TACTICAL URBANISM

Short-Term Action For Long-Term Change
Mike Lydon, CNU-A
@MikeLydon | @streetplans | @Open_Streets
IT'S GOOD TO BE HERE
We’re a planning, design, and Research-advocacy firm
Better Streets, Better Places

- Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning + Design
- Placemaking + Tactical Urbanism
- Urban Policy Development
- Urban + Architectural Design
- Public Outreach / Involvement
- Web Design
- Education | Training | Workshops
- Research-Advocacy
Visualizing Safe Streets

Existing
Automobile Space: 80%
People Space: 20%
Awesome! Now What?!

Proposed
Automobile Space: 50%
People Space: 50%
Real Change is Hard!
How Do We Create A Culture Shift?
Inspiration #1: Start Small - Open Streets!
The Open Streets Project
(www.openstreetsproject.org)

The Open Streets Guide

Opening Streets to People | Sharing Resources | Transforming Communities

Open Streets Initiative
temporarily closing streets to
car traffic, so that people
can use them for walking,
biking, dancing, playing, and
socializing.

With more than 65 documented initiatives in
North America, open streets are
increasingly common in cities seeking
innovative ways to achieve environmental,
social, economic, and public health goals.

Learn More About The Open Streets Project...

Are you organizing an open streets initiative in your town?
Tell us about your initiative by adding it to
OpenStreetsProject.org.

Add My Initiative

Recent News

- New Resources from Eugene
  on Organizing Volunteers
  12/19/2011 - With winter quickly approaching, it may
  not be the ideal season to hold open streets in much of North
  America, but it’s already time to...

Open streets
about 3 days ago
The Rise of North American Open Streets
Spectrum of Intervention

- Open Streets Events
- Pop-Up Events
- People St
- Streetscape Plan

Temporary Ephemeral

Permanent Sustaining
Inspiration #2: NYC’s Pavement to Plazas
A Plan **without** Implementation Tactics

RPA’s Midtown Plan (1969)

---

**DIAGRAMMATIC FORM RESPONSE**

This diagram is intended to convey the bulk or forms which the long-range movement system could generate if the function, form, and amenity principles in Chapter Three were applied in midtown. The asphalt membranes of the street level would be penetrated to bring light and air into the special sub-surface “mixing chambers” (shown in gold). Reclaimed waterfronts for public recreation is shown in green.

This is a more detailed study of prospective physical form than the earlier conceptual diagram, but it is nevertheless a diagram and not a physical plan.
Step 1 - Disrupt the Status Quo
Times Square (2009)

Image: Nina Munteanu
Step 2: Iterate on the Design

Times Square (2010)

Image: NYC DOT
Step 3: Measure + Learn
Times Square (2012)

- Pedestrian Traffic: 15% Increase
- 180% Increase in Retail Rents
- 33% Decrease in Traffic Injuries
- 1 of 65+ Plazas in Process
What's Going On Here?

This project is being brought to you by:
The City of New York
and Construction

The name of this project is:
Reconstruction of
Project # IWMP2012
Adapted from The Lean Startup by Eric Ries
Tactical
Adj: /tak-ti-kal/

1. of or relating to small-scale actions serving a larger purpose

1. Adroit in planning or maneuvering to accomplish a purpose
Build a Better Block
Informal Bike Parking
Intersection Repair
Guerrilla Gardening
Reclaimed Setbacks
Weed Bombing
Chair Bombing
Ad-Busting

Park(ing) Day
Park-Making
Pop-Up Town Hall
Micro-Mixing
Site Pre-Vitalization
Pop-Up Retail
Food Carts/Trucks
Mobile Vendors
Depave
Camps

Pavement to Plazas
Pavement to Parks
Open Streets
Play Streets
Pop-Up Cafes
Parkmobile

TACTICS
Tactical Urbanism has become a global movement led by no one, that can involve anyone, and that is intended to improve the lives of everyone.
00 Preface

01 Disturbing the Order of Things

02 Inspirations and Antecedents of Tactical Urbanism

03 The Next American City and the Rise of Tactical Urbanism

04 Of Cities and Citizens: Five Tactical Urbanism Stories

05 A Tactical Urbanism How-To

06 Conclusion: Go Out and Use This Book!
Tactical Urbanism: A city, organizational, and/or citizen-led approach to neighborhood building using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions intended to catalyze long-term change.
Tactical Urbanism is Not New!
The Dutch Woonerf - 1974
The Rise of Tactical Urbanism

- Shifting Demographics
- Citizen Frustration
- The Great Recession
- Radical Connectivity
Business As Usual: Sprawl Costs America $1 trillion / year (VTPI)
Disturbing the Order of Things
TOP DOWN

