

ResidentFirst

SLOW STREETS

December 2020



KUNSILL LOKALI
FGURA

ResidentFirst

This document has been authored by studjurban and Studio Tom Van Malderen on behalf of the Local Councils' Association Malta and the Fgura Local Council.

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Introduction

Streets in Malta are mostly dedicated for vehicles, including local streets which should encourage a greater pedestrian activity. Vehicles also travel at relatively high speeds, causing safety concerns for residents and other street users.

At the same time, the average width of pavements is, at best, 1m – too narrow to allow two people to pass each other comfortably, or for wheelchair users to be able to navigate along a pavement, or even for an individual to pass by with a stroller. As a result, people are

forced to be in close proximity with passing vehicles, risking walking, running, scooting, or cycling in the street next to speeding cars. This is a street safety issue, as well as a public health issue, in the light of the new social distancing guidelines.

What is the Slow Streets initiative?

Slow Streets is a pioneering initiative in Malta and Gozo geared towards giving back streets to the people rather than cars, focusing primarily on residents' wellbeing. The Local Councils' Association, in partnership with Transport Malta and the Planning Authority, is collaborating on this action plan in order to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists by promoting walking, cycling and better accessibility to public transport networks. These new strategies will plan to ensure that mobility within localities is safe, sustainable, healthy and efficient, in addition to providing more public open space that contributes to an elevated quality of life.

The initiative focuses on strategies of traffic calming and management. In addition, each Local Council will study the degree of pedestrianisation it should implement according to the

locality's street network and the needs of its residents, whether temporarily or permanently. Slow Streets provides residents with an opportunity to experience their neighbourhoods in a new way, as a number of safe walking corridors will connect civic landmarks, medical facilities and other important services. This includes linking cycling priority routes and temporarily designated streets converted into creative play areas for children to enjoy safely.

In Malta, streets are the primary public spaces, used daily by everyone. In order to improve the liveability of our localities, therefore, we need to start from our streets. Having pedestrian-friendly streets implies greater, equitable access to the outdoors, active transportation, opportunities to exercise, and the support of both physical and mental health.



Slow Streets provides residents with an opportunity to experience their neighbourhoods in a new way.

Source: publicspace.org

Who are Slow Streets for?

At the heart of Slow Streets lies the local community and the need for better well-being for all residents. The ultimate objective is to make streets more welcoming and accessible to

people of all ages, who want to travel on foot, by bicycle, wheelchair, scooter, or skateboard. In particular, there is special consideration for the needs of the elderly and physically disabled.

How do Slow Streets work?

The Slow Streets programme is designed to limit through traffic on certain residential streets so as to allow such streets to be used more as shared spaces. 'Through traffic' is vehicular traffic which passes through a particular locality or area, rather than stopping there, solely in order to arrive at another destination.

Simple tools such as signage, floor markings and cones will be used to slow down speeds and block roads, either temporarily or permanently, to improve safety for people who want to walk or cycle. This type of intervention is commonly referred to as 'tactical urbanism'. Access to private driveways/ garages and loading and unloading of goods will be maintained for residents and businesses respectively, with better management schemes, as well as access for emergency and service vehicles as required.

Different degrees of interventions are subsequently proposed according to findings from comprehensive site analyses and the development of a vision for each street as part of a wider, more extensive, network.



source: Global Designing Cities



source: Global Designing Cities

At the heart of Slow Streets lies the local community and the need for better wellbeing for all residents.

What is 'tactical urbanism'?

Tactical urbanism involves using temporary materials in order to repurpose places and transform them into more dynamic public spaces, with pedestrian safety as a primary concern. The strategy is a phased approach, with short-term commitment that eventually leads to more permanent solutions.

Such experiments are carried out inexpensively, and with flexibility, in order to assess the potential success of an idea and to enable making adjustments before committing significant capital expenditure. Tactical urbanism can push existing ideas to move closer to implementation in the quickest manner.

Some examples of tactical urbanism strategies are:

- temporary signage and bollards to close off some streets for different uses, such as play streets or the setting up of markets;
- use of planters to define a boundary, especially at important pedestrian entrances;
- use of temporary movable furniture to turn a parking space into public space;
- use of painted markings on pavements to highlight priority for pedestrians; and
- added signage to help minimise through vehicular traffic and prioritise walking and/or cycling.



Selected materials will likely involve some level of trial and error before reaching the optimal design for the particular context. The flexibility of tactical urbanism initiatives provides an opportunity for creative thinking, and is the starting point for real change.



Tactical urbanism involves using temporary materials in order to repurpose places and transform them into more dynamic public spaces, with pedestrian safety as a primary concern.

At the heart of Slow Streets lies the local community and the need for better well-being for all residents. The ultimate objective is to make streets more welcoming and accessible to people of all ages, who want to travel on foot, by bicycle, wheelchair, scooter or skateboard.

The Slow Streets Network is based on this important concept, wherein local streets become primarily focused for local resident access and services, as opposed to through traffic.

Slow Streets Network

In order to propose a solid strategy for the locality, both desktop and on the ground research was conducted to assess the potential of a Slow Streets network.

The first step of in-depth desktop 'macro' analysis entails studying the locality in terms of transportation networks, main activity zones, development density and the presence of public open spaces. Analysing transportation networks is important to understand the main vehicular and pedestrian routes, in order to be able to identify which roads should be mainly encouraged for vehicular use and, subsequently, which streets may be alleviated, or even liberated, from traffic so as to be prioritised for pedestrians. Over the recent years, there has been significant investment within the arterial and distributor road infrastructure in Malta, which has undergone expansion and upgrading, however it is not being used to its maximum potential. The widening of the arterial and distributor road networks should enable us to relieve the pressure on our local roads, particularly from through traffic.

The strategies of Slow Streets are based on this important concept, wherein local streets become primarily focused for local resident access and services, as opposed to through traffic. Within these strategies, access to public transportation is always being permitted, even within those streets which have been selected to have no (or very limited) access for vehicles, so as to further encourage the public to use buses rather than their

private cars.

The main outcome of the desktop analysis is the selection of potential Slow Streets, which together make up a comprehensive network. The selection of streets to be included within this network comprises a critical stage, as it sets the overall strategic vision for the locality. The selected streets undergo further in-depth 'micro' analysis, wherein on-site observations are carried out at different times of day and for different days of the week, in order to ensure that the selected strategy may be carried out successfully. These observations include:

- pedestrian connectivity (understanding the location and frequency of crossings and pavement continuity);
- other connections, such as stairs or informal/unsurfaced paths;
- solar exposure of the street network (and the amount of shade throughout the day);
- the presence of green or urban open pockets, including front gardens;
- the availability of street furniture;
- ground floor use (for instance, whether commercial or residential);
- the amount and frequency of garage doors and the presence of reserved parking; and
- social behaviour and activity within the urban spaces.

Pavements and roads are further measured on site in order to sketch an accurate section for each of the selected streets. This exercise is crucial for determining the possible intervention within each street, based on the available road space, and taking into account both the activities and characteristics of the street.

All the data is collated and the proposed network is analysed with all the information at hand. The project team goes through this analysis and establishes a vision for the locality – with a prime objective being that of resolving existing problems caused by through traffic and improving the connections to important public spaces – following which, individual street and space interventions are discussed and agreed upon.

The strategy is finally concluded once it may be established that the individual interventions are able to coexist seamlessly, without creating any unwanted repercussions and while further considering potential extensions with neighbouring localities.

Within these strategies, access to public transportation is always being permitted, even within those streets which have been selected to have no access for vehicles.

