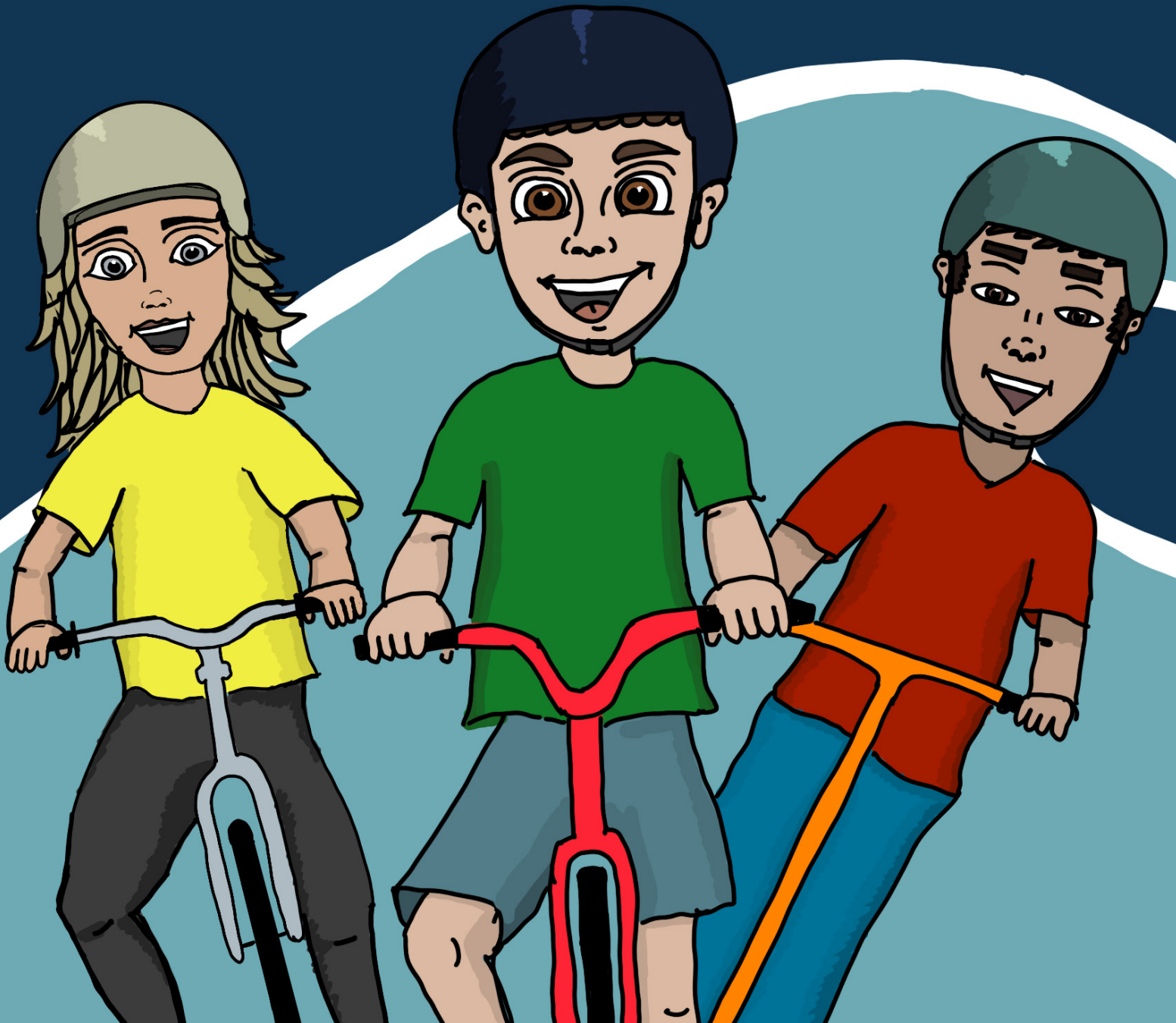


JOIN THE BIKE BUS: SAFE STREETS FOR ALL

An Interactive Story About Safer Streets and Stronger Communities



A publication prepared for the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA)

