

DIY Streets

It's easier to ask for forgiveness than for permission. Make it happen today.



Photo: flickr – Nicholas Whitaker

Contents

Why Do-it-yourself? Empower Yourself to Make Change.....	page 2
Ghost Bikes, Block Parties, Overhead banners , Intersection paintings.....	page 3
DIY Crossing Flags, Yard signs, Park(ing) Day, Volunteer Crossing Guards.....	page 4
Walking School bus or Bike train, Pace Car, Kidical Mass.....	page 5
Other Activities and More Information.....	page 6

Why Do-it-yourself?

Empower Yourself to Make Change

Below are actions and activities you can do to raise awareness and reclaim the street as an important part of your neighborhood.

While driving

- **Slow down!** The safest speed may be lower than posted limits.
- **Do not block** intersections, crosswalks, or sidewalks when you park.
- **Watch for bikes** (on your left or right) when you change lanes, make turns, and making other movements.
- **Be careful opening doors** (especially watch for bikes).
- **Stop for all people** walking and bicycling at intersections. Vie them at least six feet on either side (about one car length).

While walking

- **Cross legally.** Cross at a corner or designated mid-block crossing. In most Oregon cities you are legally required to use corner crosswalks (marked or unmarked) unless you are more than 150 feet from a corner.
- **Be visible**, especially at night, by wearing bright colors, lights, and reflective clothing. Do not wait to cross the street behind vehicles, signs, or other obstructions that may make you less visible to traffic.
- **Wave at drivers** to get them to notice you before you step of the curb or try to make eye contact.
- **If there are not sidewalks**, get as far to the side as possible and walk in the same direction as the cars.

While bicycling

- **Use crosswalks while riding at a walking pace** - leaving room for pedestrians and ringing a bell or announcing to pedestrians that you are “on their right!”
- **Use hand signals** for lane changes, turns, and stops at least 100 feet before the action
- **Obey ALL traffic laws, signs, signals, just like when driving a car.** Bicyclists ignoring basic rules are one of the biggest complaints of drivers and pedestrians.

While taking transit

- **Do not cross too close** to buses or railed vehicles – they may not see you.
- **Arrive early**; waiting a little while is better than running to catch your bus and getting hurt by cars or the bus.
- **Signal the bus with a light at night**, this can also help cars see you when crossing the street to catch the bus.

Neighborhood Pledge for Safety

I pledge to take personal responsibility to create safer streets. I will change my behavior while traveling, in a car, while walking, or on a bike.

The BTA can advise you on many street design improvements and help guide you through the process of seeking changes.

Contact Gerik Kransky at
gerik@BTA4bikes.org, or (503) 226-0676x11

Overhead Banners

Hang signs over the road to enhance the sense of place and to give drivers a sense of enclosure. Let people driving know they are in a community space.