Fgura

Fgura is a recently developed residential area that expanded in all directions, to touch Bormla, Zabbar, Paola and Tarxien. Development happened so fast that soon Fgura became a densely populated and bustling town which is relatively walkable since distances are short, services are easily available and largely within good reach. Local streets extend to the peripheral areas and can serve as walking paths for commuting or recreational purposes. However, many of these streets are in dire need of traffic calming interventions in order to be used as quality pedestrian spaces by its residents and visitors. This can be achieved by keeping cars primarily on the upgraded main and arterial roads or by programming road closures during designated times and/or days.

Triq Haz-Zabbar and Hompesch Road are cutting right through the locality and form the commercial heart. They make it an attractive destination with all kinds of shops and businesses, also attracting residents from neighbouring localities. This, however, further increases the number of cars within the locality, with drivers often opting to circulate around the locality's internal street network in order

to seek on-street parking and to park as close to their destination as possible. Located between many localities, the Fgura main roads also have turned into thoroughfares between these localities, resulting in a number of traffic issues that occur within its local streets, notably resulting from the occurrence of through traffic.

The main aim of Fgura's Slow Streets strategy, therefore, is to identify and strengthen a walkable network that can be safely used by residents and visitors to link the multiple activity areas, including the connections to the many neighbouring localities. By using different schemes of traffic management, including both the promotion of 'local access only streets' and tactical urbanism interventions, the priority within these streets is being shifted to pedestrian and cyclist use rather than cars, while still retaining the important bus routes that navigate within the locality. A number of key streets have also been identified for potential reconfiguration since they could provide critical, much-needed change to the entire network and enable a stronger and safer street environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

LOCALITY



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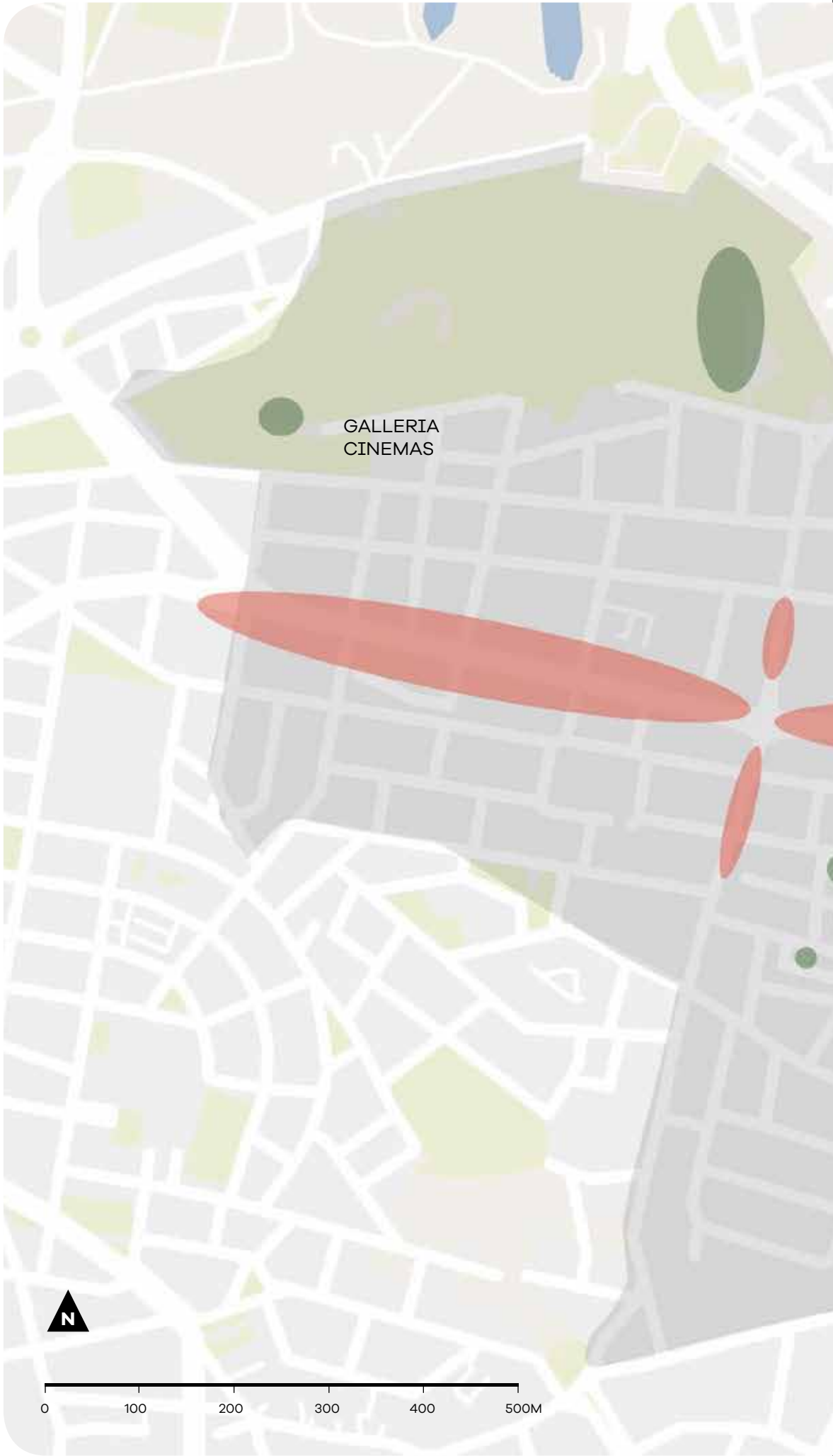
ZABBAR

