

PPS Initiative

Building Community Through Transportation

Transportation investments – both streets and transit facilities – have enormous potential to reshape communities and be catalysts for more livable, economically viable and sustainable cities. PPS’s initiative, Building Community Through Transportation, provides the framework through which cities can work in partnership with transportation agencies to achieve this critical goal. As we are faced with mounting evidence that how we have planned and shaped our communities over last 50 years is a major contributing factor in the degradation of our natural and human environments, more and more people are beginning to recognize that this is a key moment to make wise transportation decisions that will influence our quality of life for years to come.

Initiative Goals

PPS seeks to create a climate where community-initiated transportation plans are fundamental to the transportation agencies responsible for implementing millions of dollars of improvements every year, and where a positive working relationship is developed between these agencies and the people they serve.



Specifically, our goals are to:

- Empower citizens, elected officials, communities and professionals to use Placemaking in the planning, design, and operation of streets and transit facilities;
- Create a framework for community-supportive transportation policies and practice at the state and local level;
- Expand federal funding for community-based transportation planning.

Primary Components

- **Streets as Places:** Transforming the design and construction of public streets into places where people want to be and that improve the quality of human life and the environment, rather than simply move vehicles.
- **Thinking Beyond the Station:** Influencing the planning and design of transit centers (bus, railway, subway stations) to become catalysts for economic vitality, civic engagement and environmental sustainability as well as to service people’s transit needs.

How Your Community Can Join this Initiative

While it is critical to work at the state and national levels, we also want to work with your community to foster innovation, leveraging the passion and commitment of local citizens and governments. Specific issues and opportunities vary in each city or region, but each of the initiative’s local campaigns conduct similar activities:

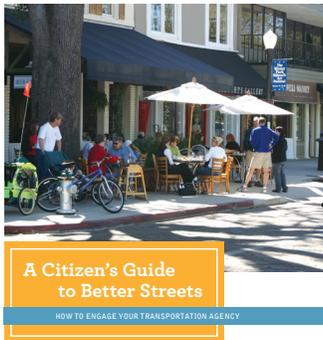


1. **Capacity Building:** Training equips stakeholders – citizens, elected officials, community organizations and professionals – with the knowledge to effectively work with transportation agencies to achieve reforms in local planning practice. Training can also be the catalyst for dialogue among these stakeholders who rarely, if ever, collaborate to create great places.
2. **Community-Based Transportation Plans:** Once advocates and public agencies have been inspired to think about the community building potential of transportation planning, PPS can facilitate the creation of such a plan. This is a practical way to create a grassroots vision for local streets, transit stops, public spaces and the connections between them. In our national campaign efforts, PPS is advocating for an increase in funding, through the 2009 federal transportation law, to implement these new transportation plans.
3. **Framing the Campaign:** To enhance the short-term success and long-term sustainability of your community planning efforts, they should be treated as a campaign. Campaigns need mission statements, goals, action items, a name, a logo, and a slogan, all of which emerge from the initial community visioning process. PPS can facilitate the branding of a campaign by providing written content and images for local websites, and framing messages for local communications and outreach.
4. **Coalition Building:** A dedicated network of local stakeholders will guide the direction of your campaign activities, as well as facilitate in-depth dialogue and public discourse about the potential of streets and stations through events, list serves and blogs. PPS can facilitate the development of this network of partners and supporters, which is vital to achieving a new vision for transportation.
5. **Demonstration Projects:** Pilot projects help move your campaign forward by enhancing local capacity to better plan public spaces and by achieving visible results that create excitement, momentum and commitment. PPS can provide a range of levels of technical assistance – from “SWOT” team assistance, in which a short intervention can help to support innovative projects and programs at the local community level, to longer term placemaking planning and design projects.
6. **Policy & Planning Tools:** To sustain positive results, it is important to leave in place policy and planning tools that your community can use to continue building on your work over the long term.

Campaign Accomplishments

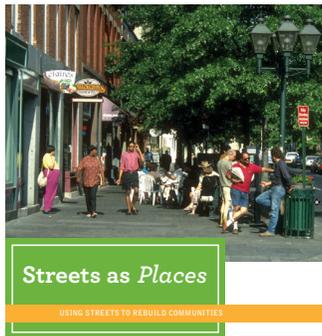
In part through the support of the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Foundation, PPS has greatly expanded the resources it can bring to local communities to reshape their transportation systems:

New Transportation Publications. For nearly 20 years, PPS has been publishing planning guides and research on how to improve streets and transit facilities. In partnership with AARP, PPS is publishing the following new publications related to the Building Community Through Transportation initiative:



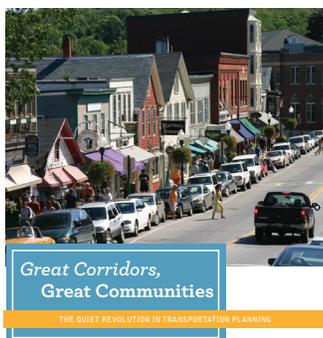
A Citizen's Guide to Better Streets is a primer to help citizens interact collaboratively with their local or state DOT.

Project for Public Spaces, Inc.



Streets as Places is about how citizens can shape and enhance their streets to serve all users—not just cars—with lively, walkable, community-friendly environments.

Project for Public Spaces, Inc.



Great Corridors, Great Communities describes how planning transportation within the context of a larger corridor, rather than with individual, location-specific projects, can benefit both mobility needs and community quality of life.

Project for Public Spaces, Inc.

Customized Placemaking Guidebooks. PPS has recently developed a customized guidebook for Chicago called *A Guide to Neighborhood Placemaking in Chicago*. This guide can be tailored to inform local transportation planning and Placemaking in other cities. Depending on particular needs, this could include a “how-to” Placemaking handbook, development and design guidelines, zoning change recommendations, and street design guidelines.

Research and Tools. PPS is expanding its research program on streets, including a major study on walkability on New York City streets that is enabling us to disseminate a new “Street Audit” tool so that local communities can evaluate the effectiveness of their streets. One of a series of “Place Audit” tools that will be available online (planned for 2009) or in print, the “Street Audit”, allows stakeholders and professionals alike to think differently about the design of their streets and public spaces. See www.pps.org for more information.

Training. PPS has created one- to four-day training programs for various state DOTs and hosts a bi-annual “Streets as Places” two-day training workshop in New York City for both transportation professionals and stakeholders. We also offer a “Thinking Beyond the Station” training course for transit agencies and their customers, and several PPS staff are instructors for the National Highway Institute’s “Transportation and Land Use” training course, which can be requested in any city.

Projects. PPS is working extensively with communities to plan and design more effective streets, transit facilities, and transit-oriented developments. These projects not only create better places in communities, but they have resulted in new models for collaborations between these communities and their transportation agencies.