

Street design for children and older people

Recommendations and examples for practical application

German Environment Agency

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The brochure was produced as part of the research project “Active mobility: Street design for children and older people” which examined the needs and requirements of children and older people with regard to street design. The project’s focus was on how street space as well as local public transport access areas and stops should be designed to promote active mobility among children and older people



CHILDREN AND OLDER PEOPLE IN ROAD TRAFFIC

1

Children and older people as a benchmark

We all undertake several journeys every day: to work, to the shops, to school, to visit relatives or friends. Children and older people walk a lot, ride bicycles, or take buses and trains. They make extensive use of eco-friendly modes of transport for their everyday journeys and thus have very environmentally friendly mobility habits. At the same time, as pedestrians and cyclists, they are more frequently involved in traffic accidents. Street design that is geared to their needs can and must provide them with better protection. The requirements of children and older people in terms of the design of our cities, roads, and public spaces should therefore be the benchmark for strengthening active mobility for all.

What exactly is... eco-mobility?

The term “eco-mobility” refers to all environmentally friendly forms of mobility. In summary: walking, cycling, public transport, and car sharing.

This brochure is based on the following thesis:

“If the street environment is designed to best suit children and older people, it is designed to best suit all sections of the population. It therefore promotes active mobility and the use of public transport, and supports the transport transition in local communities.”¹

Independent mobility is not only a need, but also a prerequisite for participating in social life and being able to use various services. Active mobility such as walking and cycling have been proven to promote individual wellbeing, reduce stress levels and help prevent illness.

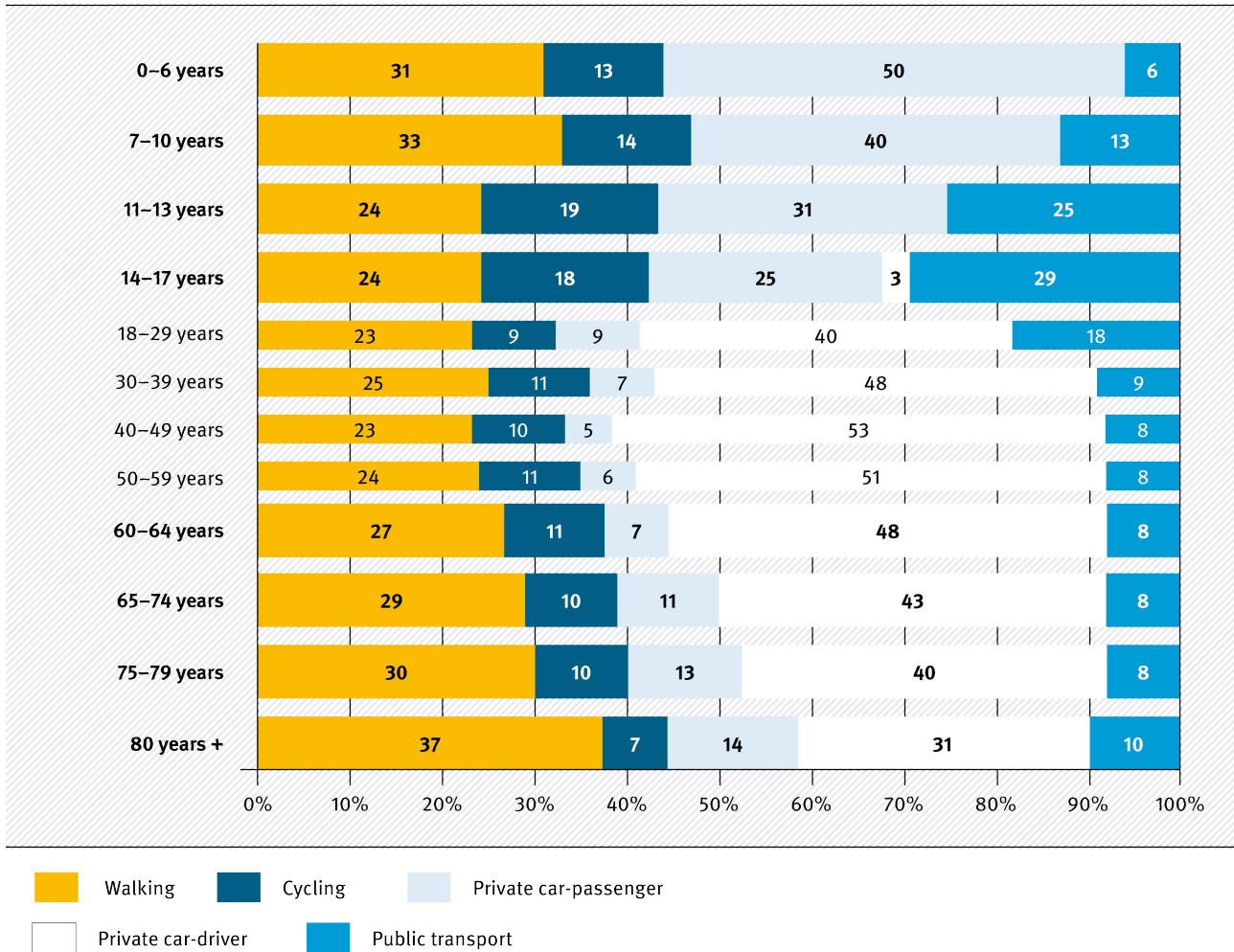
What exactly is... active mobility?

Active mobility is defined as getting around in a physically active way, using non-motorized means. This can be on foot, by bike, on a balance bike or on a scooter. It also includes using a walker, using a manual wheelchair or using a hand bike. Active mobility has numerous positive effects on the environment and society: on the one hand, it promotes the health of those who actively move around. On the other hand, active mobility is a resource-saving form of transportation that helps protect the climate and the environment. Last but not least, active mobility contributes to the liveability in cities and communities. This brochure focuses on active mobility among children and older people and includes journeys to and from public transport stops.

¹ This idea originated with Jan Gehl, a Danish architect and urban planner. According to Gehl, a lively city is characterized by people who spend a lot of time in public spaces—such as cyclists and pedestrians: “Look at how many children and elderly people are out and about on the streets and squares. That’s a pretty reliable indicator. In my definition, a city is liveable when it respects the human scale. In other words, when it ticks at the pace of pedestrians and cyclists rather than cars.” Jan Gehl observed that attractive and varied public spaces promote active mobility and simultaneously encourage people to spend more time there.

Figure 01:

Modal split by age group



Source: Own representation, German Environment Agency according to Infas (2025)

**FACTS & FIGURES:
YOUNG AND OLD IN ROAD TRAFFIC**

Children and older people are much more active in terms of mobility—i.e. walking or cycling—than other age groups. Children aged 7 to 10 undertake a high proportion of journeys on foot (33 percent). Among 11- to 13-year-olds, i.e. those entering secondary school, the proportion of public transport use rises to 25 percent. At the same time, the proportion of bicycle journeys increases to 19 percent. It is only from around the age of 60 that the proportion of journeys undertaken on foot (27 percent) rises again significantly. Among the over-80s, journeys on foot account for 37 percent of journeys undertaken. The importance of the bicycle remains relatively constant among adults up to the age of 79, at around

10 percent. At the same time, road traffic accident data shows an increasing risk for the older population. The number of people aged 65 and over injured in road traffic accidents rose from around 28,000 in 1970 to around 44,000 in 2021. The proportion of people injured in this age group has thus doubled from seven to 14 percent. The number of people under the age of 14 injured in traffic accidents fell from around 70,000 to around 22,000 during the same period.

The number of people killed in road traffic accidents has fallen continuously since 1970 in all age groups, both in absolute terms and as a percentage, except for older people. The number of people aged 65 and over killed in road traffic accidents has roughly doubled since 2000.

What exactly is... street design?

An attractive design of street space promotes active mobility. The German Road and Transportation Research Association (FGSV) defines street space as “the three-dimensional area above the carriageways and verges of a road between adjacent properties”². Street space thus encompasses all traffic lanes, verges, footpaths and cycle paths, as well as recreational areas. It forms part of the public realm and is freely accessible and usable by everyone.

Depending on how street space is designed, it will be used differently. If a street is primarily geared towards cars, they will dominate its appearance: with their noise, exhaust fumes and space requirements. If a street is geared towards pedestrians and cyclists and there are opportunities to linger, communication and interaction will flourish and public space will fill with life³.

So, if we want more people to be actively mobile in order to stay healthy and contribute to environmental protection, street space must be designed to be attractive for active mobility.



Figure 02: Liveability and traffic calming, Nuremberg · Source: Planersocietät

² FGSV (2012)

³ German Environment Agency (2017)

2

The requirements of children and older people regarding street space

2.1 FRIVOLOUS AND IMPULSIVE—CHILDREN IN ROAD TRAFFIC

For the purposes of street space design, children are defined within this publication in accordance with the German Protection of Young Persons Act. According to this, a child is a person who is not yet 14 years old; adolescents are persons who are at least 14 but not yet 18 years old⁴.

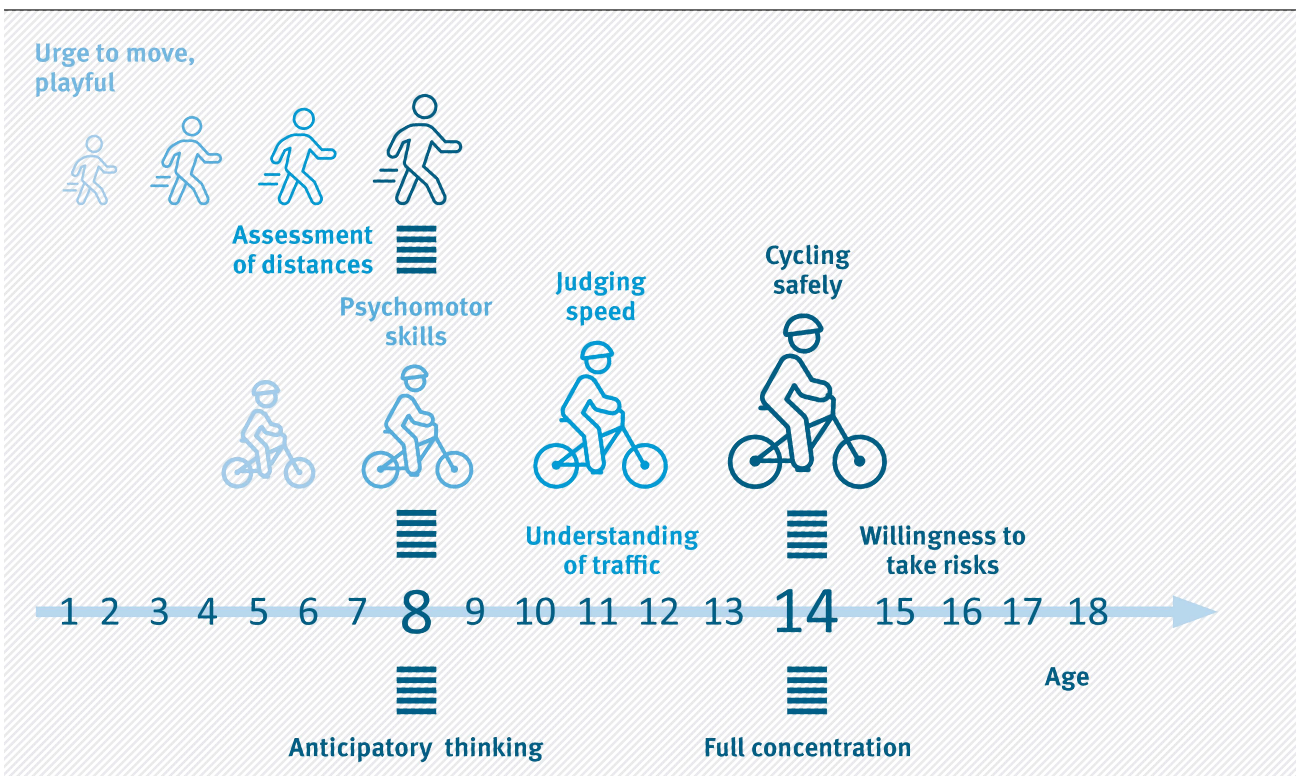
In terms of road traffic, the mental and physical abilities of children vary considerably throughout their childhood. Up to the age of about 7, everyday situations in road traffic—such as crossing a busy street—pose considerable dangers for children. They have a great urge to move around, often act

impulsively and their movements often are not predictable for other road users. They are unable to fully comprehend and process the many different situations and stimuli that road traffic entails. At the age of 6 to 7, children already possess many of the motor skills needed to navigate road traffic. However, due to their height, numerous obstacles (including parked cars) block their view. They also need more time to cross a street, for example.

From the age of about 8 to 9, children can behave more safely in many traffic situations. Their spatial awareness continues to develop and they can draw logical conclusions in certain situations.

Figure 03:

Children and their mobility-related abilities



Source: Planersocietät, own representation (2019)

4 BMFSFJ (2023)

Nevertheless, at this age children also look for the shortest and for them most sensible routes, which are not always the safest. Waiting, for example, before crossing a street is still very difficult for children at this age.

At around 10 to 11 years of age, children are able to participate in road traffic, significantly safer and more independently due to their stage of development. According to the Highway Code, children aged 10 and over must cycle on the road if there is no cycle path and the pavement is not expressly designated for cyclists. However, children of this age are not yet able to correctly judge speeds and distances to moving vehicles. It is only between the ages of 12 and 14 that children have the necessary cognitive and physiological prerequisites to mostly behave safely in complex traffic situations. However, their reaction times are not yet fully developed (see Fig. 03).

Practice in everyday life is particularly important for children to learn safe traffic behaviour. Only if children are regularly out and about in traffic, apply the skills they have learned and learn from real-life situations will they be able to demonstrate safe traffic behaviour in the long term.

WHAT CHILDREN NEED CHILDREN'S REQUIREMENTS REGARDING STREET SPACE

Children are among the most vulnerable road users. Their perception is limited, they have a limited understanding of traffic rules, and they often react spontaneously and unpredictably—all of which increases their risk of traffic accidents. In addition, their height limits their field of vision and makes them easier to overlook. They also lack the experience to correctly judge complex traffic situations. To ensure their safety and mobility street space must be designed child-friendly. Children do not only travel on foot—they also use bicycles, balance bikes, scooters or tri-cycles and are often accompanied by adults.

In doing so they often move unpredictably, riding in all directions instead of straight lines and stopping suddenly when they discover something

interesting. This spontaneous and curiosity-led behaviour requires particularly well-thought-out design of pavements and traffic areas to make them safe and child-friendly.

Young children are exclusively out and about with their parents or accompanied by adults. During this time, they learn how to behave safely in traffic—even if they are still a long way from having all the skills they need to be travelling on their own. Parents decide at what age their children can undertake their journeys on their own. They usually only let their children go unaccompanied when they feel that they are safe in traffic.

This means that in order for children to be able to move around actively and independent, conditions must be in place that meet their needs, thus creating safety and trust.

For actively mobile children, the following requirements regarding street space must therefore be taken into account:



Short distances

Children can tire more quickly over longer distances, which impairs their ability to remain alert. If distances to schools, playgrounds and other destinations are short, children are more motivated to travel independently on foot, by bicycle or by scooter. Safe footpaths should therefore start right outside the front door, be seamlessly integrated into the street network and lead to the destination without any detours due to numerous crossing aids.