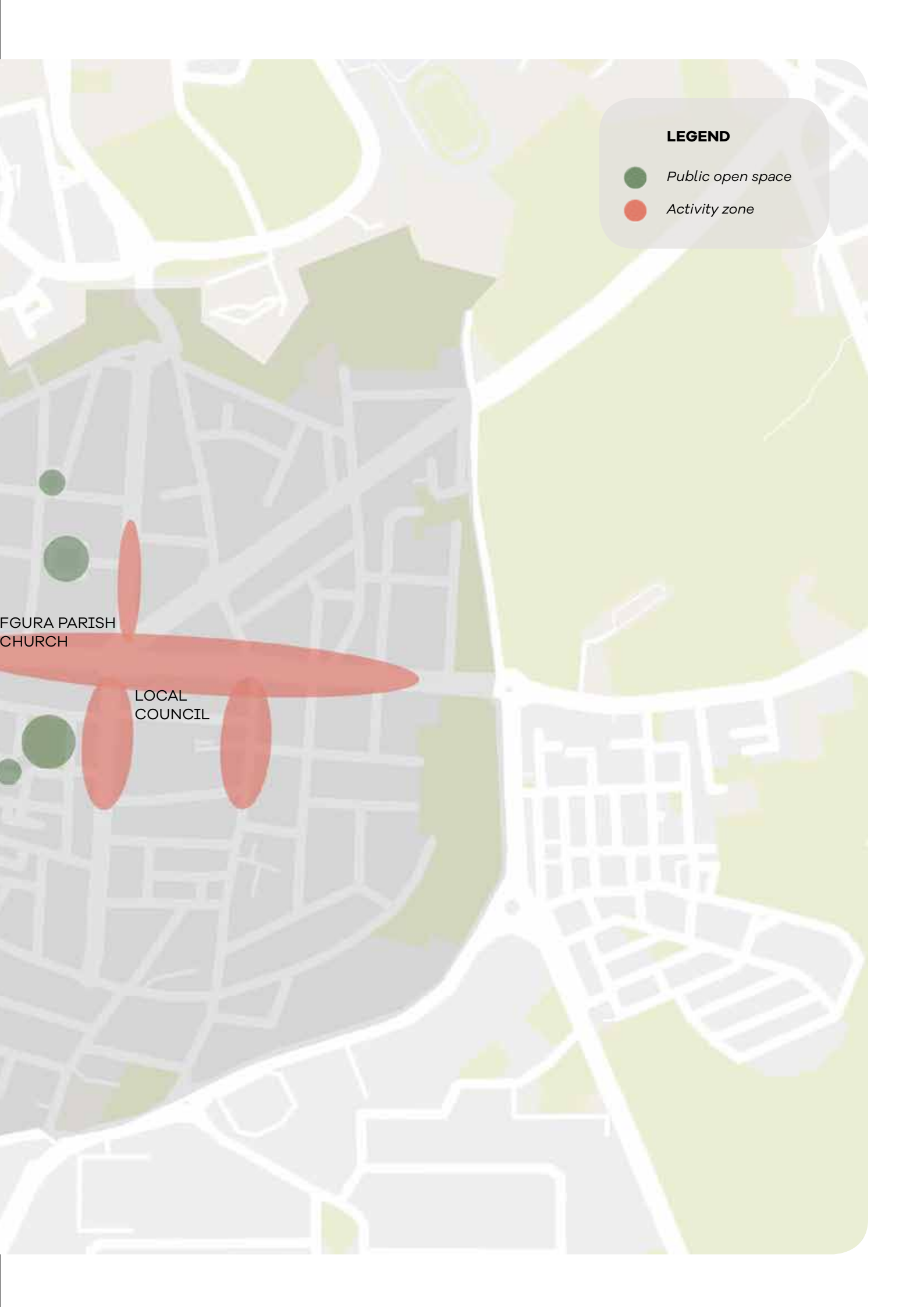
ZEJTUN

**ACTIVITY
ZONES**



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LEGEND

- Public open space
- Activity zone

FIGURA PARISH
CHURCH

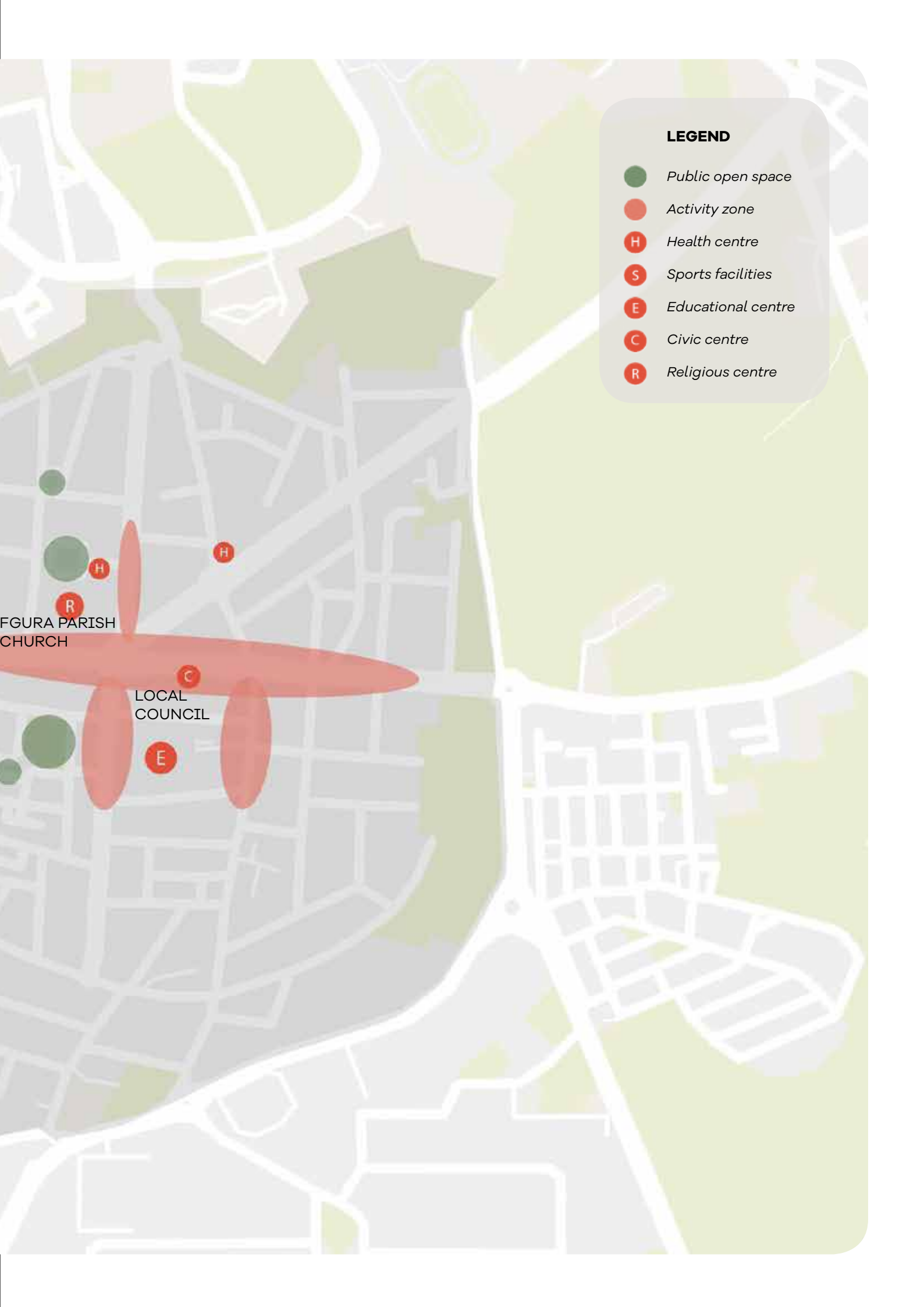
LOCAL
COUNCIL

DESTINATIONS



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LEGEND

- Public open space
- Activity zone
- H Health centre
- S Sports facilities
- E Educational centre
- C Civic centre
- R Religious centre

