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# Mexico City Activists Draw the Line With DIY Bike Lanes

By **Angie Schmitt**

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There's a growing demand in Mexico for better accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians. But the government has been slow to respond to the overwhelming need for safer conditions for active transportation.

Cycling advocates in Mexico City aren't taking it lying down. Recently, they acted out every frustrated bike advocate's ultimate fantasy: taking matters into their own hands and re-allocating street space with their own paintbrushes. false

Jimena Veloz on Network blog [The City Fix](#) describes how she and a small group painted a "wikilane" leading right to the doors of Congress:

Mexico City's government pledged in 2007 that it would build 300 km of bike lanes around the city by 2012. However, the city still only has 22.2 km because most money is allocated to car infrastructure, leaving aside

non-motorized mobility. That's why the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy and the National Network for Urban Cycling ([BiciRed](#)) launched a campaign called '5% for bicycles and pedestrians', which asks national legislators to assign at least that percentage of the transportation budget to non-motorized infrastructure.

We bought paint, brushes and rollers. We built wood signs. We cut stencils. We borrowed a tricycle to carry everything. We invited everyone we knew and told them to come help. And on Sunday, November 6th, we were ready to start painting.

We set a goal of painting a 5km bike lane that would end at Congress, the Wikicarril (wikilane). We funded our effort through [Fondeadora](#), a crowd-sourcing site, and we managed to collect 13,500 pesos (about US\$1,000) in just 4 days thanks to the collaboration of 37 generous supporters.

We worked for 8 hours. We painted 5 kms. We spent less than 1000 dollars. How much would it cost to actually build the bicycle infrastructure the city needs?

Elsewhere on the Network today: [Commute by Bike](#) takes heart in the efforts of a UK car talk radio show to inform listeners about how to interact safely with cyclists. [Grist](#) reports that the Department of Defense has taken a special interest in the college town of Oberlin, Ohio, whose sustainability efforts, applied elsewhere, have the potential to enhance national security. And [Trillium Solutions](#) wonders whether declining service at smaller airports will help build the case for inter-city rail.

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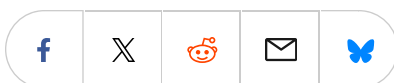
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## Angie Schmitt

Angie is a Cleveland-based writer with a background in planning and newspaper reporting. She has been writing about cities for Streetsblog for six years.



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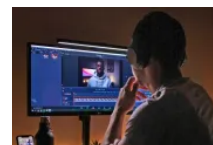
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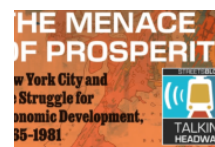
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