

ACTION IDEAS

SO YOU WANT TO GET ACTIVE? HERE ARE SOME AMAZING IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED





THE ACTION IDEAS CATALOGUE
IS DIVIDED INTO MULTIPLE THEMES,
TO HELP YOU AND YOUR GROUP
IDENTIFY AND NARROW DOWN WHAT
YOU CAN DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

What is an action idea? Let's start with an example

In the city of Amsterdam, bicycle capital of the world (along with Copenhagen), cycles rule the streets. Great efforts were made to accommodate the bicycle - foremost the creation of an elaborate network of high-quality cycle lanes. They were so efficient and safe that cycling became the easiest mode of transport in the city. However, this didn't just happen by chance.

There was a time, in the 1950s and 60s, when cycling was under severe threat of being expelled from Dutch cities by the growing number of cars.

After World War II, as the economy grew, whole neighborhood's in the city of Amsterdam were destroyed to make way for roads and motor vehicles. The increase in traffic brought along with it mounting crashes and casualties. A staggering loss of over 3000 deaths, including 400 children, led to protests and rallies.

One such rally was the "Stop de Kindermoord" ("stop the child murder"), which grew into a massive movement.

Over the years, this included bicycle rallies, crash site visits and special carfree days. The entire protest was so effective that Stop de Kindermoord was turned into an official organization dedicated to developing ideas for safe urban planning by the Dutch government. This is the true potential of Action!

There are many opportunities to insert days of action into the calendar. Just think of the hundreds or even thousands of people pouring into the streets on World Carfree Day (September 22) and commanding the whole road space for a day. Or a Critical Mass bike ride, or other fun street-reclaiming events. Ideas like this are exactly what this Toolkit sheet is about.

Please note! While there are many ideas to get you started, the best approach is to choose a few that speak most to you and keep the rest on the back burner to try out sometime in the future! Go ahead, experiment and combine multiple action ideas into one or many grand events.

ACTION IDEAS

Events
and
festivals

Workshops and
education

International
Cooperation/
Collaboration

Streets for People
Campaigns

Photo
Contest

Media
and
awareness
raising

Theatre -Arts
events on
Public Space

Research
Projects

Active
mobility +
policy,
support,
advocacy

Video
Blogs

Webinars
& Online
Programs

Climate Change
+ Carfree Cities
Campaigns

Public
speaking &
discussions

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

CELEBRATING CARFREE SPACES + STREET FESTIVALS

There are many events throughout the year that provide an ideal occasion to hold street festivals or public events where you can promote carfree cities, carfree public space, and more. Everyone loves a street party, and usually authorities are happy to cooperate. An alternative to temporary closure is to celebrate in an existing pedestrian environment and bring attention to the many possible uses of existing community space.

CARFREE SUNDAYS (CICLOVÍA) + KIDS AND FAMILY PROGRAMS:

Ciclovia is the awe-inspiring celebration of carfree streets occurring every Sunday in Bogotá, Colombia. It has since inspired many global cities to follow their lead, with variations in the theme.



Making a different public square carfree for a day every Sunday and then running programs for kids and families is also a great concept, coming from Istanbul, Turkey. In Bangalore, India, different neighborhoods organize Cycle Sundays where people can enjoy community space for cycling and other activities.

CONFERENCES AND GATHERINGS:

Conferences are great places to exchange and contemplate the latest trends, ideas and to meet passionate like-minded individuals. One day conferences within city/region is a good start. Another popular event is youth exchanges with accommodation and travel costs covered. There are numerous options for creating exchanges and allowing practitioners to interact, share experiences and build alliances. Remote gatherings (teleconference) is also a sustainable alternative, keeping costs down and avoiding travel emissions.

WORLD CARFREE DAY + MOBILITY WEEK, PARKing DAY

This is the prime celebration of carfree cities, happening once every year on 22nd September. Many cities have joined the European Mobility Week framework and host a variety of activities for a whole week in this period. PARKing Day takes place during this time and is celebrated by converting parking places into pop-up parks for a few hours or a full day.

FUN EVENTS,ART, THEATER, FILM:

Art and expression brings along with it a sense of emotion and passion that can never be expressed through formal conferences and discussions. That is why a theatre festival is a great opportunity to grab the attention of the public, increase interest, expand base, and electrify passion through the city. Topic oriented events, discussion forum, film screening, raffle, competition, games, concerts - the sky is the limit!

JOINT EVENTS WITH ALLIES:

Make the most out of it by sharing energy, resources, support, and building on common ground. Once you create meaningful synergies with other groups that share your mission and goals, the scale and quality of impact changes. You can reach out to cycling groups, air pollution groups, children's

groups, environmental and social organizations, and more. While you are building momentum for your cause, don't forget to support the good efforts of others. For instance, if a cycling group is celebrating something, go ahead and tag along and show your support! Mutual support is the surest way forward.





WORKSHOPS AND EDUCATION

MAQUETTE DESIGN WORKSHOP:

A maquette is a 3D model that can be constructed out different materials, including clay, wood, cardboard etc. A special feature of creating physical models is the collaborative aspect, where participants can think through and work out specific elements of the building/design process. So, go ahead and build an actual model of a neighborhood, street, intersection, or an area that you would like to redesign, and explore how perspectives of the living space changes, and so too the design. The "Pattern Language" approach of inclusive planning by Christopher Alexander, is a great source of inspiration.

COMMUNITY GROUPS + VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS:

An important part of creating a movement is awareness-raising, outreach, and community building. This is where you can offer skills workshops and educational or capacity building events for specific neighborhoods and communities. It is an especially important tool to help bring to focus the needs of minorities and vulnerable groups. Where possible, organize volunteer programs encouraging locals to participate.



