

HOW-TO GUIDE: CREATE A SLOW/SHARED STREET PROGRAM





SLOW STREETS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Throughout COVID-19, vehicular traffic has reduced, while the need for spaces for people has increased. For the ChangeX Slow/Shared Streets program, you'll work with your city leaders to slow down the streets in your community by shutting streets down to thru traffic and opening them to activities such as walking, running, and bicycling while maintaining safe social distancing.

You will work with the Better Block Foundation and your city leadership to determine what policies are already in place for Slow/Shared Streets programs, and to determine what approach is best. This may mean rallying your neighbors together to apply for an existing program; working with leadership to develop a new program; or creating elements to enhance streets that are already slowed down.



INTRO TO TACTICAL URBANISM

HOW TO MAKE YOUR STREET OPEN TO PEOPLE

Most Slow/Shared Streets programs are made possible by city leadership, you, and tactical urbanism. What is tactical urbanism? It's a movement that began a little more than a decade ago by neighbors who wanted to make improvements to their streets and sidewalks. Generally, the initiatives are grassroots, and quickly implemented with lower-cost items that can demonstrate a potential long-term change.

In this case, you may use the technique to close your neighborhood street to thru traffic (but still allow local traffic, such as deliveries, emergency vehicles, and residents' vehicles). By closing your street to thru traffic, you're opening it up to allow more space for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The next few pages outline the steps you may need to take for implementation, as well as give some material and design guidelines. So, let's get started.

DEVELOPING THE CRITERIA FOR YOUR PROGRAM

In order to promote social distancing and also provide safe space for residents to get outside and get exercise, you will work with your city leadership to create more space for people.

POTENTIAL CRITERIA FOR YOUR PROGRAM

- Low-traffic street
- Neighborhood street
- No signals along the street
- Create Neighborhood Block Captain
- Approval from 25% of neighbors on the street
- Limited to one block
- Must be open to local traffic, deliveries, and emergencies
- No other city or utility work along the block during its Slow Street time, except for necessary maintenance and emergency repairs.



ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

When you develop your program alongside city leadership, there are several different types of criteria you may want to consider. A few of the criteria for one program is listed above. You may want to build off these, or create some entirely new processes. Put together a few ideas, and then talk with city leadership about their criteria, as well. The goal is to create more space for people but maintaining safety for everyone.

POTENTIAL DESIGN APPROACHES

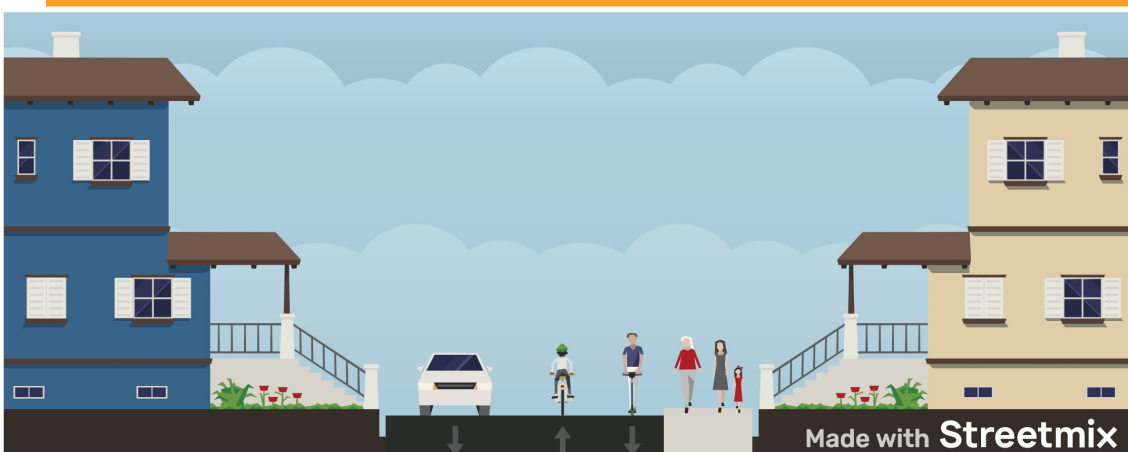
Each neighborhood is unique but many have a few similar characteristics. We would need more information to determine which design approach is best for you, and you would need to wait until the criteria is finalized with your city leadership, but in general, here are two design approaches to possibly consider.