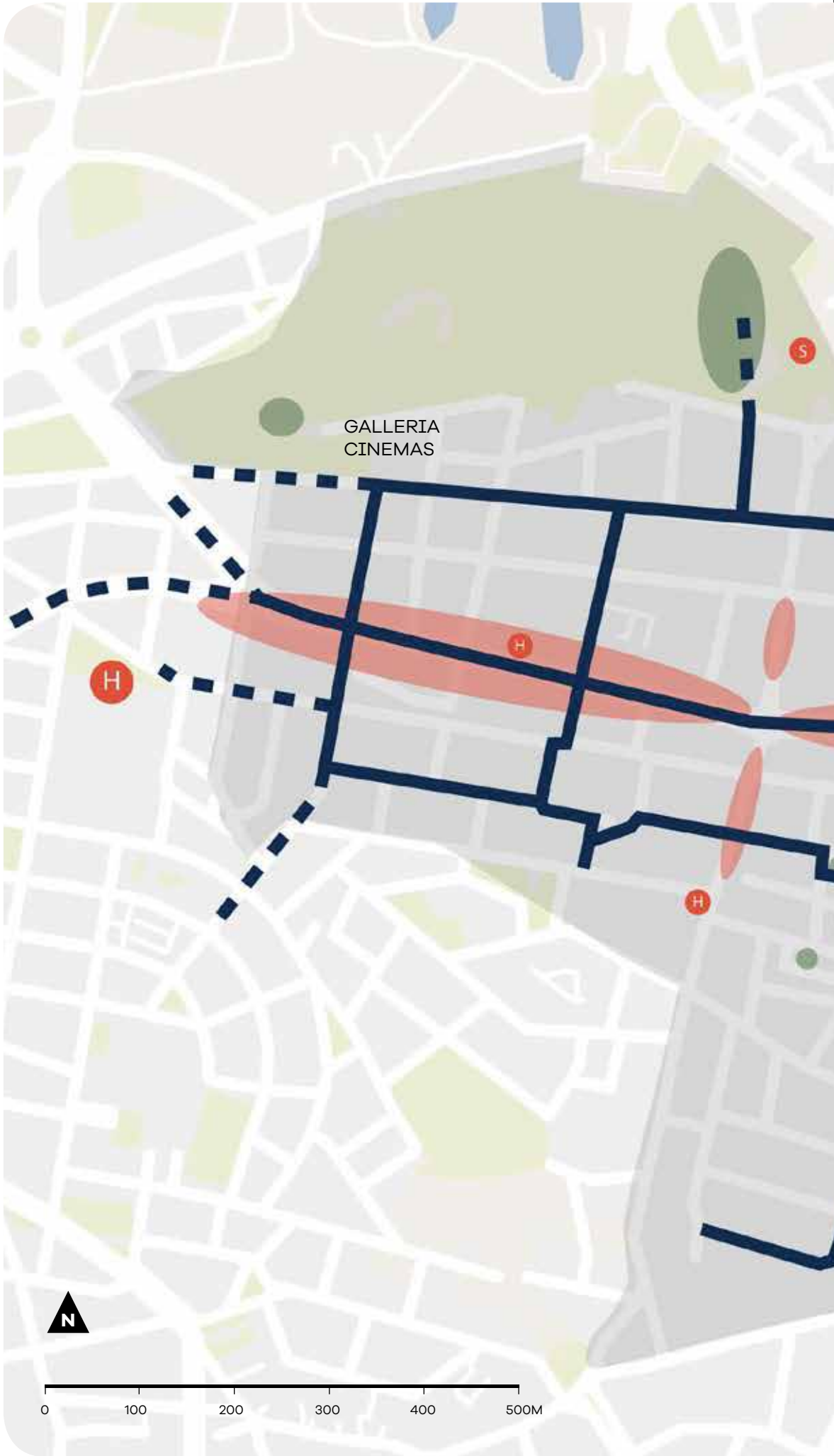
FIGURA PARISH
CHURCH

LOCAL
COUNCIL

NETWORK



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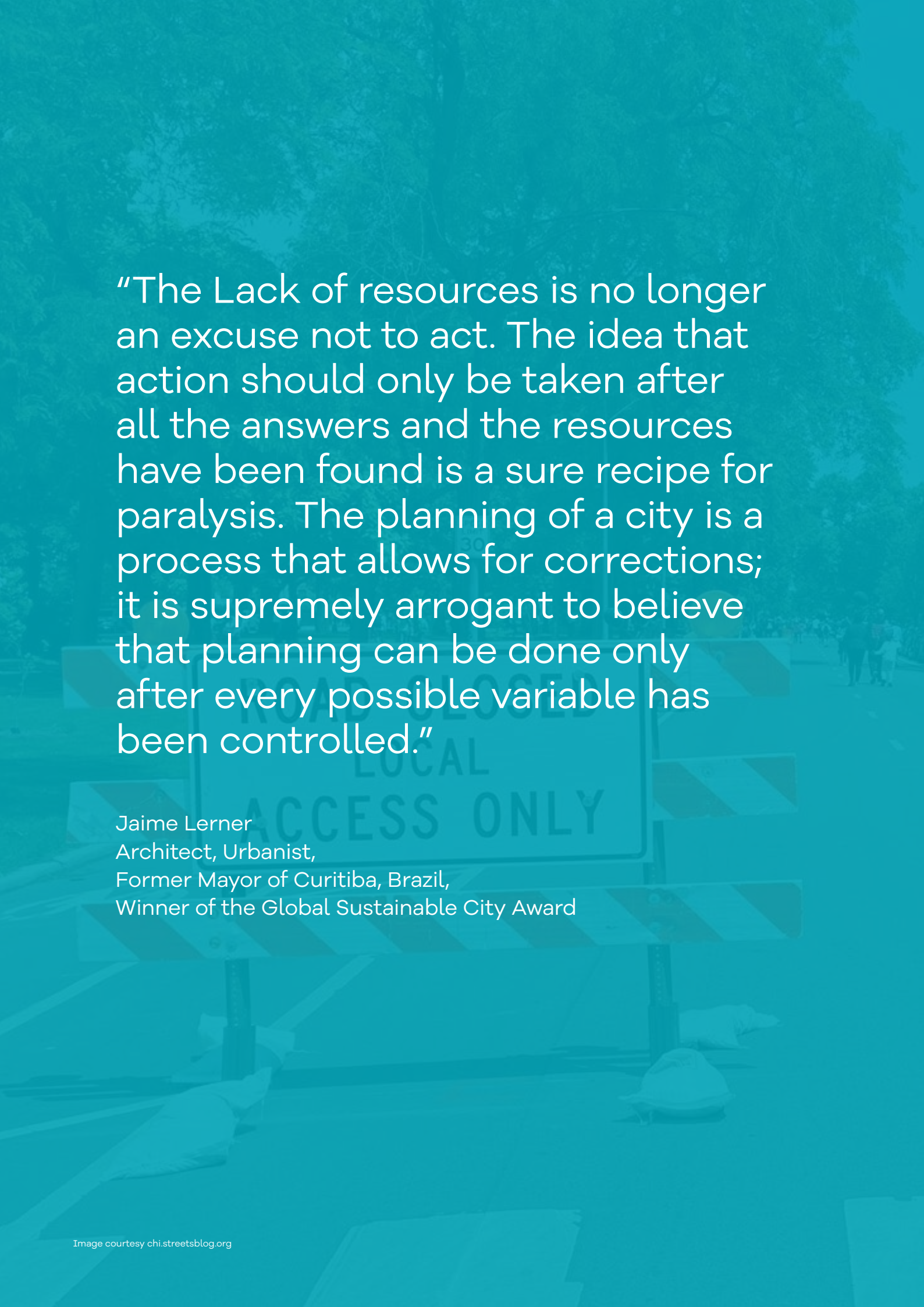


LEGEND

- *Public open space*
- *Activity zone*
- H *Health centre*
- S *Sports facilities*
- E *Educational centre*
- C *Civic centre*
- R *Religious centre*

FIGURA PARISH
CHURCH

LOCAL
COUNCIL



“The Lack of resources is no longer an excuse not to act. The idea that action should only be taken after all the answers and the resources have been found is a sure recipe for paralysis. The planning of a city is a process that allows for corrections; it is supremely arrogant to believe that planning can be done only after every possible variable has been controlled.”

Jaime Lerner
Architect, Urbanist,
Former Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil,
Winner of the Global Sustainable City Award

Implementation

Type of Interventions

Slow streets level 1 - signage & branding

Slow streets level 2 - re-routing

Slow streets level 3 - tactical urbanism

Slow streets level 4 - reconfiguration

Slow Paths

Play Streets

Extensions

Cycling

Fgura Interventions

Phasing Strategy

Types of Interventions

The interventions that are envisaged to take place on different streets have been collated into the following four levels:

Level 1 - signage & branding

refers to interventions such as signage, branding measures and basic floor marking that emphasise the slowing down of vehicular traffic, without altering the nature of the street. Level 1 has been applied to streets that contribute to the formation of a continuous network

Level 2 - re-routing

entails traffic management measures such as the introduction of dead ends and access-only to local traffic, rerouting and converting two-way streets to one-way routes. Such actions are critical in order to allocate more space for pedestrian or cycling use. At the same time, as discussed earlier, traffic management is also crucial to encourage drivers to use the arterial and distributor roads rather than the local roads, enabling faster access across localities. The shift of vehicles onto the main infrastructural routes would free up local roads from unnecessary traffic, and resultant congestion, allowing more people to use the streets and resulting in less noise and air pollution for residents.





Level 3 - tactical urbanism

mainly refers to tactical urbanism initiatives, defined previously, within a specific area, focusing particularly on traffic intersections and pedestrian crossings. These markings first highlight the need to prioritise pedestrians and their safety, which eventually might lead to a more permanent infrastructural change, such as raised crossings and wider pavements. The paint markings may also introduce colour and/or artistic flair to the area, potentially contributing to a greater sense of place and local identity.





