Guerrilla Bike Lanes & Tactical Urbanism

Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference
Columbus, OH - October 2016
Obstacles of Place

• Roadways have divided us
• High mobility in Urban Districts
• Safety in the Neighborhood
• Limit In-School Resources
How to Rebuild/Reclaim Community?

- Use the Infrastructure as a Platform for Engagement
- Re-invent “Public Involvement”
- What is meaningful and attractive to current community
Tactical Urbanism

- *Tactical Urbanism* is an approach to neighborhood building and activation that uses short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions and policies.
Tactical Urbanism

• *For Government*, it is a way to put best practices in motion quickly
• *For Citizens*, it allows the immediate reclamation, redesign, or reprogramming of public space
• *For Developers & Entrepreneurs*, it is a means of collecting data from the market they intend to serve
• *For Advocacy Organization*, it is a way to show what is possible or garner public and political support
Tactical Urbanism

- Better Block
- Open Streets
- City Repair
- Re-Imagining Civic Commons
Better Block

- Jason Roberts & Team Better Block
- Original Better Block in Oak Cliff, Texas (Dallas)
- Better Block Comes to Akron, OH in May 2015
Jason Roberts

- Background
- Issues in his own neighborhood
- Looking to other Communities Around the World
- How to bring great spaces back home to his town
Better Block Oak Cliff, Texas

- Organizing neighborhood leaders and volunteers
- Overcoming “the rules” which inhibit development
- Temporary & Cheap
- Experiential - helps to see what could not be imagined easily
Better Block Comes to Akron, OH

- May 2015
- North Hill Neighborhood Selected
- Community Leaders on the ground
- International community - many walkers already
- Safety Need
- Buildings vacant and lacking reinvestment
Better Block Comes Akron, OH

- Road Diet
- Crosswalks
- Buffered bikelanes (Cycle Tracks)
- Street Trees
- Benches
- Plazas
- Shops
- Entertainment
Better Block Comes to Akron, OH
Better Block Comes to Akron, OH
Neighbor Apparel &
International Welcome Center
Bike Shop & International Food
Bocce - Past & Present
Pop-up Beer Garden
Finger-Paint & Duct Tape
Donated & Borrowed Materials
Finished Plaza
Evaluation

**Before**
- Street had few pedestrians
- Traffic speed 28-29 mph
- Noise 97 dB max
- “This is not a block I’d feel particularly comfortable at at night. The lighting is poor, or at least not inviting.”

**After**
- High volume pedestrians
- Traffic Speed 15 mph
- Noise 87 dB max
- “I felt safe for once in 28 yrs. Never walked in that area before Better Block. Thank You!”
Better Block - Lessons Learned

- Passion & Engagement
- Doable
- Experiential - learn in doing; feedback;
- Incremental Densification
- Draw Inspiration from Other Places
- Easy & Creative Resources
- Recipe for More...
Better Block - Future & SRTS

- Vernon Odom Blvd.
- Aqueduct Street - Complete & Green
- Middlebury BetterBlock
- The Minimum Grid & Towpath Re-Routing
City Repair

- Barn Raising an Intersection
- Overcoming “the Rules”
- Empowerment & Collaborative Process
- The City Repair Project fosters thriving, inclusive and sustainable communities through the creative reclamation of public space
City Repair

- Human Scale
- Permaculture
Re-Imagining Civic Commons

- The Civic Commons - the series of Public Spaces used by all for a variety of interactions and Public Life
  - Parks, Plazas, Libraries, Government Buildings, Schools
- April 4-17 in Akron
- Connections Downtown to South Akron along Ohio & Erie Canalway Towpath Trail
- Brainstorming many program activities & seeing what happens
Re-Inventing “Public Involvement”

• We need a New Process
• Social Infrastructure not just Physical Infrastructure
• Collaborative & Empowering
• Experiential
• Low Cost & Fast
• Smaller & More Feedback
Re-Inventing “Public Involvement”

Many Small Projects
Implications for Future “Complete Streets”

- Addressing needs for road safety & neighborhood security
- Empowering communities
- Addressing Equity
- Instilling hope and passion
- Experiential learning possibilities
Building for Tomorrow

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