

Study on Seoul Transport Policies on Aged Society

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The purpose of this study is to provide transportation policies to cope with the aging society for Seoul. To do this, it is key to understand the changes in travel behaviors generated by the low birthrate and rapid aging of the society. The major results are as follows.

1. The necessity of transportation policies to cope with the aged society

As of 2005 in the Seoul metropolitan area, the aged population takes 7.1% of the total population which is 'ageing society'. It is expected that the aged population would reach 14.3% by 2021, which will become 'aged society.' Aged society does not come in one or two years so that we need long term action plans rather than short term ones. As travelers aged over 65 will increase their daily activities, total number of trips would not decrease even though aged population increase.

In case of bicycle roads in Seoul, its use and effect were not satisfactory considering its cost to build. It is simply because no systematic plans have been provided but only supply side policies have been emphasized. In contrast with this case, Japanese aging policies has been successful by developing related laws, technologies, infrastructures based on the integrated road map managed by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. Therefore, in every policy, it is pivotal to prepare a road map to carry plans.

2. Travel behaviors and needs of aged people

The aged travelers over 65 have a tendency to increase leisure and personal purpose trips when they decrease commuting and work related trips. In their mode choice, personal vehicles and subway trips are decreased but walk and bus trips are increased. Around age of 65 trips per person is rapidly decreased. However trips per person who work in the field of professional/technical, administration/management is similar to that of younger age group or even higher. Also the aged travelers in those occupations actively use personal vehicles while the others in the other occupations field highly use walk and bus.

3. Transportation action plans for the aged society

Transportation action plans are generated through analyzing various needs of the aged, analyzing national and international policies, and related laws. Action plans are composed of transportation mode, transportation infrastructures, and trip support system. The action plans have long and short range plans.

In the transportation mode part, walk and bus are proposed as major concerns. Mid and sort term plans involve actions such as to build pedestrian network, and to introduce low floor bus. Long term plans suggest to develop customized services.

In the transportation infrastructure part, mass transit, pedestrian facilities, personal vehicle facilities are major concerns. Mid and short term plans suggest to use Universal Design and long term plans suggest to apply IT technologies to the transportation system.

In the trip support system part, financial support and license system are major concerns. Mid and short term plans suggest the diversification of financial support and simplification of the process. Long term plans suggest the way to prepare budget resources and welfare system development related to the medical system and insurance system.

4. Support policies for present aged travelers

It is urgent to provide support policies for the present aged travelers. For this four policies are suggested which are to introduce Silver-line, to construct mid refuge island on the wide roads, to increase the night vision of road signs for the aged drivers and to introduce new transportation mode and taxi-voucher policies.

Table of Contents

Chapter I Introduction

1. Background and purpose
2. Scope and main contents

Chapter II The necessity of the propulsion plan for transport policies suited for the aged society

1. Prediction of population and travel volume
2. Japan policies for the aged
3. Seoul transport policies for the aged

Chapter III The trip characteristics and the needs of the aged

1. Physical characteristics of the aged
2. Trip characteristics of the aged
3. Needs of the aged

Chapter IV The propulsion plan of the transport policies suited for the aged society

1. Deduction of traffic policies parts that require propulsion plan
2. Establishment of propulsion plan in each part of the traffic policies

Chapter V Mid and short-term detail plans in traffic policies

1. Mid and short-term detail plans of traffic modes
2. Mid and short-term detail plans of traffic facilities
3. Mid and short-term detail plans of traffic relation system
3. The traffic support plans for the aged at present time

Chapter VI. Conclusions and recommendations

1. Conclusions
2. Recommendations

Appendixes

1. Survey object analysis
2. The Concept of Universal Design: Universal Design in Mass Transportation