Mayors | City Councilors | Municipal Departments

Developers
Entrepreneurs
Business Improvement Districts

TACTICAL URBANISM

BOTTOM UP

Citizen Activists | Community Groups | Neighborhood Organizations

Advocacy Organizations
Artists
Planning + Design Firms
Tactical Urbanism: 3 Common Applications

1. Citizens: Unsanctioned Citizen Action

2. Municipality/Developer: ‘Phase 0’ Implementation

3. Municipality/Organization: Public Involvement Through Collaborative Demonstration
1. Working from the Outside In: Hamilton, Ontario
April 19th, 2013 Tactical Urbanism Workshop

**Phases**

- **24hr**: *Surface Alteration* (Approach of Y Section)
- **2 Days**: Track usage, identify other nodes in city
- **2 Weeks — 1 Month**: Joining Neighbours
- **Intermediate**: Change Perception + Visibility

**Communication**

- Live Stream Intervention
- Blog, Social Media, Print Media

**Locke Festival (August)**

- Event / Installation
  - Promote / Tag Team
  - Community Event
  - Li Balcons, Street Performers / Researchers
  - Visualize data: chalk boards, balloons
  - Also could coincide w Access Closure

- 2 Way Traffic
  - Work
  - Bike Lanes

Existing Patterns + Draw Imprint of Circulation Patterns
1 calm
2 reclaim
3 recreate
Locke St.
April 30th: Locke St. + Herkimer St.

Image: Tactical Urbanism Hamilton
“I like it! It really controls the traffic. It was scary.”
Mahoney: How active imaginations are reinventing Hamilton

By Jeff Mahoney

What if you knew your block could use a crosswalk or traffic calming measures, but you couldn’t wait for city council to get around to it?

(I don’t know; they might be busy formulating a “decorum” policy.)

Would you paint the crosswalk yourselves, ask permission later? Would you block off one lane of a busy street in your neighbourhood and dedicate it for use by bicyclists? Or fill all the parking meters along a block for the day, set up tables and chairs and throw a party?

Think of the corner of Mary and Cannon. I did, as part of a recent “tactical urbanism” charette (see below for definition).

Here’s what our charette group (which included architects, residents in the area, a community activist and a business owner) came up with for Mary and Cannon.
SPECIAL REPORT: TACTICAL URBANISM

City Crackdown on Tactical Urbanism

A memo by Public Works general manager Gerry Davis calls acts of tactical urbanism ‘illegal, potentially unsafe’ and ‘vandalism’.

By Ryan McGreal
Published May 09, 2013

this article has been updated

Public Works General Manager Gerry Davis sent a memo on May 7, 2013 to Council warning about "unauthorized activities on our city streets" related to the recent workshop and public lecture on tactical urbanism.

According to Mike Lydon, a principal at The Street Plans Collaborative and author of the Tactical Urbanism e-book, tactical urbanism is the principle that citizens can undertake direct low-cost, high-reward actions that immediately improve some aspect of a community’s public life and demonstrate to city leaders that there are opportunities for easy, successful changes to the status quo.

Lydon emphasized that the essence of tactical urbanism is to take short-term action that precipitates long-term change and are informed by vision, local context, agility, value, and community engagement. He noted that most cities welcome tactical urbanism and are inspired by demonstrations of change to invest in more permanent transformations informed by the lessons learned.

'Illegal, Potentially Unsafe'

However, the City of Hamilton does not appear to see it that way. In Davis’ memo, he warns:

These changes to City streets are illegal, potentially unsafe and adding to the City's costs of maintenance and repair. The City can consider this as vandalism, with the potential for serious health and safety consequences for citizens, particularly pedestrians. There is potential liability and risk management claims to both the City and the individuals involved.

Of course, left unmentioned is the ongoing danger to individuals and liability to the city from Hamilton's status quo of pedestrian- and cyclist-unfriendly automobile oriented streets, a shameful legacy that has continued unimpeded for decades despite the overwhelming weight of evidence, expert testimonial, and even official policy.
PHONE THE HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU SEE ANY INSTANCES OF TACTICAL URBANISM.

DO NOT APPROACH TACTICAL URBANISTS DIRECTLY. PLEASE WAIT FOR THE POLICE TO ARRIVE. THEY MAY BE ARMED AND DANGEROUS, BUT THE TACTICAL URBANISTS ARE UNLIKELY TO BE. FOR ALL SUCCESSFUL ARRESTS, PUBLIC WORKS WILL PROVIDE 10 KG OF FREE ASPHALT.
IF YOU SEE SOMETHING REMOTELY PROGRESSIVE...

....REPORT IT!

ONLY YOU CAN STOP URBANISM!