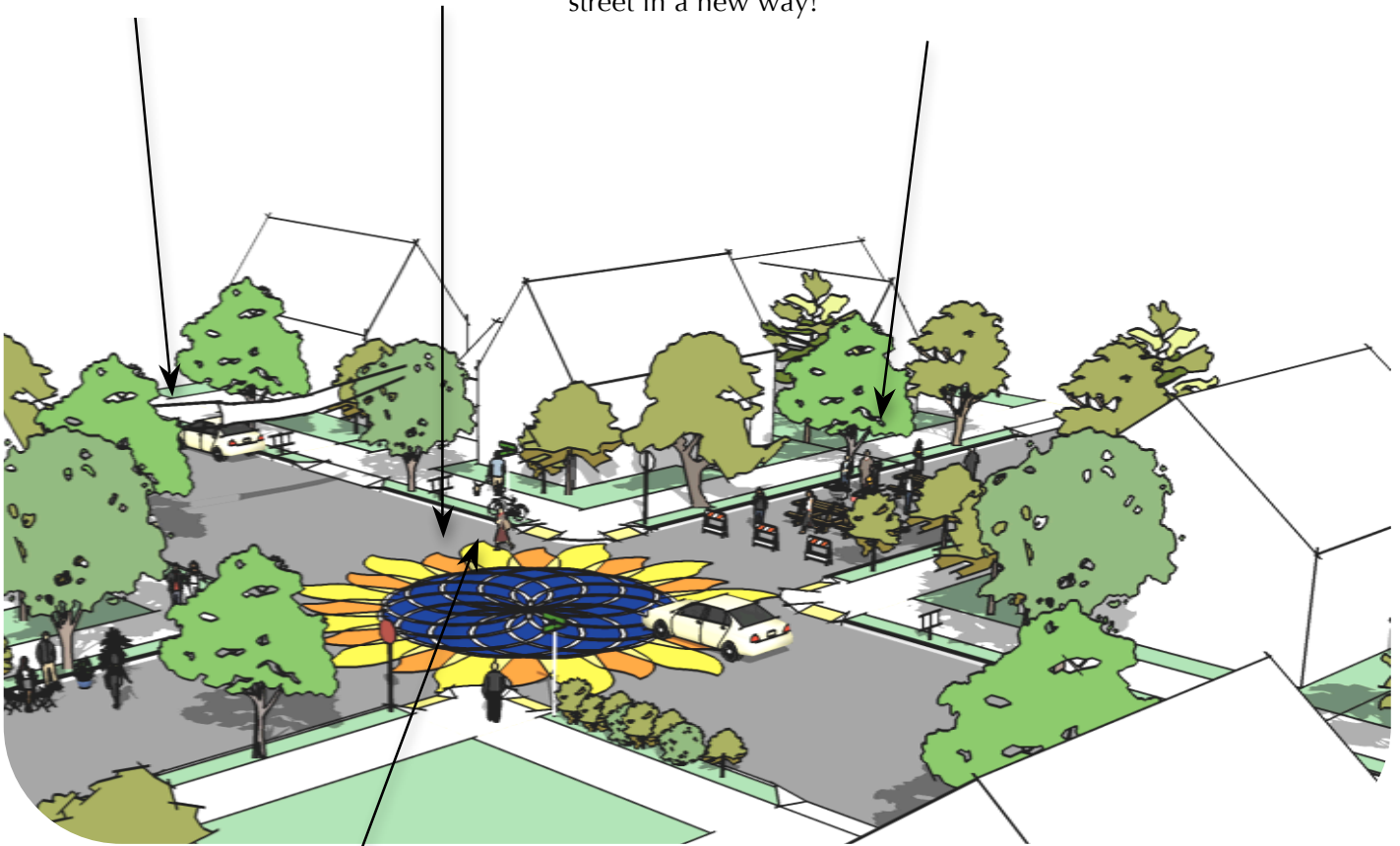
Block Parties

People can take over a section of a street in their neighborhood to hold parties, gatherings, and other events. Block parties can be organized officially through cities, often with the help of neighborhood associations. This requires permitting and the consent of residents of the street.

Block parties can also be unofficial. Start by arranging a meet-up at a place somewhat off the street - a front yard, a pocket park, an empty parking lot. Bring a few chairs and some toys - balls, chalk, balloons, etc. Invite neighbors to bring more supplies. Let the party grow as more people show up, spilling into the middle of the street. If cars need to pass, let them drive through slowly. Wave and be friendly – show how much fun it is to meet your neighbors and to use the street in a new way!

Intersection Painting

Paint intersections and roads with colorful designs. In Portland, City Repair (<http://cityrepair.org/>) has a long history of successful street painting.



Ghost Bikes

A Ghost Bike is a roadside memorial, made from a bicycle painted white, where a person on a bike was killed. The bikes often have a sign with information about the accident and are locked to a permanent object close to the location of the crash. They can also be a statement to support bicyclists right to safe travel. Many ghost bikes are installed by concerned citizens, not by relatives or friends of those killed.

Volunteer Crossing Guards

Partner with people or organizations in your neighborhood to create a volunteer crossing guard program. Volunteers can help children cross a difficult and busy road on their way to school.