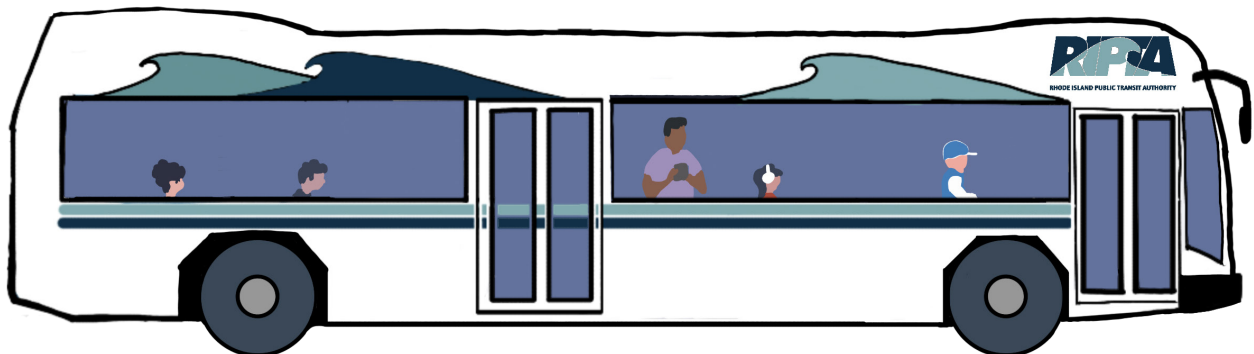
Join the Bike Bus: Safe Streets for All was funded through Rhode Island Public Transit Authority's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The document is intended to serve as an educational activity for students and families.



RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

As you read the story, look to the back of the book to find the bold words in the glossary.





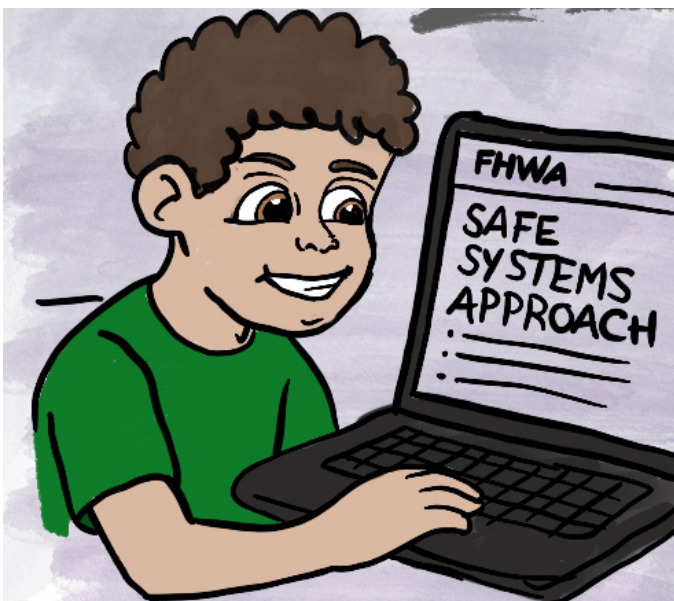
One day, Jordan and his mom were driving to school. Jordan asked, “Mom, can I bike to school instead tomorrow? Some of my friends bike and I would like to try.” Jordan’s mom was concerned about him biking to school alone, especially crossing Main Street. People drive very fast there and she’d read news stories about crashes.

“I think it’s a great idea for you to bike to school,” she said, “but I worry about you crossing Main Street by yourself. **People Make Mistakes.** Your friends who bike live closer to school—it’s safer for them.”

Jordan was quiet in the back seat for a moment, then he asked “What if I learn all about how to ride a bike safely and about crossing Main Street safely? Then can we talk again about biking to school?”

“Sure! That’s a great idea!” His mom replied.