OPTION 1: SHARED SPACE WITH 1-WAY TRAFFIC LANE

For this option, you could close off one side of the street and create space for pedestrians/bicyclists. The other side would become a one-way for local traffic, delivery, and emergency vehicles.

Block off the entrance on either side with the barriers. Post notes on the barricades alerting that this street is not for thru traffic. Add signage indicating that the open side is for one-way traffic only.

Use cones as delineators between the two spaces ensuring to not leave space for vehicles to cross over.



POTENTIAL DESIGN APPROACHES

OPTION 2: CLOSED CENTER, 2-WAY TRAFFIC LANES

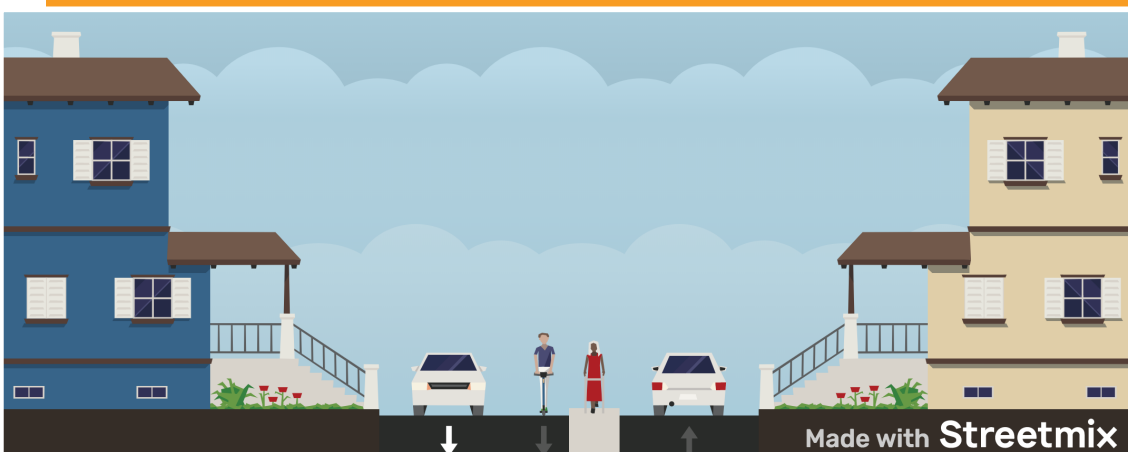
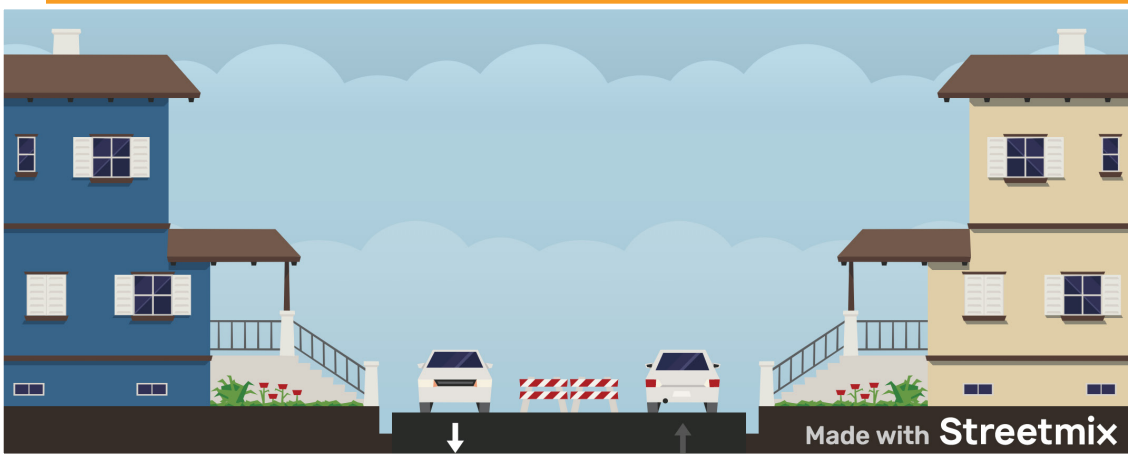
If there's enough room, you can transform the center portion of your street into shared-use space and allow local traffic, delivery, and emergency vehicles on either side.