Level 4 – reconfiguration

refers to the most substantial intervention which is the reconfiguration of the street section. As explained earlier, streets have been studied and measured on site, in order to assess whether more space may be allocated to pedestrians (extending beyond existing pavements), cycling lanes and/or greening initiatives (such as the introduction of planters). The designation of vehicular space is based on the Planning Authority's Development Control Design Policy, Guidance and Standards 2015 (DC15) Standard S1 (Vehicular Access Width Standards), which establishes a width of 3.7m as required for access by a fire tender, which is the largest emergency vehicle that should be able to access the road safely. In this regard, therefore, roads that are wider than this standard and that are considered to provide important pedestrian routes therein, are being reconfigured to this width. In many cases, a number of the above strategies are combined together in order to achieve a bigger impact.



Slow Paths

comprise another specific typology of Slow Streets (although the two names may seem similar, it must be clarified that 'slow paths' is not another term for 'slow streets'). Slow paths refer to a designated slow section of the road, when intervening on the entire street is not possible. This is often used in larger roads where slower-moving, more localised/dedicated slip roads or dedicated bus lanes are available, and where priority for pedestrians and cyclists is often not considered.



Play Streets

'Play streets' are a type of intervention where local roads are closed off to cars temporarily, for example on weekends, so that they can be transformed into places where neighbours of all ages may gather around together and play freely. Children may use skates, bicycles, and movable playgrounds may be set up while adults may play cards, chess or simply watch their children in a safe environment. Play streets can occur on a regular basis (for instance, weekly or monthly), and may constitute an important part of daily life for the local community because they:

- give children more opportunities to play in a safe space close to their homes;
- provide a chance for residents to come together and for everyone to get to know their neighbours; and
- help residents to be more physically active and healthier.





Play streets – programming

Programmes and cultural activities are important for the success of play streets. They bring together the local community and give residents a sense of ownership of their neighbourhoods. Different festivals and activities attract a broad audience, expanding the circle of participants. They can vary from art and music activities to the organisation of games and fitness classes, or a combination of more than one activity. Preparation for such interactive activities may further occur with the active, hands-on, involvement of residents, which increases their sense of belonging and ownership of the public space (for example, helping with road painting, or further embellishing the streets with their own plants).





source: Global Designing Cities

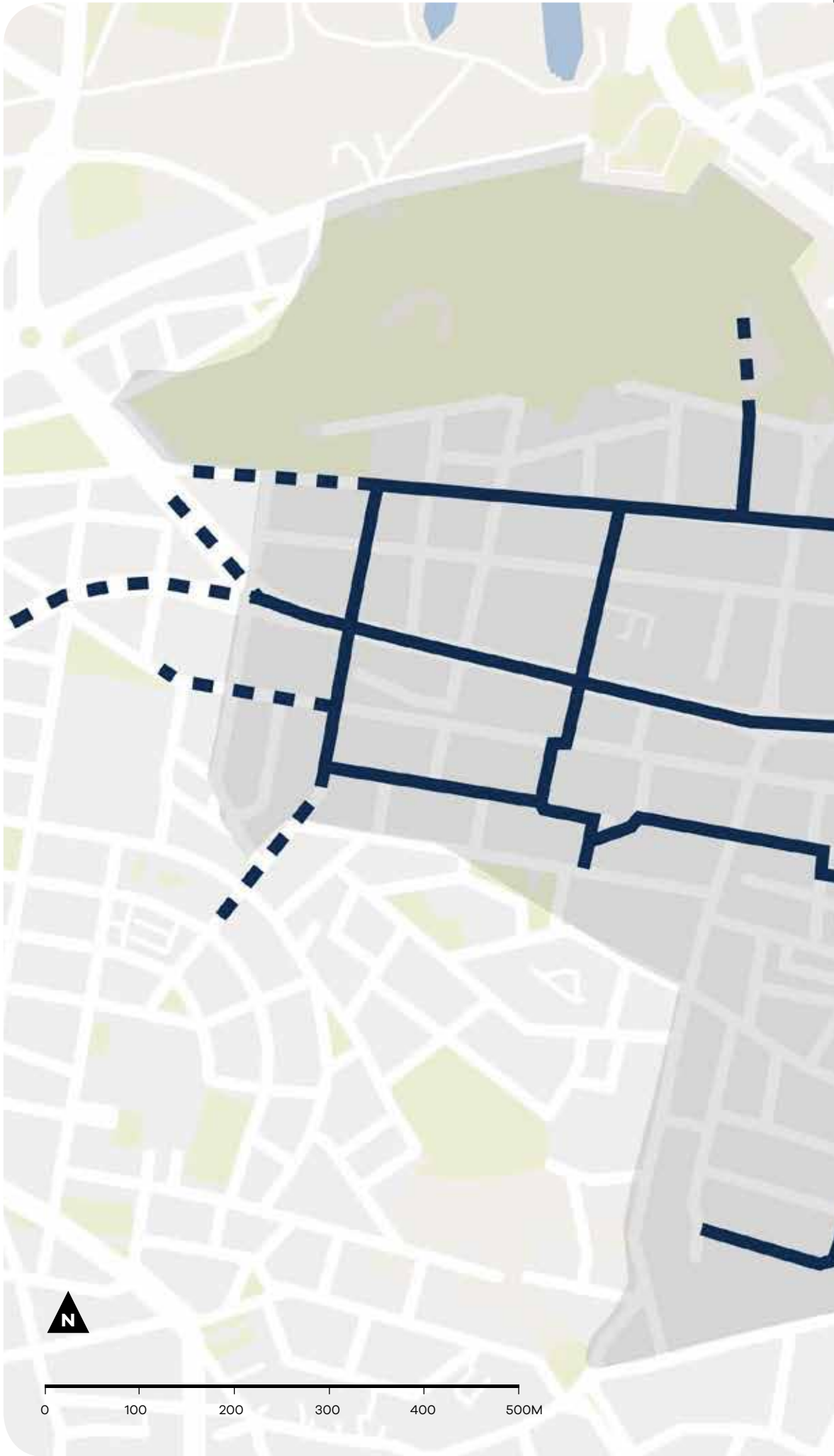
■ ■ Extensions

The last type of intervention refers to 'extensions' with adjacent localities and /or within the same locality. These links are important as they represent the future potential expansion of the network, resulting in even better connectivity for local and /or neighbouring residents. Such expansion may involve the need for infrastructure upgrading, and could be scope for future local council projects.

