



# Better Block PSU: Request for Pop-Up Project Proposals

**Better Block PDX and  
Portland State University**

A partnership program of the Transportation Research  
and Education Center (TREC) at PSU

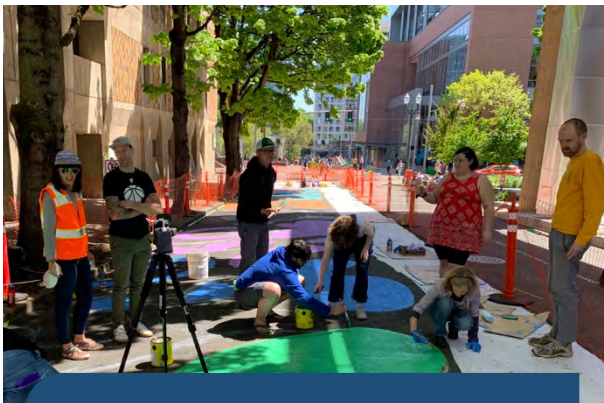






## Who is Better Block PDX?

**Better Block PDX** is a volunteer-led effort encouraging everyone to imagine what spaces could be when they are designed for people. We partner with community organizations, Portland State University, Portland Bureau of Transportation, and you to create inviting and interactive places through tactical urbanism “pop-up” projects.



## How is Portland State University Involved?

Through the **Transportation Research and Education Center (TREC)** at PSU, the university connects planning and engineering student expertise with community advocates through our partnership program **Better Block PSU**. This exchange of knowledge is also an opportunity for students to tackle a real transportation and/or placemaking challenge in the local community.

# HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THE STREETScape IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

**Portland State University's** transportation students in engineering and planning are ready to support your idea with their expertise.

We are looking for public places where small changes to the streetscape will make a big difference. This is an opportunity for your community organization to partner with us to plan your pop-up project. We are prioritizing BIPOC, LGBTQI, disability advocacy, and women-led organizations.

**Two to four** larger-scale projects will be selected for the PSU Project Pathway, through which planning and communication students will develop outreach and engagement reports. **One to two** of which will go through an engineering phase to produce a traffic plan.

With these outreach materials and technical expertise applied, you will be ready to implement your pop-up project. Please note that Better Block PSU does not offer funding and project implementation capacity.

**Applications are due on March 10, 2020. Submit your application here:**

<https://forms.gle/KrnLgijDvHLrFfcN7>

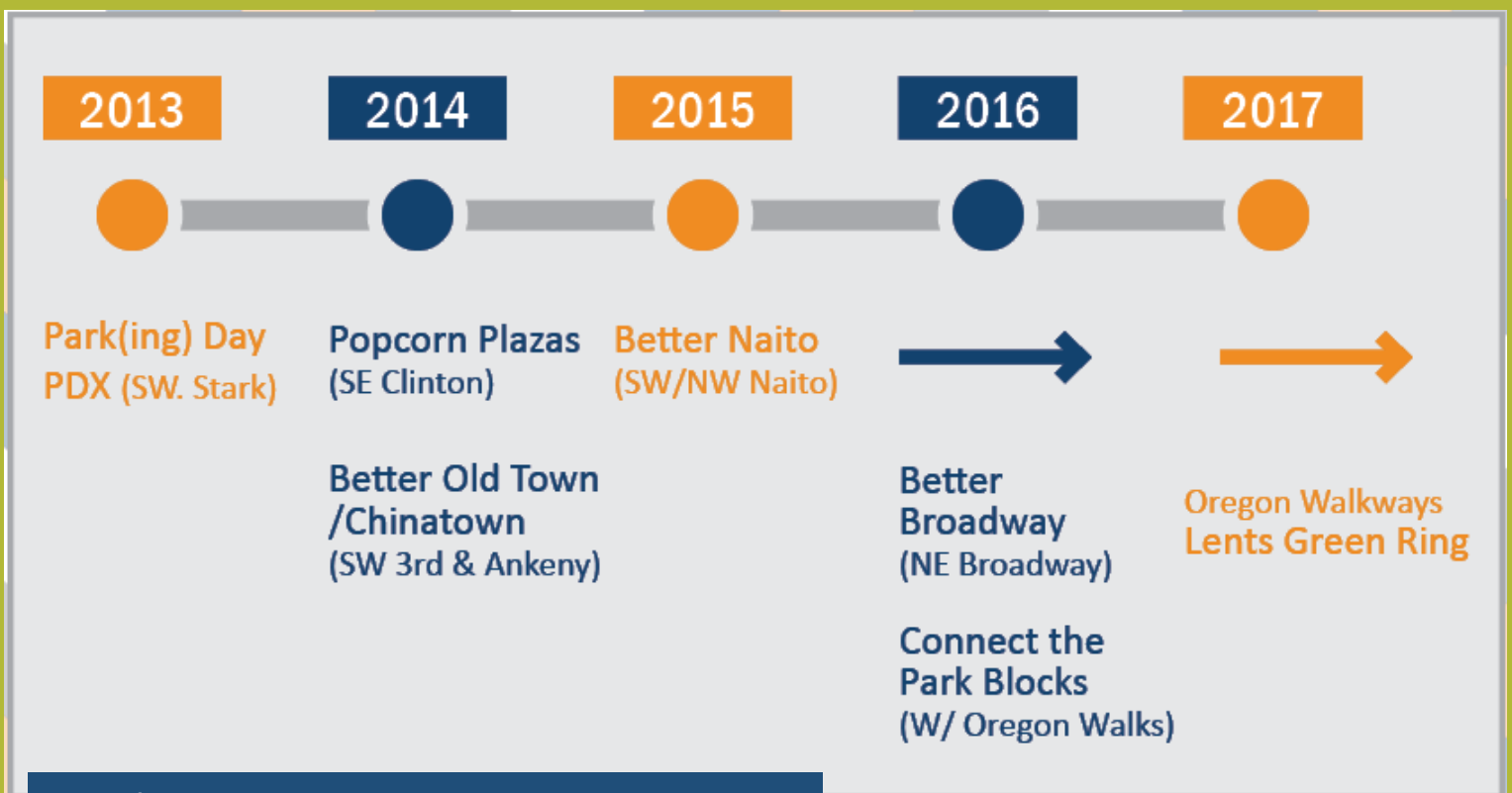
## WHAT IS A POP-UP PROJECT?