Slow down

Children benefit from low vehicle speeds on the road (e.g., traffic-calmed areas or 30 km/h zones). This makes crossing the road safer, allows drivers to react more quickly and helps them drive more considerately.



Crossing the street safely

Kerb extensions and road narrowing, pedestrian refuge islands, and similar aids bring children into the field of vision of drivers and shorten the crossing distance. In addition, crossings are bundled and motor vehicle traffic is made aware of the location. Zebra crossings and traffic lights clearly regulate the situation for all road users. Crossing aids reduce the complexity of the situation and help children find their way around. Barrier-free and lowered curbs make it easier to walk and to carry balance bikes, bicycles or scooters. Sufficient crossing aids also prevent children from crossing the street elsewhere between parked cars.



Longer green lights

Longer green phases help children cross the street when the light is green and prevent them from suddenly turning back because the light turned red too quickly.



Sufficient space

Separate, wide paths enable children to walk, ride a balance bike, bicycle or scooter safely. Small children are accompanied, led by the hand or ride their bikes alongside a parent. Children also need space to play.



Easy orientation

Clear and simple signage and highly visible and understandable route markings, such as lines or pictograms, help children find their way around. Relevant traffic signs must be clearly visible to children. The operation of pedestrian / cyclist activated traffic lights must also be simple and understandable for children.



Clear rules

Children need clear rules at intersections and junctions that are easy to understand, safe and child-friendly. Crossing markings are helpful here; the Germany-specific “right turn on red” sign should be avoided.



See and be seen

Due to their height, children are easily overlooked by drivers. Conversely, they have a poorer overview and a different perspective on traffic than adults, especially when crossing the road. They therefore need wide waiting areas at crossings with good visibility and adequate lighting so that they can see well and can be seen easily.



Play and learning spaces

In addition to playgrounds, children also need places to play on their daily journeys. These should be designed in such a way that children can move around freely without being endangered by cars or other vehicles. In these integrated play and learning areas, children can let off steam on their way to school and meet other children. This increases their motivation to walk longer distances or take small detours.



Safe routes to school

Children can practice independent mobility on their way to school. To this end, street spaces should encourage the learning of traffic rules. Marked and monitored routes to school and pedestrian crossings near schools create safety and contribute to traffic education.



Places to linger

Depending on the age of the children, there will be different needs to take breaks—to rest, eat or play.



Pleasant environment

Like all people, children feel more comfortable and safer in a clean, well-maintained and aesthetically pleasing environment, so they prefer to spend time there—whether on foot, by bike or by scooter. It should also be taken into account that children are closer to sources of exhaust fumes and noise due to their smaller size. They therefore benefit particularly from a reduction in road traffic emissions.



Figure 04: Neighbourhood block in Berlin, Lausitzer Platz · Source: Norbert Michalke



Separate bike lanes

Children need bike lanes that are clearly separated from motor vehicle traffic, ideally by curbs and green strips. Bike lanes should be wide enough for overtaking and offer sufficient space for children and the persons accompanying them. Good visibility is crucial at intersections and junctions so that children can be seen by drivers in good time. Children riding bicycles must be visible to car and lorry drivers well before an intersection or junction. To ensure mutual visibility, parking must be strictly prohibited in these areas.



Flat, non-slip floor surfaces

Children often use wheeled devices for independent mobility. The small wheel diameter of children's bicycles, scooters, and similar devices makes uneven surfaces particularly difficult to navigate. Roots, edges, sunken paving stones, and manhole covers become tripping hazards for small wheels. Floor coverings that are too smooth increase the risk of slipping in wet and snowy conditions.



Easy use of public transport

Children's requirements of public transport are comparable to those of other passengers. Frequent service, punctuality, and easy-to-understand transfer procedures make it easier for children to use public transport. Children need sufficiently large waiting areas so that they do not step onto the road due to lack of space or while playing. Stops must be barrier-free so that small children and parents with strollers can easily get on and off. Stop announcements on buses must be made in good time and be clearly understandable so that children do not miss their stop.

2.2 SLOW AND IN NEED OF REST— OLDER PEOPLE IN ROAD TRAFFIC

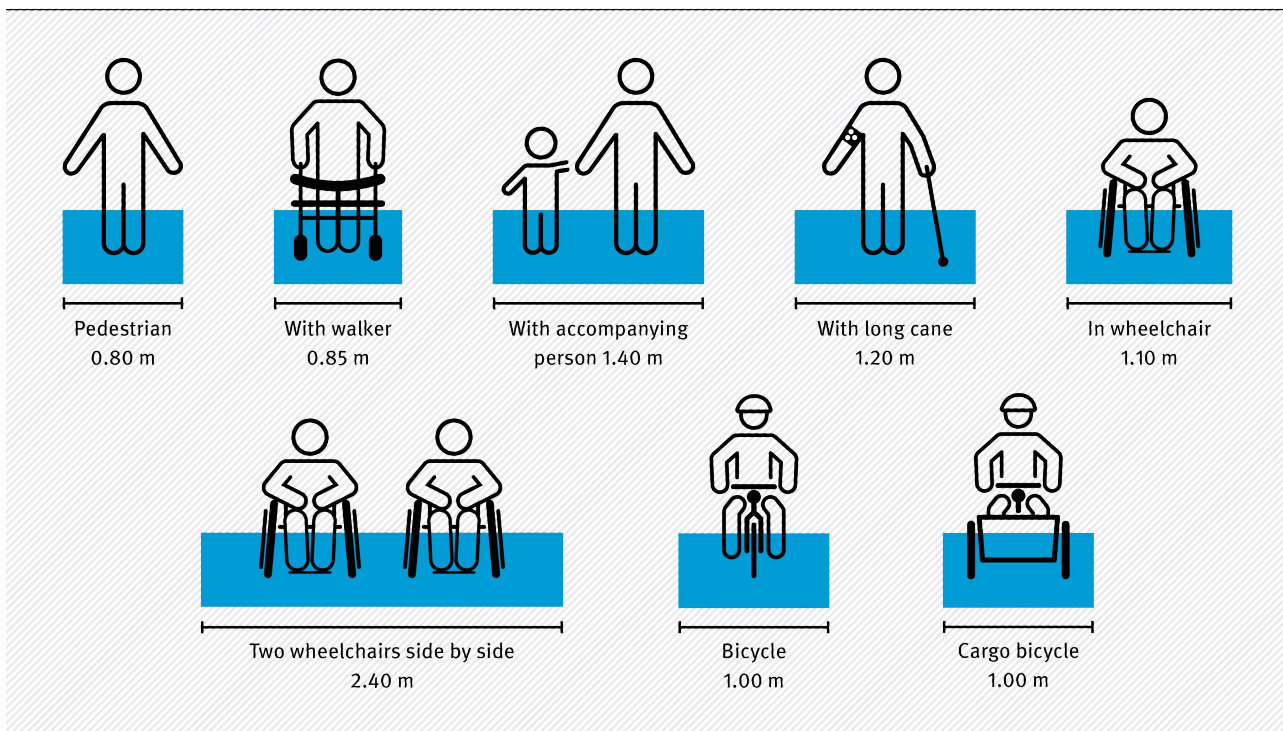
People’s physical and mental abilities change over the course of their lives. While children’s abilities develop and tend to increase with each passing year, they decline again in old age. When and to what extent these abilities decline varies greatly from person to person and is a gradual process. The group of older people cannot therefore be defined solely by age, but rather by certain abilities. If physical or mental abilities decline significantly, participating in road traffic becomes difficult or even dangerous.

- ▶ Attention and concentration decline with age, especially the abilities to divide attention (multi-tasking) and react quickly, which are particularly important in road traffic. In addition, information is processed more slowly, which affects reaction speed and response time.
- ▶ Short-term memory in particular deteriorates, which can lead to confusion or uncertainty in traffic.

- ▶ The speed, coordination, and accuracy of motor movements may decrease, which can manifest itself, for example, in slow speeds when crossing roads and unsteady walking or cycling.
- ▶ Older people may find it more difficult to hear and recognize acoustic traffic signals or warnings from other road users. This can lead to dangerous situations.
- ▶ Vision and the ability to adapt to changes in light decrease.
- ▶ Older cyclists may have difficulty making themselves understood when communicating with other road users, which can lead to misunderstandings, confusion, and accidents.

Figure 05:

Space requirements (without safety distances)



Source: German Environment Agency, own representation based on FGSV (2006)

WHAT OLDER PEOPLE NEED REQUIREMENTS OF OLDER PEOPLE REGARDING STREET SPACE

For many older people, barrier-free and easily accessible streets are a basic requirement for maintaining their independence and social participation. Designs suitable for older people include wide, non-slip, level pavements, lowered kerbs, sufficiently long green phases at pedestrian crossings, and seating areas for resting. Similarly, on bicycles, older people are often unable to react quickly to unexpected events or get on and off their bikes without difficulty, which further jeopardizes their safety. When walking, they often feel pressured and unsettled by cyclists on the pavement. Taking these needs into account is crucial to enabling older people to participate actively in public life.



Short distances

Older people are often no longer able to walk long distances. Short distances are therefore important for independent mobility.



Slow down

Older people often have slower reaction times, both when walking and cycling. When cars drive more slowly, they have more time to react to them or cross the road.



Crossing the road safely

Older people benefit from crossing aids. Curb extensions and pedestrian refuge islands shorten the crossing distance, reducing the time spent on the road. Traffic lights and zebra crossings are helpful and easy to understand, but should take into account the slower speed of older and mobility-impaired people.



Longer green lights

Older people often walk more slowly and need longer green phases at pedestrian crossings to cross the road safely.



Sufficient space

Older people need wide pavements for slow walking or for travelling with walkers, other aids, or in wheelchairs.



Easy orientation

Orientation should be facilitated by large print and clear, simple signage. Self-explanatory, high-contrast paving surfaces and paving can also help older people find their way around more easily. For visually impaired people, guide elements and contrasts in street space are important for safe movement.



Seeing and being seen

Like children, older people need adequate lighting, especially at crossings, so that they can see well and are seen easily by other road users.



WC Public toilets

Publicly accessible toilets give senior citizens peace of mind when they are out and about for longer periods of time.



Barrier-free design

Pavements should be covered with smooth, non-slip materials, be level, and well maintained. Lowered curbs make it easier to walk with walkers and enable wheelchair users to navigate. At the same time, visually impaired people need a noticeable curb for orientation.



Level, non-slip flooring

Some older people are no longer able to react as well to uneven surfaces. They therefore prefer level, paved footpaths. This is also necessary to ensure that paths are easily accessible (barrier-free) for walkers and wheelchairs. In addition, the cross slope of paths plays a role in safety, which is why the lowest possible angle of inclination should be aimed for.



Seating

Seating is particularly important for increasing the range of movement of older people. It must be designed to be safe and kept clean.



Places to linger

In addition to simple seating at short intervals, social meeting places should be created in public spaces. Attractive and easily accessible places where people can linger for longer periods of time can be a motivation for older people in particular to travel actively, especially if the amenity value is high.



Pleasant environment

Cleanliness and safety play a crucial role for older people. For safety, places must be well lit, busy and well visible. In addition, paths should be pleasant and aesthetically appealing. Trees and roofs provide shade in summer and protection from rain.



Separate bike lanes

Dedicated cycle paths, cycle lanes and advisory bike lanes (Schutzstreifen) on the road help prevent conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians and motorists and increase the feeling of safety. Since many older people use e-bikes the cycling infrastructure should also be suitable for higher speeds. This is usually the case with protective lanes and bike lanes on the road.



Easy use of public transport

The demands older people place on public transport are comparable to those of other passengers. These include frequent service, punctuality, and easy-to-understand transfers. Public transport stops should be easily accessible and equipped with covered seating. Clear signage and announcements of stops are also helpful.

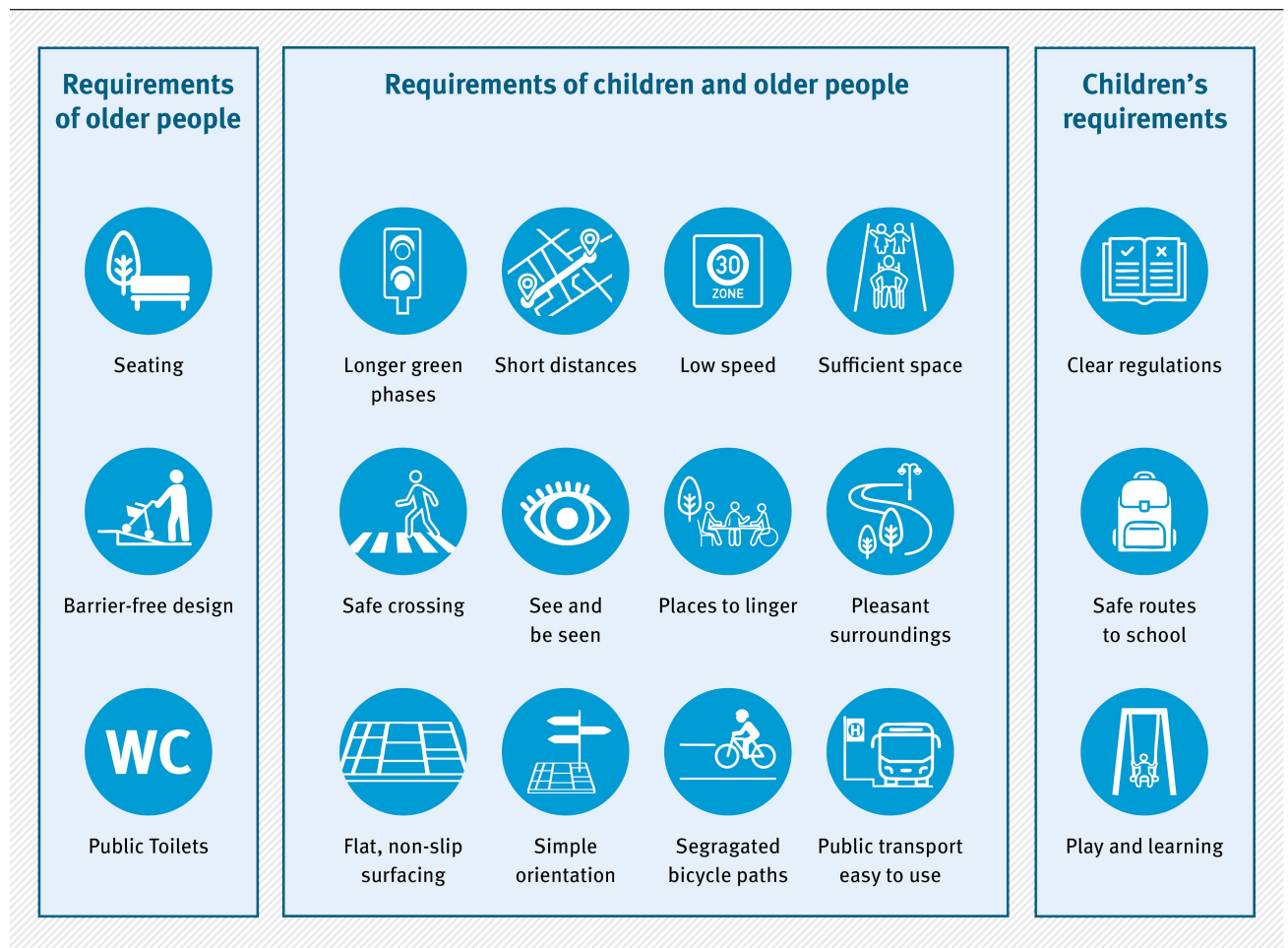


Figure 06: Walker training for older people, Brühl, Germany
Source: Alexandre Fuchs

When considering the requirements of children and older people regarding street space, there are many similarities. However, some aspects are more important for children, while others are more important for older people. Figure 07 summarizes this.

