

## Senior Views Unite Community

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### Background: Creating Community: 'Silver' Green Mapmaking from a Senior Citizen's Vantage Point

Based on the walking Green Map of Maioka Kashio created with the local middle school in 2006, Maioka Kashio Nursing Home implemented a Green Mapmaking project with the experiences of seniors as its main focus.

The map includes information on seasonal nature and social resources as well as nursing homes, hospitals, doctor's offices, pharmacies, and other helpful services.

The Green Mapmakers used a wheelchair in their field research to assess and convey the impact of even the gentlest slopes on accessibility.



Maioka Kashio Green Map for Seniors (2007)



Maioka Kashio Walking Map (2006, below) became the basis for the seniors' map



### Impacts: Seniors Lead the Way

The mapmaking project changed the attitudes of the local seniors, who often waited passively for useful information to be given to them. This project provided them with the opportunity to lead a hands on experience, gain useful information, and connect with various



generations in their community.

The field research team consisted of local nursing home residents and 38 students from nearby Maioka Middle School. The use of wheelchairs provided the participants with awareness of specific issues (slopes, elevators, wheelchair accessible restrooms and more) in their community. Some of the other senior-friendly sites charted include community stores, benches, and socializing spaces such as public bathhouses and barber shops.

Design inspiration came from the Yellow Pages phone book because of its familiarity and friendliness. An art student at Maioka Middle School made the colorful cover illustrations. The final product communicated warmth and friendliness thanks to the hand-drawn and lettered images contributed by volunteers.