Pop-ups are short term demonstrations of improvements to underutilized spaces. They allow community members and city leaders to imagine improvements to the streetscape in the most interactive way possible: by experiencing them! The term “pop-up” refers to how they may be set-up overnight and taken down a few days later.

# THE PSU PROJECT PATHWAY PROCESS



## PAST PROJECTS FROM BETTER BLOCK PDX



Learn more at: [betterblockpdx.org/projects/](http://betterblockpdx.org/projects/)

# SUBMIT YOUR POP-UP PROJECT TO BETTER BLOCK PSU

**Applications are due on March 10, 2020.  
Submit your application here:**

**<https://forms.gle/KrnLgijDvHLrFfcN7>**

## **Some questions to consider for your application:**

Where are you proposing a pop-up project?

Do you know of any existing partnerships or events that could help leverage this project?

What ideas do you have for re-imagining this space?

What are some ways to make the space inviting for all?

Who are the local leaders and champions for this idea?

## **QUESTIONS?**

Contact the Transportation Research and Education Center (TREC) of Portland State University at [treceducation@pdx.edu](mailto:treceducation@pdx.edu)





# Guide to Pop-Up Projects

## Better Block PDX



Photos: Jonathan Maus/Bike Portland (top left, middle right), Greg Raisman (bottom right), Better Block PDX (others)



# What Makes a Good Pop-up Project?



## Community Involvement

A collaborative process brings people together and reinforces a sense of community while producing an outcome tailored to a community's character and needs. In being actively involved in the project, people are more supportive of permanent change.

## Low Risk, High Reward

While "pop-up" projects are taken down quickly, their purpose is to demonstrate value as permanent improvements. There is little to lose if a pop-up project is unsuccessful at achieving its purpose, but there should be potential to spark long-term change.



## Light, Cheap, and Quick

Giving community members and city leadership a taste of what a place is missing with limited resources raises the question of how a permanent solution can be done even better. A sudden change in the streetscape brings an element of surprise to those who may have taken a place for granted.

## Attention, Curiosity, and Conversation

A good project does not go unnoticed by a passerby, and while it is important for a pop-up project to demonstrate a realistic solution, having eye-catching elements can spark curiosity and conversation, and make it more memorable. It should also be inviting to everyone and allow for a variety of different uses.





## Community Events and Markets

A community event is a good situation to debut a “pop-up”. Masses of people who are drawn into such events would be right there to experience the change in streetscape.



Travel Portland

Portland, OR



Travel Portland

Portland, OR

## Block Parties

You may be surprised to learn just how inexpensive it is to obtain a block party permit through the City of Portland. Like larger community events, block parties are a good way to bring a neighborhood together and build community.



