Age-friendly NYC – An Overview
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Based on the Perspectives of Older Adults Themselves

• Consulted with more than 2,000 older adults
  • 14 neighborhoods
  • 5 languages
  • 10 immigrant groups

• Expert Roundtables
• Mapping
• Literature Review
Assets of the Urban Environment

• Transportation
• Proximity to stores & services
• Access to cultural institutions
• Support of existing communities & social networks
• Access to high quality health and social services
Challenges of the Urban Environment

• Neighborhoods and families are changing in ways that increase social isolation

• Mobility, linguistic, & cultural barriers prevent many older adults from taking full advantage of all the city has to offer

• Affordability
• Government assessment across departments optimizes resources
Commission Strategy

- Four Step Process:
  - Consult, Demonstrate, Evaluate, Disseminate
- Look for “win-win” opportunities
- Emphasize no and low-cost initiatives first
- Focus work in areas most important to older adults where short-term improvement is possible
Challenges shared by older adults:

• Stairs
• Few places to rest
• Insufficient time to cross the street
• Unclear communication
• Adapting to changes in service and weather
Age-friendly Transportation Solutions

• 3,000+ bus shelters with seating and signage, paid for by advertising

• School buses used for 500+ grocery store trips

• 1,000 benches installed with older adult input

• Streets and signage changed in neighborhoods with the most pedestrian accidents
Evaluation & Dissemination

In the first 5 neighborhoods with improved street design:

- pedestrian crashes decreased between 9% and 60%
- non-pedestrian motor vehicle crashes decreased between 23% and 46%.

Design changes expanded to 25 neighborhoods
• An aging population is an opportunity, not a crisis
• Older adults are experts on their own lives and needs
• All sectors – public & private – must be engaged
• An “age-in-everything” approach is key to planning
• Both “top down” and “bottom up” strategies are needed
• Addressing problems in partnership requires “win-win” solutions
• Many of the changes needed are low or no cost
• Pace matters – identify and publicize early wins to build momentum
Information and tools are available at:
www.agefriendlynyc.org