Try to coordinate with other parents or the

Park(ing) Day

Park(ing) Day is an international event held once a year where individuals and businesses take over parking spaces to create temporary parks, cafes, and community spaces. If your city is participating in this event, you can participate legally. If not, consider participating anyway to promote this kind of mixed-use street space. Be sure to protect yourself from cars that may not know why you are sitting in a parking space. Put up cones, colorful tape, and signs to explain what you are doing.

www.parkingday.org



Yard Signs

Make signs or statues to place in your front yard to remind cars and bikes to slow down. Signs do not have to be traffic related. Signs that are placed in front of businesses may need to get a permit from the City's permit department, particularly if the sign is helping to advertise the business.

DIY Crossing Flags

An affordable way to increase visibility while attempting to cross the street is with crossing flag. Provide flags and buckets on both sides of the street so that people walking can wave the flags for the attention of people driving, and then place the flag in the bucket on the other side of the street. These can be permanent installations or used only during school hours or special events.

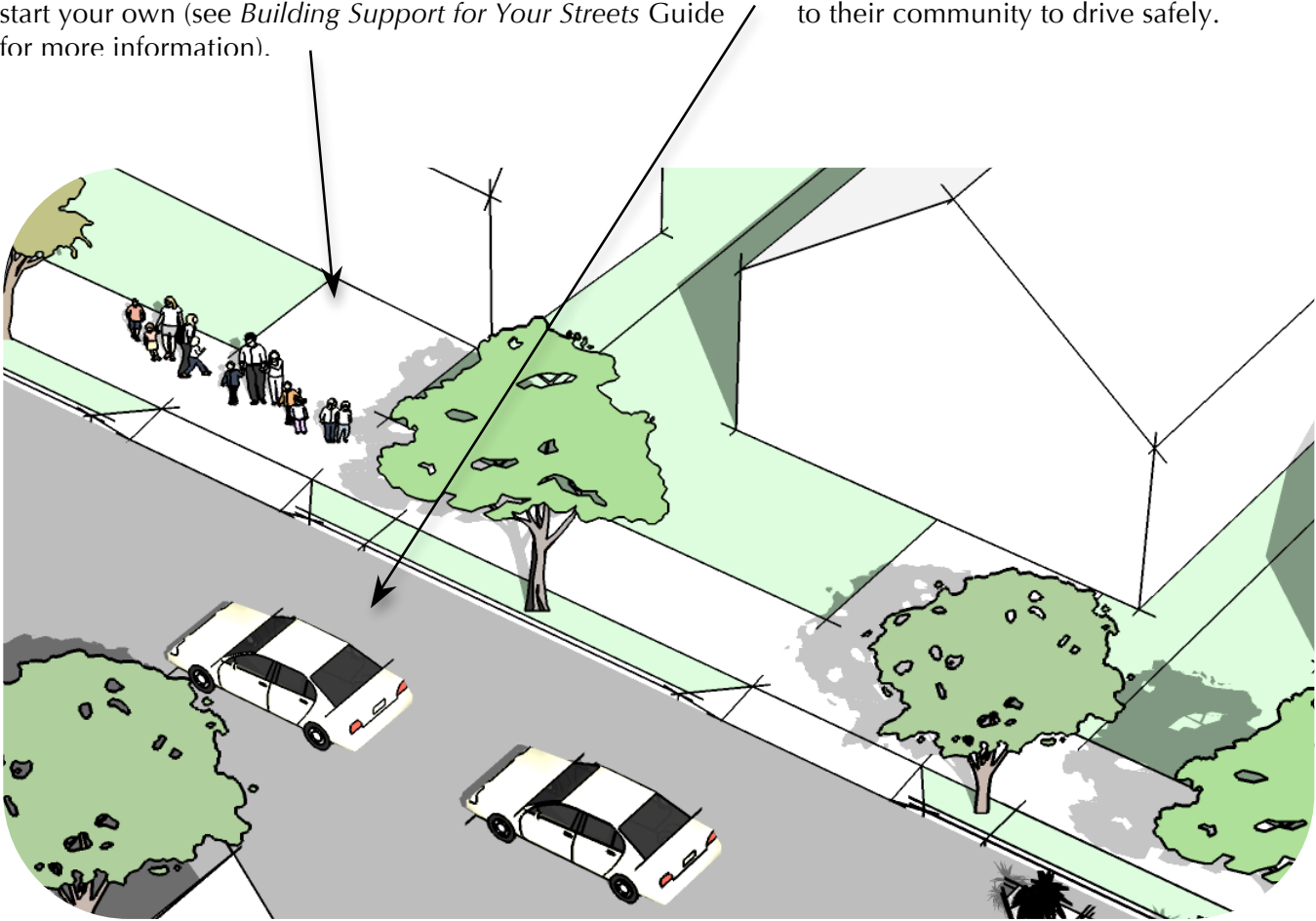
Walking School Bus/Bike Train

A large group of children traveling on foot or by bike is more visible than when traveling alone, these walking groups start from set locations within the school area and then pick up more kids along the way. Students can then travel together to school.

Contact your neighborhood school to see if a walking school bus or bike train program is in effect. If none exists, start your own (see *Building Support for Your Streets Guide* for more information).

Pace Car

In Pace Car programs, drivers sign a pledge to drive in a safe manner, following the speed limits of all streets. These drivers have Pace Car bumper stickers to inform other drivers of their actions, and to set the speed for the street, just like a pace car during a race. These programs can be informal and neighborhood-based, with drivers pledging to their community to drive safely.



Kidical-mass

Kidical-mass is a monthly gathering of families with young children where a large group of riders take over the streets to enjoy traveling by bike. The route stays on slow streets and can serve as a catalyst to educate residents about easy bike routes in the neighborhood. These events can also help educate children about the rules of the road; and most of all, they are fun! Keys to success:

- Stick to low-stress routes and trails.
- Cross busy streets at traffic signals for the most safety.
- Finish your ride at a fun destination such as a park and before dusk.
- Dress up in fun costumes and have a different theme every month.
- Visit: www.kidicalmass.com

Other Activities and More Information

Pledge to Be a Role Model

In the “I Share The Road” Pledge program, drivers sign a pledge that they will drive at family-friendly speeds and be considerate of other road users. See page 2 for a start. If you live in Portland, contact the Portland Bureau of Transportation for “I Share The Road” brochures and pledges (www.portlandonline.com/transportation or 503-823-7233)

Pace Car

You can also set up unofficial Pace Car and “Share the Road” programs by asking people in your community to commit to safe driving practices by signing pledges, attending events, or distributing mailers. Stickers and signs can help advertise and educate others about your program. Search for “Neighborhood Pace Car” online to learn about existing pace car programs in other cities.

City Repair

Interested in intersection painting? City Repair has been reclaiming streets for years in Portland: <http://cityrepair.org/>



DIY Crossing Flags

Popular in Salt Lake City, and being studied in Seattle, some neighbors are installing their own crossing flag installations with simple instructions: “Grab, Look, Wave.” Learn how they did it: <http://sites.google.com/site/crossingflags/>

Yard Signs

Yard signs are available from the Portland Bureau of Transportation: click on “Getting Around” and “Community and School Safety Project” - www.portlandonline.com/transportation

Get Started Today:

- Use this guide to locate the activity or project you are interested in.
- If the action is allowed, determine if permits are required and apply in advance.
- Gather your neighbors and friends to help.

Block Parties

- Determine when and where you want the closure and party.
- File out a closure permit request through the city

Get more information in the *Build Support for Street Safety* guide.

Walking School Bus or Bike Train

Support your local school by starting or helping on a bike train or walking school bus, most of the planning information is the same for either project: www.biketrainpdx.org/



Kidical Mass

Find local groups, pictures, and lessons learned at www.kidicalmass.org.

You will need to work with your neighbors (see *Build Support for Street Safety Guide* to learn how).