



## Enjoying Life Close to Home: Fun Streets

Posted by [Glenn](#) on July 19, 2008 - 10:00am in [The Oil Drum: Local](#)

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As we consider how to re-design our car-centric landscape, one idea that may be taking hold across the country is to close streets to automobile traffic at times and return that space to the people as a public space to be enjoyed.

We took a look at [Bogata's Ciclovía](#) earlier this year. Last month in Portland, they held a first ever "[Sunday Parkways](#)". What is "Sunday Parkways"?

What is Sunday Parkways?

6 miles, 6 hours, zero traffic~!

A circular route of city streets open to walk, bike, run, jump & skip - without having to watch out for cars!

A 6 mile "temporary park", connecting North Portland neighborhoods and residents.

A relaxed, non-competitive, FREE event featuring a variety of activities in 4 parks and along the route.

What you see here is people having fun close to home. The places we drive dozens or hundreds of miles to visit - quiet places without cars and trucks - can exist in our own front yards if we only

have the will to say no to cars. Next Stop is my hometown: New York City.

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Here's the news conference where New York's "Summer Streets" was announced:

Here's more description from [Streetsblog](#):

On three Saturday mornings in August, the Department of Transportation will ban cars from nearly 5 miles of city streets to make way for cyclists, joggers and walkers. Starting at the beginning of Centre St. in Lower Manhattan, then moving north onto Lafayette St., Fourth Ave. and Park Ave., people will be able to travel all the way to 72nd St. and then to Central Park by walking down the middle of a street.

The streets will be closed to cars on August 9, 16 and 23 from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. On 15 major east-west streets, like Canal, 14th St. and 42nd St., cars will be allowed to cross the car-free zone.

This is moving forward despite a slew of complaints and people feeling that this might turn out to be a huge mess for traffic moving through the city. As the Mayor says, we'll see how it goes, but we need to try new things. If we only worry about the inconveniences we'll only stay in the same rut we've been in letting automobiles have the run of the land.

Personally, I plan to participate and stay close to home and enjoy my front yard.



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