Figure 07:

Requirements of children and older people regarding street design



Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration

2.3 REALITY CHECK

HOW HAVE THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND OLDER PEOPLE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT SO FAR?

At some point in their lives, all people are dependent on accessible infrastructure: as toddlers, when suffering from a temporary injury or illness, when pushing a stroller or carrying suitcases or other heavy loads, or as older people. We are particularly mobile in middle age—precisely at a time when our actions influence the mobility of others.

For a very long time, the car was at the forefront of urban planning. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic was neglected in many places.⁵ This perspective has now been replaced by the model of the city of short

distances (also known as compact cities or decentralized concentration), which has its roots in sustainable urban development⁶. Mixed use, car-free areas, pedestrian-friendly city centres, and more space for bicycles are some of the keywords associated with this model. Nevertheless, cars still dominate the streetscape in many places. The fact that city streets serve social functions in addition to their traffic function⁷ has only gained attention in recent years.

When it comes to active mobility, transport policy and planning are often still based exclusively on the abilities and needs of healthy adults aged between 18 and 65. However, children and older people are highly active street users. Their abilities and needs differ greatly from those of 18- to 65-year-olds, so there is a particular need for action here.

5 Haller, Gerland (2005)

6 German Environment Agency (2011)

7 Gehl (2015)

There are already municipalities in Germany that take greater account of the needs of children and older people and design some streets accordingly. However, in Germany the planning instruments are voluntary and are therefore not used across the board. Each municipality decides for itself whether the needs of children or older people are taken into account in planning. Often, projects are aimed at only one of the two target groups, either children or older people.

2.4 CHILD- AND SENIOR-RELATED INSTRUMENTS

OPTIONS FOR ACTION FOR MUNICIPALITIES

“Child-friendly cities” seal

Municipalities in Germany can apply for the “Child-friendly cities” seal, which is awarded by the association „Kinderfreundliche Kommunen e. V.“ (Child-Friendly Cities Association). By doing so, they demonstrate their commitment to children’s rights, involve children and young people in planning, and take care of their interests. The result is an action plan that may include measures to involve children and young people in urban development. Already 62 municipalities (as of 10/2025) are participating in the program.

Play planning

Play planning takes the interests and needs of children and young people into particular consideration. Children and young people are involved in all phases in order to create spaces for play, adventure, recreation, and exercise. The aim is to achieve an overall spatial development of the respective municipality that is suitable for children and young people, with the participation of children and young people.

Children’s route plans

Children’s route plans focus primarily on the routes that children use. The cities of Heidelberg and Kiel use their children’s route plans to identify routes that are suitable for children or that are to be redesigned to meet standards for suitable children’s routes. In Kiel, this involves a continuous city-wide route network. It runs through the respective neighbourhoods and connects the individual districts. Schools, bus and tram stops, supermarkets, daycare centres, sports halls, and playgrounds are all connected.

School route plans

School route plans aim to identify the safest route to school. The aim is to help schoolchildren get to school independently and safely. To this end, verified and suitable school routes are identified. They draw attention to difficult areas in road traffic and provide tips on how to avoid them or behave correctly. In the German federal state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, the development of school route plans is mandatory and can be carried out as part of an urban planning concept. The school route plans there also include measures to make school routes safer. These can be structural measures, but also design measures.

Municipal senior citizen planning

In Germany the needs of older people are taken into account in municipal senior citizen planning. After analysing the current situation, recommendations for action are developed, including for municipal infrastructure. The city of Beckum provides a guide for older people, covering topics such as leisure, housing, health, and mobility. It views planning for older citizens as an ongoing process and updates the “Senior Citizens’ Guide” every five years.

Participation of older people

In order to find out the needs and requirements of older people, they should be specifically involved. Digital formats can support this, but should only supplement face-to-face events. The target group is reached through senior citizens’ meetings, retirement homes, churches or other associations and clubs.

Bench programs

To support the active mobility of older people, benches should be installed on pavements for people to take breaks. The decision to implement a “bench program” or “park bench concept” can be an incentive for the local authority to install a certain number of benches within a specified time frame. The locations are often coordinated with neighbourhood or district coordination offices. This usually also involves the local senior citizens’ representatives. In addition, location suggestions are also collected in the form of submissions from citizens.

Coaching programs for older people

Increasing digitalization is making it difficult for many older people to access public transport or sharing services. Coaching programs can help here and fulfil a social purpose at the same time. One approach is “peer mentoring,” in which older people are trained as mentors and then pass on their experience to others. Youth mentoring involves younger people (e.g., students) supporting older people in using digital services. Similar programs can also be offered privately, publicized in the community, or promoted through the local authority.

Lego ramps as an interim solution

In many cities, private individuals or associations are making a creative contribution to accessibility by building Lego ramps. With the help of Lego ramps, individual steps or obstacles can be overcome more easily, even with a wheelchair, walking aids, or a stroller. The colourful ramps attract attention and can be a practical solution for everyday life. However, they do not comply with accessibility standards and do not release those responsible from their obligation to find permanent solutions. In Würzburg, the Lego ramps—inspired by the “Lego Grandma” from Hanau—were built from donated Lego bricks and made available to businesses free of charge.

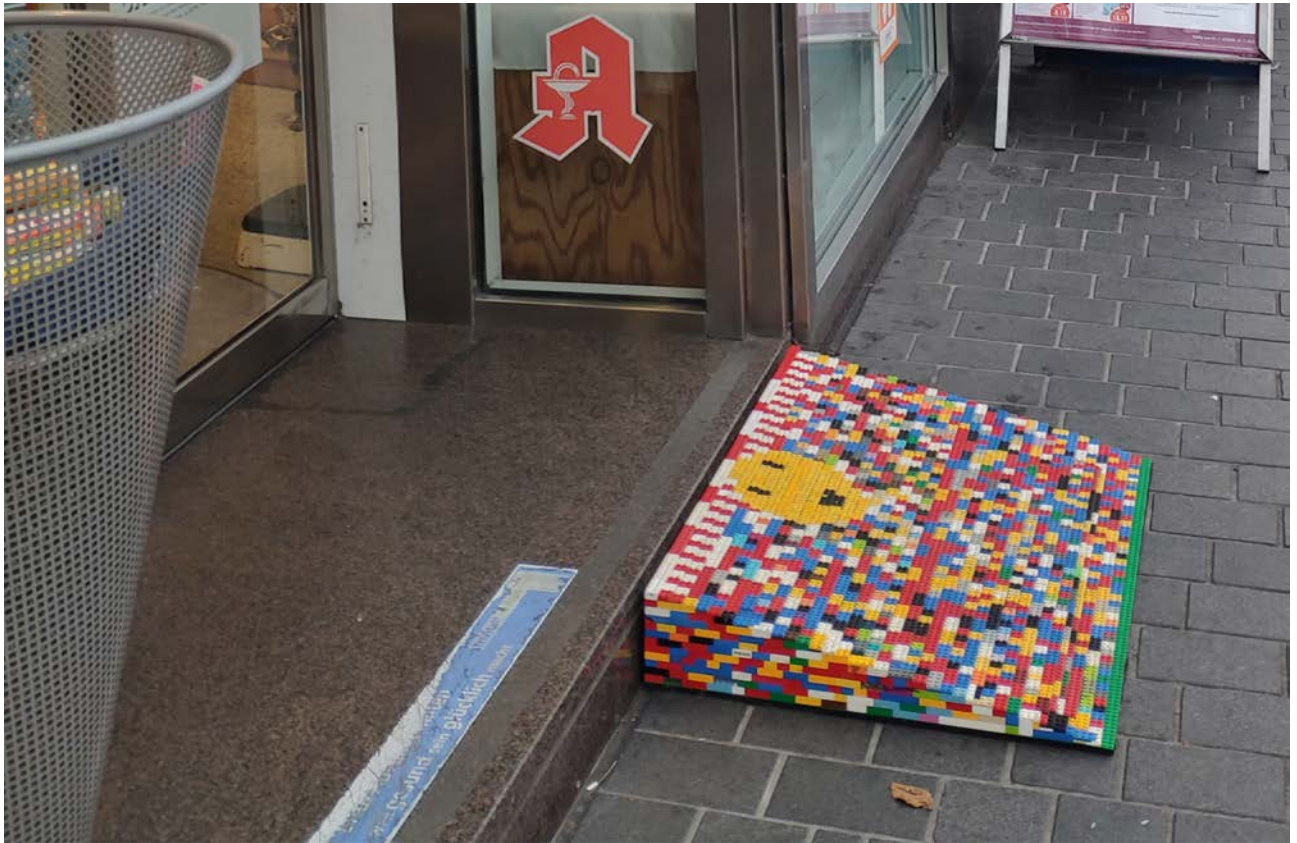


Figure 08: Lego ramp in Würzburg · Source: Planersocietät



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

3

Concepts as a source of inspiration

In practice, there are many ways to incorporate the needs of children and older people into planning. In addition to specific instruments (see section 2.4), comprehensive spatial concepts and plans make an important contribution to better aligning street space with the needs of these target groups. They can be used to provide important strategic impetus at the municipal or even regional level, address overarching issues, and achieve consistency in planning.

There are two ways to incorporate these considerations into concepts or plans:

- ▶ Targeted development of overall or partial spatial concepts that are specifically tailored to the target group.
- ▶ Inclusion in overarching (regional or sub-regional) concepts that are being developed anyway.

Specific concepts can include, for example, children's route concepts, school route plans, play area concepts, guidelines for child- or senior-friendly traffic planning, but also heat action plans for older people or concepts for barrier-free design. Overarching concepts that take into account the needs of children and older people include mobility concepts (or mobility master plans), local mobility concepts, and local transport plans.

Some municipalities are specifically addressing the needs of children and older people with overarching or specific concepts. Good examples of this are presented below.



Figure 09: Modal filter in Berlin · Source: Norbert Michalke

Pedestrian route and children's route concept, Kiel

Target group: Children

Forms of mobility: Pedestrians

Location: Kiel

Planning/implementation period: Continuous development since 2011

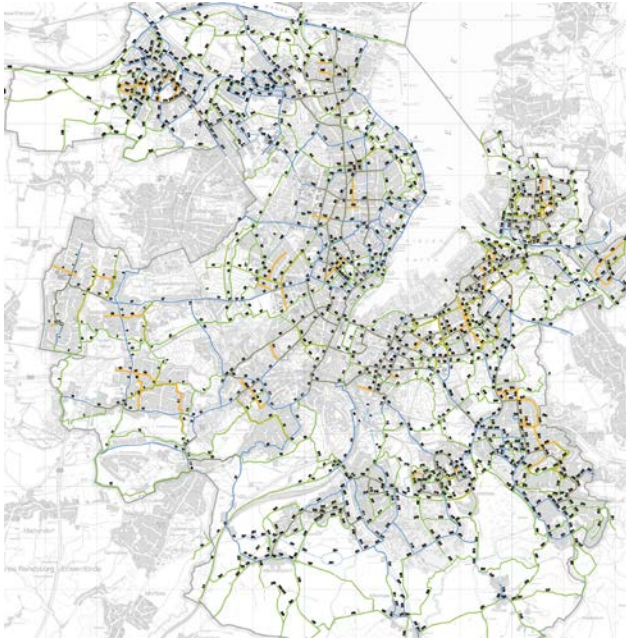


Figure 10: Map of footpath axes and children's path concept in Kiel
Source: Federal state capital Kiel



Figure 11: Opportunities for children to exercise along footpaths
Source: State capital of Kiel / Christoph Edelhoff

DESCRIPTION

The city of Kiel's footpath and children's path concept connects districts and links them to important facilities such as schools, daycare centres, and leisure facilities. It defines child-friendly paths with special standards, including varied routes, prominent crossing points every 100 to 200 meters, wide waiting areas, and child-friendly traffic lights. The project was developed on the basis of the 2008 transport development plan with the aim of creating a city-wide concept for footpaths and children's routes similar to the road network and cycle routes.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Federal state capital Kiel
- ▶ Civil Engineering Office
- ▶ Local councils
- ▶ Schools

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Development of plan for city-wide footpath network
- ▶ Sufficiently wide paths and waiting areas at crossings and public transport stops
- ▶ Play elements in the "playable neighbourhood" of Wellingdorf-Ellerbek
- ▶ Regular crossing aids such as traffic lights and zebra crossings
- ▶ Request button on traffic lights at child-friendly height

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

For a children's survey, a "travel diary for children" was distributed in elementary schools and the children's feedback was then taken into account in the design. During the updating of the concept, online participation took place in various local districts.



Figure 12: Travel diary for children as part of the participation in the pedestrian route and children's route concept
Source: Federal state capital Kiel

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The children's path network takes into account children's abilities, such as their urge to move and their curiosity, through specific standards. Varied walkways and distinctive landmarks promote motor skills and independent navigation, while wide waiting areas and child-friendly traffic lights ensure that they can move around freely. Short crossing distances and frequent crossing aids promote safety and strengthen independence.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

The concept has been developed step by step since 2011 in Kiel's 18 local council districts with the participation of local councils and citizens (planning walks). Thanks to this gradual development of the concept and the focus areas, the topics of walking, children in traffic, and accessibility are continuously being discussed in public and political debates. Pedestrians are thus increasingly being heard in public. This approach makes it possible to set aside budget funds for the walking program and to continuously implement measures based on it. In the case of larger road construction projects, deficiencies identified by the concept are being remedied. Conclusion: The effort is worthwhile, as it has both short-term and long-term effects.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Child-friendly traffic planning in Heidelberg
- ▶ Action plan for a child- and youth-friendly community in Stuttgart
- ▶ Children's city map Leipzig

The contents of the profile are based on:

Personal communication with the state capital Kiel (2025)

State capital Kiel (2018)

Neighbourhood blocks in Berlin and superblocks in Leipzig

Target group: All residents, especially families, children, and older people

Type of project: Neighbourhood design

Location: Berlin and Leipzig

Planning / implementation period: Beginning of 2020



Figure 13: Bergmannstraße shared space, Berlin
Source: Norbert Michalke



Figure 14: Street festival, Berlin
Source: Norbert Michalke

DESCRIPTION

Neighbourhood blocks and superblocks are urban districts in which through traffic is prevented by measures such as roadblocks, one-way streets, or traffic calming measures. The streets are mainly for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport. The aim is to improve the quality of life and leisure time in residential areas, promote sustainable mobility, reduce air pollution and noise, and increase traffic safety.