PBOT

Portland, OR



Sarasota Police Department

Sarasota, FL

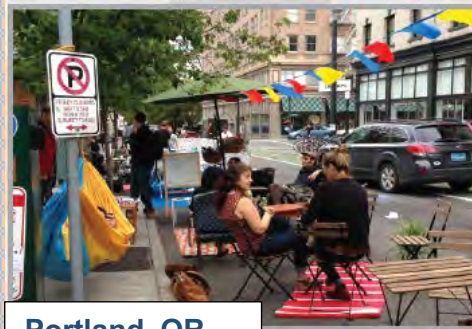
## Street Seats & Parklets

The idea for converting parking spaces into short-term or long term parks or seating areas is attributed to San Francisco-based Rebar Group, and has been implemented in cities across the globe.



Building Active  
Anaconda Team

Anaconda, MT



Better Block PDX

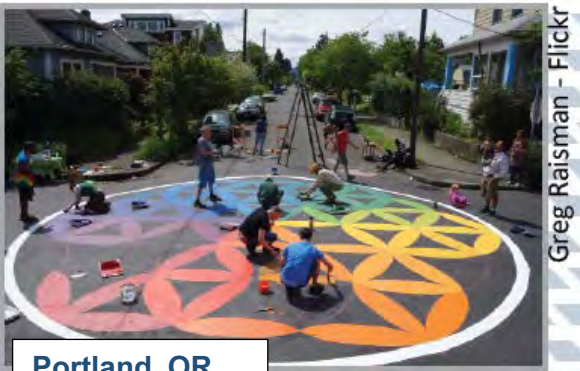
Portland, OR



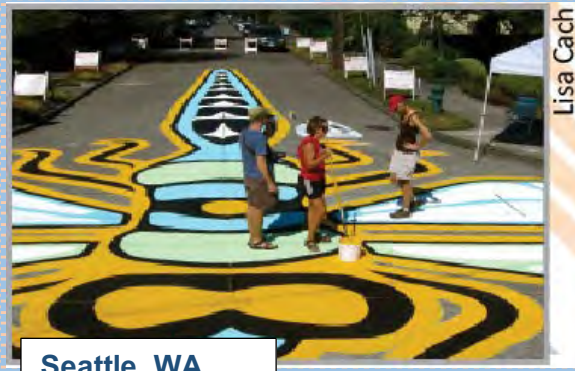
## Ideas & Examples

### Intersection Painting

Activities as simple as painting an intersection fosters interaction among neighbors and establishes a sense of community pride.



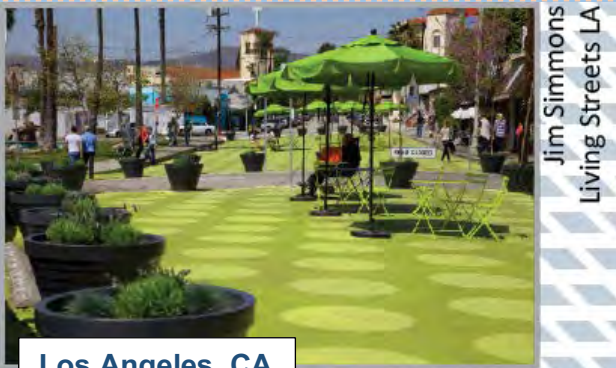
Portland, OR



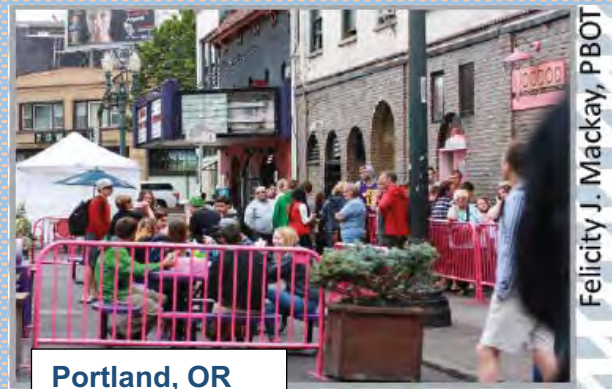
Seattle, WA

### Pedestrian Plazas

Excess street space where there is a lack of activity are prime for Pedestrian Plazas. They should be designed to promote a variety of activities such as eating or drinking, meeting up, people-watching & passing through.



Los Angeles, CA



Portland, OR

### Bicycle Facilities

Pop-up bicycle facilities attract all types of cyclists, including those who would otherwise feel uncomfortable riding a bicycle in the street. They also give concerned business owners an idea of how it would affect them.