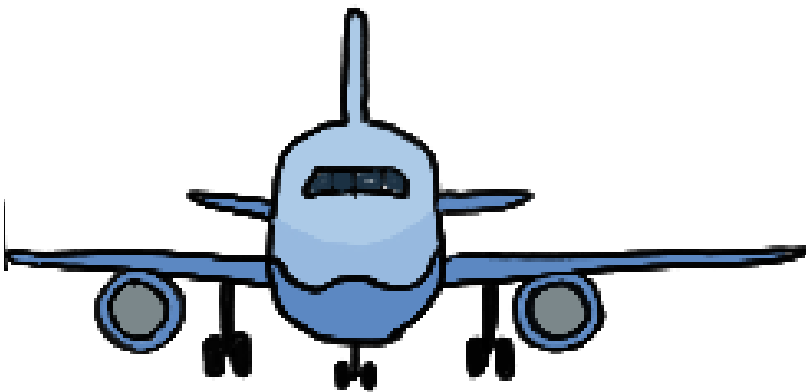
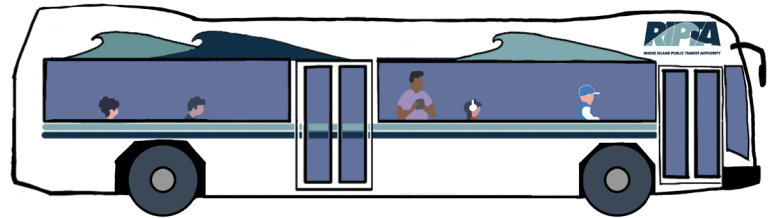
When Jordan got home from school that day, he looked up “biking safely” on the internet and found the **Federal Highway Administration’s Safe System Approach** to street safety. He read about designing safe streets for all people who use them. He learned about **Road Users**, especially **Vulnerable Road Users** like kids walking or biking.



**ON THE NEXT
PAGE, PLAY A
GAME AND LEARN
ABOUT THE
SAFE SYSTEM
APPROACH TO
ROAD SAFETY!**

Transportation Planners and **Transportation Engineers** design roads by thinking about all the people who use them and how to keep them safe. On this page are images of road users and non-road users. Think about who you see using the streets in your community!

CIRCLE ALL THE ICONS ON THE PAGE THAT ARE ROAD USERS.