Brought to you by the City of Hamilton Department of Roadway Security and Asphalt Relocation.
City to negotiate with tactical urbanists

By Adam Carter, CBC News  Posted: May 19, 2013 9:18 AM ET  |  Last Updated: May 23, 2013 12:11 PM ET  1

These bumpout cones that were installed by regular citizens at Herkimer and Locke were removed by the city for being "illegal and potentially unsafe." (Courtesy Ryan McGreal/Raise the Hammer)

A group of Hamilton citizens is trying to slice through municipal bureaucracy and implement short-term traffic flow solutions to improve the city’s streets on their own.

"We call it tactical urbanism, and it’s a movement that has taken hold in cities around the world," says community organizer Dan McConkey, who helped organize a series of temporary road closures in West Hamilton this year. (Photograph by Tamara Ogilvie)

Top Hamilton Headlines

- First electric car charging station unveiled in downtown Hamilton  0
- Hamilton’s Steeped Tea moves from Dragon’s Den to U.S. market  15
- Is $477 in taxes for transit in Hamilton worth it?  5
- Family of missing Canadian in Australia offers $10K reward  22
City to Install Permanent Bumpouts at Herkimer and Locke

City staff do an about-face and embrace tactical urbanism as a way to make short-term, low-cost changes that help pave the way for a larger culture shift.

By Graham McNally
Published May 23, 2013

On Tuesday, Phil Toms and I met with Councillor Brian McHattie and John Mater, Director of Corporate Assets and Strategic Planning from the City of Hamilton, to review the recent pylon installation that occurred at Herkimer and Locke.

For those unfamiliar with the installation, at the end of April, the Hamilton-Burlington Society of Architects invited Mike Lydon of the Street Plans Collaborative in Brooklyn, New York, to come to Hamilton to introduce Tactical Urbanism and lead a day of thinking, imagining and designing.

Pylon Bumpouts at Herkimer and Locke

In the weeks between the Charnette and the subsequent public talk on the subject of Tactical Urbanism, pylons were placed at the intersection of Locke and Herkimer, cited by many pedestrians as a threatening intersection.

The pylons provided ‘bumpouts’ (additional space for pedestrians) which have the effect of shortening the crossing distance, placing pedestrians in a more visible location at the corner.
City Paints Crosswalks, Bumpouts at Herkimer and Locke

The City has already begun installing the one-year pilot project at Herkimer and Locke to create a more pedestrian-friendly design, after City staff met with Tactical Urbanism representatives.

By Ryan McGreal
Published May 28, 2013

The City has painted ladder-style crosswalks and bumpouts at Herkimer and Locke as part of a pilot project to give the intersection a more pedestrian-friendly design.

The pilot follows an act of tactical urbanism in which local residents used pylons to create bumpouts at the southwest and northeast corners. Senior City staff met with representatives from the city’s Tactical Urbanism movement and agreed to implement the changes more officially.

The next step is to install bollards to protect pedestrians from automobiles in the busy, aggressive intersection. After a year, the City will review the pilot and decide whether to make it permanent.

A similar pilot is also planned on Longwood Avenue.

Tactical Urbanism
City Bolsters Crosswalks at Multiple Locations

The City has undertaken crosswalk improvements at several locations around Hamilton, suggesting a new commitment to maintaining and improving walkable infrastructure.

By Ryan McGreal
Published June 07, 2013

Here's a roundup of some work city crews did this week on bolstering crosswalks at several locations around Hamilton.

Knockdown Sticks at Herkimer and Locke

The City recently painted bumpouts and zebra crossings at the corner of Herkimer and Locke. According to Kelly Anderson, spokesperson for the Public Works department, the next step is to install "knockdown sticks", or flexible bollards, along the bumpout lines.

[Knockdown sticks] are retro reflective silver on a white stick and are about three feet high. They can be knocked down by a vehicle or by hand and will stand back up by themselves.
Today: 102 Complete or Underway

City Embraces Tactical Urbanism

Last Wednesday, Hamilton Councillors further embraced Tactical Urbanism and took steps toward implementing an innovative approach to city building.

By Graham McNally
Published September 24, 2013

Last Wednesday, Hamilton Councillors further embraced Tactical Urbanism and took steps toward implementing an innovative approach to city building.

Council accepted a staff report jointly prepared by the Neighbourhood Development Strategy and Public Works, recommending the City support the Hamilton-Burlington Society of Architects (HBSA) in developing an outreach, engagement, and communication strategy around the Ideas of Tactical Urbanism.

The report followed up on a delegation by Phil Tomm and me, representing the HBSA, in which we presented the Ideas behind Tactical Urbanism to Councillors. In very general terms, Tactical Urbanism is an approach to urbanism that can be citizen-led, city-led or a collaboration of the two. Projects are typically quick, cheap and fun with an eye to achieving a long-term goal.