The concepts are inspired by the superblocks in Barcelona and the Dutch “compartments.” They were developed in response to the increasing turning away of cities from people’s needs in terms of space, safety, and quality of life.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

City of Berlin

- ▶ Residents
- ▶ Local initiatives
- ▶ District administrations
- ▶ Changing Cities e. V.
- ▶ Heidelberg University

City of Leipzig

- ▶ Residents
- ▶ Local initiatives
- ▶ District administrations
- ▶ SUPERBLOCKS Leipzig e. V.



Figure 15: Play street with street furniture Superblock Leipzig
Source: SUPERBLOCKS Leipzig e.V.



Figure 16: Modal filter Superblock Leipzig
Source: SUPERBLOCKS Leipzig e.V.

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Barriers, bollards, diagonal barriers
- ▶ One-way streets
- ▶ Speed limits
- ▶ Seating
- ▶ Greenery
- ▶ Town squares
- ▶ Delivery zones

INVOLVEMENT OF THE TARGET GROUP

Interested citizens can actively participate in the design process through formats such as World Cafés, future conferences and workshops, participatory forums, and mobile wish offices.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

Neighbourhood blocks and superblocks promote active mobility, improve quality of life, and increase traffic safety. They also make it easier to use public transportation, as walking distances to stops become more attractive due to reduced motor vehicle traffic.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

In Berlin, 36 neighbourhood blocks were politically approved, 11 of which have been (partially) implemented. The “HowToKiezblock” guide was created. The specialist conference AUF DIE STRASSE, FERTIG, LOS! (ON THE ROAD, READY, GO!) took place in Leipzig to discuss the results of the implementation in the context of lectures and site visits. The guideline “Recommendations for Superblocks–ESu 2023” was created.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Neighbourhood zones in Düsseldorf
- ▶ Networked play and meeting areas in Frankfurt
- ▶ Circulatieplan Ghent, Belgium
- ▶ Superblocks Barcelona, Spain

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with Changing Cities e. V. (2025)

SUPERBLOCKS Leipzig e. V. (n.d.)

Changing Cities e. V. (n.d.)

Sustainable Mobility Concept, Kronberg im Taunus

Target group: Schoolchildren

Forms of mobility: Active mobility, public transport and motor vehicles Location: Kronberg im Taunus (Hesse)

Planning period: 2023–2024 / Implementation: since 2024



Figure 17: Redesign of Bahnhofstraße in Kronberg im Taunus
Source: City of Kronberg im Taunus

DESCRIPTION

The sustainable mobility concept aims to promote the switch to sustainable modes of transport and to make school and play routes safer and more attractive for children and young people. Children and young people contributed their ideas in workshops. School environments were assessed by experts in terms of infrastructure suitable for children and young people. The concept complements the urban development concept developed in 2015/16 by adding the area of mobility, after previously focusing on housing, commerce, and landscape. Findings from the local mobility plan were incorporated into the development.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ City of Kronberg im Taunus
- ▶ Citizens (workshops and mobility survey)
- ▶ Children and young people (workshops)
- ▶ Interest groups (transport round table)
- ▶ Political decision-makers (mobility working group, excursions, and information events)

ELEMENTS USED

Concept with recommendations for measures such as

- ▶ Reduction of parking space
- ▶ Improvement of visibility at crossings
- ▶ Use of parent drop-off points
- ▶ Barrier-free entry, exit and transfer points in public transport with short distances
- ▶ Coordinated timetables with connection guarantees



Figure 18: Design of the Bike & Ride facility at Kronberg im Taunus station · Source: Dorbritz Architekten / Visualization ONIRISM

TARGET GROUP PARTICIPATION

As part of the project, workshops were held with children and young people as well as with interest groups (youth council, senior citizens' council, parents' initiatives).

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

Extended curbs and keeping sightlines clear help reduce the danger posed by children's height and their sometimes limited attention in traffic. By creating a child-friendly environment, children can train their motor skills and learn to move safely in traffic.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

An evaluation accompanies the implementation process of the measures and is based on quantitative and qualitative indicators.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Local mobility concept for Göttingen-South
- ▶ Local mobility plan for Hattersheim

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the city of Kronberg im Taunus (2025)

City of Kronberg im Taunus (2024)

4

Design elements suitable for children and older people: practical examples and exemplary ideal-typical visualizations

Eight areas of action play a key role in street design that is suitable for both children and older people. Each of the following areas of action is associated with numerous design elements that contribute to making street space more attractive and safer for children and older people:

4.1 Pavements and their design

Plenty of space and barrier-free travel

4.2 Cycling

Unbroken cycle path networks and secure parking facilities

4.3 Local public transport

Accessible mobility options

4.4 Crossing facilities

Crossing the road safely

4.5 Quality of stay

Places to linger, urban green spaces and social interaction

4.6 Information and communication

Easy orientation, contrasts, and symbols

4.7 Lower speeds

Slow down, stay safe

4.8 School streets and safe routes to school

Priority for actively mobile children

“This is what it could look like!”—Exemplary visualizations as a glimpse into the future

In practice, the eight fields of action cannot be separated from one another, but are closely inter-linked. Depending on the location, different measures from the fields of action are necessary and appropriate. Four visualizations illustrating typical street design situations serve to illustrate this. For the visualizations, photos of real street spaces were graphically edited using computer programs and supplemented with design aspects suitable for child- and older people. The visualizations show how measures from the eight fields of action can be ideally combined:

CYCLING SAFELY AND WITH ENJOYMENT (PAGE 34)



Figure 19: Bürgerreuther Straße, Bayreuth
Source: Planersocietät



Figure 20: Cycling safely and with pleasure
Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration

BUS STOP AREAS SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN AND OLDER PEOPLE (PAGE 40)

Initial situation



Figure 21: Jahnstraße, Geretsried
Source: Planersocietät

Exemplary visualization



Figure 22: Bus stop areas suitable for children and older people
Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration

SLOWING DOWN, CREATING SPACE AND LIVEABILITY (PAGE 50)

Initial situation



Figure 23: Rahmenstraße, Iserlohn
Source: Planersocietät

Exemplary visualization



Figure 24: Slowing down traffic, creating space and improving quality of life · Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration

THE WAY TO SCHOOL AS A SAFE PLACE OF LEARNING (PAGE 62)

Initial situation



Figure 25: Hermann-Günth-Straße, Emmendingen
Source: Planersocietät

Exemplary visualization



Figure 26: The way to school as a safe place of learning
Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration

4.1

Pavements and their design

Sufficient space and barrier-free travel

Children and older people need wide separate paths. Children can then move around safely in traffic on their own—on foot, by bike, or on a scooter, but also accompanied by their parents. Older people also need wide paths, as they are more likely to rely on mobility aids. In addition, having enough space reduces conflicts when children are playing enroute and older people need to take a break.

Pavements should be made of smooth, non-slip materials, be level and accessible, and be well maintained. Lowered curbs make it easier to walk with walkers and enable wheelchair users to use the pavement. At the same time, people with visual impairments need curbs that are clearly visible and high-contrast for orientation. The cross slope of pavements also plays a role for safety, which is why the lowest possible slope angles should be aimed for. The following aspects should be taken into account when designing pavements:

Pavements

- ▶ Sufficiently wide pavements (2.50 m)
- ▶ Free of hazards, obstructions and constricting objects
- ▶ Preventing illegal parking and parking on pavements
- ▶ Clearly defined boundaries between the carriageway and cycle paths
- ▶ Additional, separate footpaths independent of the road layout

Surfaces

- ▶ Smooth but non-slip floor coverings
- ▶ Minimal joints (“trip hazards”)
- ▶ Minimise gradients and slopes as far as possible
- ▶ High-contrast design to distinguish between traffic areas

Lighting

- ▶ Illuminate the entire width of the pavement
- ▶ Avoid dark areas and spaces that cause anxiety

Railings and barriers at hazardous locations

- ▶ Implement if necessary for protection
- ▶ Attractive design
- ▶ Height suitable for children
- ▶ Design as a bicycle parking area (bicycle racks)

Steps and ramps

- ▶ High-contrast design and special marking of the first and last steps
- ▶ Handrail (strictly mandatory for three or more steps), also at child height
- ▶ Possible incorporation of playful elements



Figure 27: Independent footpath, Bayreuth
Source: Planersocietät

Stuttgart Rectangles, Stuttgart

Target group: All age groups

Forms of mobility: Walking

Location: Stuttgart

Planning period: from 2017 / Implementation: from 2021



Figure 28: Stuttgart Rectangles · Source: Planersocietät



Figure 29: Stuttgart Rectangles · Source: Felix Märker

DESCRIPTION

As part of the walking strategy for the city of Stuttgart, the Stuttgart Rectangle was developed as a multifunctional area. This is intended to accommodate objects that would otherwise be placed on the pavement in a rectangle, so that the pavement remains freely accessible.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ City of Stuttgart

ELEMENTS USED

The multi-purpose area is used to accommodate items such as seating, bicycle racks, e-scooters, parking ticket machines, electrical boxes, litter bins, customer display stands or signs

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

Clear pavements improve mobility for people with visual impairments and wheelchair users. People with disabilities can also get around more easily, as bottlenecks and obstacles are minimized.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

Further potential locations for these rectangles have been identified. Around 10 rectangles are to be implemented each year.

The contents of this profile are based on:

State Capital Stuttgart (2017)

Smooth paving, Ladenburg

Target group: Older people and people with limited mobility

Forms of mobility: Active mobility

Location: Kirchenstraße, Ladenburg

Planning/implementation period: Implementation 2020/2021



Figure 30: Smooth paving, Ladenburg
Source: Planersocietät

DESCRIPTION

The use of polished paving stones to create a barrier-free, level surface is intended to promote active mobility. The surface makes it easier for people with limited mobility to use. Moving around on natural stone paving is very time-consuming and strenuous for those affected, as well as risky. Falls caused by uneven paving pose a high risk of injury. Level surfaces enable the use of pavements with various aids. At the same time, the attractive cityscape is preserved thanks to the paving stones.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ City of Ladenburg
- ▶ Archaeological monument preservation, RP Stuttgart

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Barrier-free natural stone paving

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

- ▶ Resident participation in 2019 and 2020

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The accessible natural stone paving makes it easier for older people, people using mobility aids (walkers, wheelchairs), people with pushchairs and children on scooters to get about. The improved accessibility of paths promotes independent living and social participation.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

Positive feedback from the public regarding the compatibility of the old town's appearance and accessibility.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Barrier-free cobblestones in Rothenburg ob der Tauber
- ▶ Comfort strips in Calw
- ▶ Comfort strips in Münster

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the city of Ladenburg (2024)

4.2

Cycling

Continuous bicycle path networks and secure parking facilities

Physically separated bike paths and bike lanes or advisory bike lanes on the road increase the feeling of safety and help to avoid conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians, and motor vehicles. This benefits all cyclists, but especially children and older people due to their specific mental and physical characteristics.

Structurally separate bike lanes should be wide enough for overtaking and offer sufficient space for children. For faster e-bikes, which are increasingly used by older people, bike lanes or advisory bike lanes should be provided on the roadway. At intersections and junctions, good visibility is crucial so that children in particular can be seen by motorists in good time and can see far ahead themselves.

The following aspects should be taken into account when it comes to cycling:

Bicycle paths

- ▶ Visual or structural separation of the roadway and pavement
- ▶ Sufficiently wide bike paths with a level, non-slip surface

Bicycle parking facilities

- ▶ Easily accessible and close to the respective destination
- ▶ Sturdy and theft-proof (also for e-bikes)
- ▶ Covered
- ▶ Special areas for children's bicycles and scooters, bicycle trailers, and cargo bikes

Rest areas / toilets

- ▶ Rest areas on tourist cycle routes
- ▶ Seating
- ▶ Information for orientation
- ▶ Shade
- ▶ Drinking water
- ▶ Toilets
- ▶ Barrier-free design

Cycle network, cycle route to school

- ▶ Thinking about cycling infrastructure in terms of a network
- ▶ Connecting cycling starting points and destinations
- ▶ High priority for school routes and their feeder roads

Lighting

- ▶ Adequate lighting of the cycle path to minimize the risk of accidents

Surface

- ▶ Smooth surface that is easy to ride on
- ▶ Sealed to prevent clothing and bikes from getting dirty



Figure 31: Bicycle-friendly street (Fahrradstraße)
Source: Norbert Michalke

Barrier-free tourist cycle network, Bad Dürkheim district / Neustadt an der Weinstraße

Target group: People with limited mobility; older people; families with children

Forms of mobility: Cycling

Location: Bad Dürkheim district and Neustadt an der Weinstraße

Planning/implementation period: 2018 feasibility study; 2019 funding application (REACT-EU); end of 2021 approval and start of implementation; end of 2023 implementation of all measures; spring 2024 certified according to the German certification “Accessible Travel or All” (RfA); April 2024 official approval



Figure 32: Accessible cycle path, Forst an der Weinstraße
Source: DZT / Jens Wegener

DESCRIPTION

The barrier-free cycle network was developed to create an inclusive and universally accessible tourist offering. Measures have been implemented along around 80 kilometres to make cycle paths safer and more accessible for people with limited mobility, older people, and children. The network also makes it easier to plan individual tours. The project was created as a connecting element of the tourist services in the pilot region for barrier-free tourism in Rhineland-Palatinate and is the first officially certified cycle network of its kind in the federal state.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Participating municipalities (Bad Dürkheim district, Bad Dürkheim town, Wachenheim and Deidesheim municipalities, Haßloch municipality, Neustadt an der Weinstraße)
- ▶ Ministry of Economic Affairs, Transport, Agriculture, and Viticulture of Rhineland-Palatinate
- ▶ State Office for Mobility Rhineland-Palatinate
- ▶ Tourism organizations (German Wine Route Association—Mittelhaardt, Pfalztourismus e. V. (Palatinate Tourism Association))
- ▶ Disability representatives
- ▶ Farmers and winegrowers

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Expansion of barrier-free, flat, and wide cycle paths with signage
- ▶ Rest areas with wheelchair-accessible tables and wheelchair-accessible sanitary facilities

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

There was close cooperation with an experienced planning office and the involvement of disability representatives (pilot project).



Figure 33: Accessible cycle path, Forst an der Weinstraße
Source: DZT / Jens Wegener



Figure 34: Accessible handbike tour along Bliestal Freizeitweg,
Blieskastel · Source: Julia Wolf, freiheitswerk

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

Wide, level paths with sufficient turning areas make cycling easier and support the subjective and objective safety of users. Likewise, lowered curbs, crossing aids, low gradients (< 6%), and accessible sanitary facilities enable low-threshold access. Information systems and special signage (in line with Rhineland-Palatinate guidelines on accessible signage) improve navigation. Thanks to the good infrastructure along the network and the possibility of individually planned tours, the network enables low barrier and barrier-free cycling experiences.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

The barrier-free cycling network has been certified by the responsible Berlin association German Tourism Association (DSFT) Berlin in accordance with the “Travel for All” guidelines and meets DSFT Level I criteria for people with walking disabilities and wheelchair users. It has been nominated for the Rhineland-Palatinate Tourism Award. Scientific studies on usage, surface, and construction methods are currently being prepared for evaluation.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Handbike Weltenburg Tour Kelheim
- ▶ Barrier-free cycle paths in Oberstdorf
- ▶ Handbike tour Bliestal Freizeitweg (leisure trail) Blieskastel

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the district of Bad Dürkheim (2025)

Estelmann (2024)

City of Neustadt an der Weinstraße (no date)

Initial situation



Exemplary visualisation—This is what it could look like!