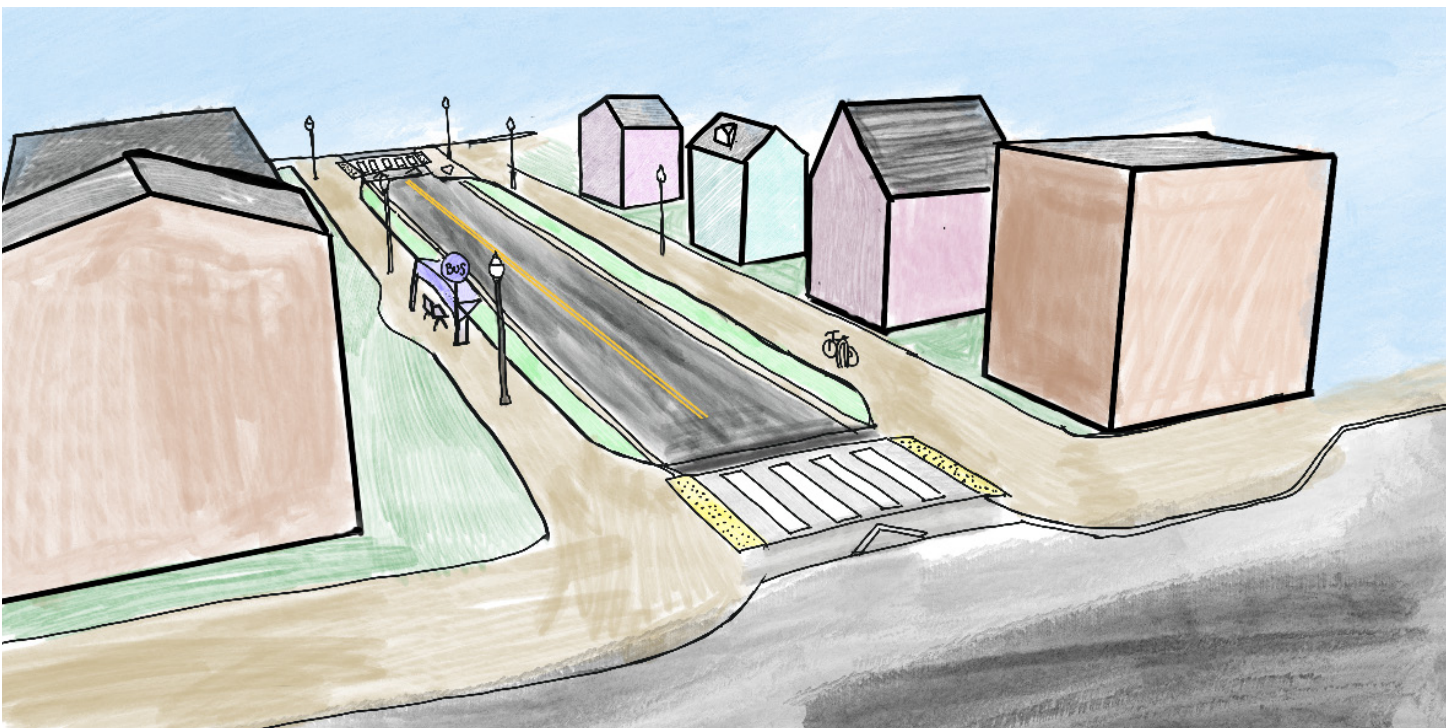
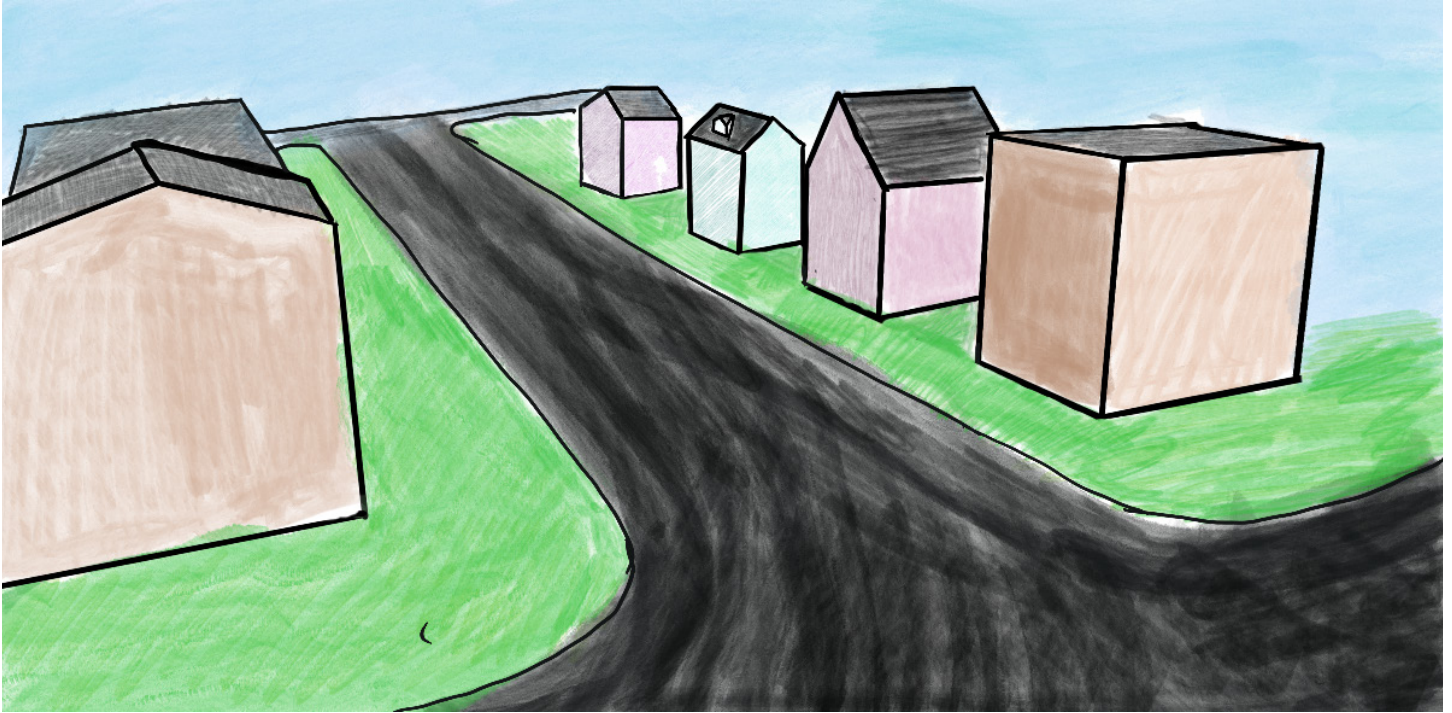


SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH!