NETWORK



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INTERVENTION



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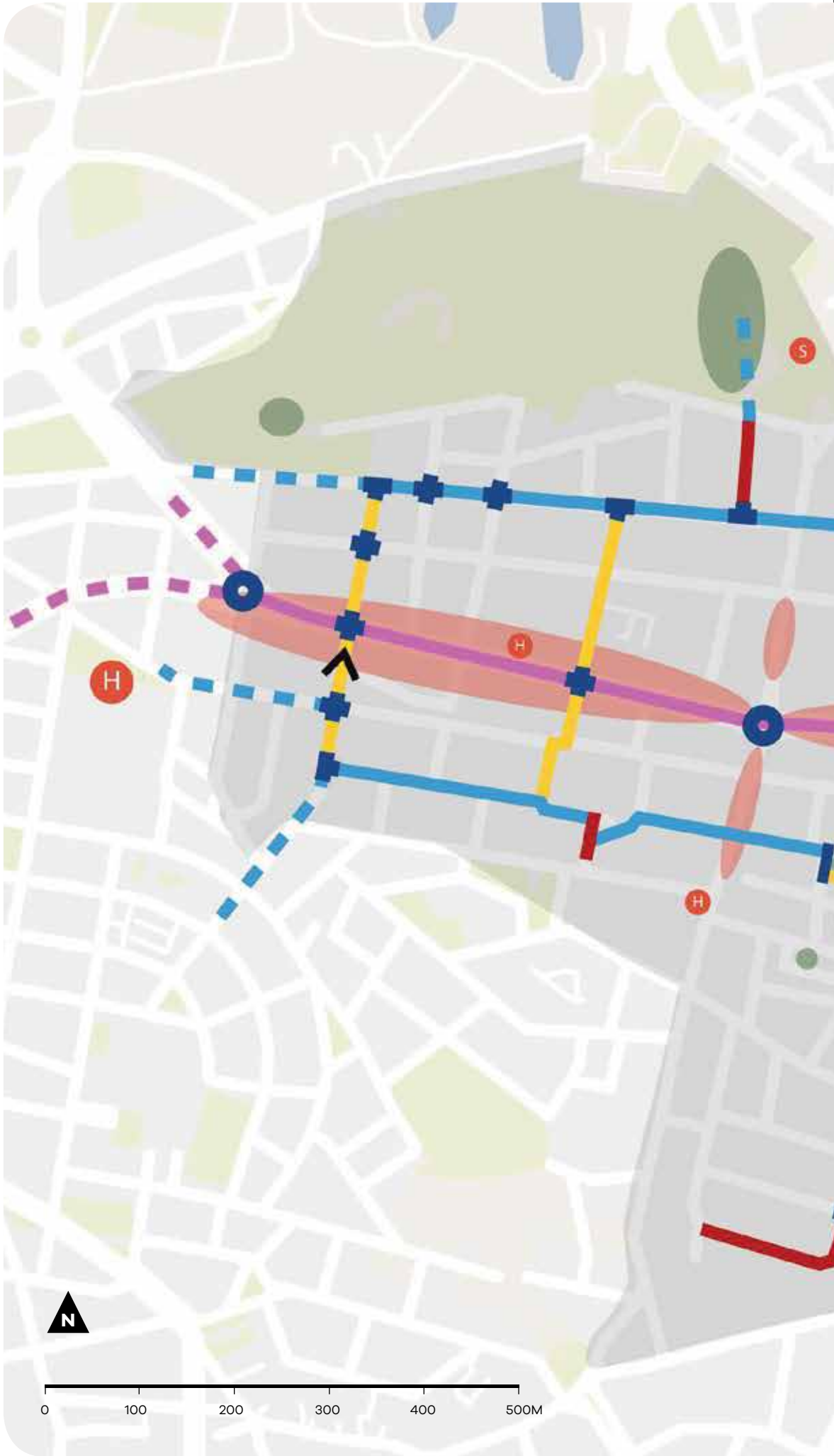
LEGEND

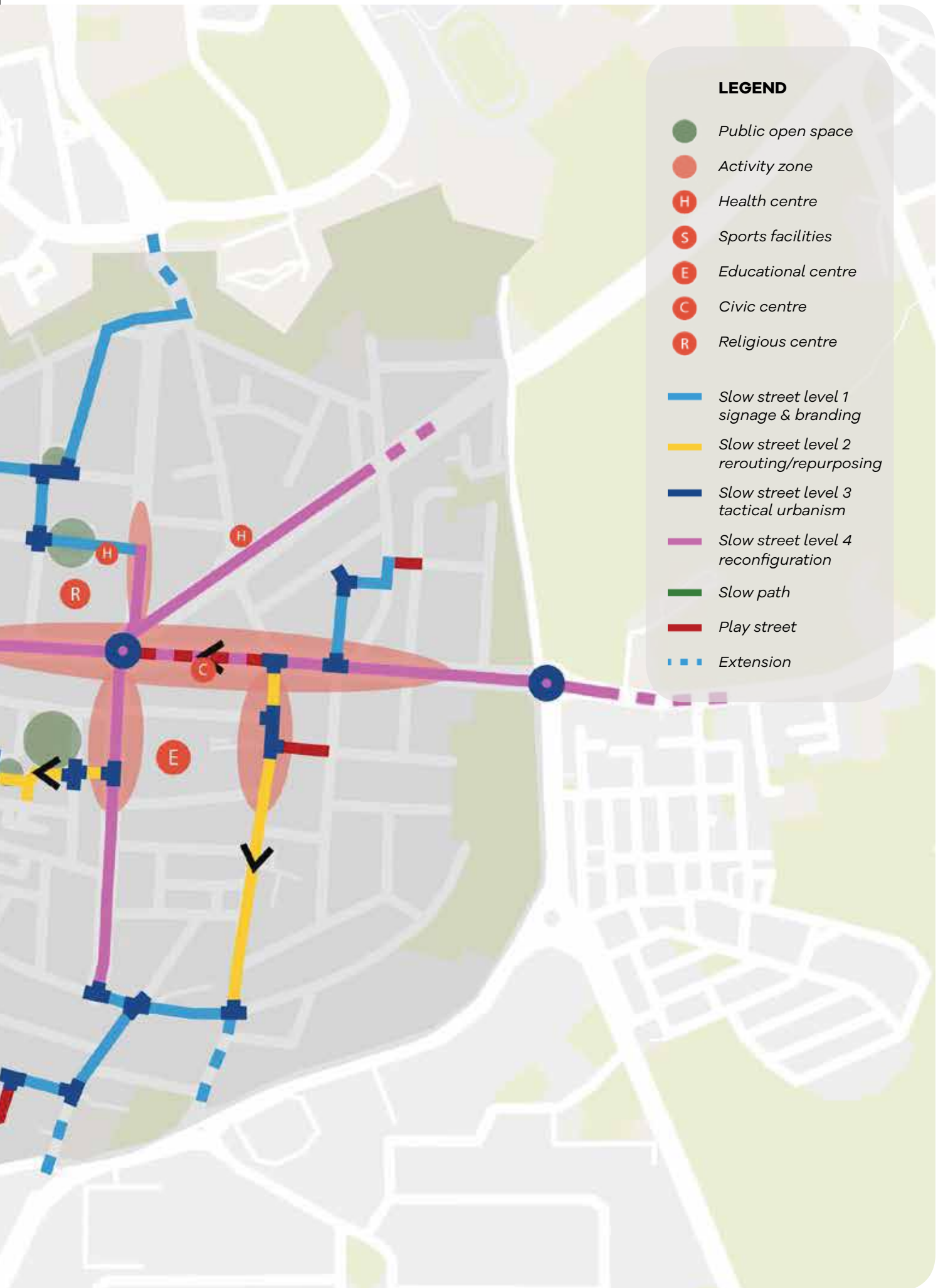
- Slow street level 1
signage & branding
- Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4
reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension

INTERVENTION



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LEGEND

- Public open space
- Activity zone
 - H Health centre
 - S Sports facilities
 - E Educational centre
 - C Civic centre
 - R Religious centre
- Slow street level 1 signage & branding
- Slow street level 2 rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3 tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4 reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension

Cycling

Cycling lanes form an integral part of the Slow Streets network and their inclusion within the interventions discussed above has been a core objective. Providing opportunities for alternative modes of transport may contribute to the decongestion of vehicular traffic and therefore provide more opportunities for space.

According to the Bike Advocacy Group, the solution to traffic congestion is having more people cycle. Since the average distance of a typical journey travelled in Malta is 5km, cycling is the fastest and cleanest mode of transport, especially when taking into account how much time car drivers spend looking for parking. Bicycles also occupy much less space which decongest roads and crossings, and decrease the need for parking space.

This is further reflected in the words of Transport Malta's National Cycling Strategy (2018, p.46): 'The promotion of cycling as an alternative mode of transport is considered to be an essential

part of any scheme or strategy to promote sustainable mobility through which transport authorities can address traffic congestion, improve accessibility, promote personal health, reduce air pollution as well as contribute towards lower greenhouse gas emissions, all of which are attributes necessary to improve the quality of life of any community.'

