



11 CONCLUSION

This report, *Mobility Initiatives for an Aging Population: A Scan of Current Practices*, highlights initiatives other cities have either implemented or are planning to employ in response to the global phenomenon of proportional shifts and changing demographics relative to the aging population. It also echoes many of the issues presented in *Age-Friendly NYC* and other recent studies that recognize the issue of mobility and aging. Mobility is essential to everyday life and when one loses the ability to drive, board a train, or walk, life changes for that individual. The degree of mobility of a person greatly contributes to how an individual feels and their sense of subjective well being. In fact, the ability to move trumps all other functional capacities that we possess; it is integral to survival.

Sometimes relatively simple engineering changes in the environment, such as retiming traffic signals, filling in potholes and cracks in the sidewalk, and legible signs could be the difference between an accessible and inaccessible trip to the neighborhood market. New York City is unique and some of the issues that must be dealt with need to be done on a very large scale. Retrofitting New York's aging transit system is costly. While many stations will be accessible in the near future, the improved stations will still remain a barrier for many individuals. The case studies in this report provide ideas and useful information aimed at improving mobility for the growing older adult population.

The practices in this report are current practices throughout both the United States and the world. By examining current practices, it will be easier to see what may or may not be feasible for New York City. The products of both this report and *Age-Friendly NYC* present mobility issues of our aging population. Their emergent synergy should help to sharpen the focus on the steps that are necessary to address the needs of the older adult population and generate viable solutions for our City.

In an effort to expand on the initiatives documented in this report, a next step could be analyzing possible applications gleaned from the case studies for potential implementation in neighborhoods identified as having a high concentration of older residents. By conducting further analysis in these areas, appropriate changes to enhance mobility could be explored.

Another step could be a continuance of this study by investigating a second set of current practices that could lead to innovative ideas on mobility in NYC for the older adult population. The research for this report clearly indicates that the aging population dynamic is universal, and new ideas and initiatives exist and are unfolding all over the world.

Also, since so much information on aging and mobility has recently

emerged in the form of studies and initiatives, a compendium of pertinent information drawn from these sources to bring together ideas may be useful, and provide a basic document on aging and mobility for reference. This could be another new effort following DCP's report.

The New York City Department of City Planning will continue to coordinate with the Office of the Mayor and other relevant agencies in the interest of collectively nurturing an age-integrated society by supporting and implementing improvements, and enhancing mobility for a rapidly increasing population of older New Yorkers.

Finally, given the evolving and projected trends and shifts in demographics, it is the hope that the ideas contained in this study will contribute to a well-balanced environment encompassing the following: an age-friendly city, an age-integrated city and a livable city for all New Yorkers.