Which of the two streets is better for all types of road users?

Road users are not only the people using the street itself, but also the sidewalks and bike lanes. Think about which road would be best to prevent people from making a mistake and injuring another road user.

Draw arrows to the parts of the street that help keep people safe.



Jordan rushed into the kitchen, excited to show his parents what he had learned. He opened his laptop and said, “I learned how **Safe Streets** are made for people walking, biking, driving, or riding the bus!”

He pointed to the screen. “It’s called the Safe System Approach. It helps create **Safe Speeds** and makes roads safer for everyone. For example, wide streets make drivers go faster because they feel open. But if there are trees, sidewalks, or bus stops, drivers slow down. This shows how **Proactive Safety** can prevent crashes before they happen.”



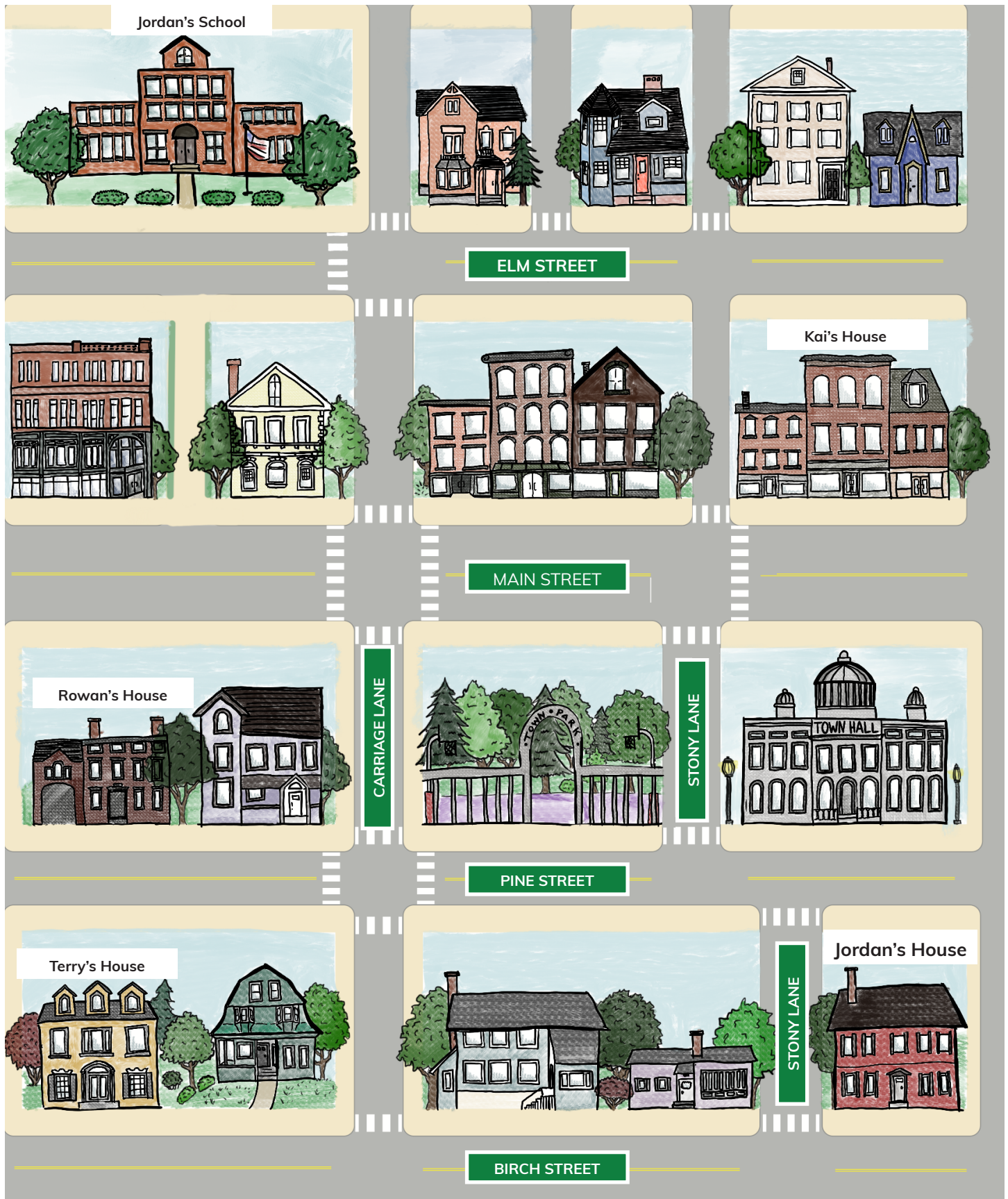
Then Jordan shared something exciting. “There’s a thing called a **Bike Bus**. It’s a group of kids and grownups riding their bikes to school together. It’s safer because drivers can see a big group better than just one person. Can we start one?”