SAFE AND ENJOYABLE CYCLING

The following aspects are crucial to ensuring that children and older people can ride their bikes safely:

1. A wide and clearly marked cycle path that is physically separated from the carriageway and the pavement.
2. Sufficient distance between the cycle lane and the carriageway provides safety for cyclists.
3. The footpath and cycle path are separated by a (drive-over) kerb.
4. The carriageway and the areas next to it are well lit.
5. A covered bicycle parking facility, a charging station for electric bikes, and a bicycle repair stand.
6. A protected bike lane separated from the carriageway by fixed elements provides the necessary safety.
7. Plants enhance the street environment and at the same time ensure the safety of cyclists (planters).
8. Trees provide shade, improve the microclimate, and make the space attractive.
9. Signposts and information boards (e.g., with a map of the surrounding area) enable good orientation.
10. The pedestrian crossing leads across the cycle path and the carriageway, is well lit, and clearly marked.
11. The pavement is lowered and set back in the area of the zebra crossing, so that pedestrians can wait there (waiting area) and the distance they have to cross is also shortened.

For the visualisations, a real-life situation has been adapted to meet the requirements of child- and senior-friendly design as fully as possible. The design Elements used are labelled and accompanied by an explanation. Information on the individual design elements can be found in the chapter 'Practice examples' (from page 26).



Figure 35: Exemplary visualization: Cycling safely and enjoyably
Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration

Bicycle-friendly street (Fahrradstraße) axis Deutenberg school centre, Villingen-Schwenningen

Target group: All age groups, especially schoolchildren

Forms of mobility: Cycling

Location: Villingen-Schwenningen

Planning/implementation period: 2022–2024



Figure 36: Bicycle-friendly street axis, Villingen-Schwenningen
Source: Ansgar Kundinger

DESCRIPTION

The project aims to promote safe cycling by developing a continuous bicycle-friendly street (Fahrradstraße) that is particularly suitable for schoolchildren. Based on the school route plan, the route was designated a priority route in the 2022 cycling concept. In addition to resurfacing the road, intersections were redesigned and the priority changed in some places. Iterative and small, effective measures (quick wins) complement the implementation.

For example, space for cyclists was gained by reorganizing parking spaces and relocating glass collection containers. The bicycle-friendly street axis was derived from the 2014 school route plan for the Deutenberg school centre. In the future, feeder roads and extensions will also be designed to be bicycle-friendly.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ City of Villingen-Schwenningen
- ▶ District (for road links)

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Designation of priority routes in the cycling plan, which is revised every two years
- ▶ Establishment of bicycle-friendly street (Fahrradstraße)
- ▶ (Prioritised) road resurfacing

- ▶ Change of right-of-way relationships at junctions
- ▶ Reduction of public parking spaces
- ▶ Mini roundabout
- ▶ Priority road with a bend
- ▶ Markings
- ▶ Bike lanes
- ▶ Updated signage

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

The students participated via the school route plan.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The bicycle-friendly street (Fahrradstraße), in conjunction with school route planning, promotes independent and safe participation in road traffic. Motor skills and awareness of dangers are sharpened. Students aged 12 and older in particular can deepen their understanding of traffic and practice their skills. Furthermore, social interactions are facilitated and space for physical exercise is created.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

Shortly before implementation, a permanent counting station was set up to record changes. There are still (too) many parent taxis and cars on the bicycle-friendly street (Fahrradstraße). After a longer survey phase adjustments will be made, if necessary. Speed checks were carried out because there were fears that speeds would increase due to the right-of-way rule. These fears have not been confirmed. It appears that the bicycle parking facility is already at full capacity shortly after its construction.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Bicycle-friendly street axes in Essen
- ▶ Bicycle-friendly street axis in Oldenburg
- ▶ Bicycle-friendly street axes in Munich

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the city of Villingen-Schwenningen (2024)

agfk Baden-Wuerttemberg (2022)

City of Villingen-Schwenningen (no date)

4.3 Public transport

Accessible mobility services

Using local public transport must be as easy as possible for children and older people. Their requirements are essentially comparable to those of other passengers: these include frequent services, punctuality, and easy-to-understand connections.

Sufficiently large waiting areas are needed so that children do not step onto the road due to lack of space or while playing, and older people have enough space, especially if they rely on aids such as walkers. Stops should be easily accessible and barrier-free so that all passengers can get on and off easily. Covered seating, clear signage, and stop announcements in vehicles are also necessary. Children and older people depend on early, clear and understandable announcements so that they do not miss their stop.

The following aspects are important for local public transport:

Stops

- ▶ Short distances to the stop
- ▶ Crossing aids in the vicinity of the stop
- ▶ Wide access routes

Stop design

- ▶ Barrier-free design (step-free, with guide elements, contrasting edges)
- ▶ Sufficiently large and visible waiting area
- ▶ Lighting and weather protection
- ▶ Cleanliness and rubbish bins
- ▶ Seating
- ▶ Clear signage and information about the services offered

Services and additional services

- ▶ Apps, services
- ▶ Services that do not require a smartphone



Figure 37: Accessible bus stop, Düsseldorf · Source: Planersocietät

GreenSAM—Green mobility solutions for the 60+ generation, Hamburg

Target group: Older people

Forms of mobility: Focus on public transport

Location: Hamburg-Eimsbüttel (especially Lokstedt)

Planning/implementation period: 2019–2021



Figure 38: Results of a planning workshop with older people · Source: Hanseatic City of Hamburg

DESCRIPTION

The project promotes sustainable and active mobility tailored to the needs of older people, who are involved in the design processes. The Eimsbüttel pilot project focuses on transfer points for eco-friendly transport suitable for older people and the improvement of public spaces. Requirements developed in a participatory process, such as barrier-free design, good lighting, safe crossings, comfortable seating, bicycle parking spaces, orientation aids, and services were summarized in guidelines and implemented in exemplary fashion, e.g., at Eidelstedter Platz.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Eimsbüttel District Office
- ▶ Eimsbüttel Senior Citizens' Advisory Council
- ▶ Traffic planners
- ▶ Hochbahn (Hamburg public transport company)
- ▶ Project partners in the municipalities of Aarhus, Gdańsk, Riga, Tartu, Turku, and Valonia/ Southwest Finland Region

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Participation process
- ▶ Guidelines with recommendations for action
- ▶ Accessibility through tactile elements
- ▶ Seating and leaning options
- ▶ Planting
- ▶ Lighting

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

A number of participatory events were held (e.g. workshops, neighbourhood walks), during which the specific needs of older people were identified, with a view to using these to develop recommendations for action and measures.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The project addressed the issue of accessibility in particular. It takes into account the increased safety needs of older people as well as physical and psychological barriers and obstacles. The quality of the environment has been increased and orientation improved. The improvement of transfer points for eco-friendly transport promotes walking, cycling and the use of public transport by older people.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

One result is a guide for transfer points particularly suitable for older people. In addition, exemplary measures are being implemented and evaluated at one transfer point (Eidelstedter Platz).

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Comprehensive policy concept for older people for the district of Unterallgäu
- ▶ Guidelines for local authority mobility management for older people in Euskirchen
- ▶ Guide to 'Age-friendly Cities' in Moers

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg (Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg) (2025)

Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg (2024)

Mobisaar—Mobility for all, Saarland

Target group: People with limited mobility

Forms of mobility: Public transport

Location: Saarland

Planning/implementation period: From 2015



Figure 39: Assisted travel service on public transport in Saarland
Source: Saarländische Nahverkehrs-Service GmbH

DESCRIPTION

The services and technologies developed in the mobisaar project break down barriers in public transport and increase the attractiveness of public transport services. People with limited mobility benefit from individual assistance tailored to their specific needs. Guides offer assistance with boarding and alighting, as well as with orientation and the use of ticket machines. This makes it easier for people with limited mobility in Saarland to access local public transport.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Project sponsor: VDI/VDE Innovation + Technik GmbH
- ▶ Project partner: Saarländische Nahverkehrs-Service GmbH
- ▶ Network coordination: saarVV-SNS Saarländische Nahverkehrs-Service GmbH

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Traffic guides
- ▶ Booking: digitally, by phone or with spontaneous support at selected locations

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

In addition to safety, independence and social participation are promoted. The range of activities for people with limited mobility is expanded.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

Around 800 people use the service regularly and approximately 80% of the population in Saarland can benefit from the service.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Bamberg rickshaw for older people Bamberg
- ▶ Rute rage-friendly transport (RAT) Oslo, Norway
- ▶ Einsteigerbus East Frisia region

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with Saarländische Nahverkehrs-Service GmbH (Saarland Local Transport Service Company) (2024)
Saarländische Nahverkehrs-Service GmbH (n.d.)

Initial situation



Exemplary visualisation—This is what it could look like!

CHILD- AND SENIOR-FRIENDLY BUS STOPS AREAS

To ensure that local public transport is barrier-free, measures need to be taken in the vicinity of stops:

1. A sufficiently large waiting area for passengers, a covered stop with seating and waste bins.
2. A raised curb allows level entry and exit.
3. A digital display ensures that information is always up to date.
4. Good lighting ensures that people can see well and be seen.
5. A barrier-free zebra crossing makes it easier for everyone to cross the road.
6. Visually impaired people rely on high-contrast guide elements to find their way around.
7. “Footprints” show children safe routes and add a playful element to the path.
8. Secure bicycle parking spaces at bus stops increase their catchment area.

For the visualizations, a real-life situation was adapted to meet the requirements for a child- and senior-friendly design as comprehensively as possible. The design Elements used are labeled and accompanied by an explanation. Information on the individual design elements can be found in the chapter ‘Practice examples’ (starting on page 26).



Figure 40: Exemplary visualization: Child- and senior-friendly bus stop areas
Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration

4.4

Crossings

Crossing the street safely

For children and older people, two things are crucial when crossing the road: a short crossing distance, i.e. a shorter distance that they have to walk on the road, and good visibility.

Extended curbs, traffic refuge islands, and similar aids shorten the distance and thus the time spent on the road. All crossing aids reduce the complexity of the situation and help children in particular to find their way around on their own. Barrier-free and lowered curbs make it easier to walk and to carry balance bikes, bicycles, scooters, walkers, strollers, or luggage, as well as to travel in a wheelchair.

Carefully designed crossing aids help to ensure that children and older people are more visible and have a good overview themselves. Crossing points should therefore have waiting areas with good visibility and adequate lighting. The following aspects should be taken into account when designing crossing aids:

Curb extensions

- ▶ Create good visibility
- ▶ 30–70 cm beyond the parking lane boundary into the carriageway
- ▶ No obstruction of visibility by parked vehicles, rubbish bins, billboards, etc.

Pedestrian refuge islands

- ▶ Good visibility of pedestrians crossing the road, especially children
- ▶ Strong contrasts in their design
- ▶ Barrier-free design
- ▶ No obstruction of view by traffic signs
- ▶ Sufficient width of the refuge island (also for bicycles)
- ▶ Protection against being run over either through design or reflective markings

Pedestrian crossings (zebra crossings)

- ▶ Highly visible markings on the road
- ▶ Good lighting
- ▶ Sufficiently large waiting area for groups
- ▶ Clear view for and of those waiting (no parking spaces in the immediate vicinity)
- ▶ 30 km/h speed limit in the surrounding area
- ▶ If necessary, traffic refuge island and raised road sections to reduce speed

Traffic lights

- ▶ Good visibility of the traffic lights and traffic light signals (even in sunlight)
- ▶ Clear separation between the waiting area and the carriageway, while also ensuring barrier-free design
- ▶ Sufficiently long green phase for pedestrians (clearance time)
- ▶ Acoustic signal
- ▶ Priority for pedestrians and cyclists (over motor vehicle traffic)
- ▶ Avoid “right turn on red” sign (Germany-specific road sign called “Grünpfeil”) (high risk potential)

Underpasses/overpasses

- ▶ Easily accessible and barrier-free access routes
- ▶ Structural separation between footpaths and cycle paths
- ▶ Permanent lighting and coloured design for underpasses
- ▶ Railings that prevent climbing and falling



Figure 41: Accessible pedestrian crossing
Source: Planersocietät

Laser pedestrian crossing, Heiden

Target group: All
Forms of mobility: Walking
Location: Heiden
Planning/implementation period: 2024



Figure 42: Illuminated pedestrian crossing with laser and LED technology · Source: Blömen VuS



Figure 43: Laser beams create a carpet of light over the pedestrian crossing · Source: Blömen VuS

DESCRIPTION

The innovative pedestrian crossing is designed to ensure greater safety for pedestrians, especially in darkness or poor weather conditions. Sensors detect people approaching the pedestrian crossing. The flashing light triggered by the sensors attracts attention to the pedestrian. At dusk, a laser light is also used to illuminate the pedestrian crossing like a carpet of light, thereby highlighting people crossing the road.

The system includes automated traffic counting and is suitable for retrofitting existing pedestrian crossings. The pilot project in Heiden (North Rhine-Westphalia) is being scientifically monitored by RWTH Aachen University.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Municipality of Heiden
- ▶ RWTH Aachen University

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Four posts fitted with sensors, lasers and LEDs

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

Health restrictions, distractions, or poor visibility can lead to dangerous situations when pedestrians are crossing the road. Laser and LED technology ensures better visibility of pedestrians, warning drivers in good time. Good visibility when crossing is particularly important for children and older people, as they find it difficult to gauge the intentions of drivers. This allows them to be safer on the road without needing to be accompanied by someone else. Everyone else who crosses the road at pedestrian crossings also benefits from this safety measure.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

Residents report that drivers' behaviour has changed and that they are now more cautious at pedestrian crossings.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Laser pedestrian crossings in Olpe and Emsdetten
- ▶ Children's zebra crossing in Kerpen
- ▶ Talking traffic lights on Schützenstraße/ Schießhausallee in Neu-Ulm

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with Blömen VuS (2025)

Blömen VuS (n.d.)

Maggi Tunnel, Singen

Target group: Schoolchildren
Forms of mobility: Walking / public transport
Location: Singen
Planning/implementation period: 2019



Figure 44: Maggi Tunnel, Singen - Source: Planersocietät

DESCRIPTION

The pedestrian tunnel in Singen is an important link between the inner city, the northern part of the city, and the southern part of Singen. It leads directly from the train station under the tracks. The formerly dreary underpass has been upgraded with 100 different colour fields and light strips. In addition, schoolchildren from Singen designed 120 mythical creatures to decorate the underpass.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Builder-owner: Singen municipal administration, building department
- ▶ Building yard
- ▶ Schoolchildren

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ New lighting with motion detectors
- ▶ Emergency power supply and emergency lighting
- ▶ Video surveillance, cameras at the entrances to the track area and entrances to the elevators
- ▶ Entrance structure on Bahnhofstraße equipped with new safety glass
- ▶ Tactile guidance system added, studded tiles in contrasting colours, bicycle rail moved, handrail retained
- ▶ New elevator to Julius-Bührer Straße put into operation in 2023
- ▶ Fully accessible passage from Bahnhofstraße

PARTICIPATION OF THE TARGET GROUP

75 Year 5 pupils from Singen took part in this project as part of a workshop. The children's animal drawings were transferred and laser-cut from sheet steel by a company. The animals were then assembled. There were also inspections with disability representatives and the association for the blind.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The lighting and colourful design have transformed what was once a potentially intimidating space. The improved quality of the environment and the enhanced (subjective) sense of safety encourage active mobility and the use of the footpath connection. The participation process resulted in a high level of identification with the redesigned area.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

The Maggi Tunnel has become a positive highlight of the city of Singen.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Mörfelder Straße Kelsterbach S-Bahn underpass
- ▶ Colourful Mainkur Tunnel, Mainkur Station, Frankfurt

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the City of Singen (Hohentwiel) (2024)

Ministry of Transport of Baden-Württemberg (n.d.)

