North and South Service Drives. Still other gaps are on mid-size portions of streets that have a swath of older homes with no sidewalks and a built-up subdivision with sidewalks, which results in a gap section of road in between two sidewalked areas.

Over the years the City and past sidewalk committees have completed sidewalk infill projects: Woodland Drive, Spruce Drive, Twin Bluff Road, and others. When sidewalk projects are proposed or implemented, however, residents often feel left out of the process.

The Task Force realized early on that many citizens appreciate being asked and listened to, and they value when compromises are made to take into account different perspectives. Situations quickly

turn negative when neighbors don't feel included and don't know the reasons for potential changes in their neighborhood.

The Task Force wanted to find ways for all residents to have the option of voicing their opinions. Many people don't feel comfortable going to regular meetings or speaking out in public. Others may not email their Council representatives, especially if they don't know much about a situation, or they feel powerless in the decisions being made.

The Task Force decided to create a procedure that would collect data in an objective matrix and gather residents' input on specific issues. The Task Force believes a consistent, multi-pronged approach like this will add objectivity and still represent different perspectives.

As a test-run to this process, we collected traffic and speed data, and mailed surveys (see Appendix F) to all households in the east Hallquist neighborhood, an area built in the 1970s that had strong emotions about a sidewalk infill project planned for 2012. In our survey, sixty percent of neighbors said they didn't want sidewalks and forty percent did want them. In the past, City Council heard often from the vocal majority but not from the quieter

minority. Survey results showed many residents on both sides of the sidewalk debate, with the percentage split being closer than anticipated.

More importantly for future projects, we learned that even when neighbors held opposing viewpoints on one issue (in this case, sidewalks) they still found areas on which to agree. In this situation, both sides felt traffic on Hallquist Avenue was too fast, the road was too wide, and the intersection of Hallquist and Pioneer was not adequately safe. The Task Force reminded itself that increasing safety is more than just adding sidewalks. Pedestrian improvements often require multiple tactics to get the best solution. Neighborhood input was crucial to understanding the full scope of the situation.

By collecting data, analyzing it with an objective criteria tool, looking at best practices, and getting feedback from people who would be affected by a change, City staff, City Council, and community members get a more accurate, well-rounded picture. The Task Force feels this creates a solid foundation on which to plan projects, allocate resources, and pool efforts so Red Wing is a safer, more pleasant, walkable place for every resident.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The new Complete Streets Committee will use the Process for Planning Pedestrian Improvements in the future (see page 27).

The Complete Streets Committee will use the Criteria Sheet (see page 70) as a tool in its decision-making.

The Complete Streets committee will conduct outreach early in the process in neighborhoods that would be affected by a potential change. Community engagement tools and methods are outlined in the section "Sustaining the Work." (Pages 31-35.)

The Complete Streets Committee will continue to seek out grants to help fund pedestrian projects, such as Safe Routes to School grants and others.



PROCESS FOR PLANNING PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

- Research best practices on similar streets and roads in other communities to see how those cities are incorporating different Complete Streets solutions.
- Review local policies and procedures related to the project to learn what is outdated, how things have changed, and what could be better.
- Document answers to the the Health, Equity, and Excellence in All Policies framework (the “HEEAP sheet”) to focus on strong results and mitigate unintended consequences.
- Collect data and input it into the Criteria Sheet to see where the priority level is based on this specific tool (see page 70).
- Mail surveys to households in the surrounding neighborhood and

document responses whenever possible. Analyze results to include in planning process. (Example survey in Appendix F; specific projects and issues will require surveys to be edited.)

- Hold Open House or other public event after data and community input has been collected. (Other engagement methods such as focus groups, neighborhood events, and one-on-one interviews can also be used if appropriate and feasible).
- Be creative and test out temporary treatments (bumpouts, painted lines, short-term signs, etc.) when possible to learn what works and what doesn’t in order to come to stronger solutions.
- Measure data and evaluate projects so improvements are successful and sustainable.

Why do some houses have sidewalks and others don’t?