The traffic lanes would need to be 11-feet each. Place the barricades in the middle with signage alerting that the street is not open to thru traffic. Use the cones to create a center lane for shared-use space. And, again, you could place the wayfinding as a block instead of a barricade.

In this situation, you need to be careful how you treat the areas in which the pedestrians cross the traffic lanes to get to the center. If creating a crosswalk, be sure to follow MUTCD guidelines.

If you have intersections in your street, you will need to treat them carefully. The goal for intersection design is to create a space that helps people avoid conflict, regardless of their mode of transportation.

Check out the National Association of City Transportation Officials, which is the ultimate go-to source on all things streets, bikes, and designs.



POTENTIAL MATERIALS

Here are a few of the items and resources you may need for your project.

Barricades

Barricades are essential at the entry points of your street. You will want to work with us or a rental company to rent the barricades. You will need at least one for either end of your street.

Cones

Another essential element is **cones**. These can be purchased or rented. The cones are delineators to the street signaling to both motorists and pedestrians who's allowed where. See the designs on the previous pages to determine where the cones should go in your street.

Reflective Tape

Use **reflective tape** on any non-reflective elements to draw attention to them when lights are low.

Paint and Signage

You may want to consider adding stencils to the streets (see the next page). For this, you may want to use **tempera paint**. This paint will wash away in one to two rains and will need to be reapplied. You could also use spray chalk, however, this is much harder to remove and will require a powerwasher.

Wikiblock

Wikiblock is an online library of street-furniture designs developed by the Better Block Foundation. These designs can be downloaded by anyone anywhere for free, and cut out using a CNC router (found at most local makerspaces, in colleges, and through fabrication shops). These designs can then be built without any glue, screws, or nails. For more, go to betterblock.org/wikiblock.

Landscaping Elements

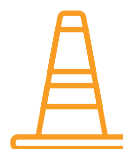
Few things transform a street into a space for people better than **greenery**. With a few plants, planters, or maybe even some borrowed trees, the space cools down and calms down. A splash of green on the gray concrete communicates to all that the space is for everyone.

Elements in the Neighborhood

Ask your **neighbors** what elements they have that you may be able to borrow. Tires could become a planter. Pallets could be a single-person bench. Some extra hand sanitizer could be setup into a wash station. There are a lot of resources at your fingertips.

Art

Art is just as important as any of the other elements in creating a space for people. Work with neighbors to organize an art exhibit that could be placed in the street or showcase the creativity of the people around you.