Providing quality cycle networks creates more accessible neighbourhoods, which in turn increases social relations and benefits the wellbeing of the entire community. Cycle paths therefore improve both the connectivity and the overall liveability in localities.



The real added value of cycling is experienced through a combination of all environmental, social and health benefits combined.

In the Slow Streets interventions, designated cycling lanes have been considered within important connecting routes, especially if there is the opportunity to reroute traffic and create one-way routes so as to allocate the remaining space for bicycle lanes and pedestrian space. In the proposed scheme, both pedestrian and cyclist connections have been given due importance. Naturally, every street case is different depending on its physical features; however, when possible, barriers (such as cones or planters) are further proposed to provide increased cyclist safety, or parallel parking has been shifted such that pedestrians and cyclists may be protected by the parked cars.

In narrower streets characterised by less space, signage is being proposed to slow down cars and raise the awareness of shared space with cyclists. These streets are included within the Level 1 interventions discussed previously.

The Slow Streets initiative lays the groundwork for future strategic locality plans, wherein the urban cores and important public spaces may be freed from car traffic and instead used by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.



Providing quality cycle networks creates more accessible neighbourhoods, which in turn increases social relations and benefits the wellbeing of the entire community.

CYCLING
NETWORK



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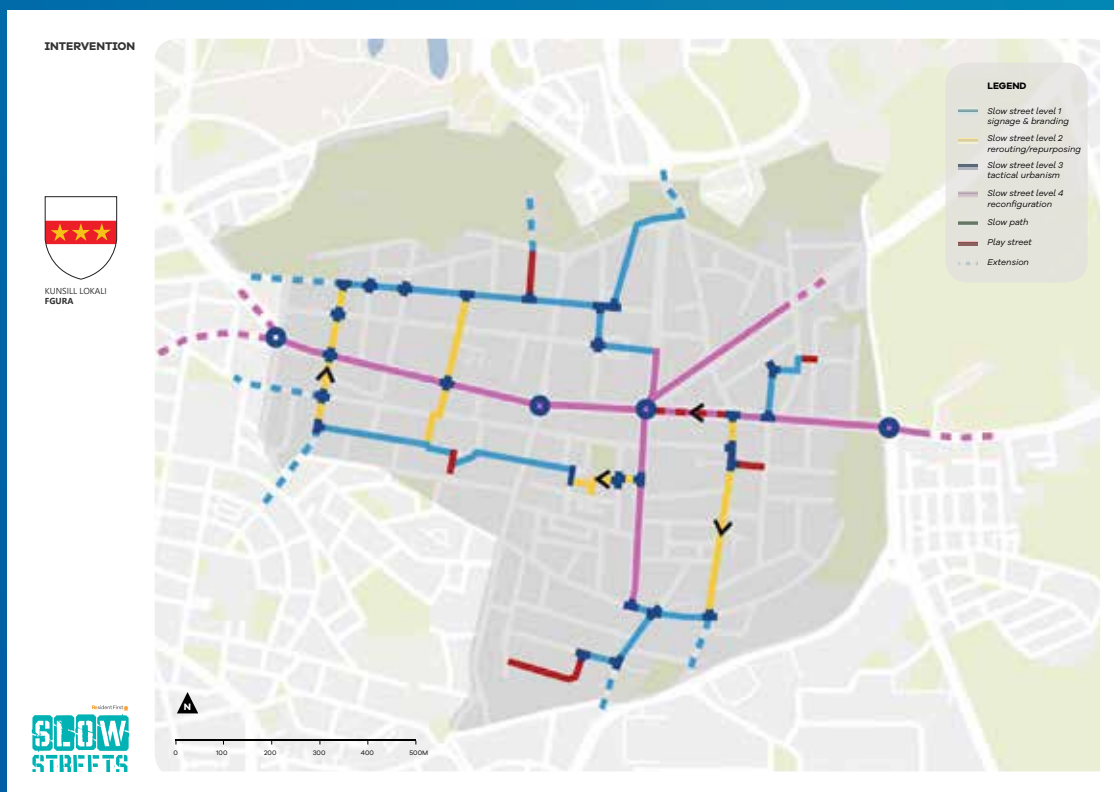
LEGEND

-  Shared road, clear signage and reduced speed
-  Dedicated cycling lane
-  Extension



Fgura Interventions

The Slow Streets route encompasses various interventions that were decided upon based on the individual nature of the streets and their connections, and the need to respond to particular traffic issues within the locality. One of the main challenges in Fgura is the intense through traffic, and how to establish a Slow Streets Network that can shift moving around in favour of pedestrians and cyclists.



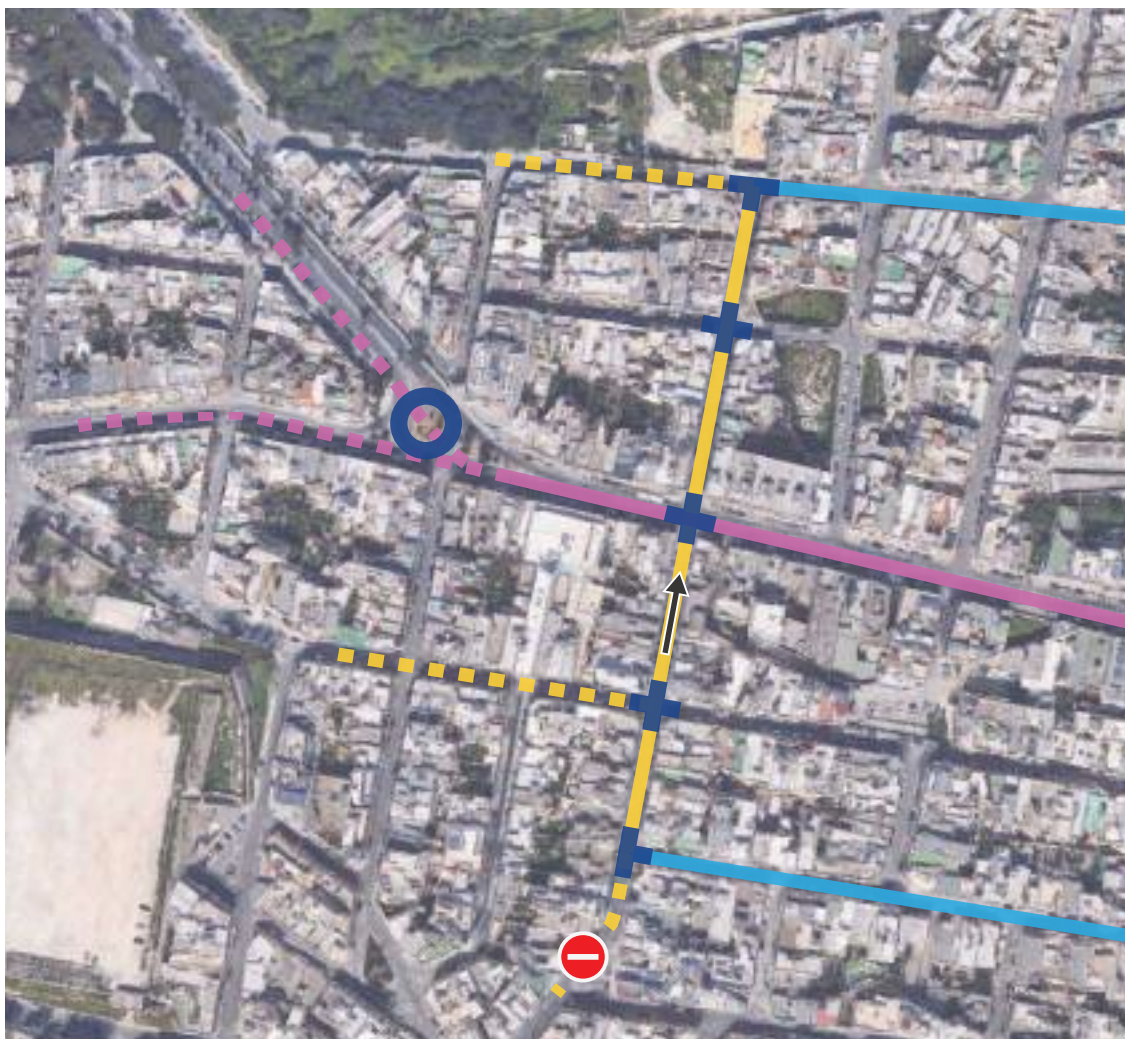
Intervention 1

Triq San Mikiel: Level 2 and 3



The first intervention focuses on the network connection leading to and from the main road Triq Haz-Zabbar. In order to provide a worthwhile safe pedestrian connection, it is been proposed to turn the one-way road Triq San Mikiel into a local access only street, using appropriate signage to warn traffic coming from Tarxien and Paola timely and deviate them through Triq Il Koppla and San Tumas to make their way to Triq Haz-Zabbar.