His parents smiled. “We’re so proud of you for learning all this,” they said. “Starting a bike bus sounds like a great idea! So, how should we plan it?”

Jordan grabbed a map of the neighborhood. He and his parents looked at the safest route to school, making sure it had sidewalks and crosswalks. Then they marked spots where friends could join the ride.

**ON THE NEXT PAGE, HELP JORDAN
FIND A SAFE ROUTE FROM HOME TO
SCHOOL FOR HIS BIKE BUS!**

MAP THE BIKE BUS ROUTE!



Jordan told his friends that the bike bus would start on Monday morning. After the weekend passed, he woke up early on Monday, excited and ready to ride.

That first day, Jordan's mom and dad rode with him. On the way, he stopped at his friend Terry's house to see if he wanted to join. Terry said yes—and his mom came too! The five of them biked together, feeling safe and having fun.

MONDAY



On their way they talked about **Shared Responsibility**, that everyone, including kids and adults, has a role in making streets safe. They also talked about how **Safe Vehicles**, like cars and bikes, with good brakes and lights help keep everyone protected.

They arrived at school and the parents said goodbye. Jordan and Terry parked their bikes and ran up the stairs. When they got to class, they told everyone how much fun it was to bike to school. A bunch of other kids wanted to join!

So Jordan and Terry made a **Bike Bus** poster and hung it in the hallway. It invited anyone who wanted to ride to meet them at the town park in the morning.

The next day, Tuesday, two kids were waiting at the park. On Wednesday, there were four kids. By Friday, ten kids were riding scooters and bikes to school together in Jordan's bike bus.

TUESDAY



FRIDAY



ON THE NEXT PAGE, DESIGN YOUR OWN BIKE BUS POSTER TO HELP SPREAD THE WORD IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

JOIN OUR BIKE BUS

A large rectangular area defined by a dotted line, intended for a drawing or message.

WHEN:

WHERE:

RIde WITH US TO SCHOOL!

Town staff from the public works, engineering, and police departments noticed the **Bike Bus**. They were happy to see so many kids biking to school safely.

One morning, the town staff came to the park where the bike bus met. They invited the kids to help with a new safety **Action Plan**. Jordan and his friends were excited to help make streets safer for everyone. Now that he could bike to school, Jordan wanted to bike everywhere.



The town staff asked the kids which streets felt safe and which ones they stayed away from. Jordan showed them the map he made with his parents. The other kids pointed out spots where they didn't feel safe biking.

After looking at the map, the town staff joined the bike bus on their ride to school. When they arrived, the staff had a surprise. They were working on a safety project for Main Street and wanted the kids to help with a **Road Safety Audit**.