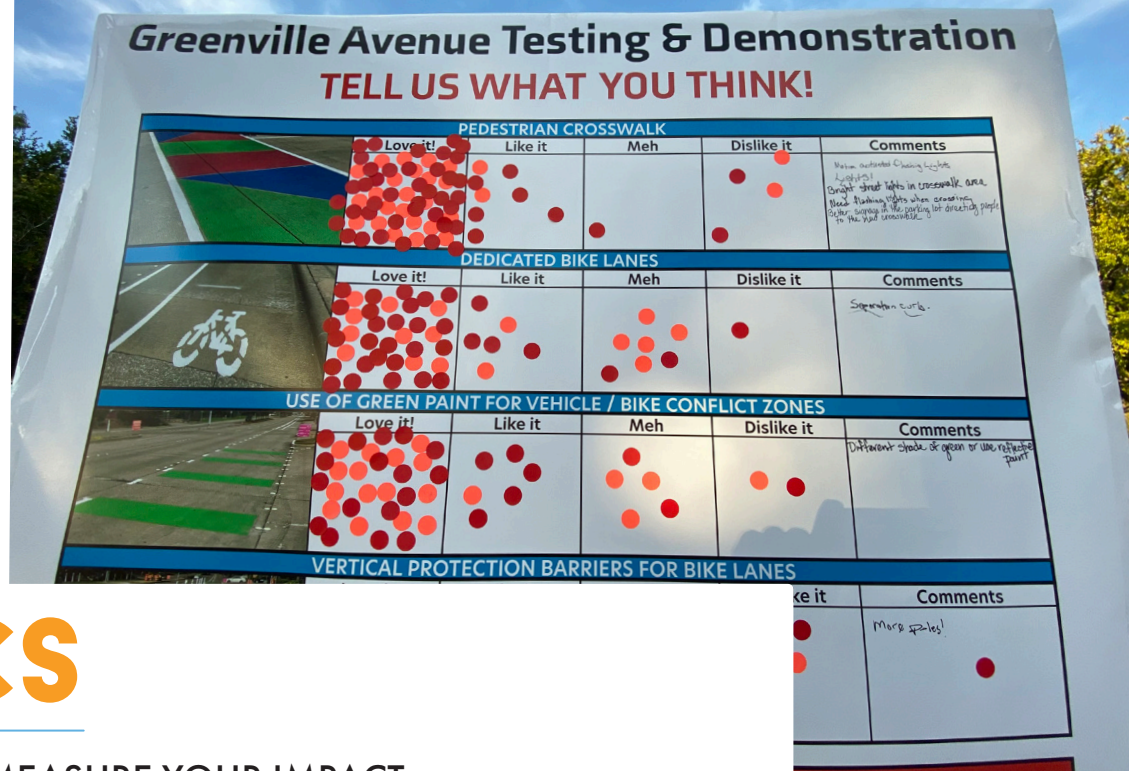
MAINTAIN A SAFE SOCIAL DISTANCE

USE STENCILS AND SIGNAGE TO ENSURE SOCIAL DISTANCING

These programs are intended to relieve pressure from overcrowded spaces by allowing residents to use their streets as a space to exercise. But it is vital that neighbors do not congregate in order for this program to work. To help with this, you could create a couple stencils to apply with tempura paint on the street.

Another option to consider is a volunteer corps of folks who would sign up for shifts to take a walk, ride their bikes, ride scooters, or go for a run. These folks would ensure that people are not congregating and would encourage everyone to keep moving.

Along with the stencils, we recommend signage printed out and placed on vertical elements.



METRICS

GATHER THE DATA TO MEASURE YOUR IMPACT

Once the criteria is set, the street is designed, and the elements are placed, you get to enjoy it with your neighbors. Walk it, bike it, run it, and be sure to stay at least six-feet away from your neighbors. However, your work is not done. This is the portion of the project that's most vital to potential changes to your street.

Do your neighbors like the approach?

Do some parts of it work, but not overall?

This is your time to measure, document, and share. Work with volunteers to gather data. There are a few ways you can go about this.

One of our favorite resources is [Gehlpeople.com/tools](https://www.gehlpeople.com/tools). Here you can find tools for age and gender tally, people moving count, participant survey, stationary activity mapping, 12-quality criteria, and a public life data protocol. Not all these tools make sense for COVID-19 measurements, so you can pick and choose what means the most to you, your neighbors, and your elected officials.

Another interesting element to measure is the speed (or change in speed). It's best to gather some of the measurements before implementation, but no worries if you weren't able to. You can always gather the data after you remove your street.

There are a couple ways you can measure traffic speeds. One is to borrow a traffic gun (or buy one). Or, more simply, you can download a speed gun app on your phone and measure from afar. Put together an excel sheet and measure several times a day consistently throughout the duration of your project. Do the same after you've taken the project down.