You’ll notice that neighborhoods and older homes in Red Wing (pre-1960s) have sidewalks. This was a common practice of building towns and cities at that time. However, there was a period in Red Wing between the 1960s and 1989 when sidewalks were not required and homes were built without them. In 1989, a community Sidewalk Committee, City staff, and City Council worked together to change the ordinance and make it mandatory to install a sidewalk with every new house. Today, there are a few places where pre-1989 homes and post-1989 homes sit side by side, some with sidewalks and some without.



SUSTAINING THE WORK



ISSUES

- Sidewalk issues often come up only when a situation or project is controversial or overdue.
- The decision-making process of developing pedestrian plans, policies, and procedures often does not include the ideas, opinions, and needs of all residents, especially those residents most affected by the proposal being discussed.
- Projects and policies would benefit from a collaborative review across multiple City departments so a variety of staff perspectives are discussed early and consistently.
- Some residents get frustrated with sidewalk committees happening every few years because they feel they've been through it before.

RESEARCH & ACTIVITIES

- Discussed ways to make Complete Streets a consistent priority and ensure the recommendations of the Task Force Report move forward.
- Weighed pros and cons of the following options:
a) Create a City staff "champion" group; b) Create a separate City commission; c) Build a new Mayor's Task

Force that would meet bi-annually; d) Create a City staff committee that would include two to three residents; or e) Do nothing and leave the status quo.

- Studied best practices on how governments can develop inclusive policies for greater equity and well being for all residents.

ANALYSIS

The Mayor’s Task Force understands it’s critical to make sidewalks, walkability, and the goals of Complete Streets a consistent priority. After multiple discussions of the options, the Task Force decided it’s best to create a multi-departmental “champion” group within the City staff called the Complete Streets Committee. There will be at least one member from the Engineering, Planning, Public Works, and Police departments on this committee. (The Police Department will be invited to meetings and copied on all notes but may not be able to attend as regularly due to time constraints.) These staff members will use their collective knowledge and leadership to further the goals of Complete Streets, and also shepherd along the recommendations and procedures documented in the Mayor’s Task Force Report. The details of this group are listed in the recommendations on page 30.

The Task Force did not feel a separate city commission was necessary, due to the large number of commissions already in place that require time from elected officials. The Planning Commission will be tasked with reviewing any projects or policies that may require review before coming before City Council. Forming an ongoing Mayor’s Task Force was also not viewed as a sustainable idea.

Task Force members discussed whether or not to include residents on the Complete Streets Committee, and at first it seemed best to include citizens. But the overall goal is to listen more closely to the whole community, or at least to community members most affected by a proposal, and two or three (or even more) residents on this committee would still only offer limited viewpoints. The Task Force agreed it’s more important that

the staff Complete Streets Committee gather community and/or neighborhood input on a regular basis, using methods appropriate for the situation. This may include focus groups, public events or Open Houses, one-on-one interviews, mailed, paper, or online surveys, and other avenues. (Details on pages 31 to 35.)

In making sure City staff continues to involve and listen to the community, the Task Force recommends that the Complete Streets Committee use the Health, Equity, and Excellence framework and tools as it develops and analyzes plans, policies, and procedures. (See pages 34 and 35 and Appendix G.)

The City staff members involved with the Mayor’s Task Force have given many hours of time and provided insightful feedback and ideas. We are grateful for their commitment to this initiative and their willingness to lead the work going forward.



RECOMMENDATIONS

A Complete Streets Committee of City staff will form consisting of one member from each department of Public Works, Engineering, Planning, and Police.

This committee will meet at least quarterly on streets and sidewalk plans, policies, and procedures.

Discussions will begin early in the process and occur through implementation and evaluation.

The Complete Streets Committee will use the Health, Equity and Excellence in All Policies (HEEAP) framework in developing plans, policies, and procedures from the beginning and throughout the decision-making process. (See Appendix G.)

The Complete Streets Committee will utilize the tools, methods, and community engagement ideas outlined in this chapter. (See pages 31-35.)