Tactical Urbanism in Hamilton

Tactical Urbanism became more widely known and popularized in Hamilton following a lecture organized by the HBSA in May of this year when we presented Mike Lydon of the Street Plans Collaborative and author of two Tactical Urbanism manuals.

Pylon bollards at Herkimer and Locke (RTH file photo)
Tactical Urbanism: 3 Common Applications

1. Citizens: Unsanctioned Citizen Action

2. Municipality/Developer: “Phase 0” Implementation

3. Municipality/Organization: Public Involvement Through Collaborative Demonstration
2. “Phase 0” – Somerville, MA
Davis Square
Too Much Surface Parking
Davis Square Streetscape Plan (2012)
Tactical Urbanism as Part of the Planning Process
Existing
make this plaza permanent
Tactical Urbanism: 3 Common Applications

1. Citizens: Unsanctioned Citizen Action

2. Municipality/Developer: Sanctioned ‘Phase 0’ Implementation

3. Municipality/Organization: Public Involvement Through Collaborative Demonstration
Collaborative Demonstration: Morgan Hill, CA
Right-Sizing Monterey Street: Option 1
Right-Sizing Monterey Street: Option 2
Collecting Feedback in Real-Time
Test Before You Invest!

City council gives ‘Complete Streets’ program the green light
Six-month trial program will begin in February

Published in the Nov. 26 – Dec. 9, 2014 issue of Morgan Hill Life

By Staff Report

Monterey Street in downtown will undergo a transformation starting in early February as two lanes will be closed in a six-month trial to determine the impact on vehicle, pedestrian and bike traffic and if limited traffic flow will improve safety and enhance the overall downtown experience.

City council members unanimously voted to approve the trial which will narrow traffic to one lane in each direction between Main and Dunne avenues. About 20 people spoke at the Nov. 18 meeting to express various views.

The decision was not an easy one as the community is divided on the "Complete Streets" concept, said Maureen Tobin, the city’s communication and engagement manager.

“The community input that was collected prior to the meeting pretty much shows that the community is split about 50-50,” she said. “This has been a discussion for a long time in the community and it hasn’t gone away and it’ll continue to be an issue of discussion.”

Tobin stressed that the council’s decision wasn’t to narrow Monterey Road forever but to conduct a half-year test to see what works and what doesn’t work.

“We’re going into it with an open mind and we want to see if there are ways to mitigate traffic issues,” she said. “Nothing is permanent and whatever is done in this trial can be undone.”

The city expects the initial phase to create confusion and traffic flow issues as drivers learn to navigate the narrower downtown thoroughfare, she said.

“Initially, until people’s habits change, it’s going to be a challenge,” she said. “I don’t think anyone is going to paint a picture that’s this is going to be delightful. There will be some initial inconvenience and some initial outcry and we need to go through that to see if it really works or not.”

On the weekend of Oct. 24 and 25, staff from the city, Harris Associates, Alta Planning + Design, Street Plans Collaborative (subconsultant to Alta), and volunteers temporarily tested the physical logistics of the new lane configuration with only two blocks — First Street to Third Street — that were reconfigured. Northbound Monterey Road was converted to one motor vehicle travel lane with an expanded pedestrian area and a shared bike/auto travel lane. The southbound direction was converted to one motor vehicle travel lane and a seven-foot-wide buffered bike lane.

The Complete Streets program was not considered as a project when the city council adopted the city’s Downtown Placemaking Investment Strategy. The idea for a Complete Streets project was developed by the Downtown Stakeholders group which initially organized to discuss traffic calming ideas following the strategy adoption.

When the Downtown Placemaking Investment Strategy was adopted, $2,675,000 was allocated for the Monterey Road Streetscape project. To date, the Complete Streets program has spent about $75,000, according to a report presented to the city council.
FEELS GOOD TO GET SOME STUFF DONE
Christchurch, New Zealand
Community Resilience
200+ Projects Later, It’s Still About People
Six Lessons

1. Embed Tactical Urbanism (Build – Measure – Learn) into the Project Delivery Process

2. Pilot Test Existing and Proposed Projects + Plans

3. Open Up The Project Delivery Process

4. Employ The 48x48x48 Process

5. Take Advantage of Existing Initiatives To Find Multipliers
Where is Tactical Urbanism Going?
"...it is about getting it right for now and at the same time being **tactical** and **strategic** about later...and about disturbing the order of things in the interests of change."

- Nabeel Hamdi

author: about the art of practice and the limits of planning in cities
Palo Alto?
U. JAMES & MOHAWK
IS NOT WORKING
FOR EVERYONE
WHAT IF
IT WORKED
THIS WAY
LIKE WHAT
YOU SEE?
HONK!
Thank You!

Mike Lydon, CNU-A
streetplans.org

@MikeLydon | @streetplans | @Open_Streets