Portland, OR



Toronto, ON



# Ideas & Examples

## Play Streets

Popularized in New York City and London, play streets bring organized and supervised play to areas with otherwise limited recreation opportunities for kids.



New York City, NY

Police Athletic League, Inc.



Seattle, WA

SDOT

## Open Streets / People Streets

Events like Sunday Parkways typically take place on single weekend days. They open up the street to pedestrians and cyclists for a more social environment.



Portland, OR

J. Maus, BikePortland



Minneapolis, MN

Bradley P. Johnson

## Pop-up Crosswalks

Crosswalks are tricky to implement, even as short-term pop-up projects, but they go a long way in making a street more comfortable and accessible for pedestrians.



Seattle, WA

Alex Garland



Portland, OR

BikePortland



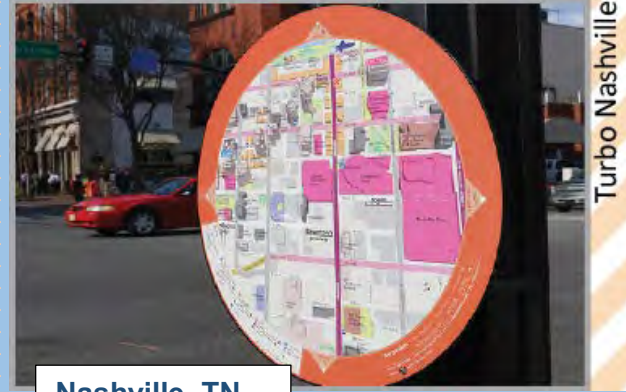
# Ideas & Examples

## Signage

A simple arrow with your travel time or distance to destinations highlights walking as a convenient way to get around. Walk [Your City] signs feature QR codes for walking directions on a mobile device.



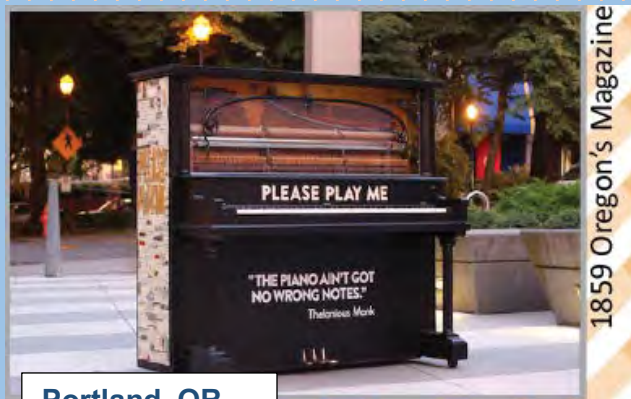
Raleigh, NC



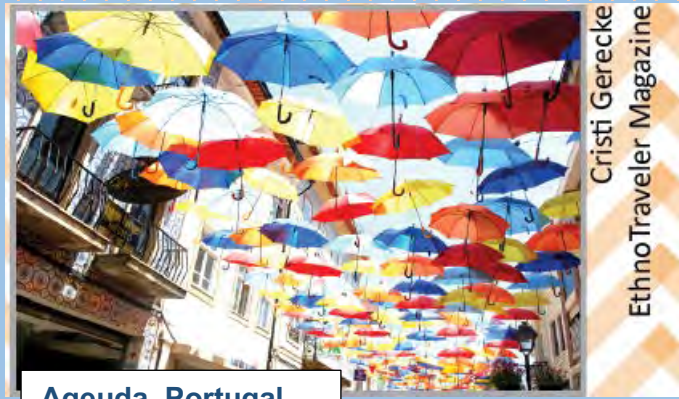
Nashville, TN

## And More...

A pop-up project doesn't need to conform to an above category. It can be unprecedented or unusual. Playable pianos, umbrella canopies, interactive art pieces, and a pop-up tea truck are just a few examples of what can come from originality. Your creativity is the limit to what kind of tactical urbanism projects can be done.



Portland, OR



Ageuda, Portugal



New Orleans, LA



Portland, OR



# Resources

[Portland in the Streets](#)

[AARP Pop-Up Demonstration Tool  
Kit](#)

[Crosswalk Guidelines for Portland](#)

[Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper  
Transformation of Public Space](#)

[Safe Routes to School Pop-Ups](#)

[Quick Builds for Better Streets](#)

[Street Mix](#)

[Tactical Urbanism Guide](#)

[How to Create Safe Routes to  
School Pop-Up Projects](#)

*This Guide to Pop-Up Projects was developed by  
Better Block PDX*