The City Infrastructure Asset Specialist will meet at least annually with the Complete Streets Committee to provide information and analysis on items such as the yearly sidewalk inspection and other data that can impact streets and sidewalk decisions.

The Complete Streets Committee will present its proposals and work to City Council on a regular basis.

With our community's collaboration, common goals, and hard work, Red Wing will become the most beautiful, walkable town in the Midwest.



TOOLS, METHODS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Task Force acknowledges that to move forward with creating a more walkable, community with forward-thinking, inclusive policies and practices, two things are key:

- Engaging more purposefully with residents; and
- Creating a system of policy development

The following pages outline tools and methods the Task Force has found beneficial. We recommend their use by the Complete Streets Committee.



PILOT PROGRAMS

Trials that test what works and what doesn't before something is permanent

Pilot programs provide the chance to test something out without committing entirely to it. The Task Force, for instance, worked with staff to pilot a new priority-based snow-removal procedure (compared to the old complaint-based system) for five snow events to see what the pros and cons were in the real world – not just on paper.

Pilot programs allow time to work out logistics, get feedback from residents, tweak a system mid-stream, and discuss difficulties and opportunities. It also gives staff, residents, and City Council a chance to see if something works before making something permanent.

Other local entities have also had success in pilot programs related to pedestrian goals. The Red Wing Public School District, together with Live Healthy Red Wing, tested out their Bus Stop and Walk program and Walking Wednesdays program before gradually expanding them to formally organized systems that today are helping build the culture of walking in Red Wing.



DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Low-cost or no-cost examples that help people visualize a potential project and give immediate feedback

Demonstration projects allow people in a community to see what a potential project will look like and give their own ideas about what to do. Demonstration projects are done before set plans or decisions are made so the community can participate in what the final project looks like and how it is implemented.

In connection with the Mayor's Task Force's work, Live Healthy Red Wing enacted two demonstration projects in the fall of 2015. The Discover Jordan Court project brought people together in the courtyard area on 3rd Street to reimagine that space and provide a better pedestrian walkway for all residents, especially the elderly who use this walkway as their main connection between their living quarters and downtown. Residents could participate in a public art project, learn history about the space, play in the drum circle and, most importantly, write their ideas for Jordan Court on a chalkboard.

LHRW conducted a second demonstration project a month later to outline potential future sidewalk extensions (or "bump-outs") at the 3rd Street mid-block crossing. Goals were to increase safety for pedestrians where visibility is often compromised. Passers-by could give immediate feedback on a chalkboard. The majority said more visibility would be beneficial and liked the idea of a bump-out in this area.

Bike-pedestrian demonstration projects like this are one way the Complete Streets Committee can try out projects and gather input.



OTHER ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Evidence-based ways that involve residents in decision-making

Over the last two years, the Mayor's Task Force has utilized a variety of methods to listen to and learn from residents so citizens can have a greater impact on their built environment and create the kind of neighborhoods, downtown, and community they want.

As detailed in prior chapters of this Report, many of these methods have been tried and all are recommended by the Task Force. Not all methods work for all situations. The Complete Streets Committee, along with other staff, will use its discretion and capacity to implement the appropriate method(s) for the situation.

- Focus Groups
- Informational Walking tours
- Walking audits (walkers rate their route)
- One-on-one interviews
- Mailed surveys
- Online/social media surveys
- Neighborhood/community events with ways to provide immediate feedback
- Surveys handed out through trusted organizations to connect with residents who often aren't reached in other ways
- Tools such as local walking maps and wayfinding signs to help encourage residents to walk/bike routes and take ownership of their environment

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Using the Health, Equity and Excellence in All Policies {HEEAP} framework for developing policies, plans, and practices.

The Mayor's Task Force on Streets and Sidewalks recommends using a Health, Equity and Excellence in All Policies (HEEAP) approach for developing pedestrian plans, policies, and practices. Health, Equity and Excellence in All Policies is a comprehensive, collaborative approach to developing any type of policy, plan, or practice that takes into account the well-being and equity of all residents early on and throughout the decision-making process.