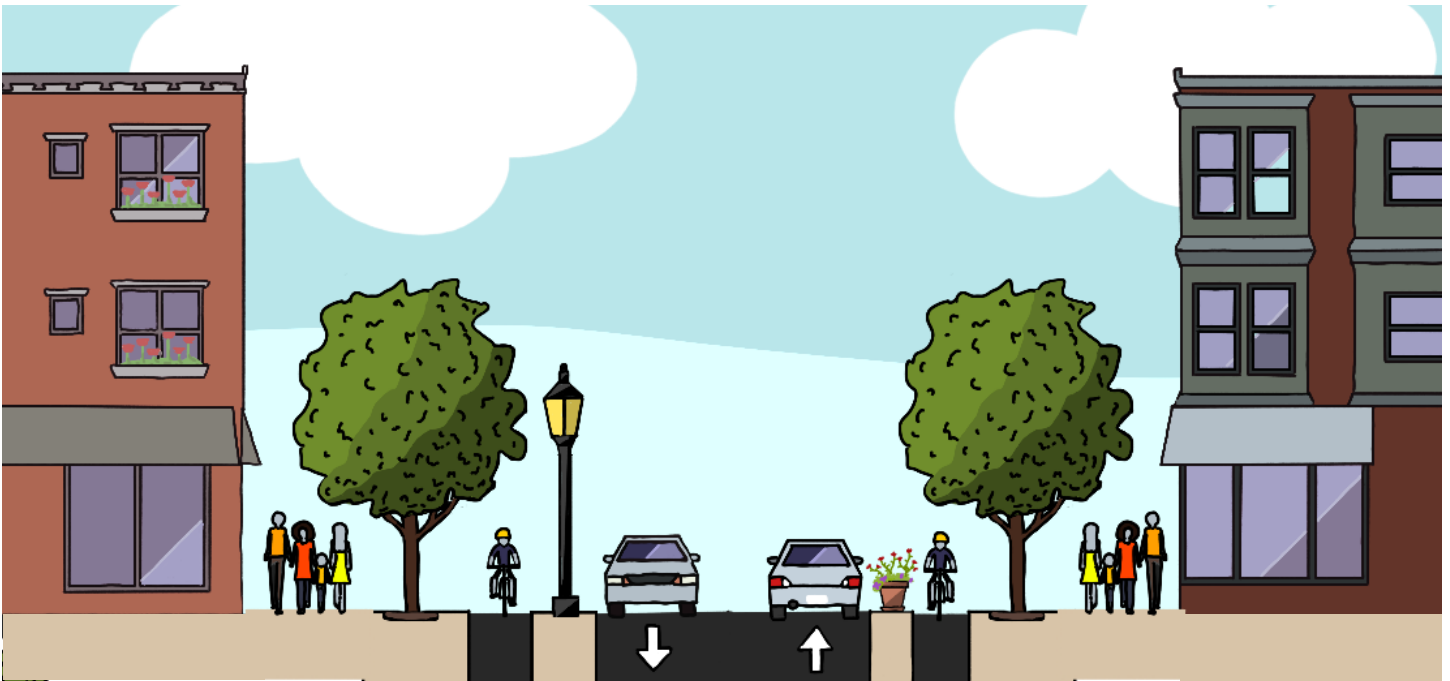
The kids suggested ideas to make the street safer. They worked with a **Transportation Planner** and **Transportation Engineer** to design things like bike lanes, crosswalks, and signs. It was fun to learn how streets are designed and to be part of the team!

After the town put in the new safety improvements, even more kids and parents joined the walking and biking school bus. Streets felt safer, and the community felt stronger.

Seeing the difference these changes made, the town made a big decision—they committed to **Vision Zero**, a plan to eliminate all injuries. They used **Layers of Protection** so that if one safety step didn't work, another would still keep people safe. One layer of protection is a safe crosswalk that helps people stay visible while crossing. A second layer is a safe person who looks both ways before crossing the street. A third layer is a safe car with sensors that stop the vehicle if someone is in its path.

By working together with kids, parents, and town staff, they were creating streets that were safe for everyone, no matter how they got around.

Jordan smiled on his ride to school, knowing that their bike bus helped change the future of their town.



ON THE NEXT PAGE, HELP JORDAN AND THE TOWN STAFF DESIGN A SAFER MAIN STREET!

Draw what you would like to see added to Main Street to make it safer and nicer for people walking, biking, and taking the bus. The elements on the bottom of the page are there to help - but use what comes to your mind!



Street Tree



Bench



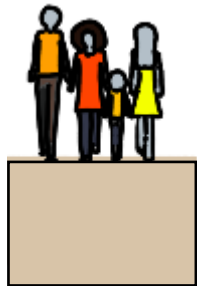
Protective
Bollard



Street
Light



Flower
Planter



Sidewalk



Bike
Lane



Travel
Lane



Travel
Lane



Parking
Lane

TRY YOUR OWN ROAD SAFETY AUDIT

Have an adult in your home reach out to the town planning department.

Do not go into a street without an adult.

Pick a spot near your home or school where you can safely watch what happens on the street. Stay there for a few minutes and record what you see. If you'd like, bring a friend or family member and do this activity together!

Street or intersection name: _____

Have you seen many cars go by? Are they going fast or slow?