SUMMER SCHOOL, INTERNSHIPS YOUTH EXCHANGES:

To reach out to a larger community and interested peoples, this tool category of providing learning and educational opportunities for a broad target group. There are many different themes for a workshop series that can be offered: primer on urban mobility, participation and active citizenship, tactical urbanism, civic journalism, to name just a few. Provide youth and adults alike with continuing education opportunities and ways to become involved in the local urban environment.

WEBINARS AND CURATED ONLINE PROGRAMS:

Webinars and online sharing have come into vogue. With this tool you can reach many people far beyond your geographic area and develop a following. Online programs allow you to invite, host, and promote the doers and shakers of today. Getting a good presenter will also highlight the work of your organization. Running a webinar series also makes sure that an ongoing dialogue can stay relevant.

MEDIA & AWARENESS-RAISING

MEDIA PROMOTIONS + ONLINE/OFFLINE PRESENCE:

Develop a media arm that is able to promote the public acceptance of carfree cities concepts as well as related urban sustainability issues. Your online presence may include communication on your website and social media, as well as videos, articles, news items, etc. Offline events can be documented and placed online, while pamphlets and print journalism may also be useful.

Where possible, aim to get your letters and articles published in the newspaper, and give interviews on radio or TV.

If you organize events, be sure to invite media and to send them press releases. Murals, installations in public spaces, and public art are currently enjoying a renaissance in cities everywhere. When ever possible, involve the local community, students and youth and their creative take on mediums



ACTIVE MOBILITY + POLICY, SUPPORT, ADVOCACY:

Working on advocacy involves a multi-pronged approach, where your organization supports, promotes, and demands policies in your city (or region, country) that prioritizes sustainable mobility, active modes of travel, and human- environment- and community-oriented urban planning.

When your efforts are directed at the government, this will connect to policy and creating the proper legal and physical environments for the uptake of sustainable mobility. When your efforts are directed to the population, this will connect to lifestyle choices, health, savings, and more.

CLIMATE CHANGE + CARFREE CITIES:

Now is the time to make the connection between climate change and carfree cities crystal clear! Carfree advocates understand the direct relief and actionable solutions that carfree cities can offer climate change action. Such messages can figure into a wide variety of campaigns and programs.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:

Start the habit of collecting and building up a wide body of materials and resources to use in your local work. This may involve everything from promotional leaflets, how-to guides, technical literature, graphics and photos, banners, postcards, and anything else that you can use to support and promote your work.

Advanced resources may include things like cargo bikes, air quality gauges, cycle/pedestrian counters, construction equipment for parklets, or any materials you may need for public demonstration and use.

PROJECTS, RESEARCH AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



ADVISORY SERVICES + CARFREE DESIGN:

Urban development projects, housing projects, and the like need to have good input and enlightened advisory bodies to help develop forward-thinking projects and plans. Consultants and planners who are intimately familiar with carfree design principles have an important role in helping define and guide future urban and housing development. A mega undertaking would be to work with investors and developers, encouraging or facilitating the launch and execution of carfree developments.

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS:

These represent major opportunities, coupling carfree concepts to the wider field of urban development, new cities planning, and so on. Additionally, many pilot projects can find funding and interest, working within the framework of international cooperation and knowledge/skills sharing projects or co-creation.

MOBILITY PLANNING, NATIONAL / REGIONAL GUIDELINES + POLICY SUPPORT:

National & Regional transport planning policy guidelines, such as Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) or national transport strategies are a mandate for every country. Sound advice from those espousing carfree cities is urgently needed. Also on the wider level, sensible policy support - including research, analysis, and recommendations - are very helpful.

LOCAL COOPERATION: There are always ways that you can engage locally when you have the time and will to do so. It may also be the case that instead of building up your own organization you might prefer to volunteer with other groups in your area. Find out whether any carfree sympathetic groups are around. There are many ways to collaborate, whether in research and field projects or, media & local outreach. Don't forget to connect to student groups and youth movements.

TRAFFIC-CALMING & STREET RECLAIMING CAMPAIGNS



CARFREE/PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS:

Launch your own campaign to convert a defined geographic area (such as a street or square) into a permanently vehicle-free zone. If you gather enough local support and can demonstrate the viability of such a project, the momentum will carry you through to successful change. Consider projects like parklets and temporary converted community space - your goal should be to convince the authorities to allow a temporary conversion to become permanent.

MOBILITY JUSTICE CAMPAIGNS:

Too often, the incursion of vehicles into neighborhoods, gridlock, or fast-moving traffic can have disastrous effects on the local population. Gear your campaign towards protecting vulnerable populations, creating safe spaces, lowering traffic noise, and reducing urban heat islands. Vulnerable populations suffer the most from faulty planning and unjust transport policy and practice

Many children are unfairly confined to their buildings, while the elderly, women, caregivers, and minorities are often the hardest hit by unjust transport practice. Residents of low-income communities are often forced to own a car, resulting in large cuts from their salaries. In many cities, cars are mainly used by a privileged minority, subduing public transport systems, space for walking, cycling, and the quality of urban life.

CAR CONTROL / HIGHWAY REMOVAL: Construct a campaign with the clear message that high volume highways have no place in city centers. Such a campaign may focus on the removal of a highway or a flyover, or the radical reduction of traffic volumes. Street closures (to through traffic), lane removal or their conversion to cycle paths, congestion charges - these and many more are measures you can demand in order to reduce inequality and promote better health and environmental quality in urban areas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE

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