The Mayor's Task Force has followed the basic tenets of this approach to frame up policy and practice recommendations that consider both the desires of all residents and the needs of staff to reach sustainable, equitable results. Our mission has been to strengthen city sidewalk policies and procedures that help create a system in which every resident can walk safely to daily destinations.

Why use this type of policy framework? Because plans and policies that impact the conditions in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, and age have an enormous effect on residents' overall well-being and on a city's vibrancy and resiliency. For that reason, governments (along with businesses, non-profits, schools, and community organizations) have the ability to positively and profoundly affect the health and equity of each resident and the whole community.

In the context of the Health, Equity and Excellence in All Policies definition, health is defined as all aspects that affect a person's health—including sectors sometimes not associated with health such as transportation, housing, education, safe neighborhoods, environmental surroundings, and economic development.

Adoption of a Health, Equity and Excellence in All Policies approach to government plans, policies, and procedures is currently happening internationally, nationally, statewide, and locally. States across the U.S. are beginning to implement this strategy, with California and Minnesota leading the pack.

Statewide, the Minnesota Department of Human Services has adopted this approach that "imbeds health and equity considerations into our decision-making processes so healthy public policy becomes the normal way of doing business." In addition, 16 jurisdictions throughout the state, including Red Wing and the State of Minnesota, are currently embarking on work that will incorporate health and equity into policies that reach all sectors of government.

Locally, the Red Wing City Council adopted a Strategic Plan in May of 2016 that states the City will begin working to implement this type of inclusive framework across its internal sectors and departments.

The Mayor's Task Force on Streets and Sidewalks recommends the staff Complete Streets Committee use this policy framework and the questionnaire on page 35 when developing plans, procedures, and policies. The goals are to work more collaboratively among departments, include regular input from residents, think through all perspectives of a proposal, decrease negative unintended consequences, and produce better policies and projects.

What is Health, Equity & Excellence in All Policies (HEEAP)?

A comprehensive, collaborative approach to developing plans and policies that takes into account the equity and well-being of all residents early on and throughout the decision-making process.

WHY do this? Because plans and policies that impact the conditions in which people are born, live, learn, work, play,

and age have an enormous effect on how healthy people are and how well their community thrives. Policy areas include sectors such as transportation, housing, public safety, parks, air and water quality, economic development, and more. Government has the ability in all these areas to positively and profoundly affect the health, equity, and well-being of all residents and the community.

Questions to Guide the Development of a Policy, Plan, or Procedure:

(1) What is the policy, plan, or procedure under consideration?

- What are the desired results (within community) and outcomes (within our internal City of RW)?
- What does this proposal have the ability to impact?
- What are best practices? What do other communities do?

(2) What is the data we have regarding this proposal? What does that data tell us?

- Will this impact a specific geographic area, neighborhood, or demographic?
- Do we have data on those areas or populations most affected?
- Are there gaps in the data we have? If so, how could we get better or updated data?

(3) How have different populations been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand that?

- How have we engaged and involved people most affected or most concerned?

(4) Who will benefit from the proposal? Who will be burdened?

- Are there potential unintended negative consequences and what are strategies to decrease those?
- Are there ways to maximize positive impact?
- Could we partner with community stakeholders for longer-term positive impact?

(5) What is the plan for implementation?

- Is the implementation plan realistic and properly resourced with funding and personnel?
- Are there resources for ongoing data collection, reporting, and community engagement?

(6) Who is accountable and how?

- How will the impacts be documented and evaluated? (How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off? Are we achieving the anticipated outcomes?)
- Is continued communication needed? If so, what will that look like?
- How could we partner and build relationships with community to ensure sustainable outcomes?

NO TIME? Answer these three essential questions: 1. What are the impacts of this decision? 2. Who will benefit and who will be burdened? 3. Are there strategies to lessen any negative and/or unintended consequences?