Does this street feel wide or narrow to you?

Have you seen many people walking or biking?

Are there sidewalks? Are there cracks, poles, or signs that would make it hard to walk or roll a wheelchair?

Are there bike lanes? If not and there are people biking, where are they biking? In the street or on the sidewalk?

What would you change about the street to make it safer for all **road users**?

BIKE BUS WORD SEARCH



Action Plan	Mistakes	Safety Audit	Tree
Bench	Ride	School	Vulnerable
Bike Bus	Road	Scooter	
Crash	Safer Street		

SAFE SYSTEMS GLOSSARY

Action Plan: A report a town or city makes to outline steps for how they will make streets safer.

Bike Bus: A group of kids and parents who ride bikes or scooters to school together, like a moving bus!

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): A U.S. government agency that helps communities build safer roads.

Layers of Protection: If one safety step doesn't work, another should still keep people safe.

People Make Mistakes: We all mess up sometimes! Streets should be built so a mistake is a small one, not a large one.

Proactive Safety: We don't wait for bad crashes to happen—we fix things before they do.

Road Safety Audit: A special check-up of a road to find safety problems before they cause more crashes.

Road Users: Anyone on the public street or sidewalk —walkers, bikers, people on scooters, drivers, and bus passengers.

Safe People: Everyone using the street—walkers, bikers, drivers, and bus riders—who help keep each other safe.

Safe Speeds: Moving at speeds where people can stop in time to avoid crashing and getting hurt.

Safe Streets: Streets with space for all road users, like sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and signs that help everyone stay safe.

Safe System Approach: A way to design streets so that if people make mistakes, hopefully no one gets hurt.

Safe Vehicles: Cars, buses, and trucks with safety devices (like seat belts or brakes that stop cars by themselves).

Shared Responsibility: Safety isn't just up to one person—communities, schools, and leaders all work together.

Vision Zero: A goal to make streets so safe that people do not get hurt in traffic crashes.

Vulnerable Road Users: People on the street who aren't inside a vehicle—like walkers, bikers, or people working in the street.

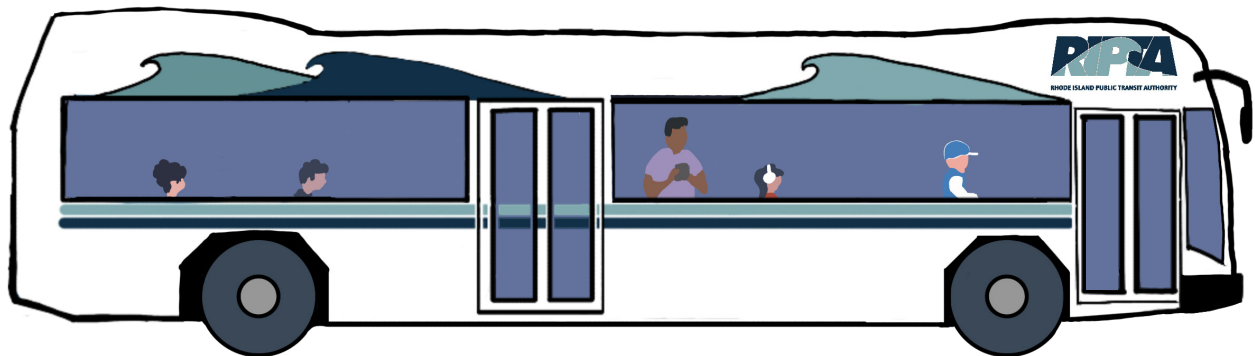
Transportation Engineer: A person who designs the details of roads—like where to put stoplights, crosswalks, sidewalks, or bike lanes.

Transportation Planner: A person who works with communities to imagine and plan safe and comfortable ways to get around.

Meet Your Bus Buddy!

Riding the bus is a great adventure and you don't have to go alone! With RIPTA's Bus Buddy program, friendly helpers are available to teach you everything you need to know: how to plan your trip, find your stop, hop on safely, and ride with confidence. Ask a parent or guardian to **email busbuddy@ripta.com or call 401-784-9575** to book a Bus Buddy and discover how traveling by bus can be fun, easy, and full of adventure!

Visit [RIPTA.com/busbuddy](https://www.ripta.com/busbuddy) to learn more.



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