Juliusstraße / Broitzemer Straße, Braunschweig

Target group: All age groups, especially people with limited mobility

Forms of mobility: Spending time, lingering

Location: Residential area, Juliusstraße / Broitzemer Straße, Braunschweig

Planning period: 2014–2015 / **Implementation:** 2017–2018



Figure 45: Redesign of the Juliusstraße / Broitzemer Straße junction, Braunschweig · Source: Stadt Braunschweig

DESCRIPTION

The project aims to improve the quality of life and reduce motor vehicle traffic. Narrowing a very wide carriageway reduces speeds whilst creating an attractive, square-like public space that was previously lacking.

Barrier-free crossings improve pedestrian connections. Juliusstraße was rerouted and narrowed, creating a square with seating. The road cross-sections now meet the requirements of a 30 km/h zone. Instead of asphalt, uniform sand-beige paving was used, and lowered curbs facilitate barrier-free crossing. The junction of Juliusstraße and Broitzemer Straße was identified by the city as unsafe and confusing in the past. Previous measures such as markings and bollards had not sufficiently improved the situation, making a more comprehensive redesign necessary.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ City of Braunschweig

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Seating
- ▶ Bollards
- ▶ Greening (trellises, tree pits)
- ▶ Paving, as the expansion is level
- ▶ Kassel barrier-free kerbstone
- ▶ Bollard lights
- ▶ Uniform paving of the square and road surface
- ▶ Waste bins

PARTICIPATION OF THE TARGET GROUP

Information was provided to citizens. In addition, a redevelopment advisory board called “Social City—Western Ring Area” was established.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

Barrier-free design and crossing aids within the street environment enable people with limited mobility to move around independently. Narrowing the carriageway reduces the crossing distance and slows down vehicles, resulting in a clearer traffic situation. Seating provides an opportunity for rest and social interaction. This benefits everyone, but especially older people, people with disabilities, and children.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

The square and the benches have been well received. There is also a desire for a weekly market (use of the square).

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Glomfjord town centre, Norway
- ▶ Meeting place “Ankerplatz” IBA Hamburg
- ▶ Wellingdorf living room, Kiel
- ▶ Georg-Pfingsten-Straße/Kaiserstraße, Kiel

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the city of Braunschweig (2024)

City of Braunschweig (2024)

Quality of the environment

Places to linger, urban greenery, and social interaction

Seating is particularly important for the quality of the environment, especially for older people. It increases their range of movement, but also allows children to take breaks. Like all people, children and older people feel more comfortable and safer in a clean, well-maintained, and aesthetically pleasing environment, so they prefer to spend time there. For safety, places must be well lit, lively, and easily visible. Trees and canopies provide shade in summer and protection from rain.

Children also need spaces for play and learning on their everyday journeys, which should not be limited to playgrounds. These should be designed in such a way that children can move around freely without being endangered by cars or other vehicles. The following aspects should be taken into account when considering the quality of the environment:

Seating and seating areas

- ▶ At short intervals along important routes
- ▶ Raised seating and armrests
- ▶ Play elements that can also be used for sitting
- ▶ Consider views and lines of sight
- ▶ Waste bins next to benches

Shade and weather protection

- ▶ On playgrounds, at bus stops and rest areas, and on everyday routes
- ▶ Pavilions with seating areas
- ▶ Canopies or arcades for protection from rain and sun
- ▶ Deciduous trees with dense foliage

Plantings

- ▶ Rows of trees lining streets, plant beds, and planters, green strips, flowering meadows
- ▶ Greenery for shade and cooling
- ▶ Trees for children to climb
- ▶ Select trees and other plants with climate change in mind

Lighting

- ▶ Sufficiently bright lighting of the street extending into the areas next to the carriageway
- ▶ Continuous and comprehensive maintenance

Recreation areas

- ▶ Places that invite people to spend more time there
- ▶ Play facilities for children, areas for the use of bicycles, scooters, or skateboards
- ▶ Accessible seating and tables
- ▶ Planting, shade/weather protection, drinking water dispensers, waste bins, publicly accessible toilets

Exercise elements/play equipment

- ▶ Colourful markings that invite play
- ▶ Intergenerational equipment or play elements
- ▶ Balance beams or walls that also serve as seating
- ▶ Use play elements away from walking areas (avoid obstacles)
- ▶ Markings, graphics, or patterns on the ground that encourage movement and guide children to safe traffic areas

Public toilets

- ▶ Good accessibility
- ▶ Clean and safe



Figure 46: Improving the quality of the environment in the real-world laboratory, Mainz · Source: Planersocietät

Bench programme, Berlin

Target group: All age groups, especially older people

Forms of mobility: Walking, spending time

Location: Berlin

Planning/implementation period: 2023

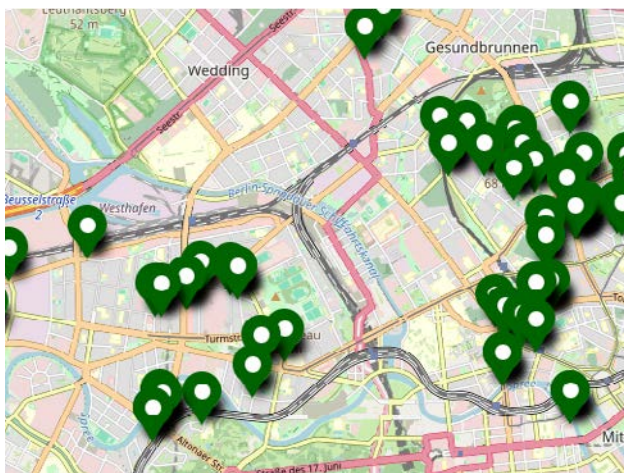


Figure 47: Online map of benches in the public realm, Berlin
Source: State of Berlin

DESCRIPTION

The aim of the “Bench Program” is to promote mobility and improve the quality of life for older people in public spaces by installing a total of 300 new benches. In 2023, 100 new benches were installed. Suitable locations for the benches are identified in cooperation with the respective district and various initiatives such as the district’s disability officer and FUSS e. V. (German Pedestrian Association)

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Department of Roads and Green Spaces
- ▶ Involvement of neighbourhood coordination groups and the mobility council

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Benches

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

The seating allows older people to rest regularly. This increases their range of activity in public spaces and allows them to remain active and mobile for longer. It also promotes their social interaction and participation in society.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Wish benches Korntal-Münchingen
- ▶ Bench concept in Binningen, Switzerland

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with Bezirksamt Mitte, Berlin (Berlin Mitte District Office) (2024)

Bezirksamt Mitte von Berlin (n.d.)

Berlin (City-state of Berlin) (2024)

Häppy—the swing path, Hechingen

Target group: Children and families
Forms of mobility: Walking
Location: Hechingen in the Zollernalb district
Planning/implementation period: 2020



Figure 48: Overview of Obertorplatz, Hechingen
 Source: Martin Keidel



Figure 49: Stream on Obertorplatz, Hechingen
 Source: Roland Beck

DESCRIPTION

The aim is to create an inviting four-kilometre circular trail that encourages visitors to linger and explore. The trail, which is child-friendly and accessible with prams, leads through green spaces and urban areas and includes various play and exercise elements such as swings, fitness and exercise equipment, and a barefoot park. The design also integrates existing leisure facilities.

The Häppy-Schaukelweg encourages the whole family to take a walk through the city, parking the car outside the city centre and exploring Hechingen on foot. At the same time, as part of the redevelopment of Obertorplatz in the town centre, a 20 km/h zone and an area featuring play and water features (with a cooling effect) were created. An interactive map and designated parking spaces facilitate access. The project arose as part of an urban discussion on how to revitalize the city centre. The Schaukelweg was planned and implemented by the city administration in cooperation with an urban designer. Sponsorship funds helped with the financing.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ City of Hechingen
- ▶ Urban designer Martina Eberle



Figure 50: Bachlauf auf dem Obertorplatz, Hechingen
Source: Roland Beck



Figure 51: Meditation swing on Schaukelweg, Hechingen
Source: Martina Eberle

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Special swings
- ▶ Play equipment
- ▶ Water elements
- ▶ Fitness and exercise equipment
- ▶ Barefoot park
- ▶ Visitor's toilet
- ▶ Inclusive swing
- ▶ Interactive map
- ▶ 20 km/h zone

PARTICIPATION OF THE TARGET GROUP

Families with children were involved in the project as the key target group. A preliminary survey was conducted to identify their wishes and needs in order to better tailor the measures to their expectations. The results of this survey were directly incorporated into the design, which was intended to be both child-friendly and family-oriented.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

A variety of play options promote children's motor skills, creativity, and interaction. In the barefoot park and on the exercise equipment, different age groups can improve their sensory perception. Many car-free routes and designated parking spaces create a safe environment. This encourages people to be more actively mobile.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

From the outset (opening in fall 2020), this project attracted thousands of visitors to the city. The revitalization of the city centre is particularly noticeable in the afternoons and on weekends. Reviews have been consistently positive.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Active village tour of Wülfershausen
- ▶ alla hopp! facilities in the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan region

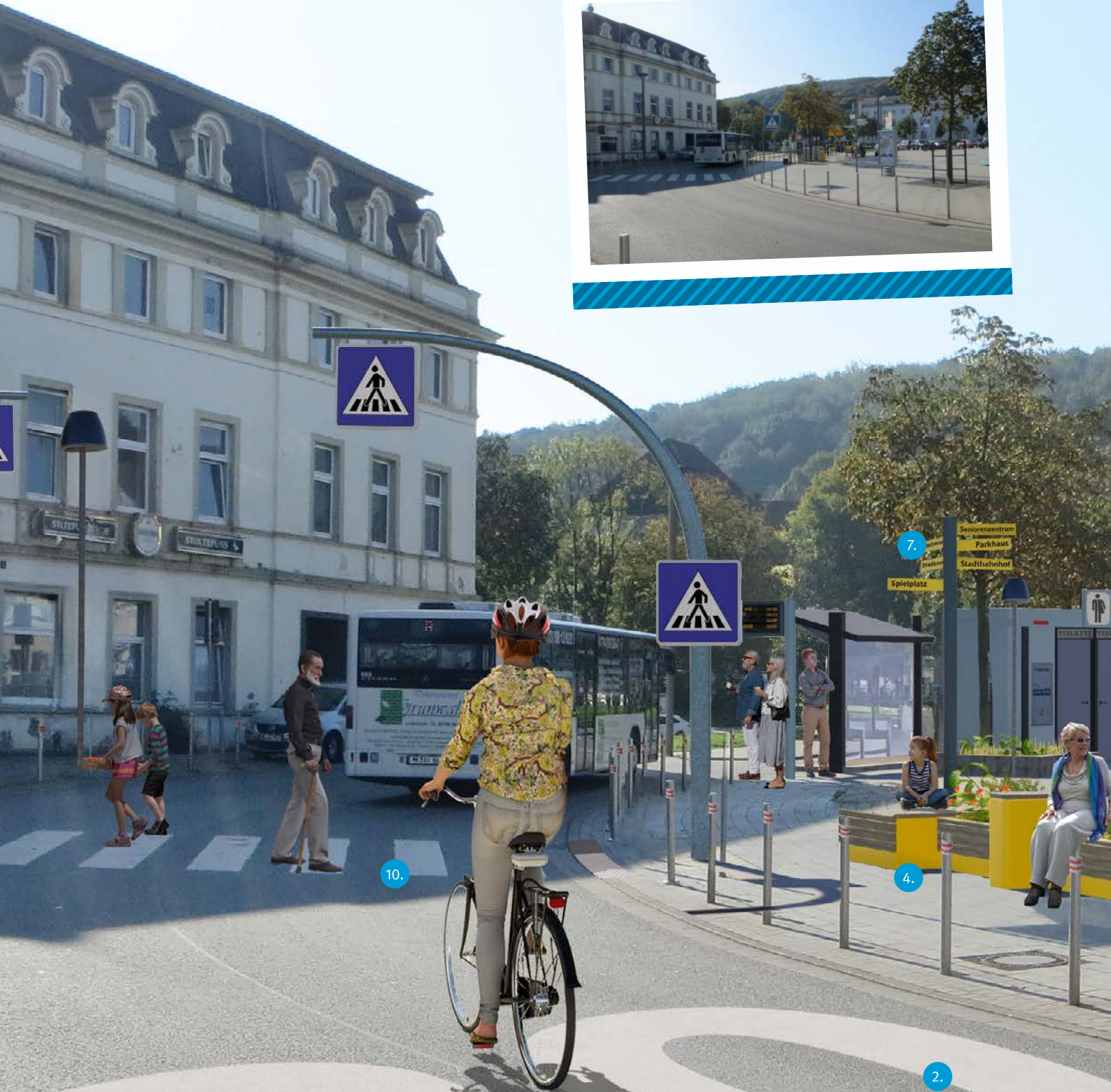
The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the city of Hechingen (2025)

Eberle (n.d.)

City of Hechingen (n.d.)

Initial situation



Exemplary visualisation—This is what it could look like!

SLOW DOWN, SPACE, AND CREATE A PLEASANT ENVIRONMENT

Numerous elements contribute to children and older people feeling comfortable in traffic:

1. A pedestrian and recreational area clearly separated from the road, with a level, non-slip surface that is also suitable for wheelchairs, walkers and scooters.
2. The 30 km/h traffic calming measure is clearly marked on the road for all to see.
3. Prominent bollards separate the pavement from the road.
4. A variety of seating options that are attractive to both children and people with limited mobility.
5. A public toilet in a central location is particularly important for older people.
6. Trees and other plants provide shade and make the street environment more attractive.
7. Signposts make it easier to find your way around.
8. Public drinking fountains benefit not only children and older people.
9. A central, covered bicycle parking facility with e-charging options ensures safety and convenience.
10. A safe crossing near the bus stop.
11. Play equipment along the path, positioned at a safe distance from the road, provides opportunities for children to play.
12. A sun shade provides weather protection for children playing as well as for older people.

For the visualizations, a real-life situation was modified to meet the requirements for a child- and senior-friendly design as comprehensively as possible. The design Elements used are marked and accompanied by an explanation. Information on the individual design elements can be found in the chapter 'Practice examples' (from page 26).

