

Communities responding to traffic:

From Mental Speed Bumps *The smarter way to tame traffic* by David Engwicht from Creative Communities. www.creative-communities.com

The Traffic Tamers Manual is worth looking at

Practical Actions for Residents

- The speed of traffic on residential streets is governed to a large extent by the degree of psychological retreat of the residents.
- Intrigue, uncertainty and humour create mental speed bumps, subconsciously slowing motorists down.
- Traffic is first and foremost a social and cultural problem, not a design problem. If we had an outbreak of civility, most of our traffic problems would evaporate.
- People who linger in the street provide higher levels of intrigue and uncertainty than those just passing through. They also attract other people out into the street. For people to linger there must be 'activity nodes', such as seating, play areas, art, shade, sunshine, stores.
- The design of a street sends a subconscious message to motorists about the primary purpose of the street and the degree of intrigue and uncertainty likely to be encountered. Streets that look, feel and act as a corridor say to motorists that the space is part of the traffic world. But streets that look, feel and act as an 'outdoor living room' say that the street is part of the social world in which motorists are welcome, but as a guest.

What residents can do to tame traffic

Reclaim your street as a socializing space

- *Move some of your normal activities closer to the street (instead of reading a book in the sun at the back of the house, read the book in your front yard).*
- *Supervise children playing on the sidewalk or in the street.*
- *Stop and say hello to people in the street.*
- *Welcome motorists as a guest*
- *Hold a street reclaiming party*
- *Organise social sports events etc*

Relax, move gently

- *Walk, cycle, roll, stroll, amble, linger and engage*
- *Reduce your car use to a minimum*
- *Teach your kids to walk, scoot, skateboard and cycle.*
- *Encourage yourself and others to pledge to the pace car concept*
- *When you drive, drive gently*

Intrigue travellers

- *Wave to motorists*
- *Do something to make yourself or your vehicle eccentric*

- *Put something intriguing in your front yard*
- *Put something intriguing in the street*
- *Blur the boundary between your private home and the street*

Retro-fit your street as a room

- *Create activity nodes on your private land or on the street*
- *Connect activity nodes into an adventure trail or promenade*
- *Encourage existing local business to connect with the street*
- *Encourage new local businesses in your neighbourhood*
- *Make you street more like a room*
- *Work with your Council to reduce traffic control devices*
- *Work with your Council to make your street feel more like a room.*