WALKABLE WASHINGTON

Transformation towards walkability is taking place all over the state of Washington. From urban, suburban and small town initiatives, the program showcases the effects of a renewed focus on creating great places for people to walk. The case studies are exceptional projects and programs showcasing how cities, counties, school districts, and community organizations throughout the state are making it safer, easier, and more inviting for people to walk.

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

We promote walkable communities and empower people throughout Washington to connect to the world by foot.

CASE STUDY

SUNSET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SIDEWALK AND PEDBEE TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN
BELLEVUE, WA

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE: Walking to Sunset Elementary School is safer for people walking now with the construction of a new sidewalk across from the school along busy West Lake Sammamish Parkway and the implementation of a traffic safety campaign that provided tools to educate and encourage safe walking practices to a wider population, outside the school children of Sunset Elementary.

The traffic safety campaign involved designing the first traffic safety playground surface that kids can walk and play on, which contains roadway elements such as intersections, traffic signals, a roundabout, crosswalks and sidewalks, along with key safety messages. As much as the graphic playground surface provides an opportunity for children to adapt and create their own game play around traffic safety, it can also be used as a game board for safety playing cards that were developed and distributed to each Sunset student. The playing cards teach traffic safety Do’s and Don’ts, using colorful graphics, and can be used in various game play.

This project built on a long history of innovation and success in delivering school safety awareness programs by featuring the City of Bellevue’s pedestrian safety mascot, PedBee, in the design of the playground and the playing cards. The traffic safety campaign involved a school traffic safety assembly showcasing PedBee traffic safety education games and a ‘Walking Wednesday’ event that invited children to...
participate in walking school buses led by city staff and police from the Cities of Bellevue and Issaquah. PedBee greeted all the children as they arrived to school.

**COSTS AND FUNDING:** The project was funded in part with a Washington Safe Routes to School (SFTS) grant with additional funds from city transportation programs for neighborhood traffic calming, pedestrian access and street overlay. Total cost for design and construction of the infrastructure improvements were approximately $346,000. Cost for the design and installation of the playground surface tiles and traffic safety cards is approximately $70,000.

**IMPLEMENTATION TIME-FRAME:** The SFTS grant was awarded to the city in 2013. Construction of the sidewalk was complete by January 2015. Installation of the playground tiles and the Walking Wednesday event happened in Spring 2015.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** The city transportation department worked closely with a large group of stakeholders through a variety of outreach methods to assess the needs of parkway users along West Lake Sammamish Parkway which led to support for a sidewalk project for Sunset Elementary. School administrators and teachers, students and their parents were actively engaged in the school traffic safety campaign.

With a project on a main arterial and close proximity to a roundabout and highway on and off ramps, creative problem solving and collaboration between the city and contractor resulted in excellent construction management to accommodate people walking and biking while the sidewalk was being constructed.

**BENEFITS AND RESULTS:** Principal benefit is a safer elevated walkway along a section of West Lake Sammamish Parkway where both pedestrians and bicyclists can travel to school. Post implementation review by the school showed an increase in children who walked to school. The program also opened a dialog between students and teachers concerning safe routes to school and gave the teachers new tools for teaching about traffic safety. What sets this project apart is that it is an infrastructure project that provides a space to teach safe walking and biking actions, providing multiple ways to teach a wider population about traffic safety, outside of the school children of Sunset Elementary. Bellevue

**PROJECT CONTACTS:**
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**RESOURCES:**

City of Bellevue Sunset Elementary School project video - [https://www.wevideo.com/view/41126595](https://www.wevideo.com/view/41126595)
Sidewalk in front of Sunset Elementary School, Bellevue WA, at crossing to school.

Sunset Elementary School, Bellevue WA, student pedestrian safety game with supporting symbols on schoolyard fence.

Examples of Pedbee Safety Playing Cards