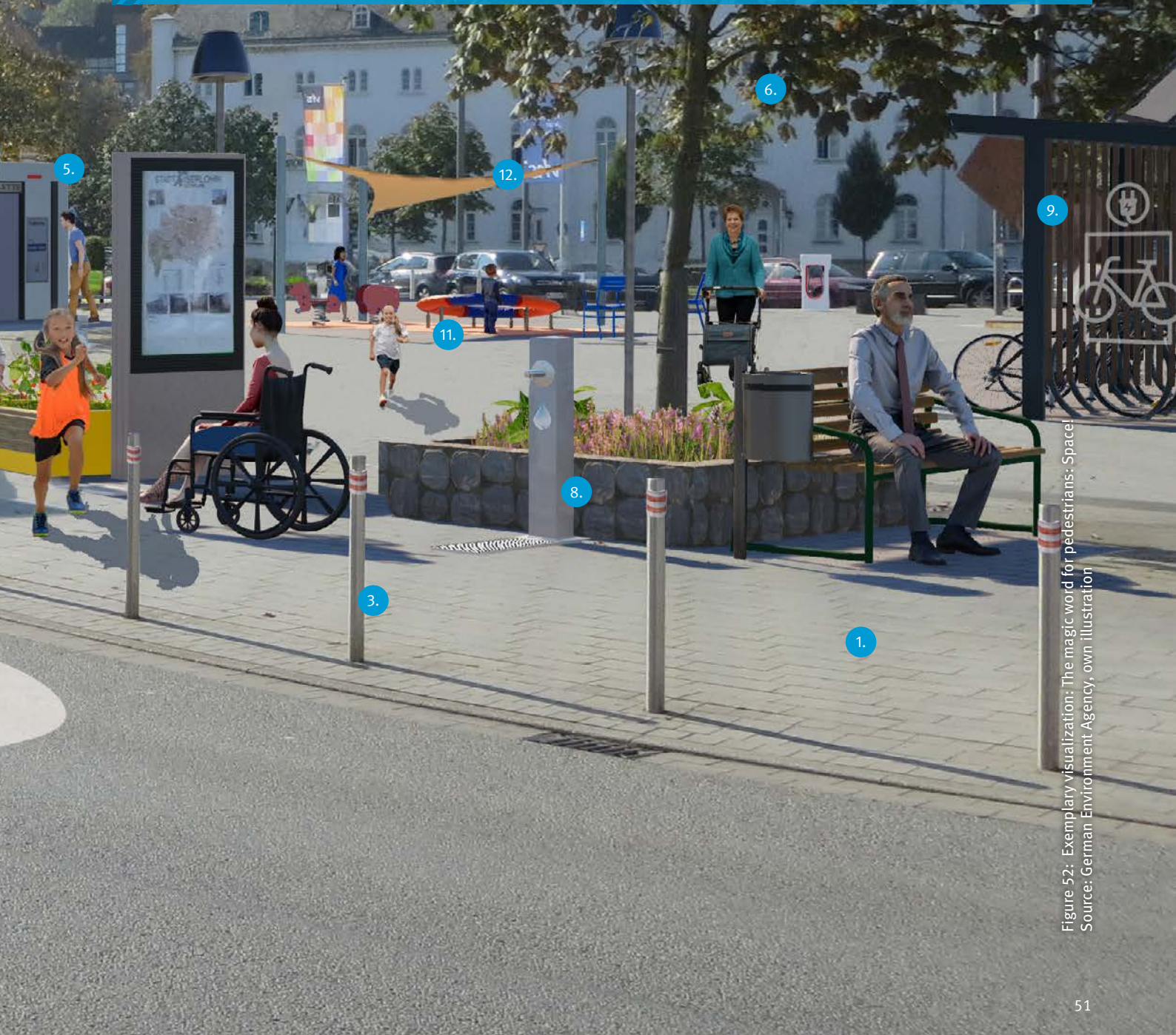


Figure 52: Exemplary visualization: The magic word for pedestrians: Space!
Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration

Nice toilet

Target group: Everyone

Forms of mobility: Active mobility

Location: Nationwide in Germany, sporadically in Austria and Switzerland

Planning/implementation period: Since 2000



Figure 53: The Nette Toilette
Source: Andreas Wegelin—Kreativraum Fotografie

DESCRIPTION

The “Nette Toilette” (Nice Toilet) is a service project that aims to create a comprehensive network of clean and freely accessible toilets in cities and municipalities. It enables the public use of toilets in private businesses, which receive a subsidy from the municipalities for cleaning and maintenance. The goal is to improve the quality of life in cities and provide low-threshold access to toilets and drinking water, especially for older people and families with children. The project was launched around 25 years ago in Aalen (Baden-Württemberg) as a cost-effective alternative to municipal toilet facilities and was developed by the studioo agency. It is also an important component of well-thought-out heat concepts in urban areas.

STAKEHOLDERS

- ▶ The project Nette Toilette is the point of contact for cities and municipalities for questions about the concept and purchasing a license, and provides the Nette Toilette app.
- ▶ Restaurants, businesses and medical practices make their toilets available free of charge. They are listed in the app. A sticker on the entrance door identifies them as participants.
- ▶ Cities and municipalities (licensees)

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ App
- ▶ Stickers

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The app can be used to find the nearest “nice toilet.” In addition, the registered locations can be filtered according to special amenities (changing table, barrier-free, etc.). Mobility is promoted by having more usable toilets and knowing their locations.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

Over 400 cities and municipalities in Germany are members of the “Nette Toilette” service project (as of 06/2025). The annual operating and maintenance costs for a conventional public toilet can finance around ten “nice toilets”. Tourists and locals can stroll through the city in a relaxed manner, and restaurateurs are delighted to have additional potential customers. The “Nette Toilette” does not detract from historic city centres and is also compatible with the cityscape in listed areas. Cities in Switzerland and Austria have also joined the project.

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with Wahl Druck GmbH (2024)

State capital Erfurt (2023)

City of Singen (2024)

4.6 Information and communication

Simple orientation, contrasts, and symbols

The provision of information and communication with road users is essential for orientation in road traffic. On the one hand, self-explanatory, high-contrast floor coverings and paving should help children and older people to find their way around more easily. For visually impaired people, guidance elements and contrasts are important so that they can move around safely without assistance. On the other hand, information should be provided in large print, with easily understandable symbols and clear directional signs. The following aspects should be taken into account in the area of information and communication:

Information boards and signposts

- ▶ Large, high-contrast font
- ▶ Easy-to-understand symbols
- ▶ Clear directional signs
- ▶ Pictograms on footpaths and cycle paths
- ▶ Continuous, at short intervals, and clearly visible to children and wheelchair users

Surface texture

- ▶ Easily recognizable and easily rollable surfaces facilitate orientation and prevent falls
- ▶ High-contrast design and colours that are self-explanatory
- ▶ Aesthetic variety
- ▶ Special markings, graphics, or patterns on pavements, squares or play areas
- ▶ Interactive floor markings can promote exercise, play and orientation through visual and tactile design



Figure 54: Signposts in Metzigen · Source: Planersocietät

City map for older citizens, Karlsruhe

Target group: Senior citizens, people with limited mobility

Forms of mobility: Active mobility, public transport

Location: Karlsruhe

Planning/implementation period: From around 2010, ongoing updates on the City of Karlsruhe geoportal

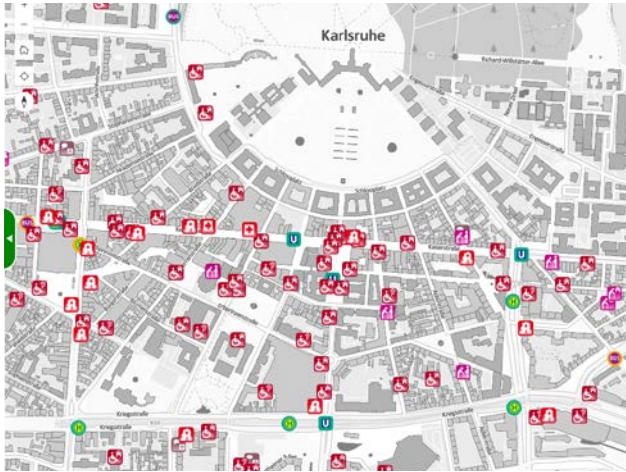


Figure 55: City map for older citizens

Source: Stadt Karlsruhe

DESCRIPTION

The Karlsruhe City Map for Older People is a digital city map that is specifically tailored to the needs of older people. It provides an overview of important facilities and services for older citizens, including advice centres, meeting places, leisure and educational facilities, barrier-free routes, bus stops, public toilets and other relevant locations. The map is available online via the City of Karlsruhe's geoportal. Particular emphasis was placed on good readability (large font), ease of use and the presentation of the accessibility and usability of facilities. The map includes search functions, route planning and a filter function for topics relevant to older people.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Senior Citizens' Office of the City of Karlsruhe
- ▶ Office for Urban Development / Geoinformation
- ▶ Other municipal departments
- ▶ Involvement of older citizens in needs analysis and development (e.g. through surveys and workshops)

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Digital interactive map (geoportal)
- ▶ Database of facilities and services
- ▶ Filter and search functions
- ▶ Barrier-free design

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

The plan was developed with the involvement of older citizens. Surveys and cooperation with the senior citizens' office were used to identify and take into account the needs and requirements of older people. User-friendliness and readability were specifically tailored to the target group.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The senior citizens' city map makes it easier to find your way around Karlsruhe and supports the independent mobility of older people. The targeted presentation of barrier-free routes and facilities enables older citizens to plan their journeys better and avoid obstacles. This promotes social participation and independent everyday living.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

The Karlsruhe senior citizens' city map is regularly updated and further developed. It serves as a model for SIMILAR PROJECTS in other cities and is well received by the target group.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Mobil Kerpen senior citizens' atlas
- ▶ Shadow Map Speyer
- ▶ City guide with accessibility tips Freiburg

The contents of this profile are based on:

City of Karlsruhe (n.d.)

“Gelbe Füße” (Yellow Feet), Rhineland-Palatinate

Target group: Children
Forms of mobility: Walking
Location: Rhineland-Palatinate
Planning/implementation period: Ongoing



Figure 56: “Yellow feet” marking · Source: Unfallkasse Rheinland-Pfalz (Rhineland-Palatinate Accident Insurance Fund)

DESCRIPTION

Spray-painted “yellow feet” help nursery and school-age children learn how to navigate traffic and move around more safely as part of road safety training. The feet mark safe routes to school with suitable crossing points. Ideally, the topic is supplemented by road safety education in the classroom.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Rhineland-Palatinate Accident Insurance Fund
- ▶ Schools with project groups (school administrators, parents, children)
- ▶ Police

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Marking of “yellow feet”

PARTICIPATION OF THE TARGET GROUP

Parents and children mark critical points on a specific map during a walk along the routes to school and nursery.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The locations of the “yellow feet” markers are selected by the project group, taking into account the children’s routes to school. Dangerous spots are avoided as far as possible so that children can learn how to behave in traffic on safe routes. On the way to school, children can playfully follow the yellow feet and follow their urge to move around.

Practicing the route with the help of the markings boosts the children’s self-confidence and their parents’ confidence in their children’s independent mobility.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Road markings in Remchingen
- ▶ School environment in Wiener Neudorf, Austria
- ▶ Kindlint Amsterdam, Netherlands

The contents of this profile are based on:

Unfallkasse Rheinland-Pfalz (Accident Insurance Fund Rhineland-Palatinate) (n.d.)

4.7

Low speeds

Slow down, stay safe

Both children and older people benefit significantly from low vehicle speeds on the road, e.g. in traffic-calmed areas or 30 km/h zones. This gives them more time to assess and evaluate the traffic situation. This makes crossing the road safer for them in particular, but also safer for all other road users. Drivers can react in good time and be more considerate. The following aspects are important when it comes to low speeds:

Traffic-calmed areas

- ▶ Design as a mixed-use traffic area with speed-reducing elements so that cars maintain walking speed
- ▶ High-contrast, intuitively understandable and clear street layout
- ▶ Suggested walking areas on the side of the street through visually striking paving
- ▶ Accessibility for people with visual or mobility impairments (including floor materials that are easy to roll on with a walker)

30 km/h speed limits on main roads and 30 km/h zones

- ▶ Crossing aids for wide roads or heavy traffic
- ▶ Pavement extensions for areas with high parking pressure or wide carriageways
- ▶ Good lighting
- ▶ Clear separation between carriageway and pavement (by curbs or green strips)
- ▶ Pavement and crossing aids that are barrier-free and sufficiently wide
- ▶ Dedicated cycle lanes or advisory cycle lanes on the carriageway in areas with heavy traffic
- ▶ Design elements to ensure compliance with speed limits

Shared space models

- ▶ Design as a mixed-use traffic area with speed-reducing elements to ensure that the 20 km/h speed limit is observed
- ▶ High-contrast, intuitively understandable and clear street layout
- ▶ Suggested walking areas on the side of the street through visually striking paving
- ▶ Accessibility for people with visual or mobility impairments



Figure 57: Shared-Space in Schweinfurt · Source: Planersocietät

Cool streets, Vienna

Target group: All residents, especially children and older people

Forms of mobility: Spending time

Location: Vienna, Austria

Planning/implementation period: From 2020



Figure 58: Cool Street, Vienna
Source: Vienna Mobility Agency/Christian Fürthner

DESCRIPTION

The “Cool Streets” project enhances public spaces by creating climate-friendly, attractive, and liveable streets. The aim of the project is to improve the quality of life in urban areas while mitigating the effects of climate change. To this end, sections of streets are being calmed or closed to car traffic to create space for people to spend time and meet each other.

Measures such as greening, improving air quality and the sponge city concept play a central role. Important elements include the installation of drinking fountains, misting columns and street furniture. In addition, users’ own initiatives are encouraged by providing mobile seating and toys, which are handed out by on-site supervisors. They are also available to answer questions and respond to suggestions in order to actively design the space together with the users.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ City of Vienna
- ▶ Residents

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Ban on motor vehicle traffic
- ▶ Ban on stopping for motor vehicles
- ▶ Drinking water fountains
- ▶ Spray mist columns
- ▶ Street furniture
- ▶ Mobile seating
- ▶ Playground equipment
- ▶ Planters

PARTICIPATION OF THE TARGET GROUP

Residents were surveyed during the project.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

The project takes into account people with different needs in order to ensure an inclusive and accessible design of the public realm. While areas for meeting and exchange promote social interaction, elements such as plants and water mist appeal to different senses. In addition, seating areas provide places for older people to take a break from walking. Drinking fountains and misting columns are measures to mitigate the heat. The seating also encourages people to leave their homes when they become uncomfortably hot in summer.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

Surveys show that local cooling measures reduce the temperature by up to 5 degrees. A citizens’ initiative is working on expanding the project.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ Temporary play streets in Karlsruhe
- ▶ Summer streets in Munich

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the City of Vienna (2024)

City of Vienna (n.d.)

4.8

School Streets and safe routes to school

Priority for actively mobile children

Children can learn independent mobility on their way to school. To this end, the design of street design should promote learning traffic rules. Marked school routes and pedestrian crossings near schools create safety and contribute to traffic education. The creation of School Streets, roads temporarily closed to motor vehicles during drop-off and pick-up times, also makes an important contribution to this. The following network and infrastructure elements make routes to school safer and more pleasant for children:

School route design

- ▶ Marking of school routes, for example with coloured designs
- ▶ Line markings or footprints
- ▶ Eye-catching design of the roadway in certain areas, e.g., in the immediate vicinity of school entrances or at parent drop-off points
- ▶ It is advisable to involve the pupils in the design

School Streets

- ▶ Include the road(s) in the vicinity of the school
- ▶ Temporary driving ban for motor vehicles at the start and end of the school day
- ▶ Exceptions for residents
- ▶ Block access using signage, supplemented by a modal filter, barriers or similar measures

Parent drop-off points

- ▶ Set up approx. 250 m to 500 m away from the school
- ▶ Clearly marked
- ▶ Inform parents of parent drop-off point locations and their importance
- ▶ Restrictive regulatory measures at the school and their enforcement



Figure 59: Playful road markings on the way to school, Sigmaringen
Source: Planersocietät

Road markings in the school area, Remchingen

Target group: Schoolchildren

Forms of mobility: Motor vehicle traffic

Location: Remchingen

Planning/implementation period: 2019–2021



Figure 60: Road markings in the school environment, Remchingen
Source: Planersocietät

DESCRIPTION

Many road users in Remchingen ignore the fact that the narrow Königsbacher Straße is a residential street and a school route, and use it as a shortcut. To ensure greater safety on the way to school, the street was painted with a colourful rainbow in the area of the elementary and middle school, which reduces the speed of motor vehicle traffic and emphasizes the 30 km/h speed limit. The aim of the project is to make children's rights visible in everyday life.

PARTICIPATING ACTORS

- ▶ Child-friendly municipality of Remchingen
- ▶ Road traffic authority and building authority
- ▶ Children in Remchingen

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Road markings

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

Primary school children were involved as part of a school holiday programme.

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

Both the participation project and its implementation were tailored to the participating children in collaboration with school social workers. Compliance with speed limits for motorized traffic is important, as primary school children are not yet able to judge speeds and distances. Lower traffic speeds help to promote children's safety and independent mobility.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

There was an evaluation of the 2020 participation measure and a feedback discussion with the children involved six months after completion of the rainbow. According to the children's impressions, traffic around the rainbow is now slower.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ School environment in Wiener Neudorf, Austria
- ▶ Kindlint Amsterdam, Netherlands
- ▶ German Road Safety Organization for Rhineland-Palatinate (Verkehrswacht RLP) "Gelbe Füße"

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the municipality of Remchingen (2024)

Kinderfreundliche Kommunen e. V. (Child-Friendly Cities Association) (no date)

School Streets, Cologne and Ulm

Target group: School children

Forms of mobility: Cycling, walking

Location: Cologne and Ulm

Planning/implementation period: 2021/2023



Figure 61: School Street in Cologne · Source: Planersocietät

DESCRIPTION

School Streets are streets in the immediate vicinity of schools where motorized private transport is temporarily restricted. In Cologne, School Streets were set up on a trial basis in four districts, while Ulm initially implemented the measure as part of a traffic trial at two school locations and then made it permanent in both cases. Access is restricted or prohibited for motorized traffic during drop-off and pick-up times, with the exception of emergency vehicles. Exit is unrestricted in both cities.

In Ulm, access to private parking spaces and garages is also permitted. To improve the process, parent drop-off zones have been set up in both cities at a sufficient distance from the school. The aim is to promote the independent active mobility of schoolchildren in a safe environment.

STAKEHOLDERS

City of Cologne

- ▶ Road traffic authority
- ▶ Municipal depot
- ▶ Selected pilot schools

City of Ulm

- ▶ Police
- ▶ Municipal traffic planning
- ▶ School administration

ELEMENTS USED

- ▶ Temporary entry restrictions for motorized traffic
- ▶ Signage: No through traffic, No entry, Additional signs indicating time restrictions
- ▶ Mobile barriers
- ▶ Parent drop-off points
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Monitoring



Figure 62: School Street in Ulm · Source: Petra Röhke-Habeck

TARGET GROUP INVOLVEMENT

The schools were closely involved in the planning process. In Cologne, the pilot schools also had previous experience with temporary closures as well as with “bike buses” and “walking buses.”

POTENTIAL FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

Children’s independent and active mobility is promoted by enabling them to move more safely and freely on their way to school. They have more space to travel by bike, scooter, or on foot. This strengthens their self-esteem, sense of direction and social skills. Parent drop-off points ensure that children are dropped off and picked up in an orderly manner, and also allow children who are driven to school to walk independently for at least the last 250 metres. The aim is to increase safety, raise awareness and encourage children to try out active forms of mobility.

EVALUATION / RESULTS

The pilot projects show that temporary School Streets can reduce vehicle traffic and speeds in front of schools, thereby increasing road safety. Walking and cycling increased significantly. Teachers reported that children were calmer and more focused. However, drop-off and pick-up traffic is also shifting to adjacent streets, so the problem of “parent taxis” has not been completely solved.

In Ulm, the traffic trial was accompanied by online participation in order to provide information about the situation and evaluate its continuation. In autumn 2024, it was decided to adopt the School Street scheme permanently.

SIMILAR PROJECTS

- ▶ School Street Bad Hofgastein, Austria
- ▶ School Street London, United Kingdom

The contents of this profile are based on:

Personal communication with the City of Cologne (2024)

City of Cologne (n.d.)

City of Ulm (n.d.)

Initial situation



Exemplary visualization—This is what it could look like!

THE WAY TO SCHOOL AS A SAFE PLACE OF LEARNING

These elements are important for mobility education on the way to school:

1. At specific times, the area in front of the school is closed to motor vehicles.
2. Clear signage regulates the no-entry zone at the start and end of the school day.
3. Removable bollards are used to enforce the driving ban.
4. A narrow passageway acts as a gate, causing vehicles to drive more slowly at other times.
5. Good lighting ensures that pedestrians in particular can see well and can be seen.
6. A safe crossing in the immediate vicinity of the school (in this case, a zebra crossing) shows children where they should cross the road.
7. Rubbish bins contribute to a clean environment.
8. Play equipment makes the way to school more attractive for children and encourages them to be active.
9. Seating in the waiting area in front of the school is convenient for parents and grandparents picking up children and encourages walking.
10. Children and older people alike find a variety of plants and trees in the environment pleasant.

For the visualizations, a real-life situation was adapted to meet the requirements for a child- and senior-friendly design as comprehensively as possible. The design Elements used are labelled and accompanied by an explanation. Information on the individual design elements can be found in the chapter 'Practice examples' (starting on page 26).



Figure 63: Exemplary visualization: The way to school as a safe place of learning
Source: German Environment Agency, own illustration



THE PATH TO A CHILD- AND SENIOR-FRIENDLY STREET DESIGN

5

From vision to implementation: First steps for practical application

In order for children and older people to be able to be actively mobile on their own, street space must be designed according to their needs. This means that it must be safe, easy to understand and inviting. This can be achieved through simple and intuitive, but also pleasant design. The biggest benefit is that this type of street design not only benefits children and older people, but also makes active mobility easier for everyone.

In practice, implementation does not mean doing everything at once, but rather starting and moving forward step by step. It helps to know:

- A. which aspects are particularly important for safety,**
- B. which measures are equally useful for both children and older people,**
- C. which measures can be implemented quickly and easily,**
- D. which stakeholders are needed for this, and**
- E. which instruments are available to local authorities for implementation.**



Figure 64: High amenity value thanks to attractive seating options, Aachen · Source: Armin Langweg / City of Aachen



Figure 65: Creation of separate footpaths and cycle paths, Berlin · Source: Norbert Michalke

A. SAFETY FIRST

When redesigning streets, safety should be the top priority:

► Reduce speed:

Lower speeds (30 km/h, traffic-calmed areas) significantly increase safety for all road users. They are easy to implement in the secondary road network and require little investment. Under certain conditions, a 30 km/h speed limit can also be imposed on main roads in Germany (such as federal, state and county roads) in built-up areas. According to the General Administrative Provisions for the German Road Traffic Regulations (“VwV-StVO”), the speed limit in the immediate vicinity of mainstream schools, special schools, nurseries, playgrounds, hospitals, facilities for people with disabilities, and care homes for the elderly with direct access to the road, as well as along busy school routes, is generally set at 30 km/h, although additional requirements may apply in some cases. For example, the

30 km/h speed limit at schools and daycare centres must be limited to their opening hours (including after-school and extracurricular activities).

► Create safe crossing options:

Since crossing a road involves numerous dangers, crossing aids are crucial for active mobility. These include extended curbs, traffic refuge islands, zebra stripes and traffic lights with sufficiently long green phases. They should be available at as many locations as possible, especially on busier and wider roads.

► Sufficiently wide and barrier-free pavements:

Narrow pavements lead to risky behaviour, with people stepping onto the road or bike path, for example. Pavements that are at least 2.50 m wide, with level, non-slip surfaces and high-contrast design, enable safe walking.

► **Separate bike paths and cycle lanes:**

A clear separation from motor vehicle traffic and the pavement increases the feeling of safety and reduces conflicts with pedestrians. It is particularly important that cycling is guided in such a way that it is always visible to motor vehicle drivers. For dedicated cycle paths parking should therefore be prohibited well before junctions. Although advisory bike lanes (Schutzstreifen) on the road are objectively the safest option for cyclists⁸, they are usually not considered safe by older people and children. Cycle lanes are often more popular.

► **Good visibility:**

Good visibility at crossing points is essential for safety. Children and older people must be clearly visible and have a good overview, especially at intersections and junctions. To ensure the necessary visibility in the immediate vicinity of pedestrian crossings, a speed limit of 30 km/h can be imposed for up to 300 m in Germany.

B. DOUBLE THE BENEFIT: HELPING EVERYONE!

Many measures benefit both children and older people. This fact should be used to initiate positive changes for both target groups at the same time:

► **Short distances:**

Both groups benefit from short, direct connections to important destinations such as schools, shopping facilities, doctors' surgeries and recreational facilities.

► **Amenity value:**

Seating, shade, weather protection, play and exercise elements and attractive design make public spaces appealing to all age groups.

► **Easy orientation:**

Clear signage, easy-to-understand symbols and high-contrast, self-explanatory floor markings help both groups find their way around.

► **Barrier-free use of public transport:**

Easily accessible stops with sufficient space, shelter from the elements and clear information make it easier for everyone to use public transport.

In addition, there are requirements that vary depending on the target group: while children need play and learning areas along their routes, public toilets and seating at short intervals are very important for older people. Balanced planning takes both perspectives into account.

C. START WITH SIMPLE MEASURES

Not every municipality can immediately undertake a comprehensive redesign of its streets. However, the following immediate measures can be implemented relatively easily and inexpensively:

► **Establish School Streets:**

The safety of schoolchildren can be increased by prohibiting motor vehicles from entering or passing through at the beginning and end of the school day. Implementation can be simple in practice if only minor structural measures are required. School Streets are not legally defined in Germany, so there are various options for creating them. In North Rhine-Westphalia, School Streets are implemented as partial closures under road traffic law, which is regulated by a decree. This permanently stipulates that access is not permitted at certain times. In other federal states, School Streets are based on German road traffic law, in this case on the prevention of dangers to traffic safety. In Berlin, a School Street is based on health regulation, because the School Street not only serves as a safe route to and from school, but also as a place to spend break time. School Streets are often first tested as traffic trials on site and only permanently established if they prove suitable.

► **Initiate bench programs:**

Strategically placed benches significantly increase the range of activity for older people. The benches can be installed gradually and are easy to implement as a single measure.

► **Consistently prevent parking on pavements:**

Enforcing existing regulations against parking on pavements immediately creates more space for pedestrians. A ruling by Germany's Federal Administrative Court in 2024 strengthens the ability of local authorities and citizens to take action against illegal parking on pavements. Based on the ruling, residents can request the road authority to intervene if illegal pavements parking significantly restricts the use of the pavement in front of their homes. However, the length and extent of the narrowing, the number of pedestrians and the alternatives available must be taken into account.

► **Improve markings and signage:**

High-contrast, clearly visible markings at crossings and clear signage are simple measures that can bring about significant improvements at little cost.

D. GETTING THE RIGHT STAKEHOLDERS ON BOARD

The successful redesigning of streets requires cooperation between various institutions and experts:

► **Local government:**

As with all planning issues, early and effective cooperation between the departments for urban development, transport, environment and green spaces is essential. Close cooperation with the departments for social affairs, health, and education should also be sought.

► **Political decision-making level:**

In Germany, promoting active mobility is easier for the administration if it can rely on a corresponding decision by local politicians. This decision can be made as part of urban development concepts, transport development plans or through a policy decision. It shows that there is political willingness to act and a desire for change in favour of active mobility. Such decisions are particularly effective when they embed the 'Health in All Policies' approach, thereby ensuring that health considerations are given greater weight in urban and transport planning processes. This leads to cross-departmental solutions that systematically incorporate the special mobility needs of children and older people. In that way synergies between transport, environmental, social, and health policies are being created that promote active mobility for all generations.

► **Affected groups:**

Children, parents and older people should be specifically and actively involved in child- and senior-friendly street design. Formats that are explicitly tailored to the needs and abilities of these groups are suitable for this purpose—this applies to the time, location and methods chosen.

► **Relevant facilities and institutions:**

Schools, nurseries and residential facilities for older people can provide valuable insights into the mobility needs of the respective target group, for example, when implementing School Streets or offering mobility education for older people.

► **Citizen associations and initiatives:**

They can act as multipliers and increase acceptance of change if they are involved.

E. USE PLANNING TOOLS AND OPTIONS PROVIDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

With the amendment to the General Administrative Provisions for the German Road Traffic Regulations (VwV-StVO), in 2024 and 2025 respectively, the following measures are expected to be easier to implement:

- ▶ **Route-specific 30 km/h speed limits on main roads and the linking of existing 30 km/h sections that are no more than 500m apart**
- ▶ **Bicycle parking facilities on areas designated for stationary motor vehicles**
- ▶ **Provision of adequate space for people walking**

It is now also easier to implement the following measures, as it is no longer necessary for road traffic authorities to provide evidence of a specific local traffic hazard before implementing them:

- ▶ **Bicycle-friendly streets (Fahrradstraßen) (including bollards for safety or as modal filters)**
- ▶ **Bike lanes**
- ▶ **Bus lanes**

Local authorities in Germany have a wide range of planning tools at their disposal to implement the measures described here. If the designation of bicycle-friendly streets (Fahrradstraßen), footpaths and bus lanes is justified on the grounds of environmental and climate protection, public health or urban development, the justification is simpler if it is based on comprehensive transport planning concepts within the meaning of the General Administrative Provisions to the German Road Traffic Regulations (VwV-StVO).

These include, for example, urban or traffic development plans, pedestrian and bicycle traffic plans, provided they are sufficiently detailed. School route plans can also be used to justify the introduction of 30 km/h speed limits, especially on main roads, if the school has developed them in collaboration with the road traffic authority.

Municipal plans and concepts can certainly make it easier to justify the measure to the road traffic authority. However, they are not absolutely necessary if the measure is sufficiently justified even without a concept.



Figure 66: Shared space, Frankfurt · Source: Planersocietät

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