The intervention also proposes tactical urbanism to establish stronger pedestrian crossings at all intersections, preferably using bright paint markings so that they become clearly visible for approaching vehicles. This strategy will further shift the priority to pedestrians and increase the safety at crossings. Additional signage will emphasise slow car speed (20km), the local access only, the sharing of the road with pedestrians and cyclists, and alert high pedestrian and cycling activity with the Slow Streets Network branding.



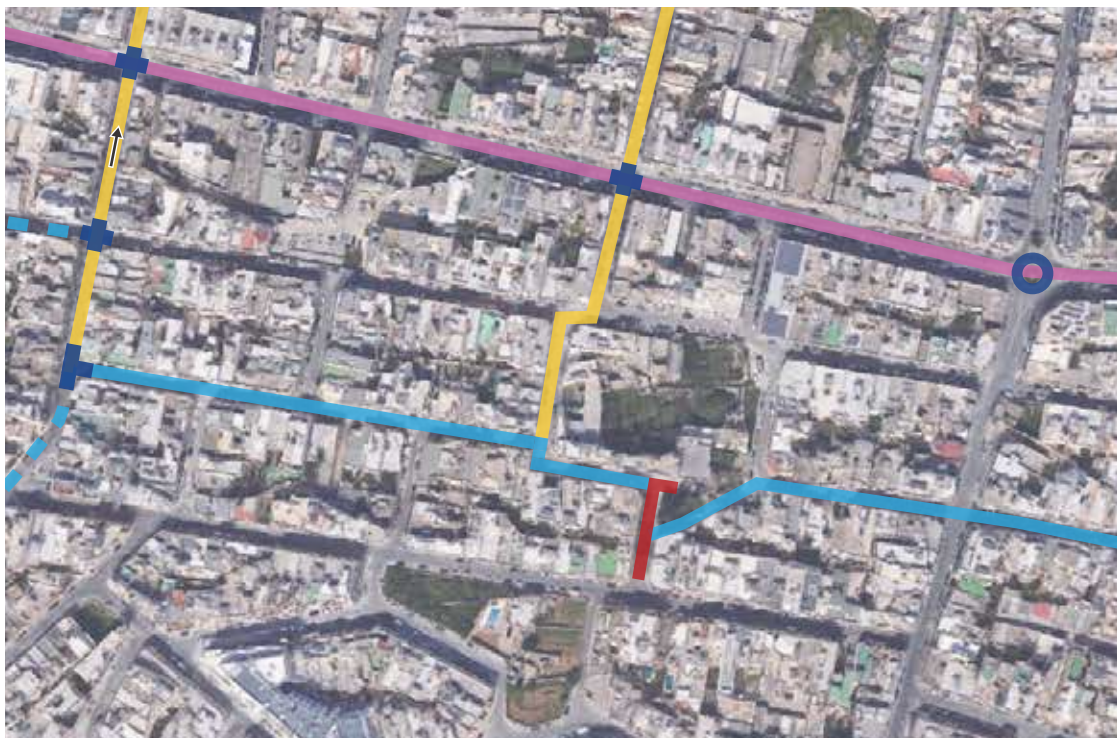


Intervention 2

Triq Kent and Sqaq Il Koppla: Level 1 and 3



Triq Kent is a relatively quiet road compared to Triq Il Kopla and forms a perfect connection to cross the locality by foot and link the Slow Streets Network through this dense residential area of town. Halfway down the road, the pedestrian alley Sqaq Il Koppla links either side of Triq Kent. The intervention emphasises the prioritisation of pedestrian movement with appropriate signage and the introduction of tactical urbanism markings along the road and at the crossing with Triq San Tumas. Car speed will be limited to 20km, with signage communicating the road sharing with pedestrians and cyclists whilst promoting the Slow Streets Network.





Intervention 3

Triq Kent and Marzu 1972: Play Street

Located in the middle of a mainly residential area of Fgura, the corner formed by these two streets is proposed to be used as a Play Street during designated times and/or days as traffic use is already low and very localised. Play streets are a global movement to promote health and neighbourliness in the public area, they give young and old a chance to play, be active on their street, whilst also building community and encouraging active citizenship. As well as these immediate benefits, they can help to bring about a longer-term culture-change, where streets are safer and friendlier at all times. Signage will communicate the frequency and use of the Play Street, together with a temporary closure of the street for through traffic and promote the Slow Streets Network.





Barrier elements

should be used to create a strong edge and define the place as a pedestrian zone

Landscaping elements

plants and trees go a long way in making an inviting space to play and socialize

Programming

activating play streets with programming is key to success. Events and activities can include exercise classes, live music, food trucks, markets, etc.



Street furniture

moveable chairs, tables, play, exercise and shade elements are preferable

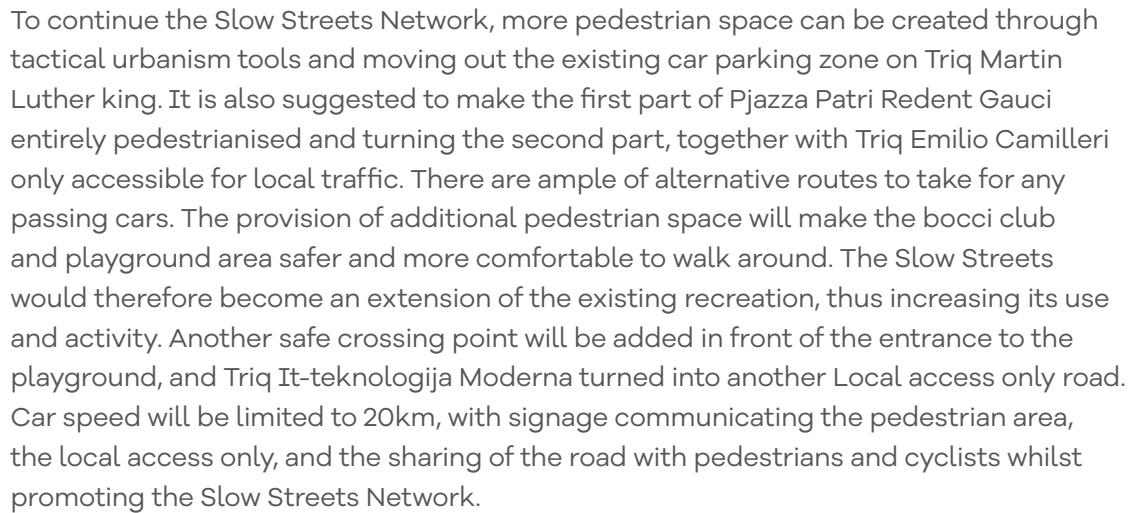
Signs

to announce and explain the Play Streets concept, the Slow Streets branding and to communicate official traffic regulations

Surface treatment

can be used to further define the playstreet

**Triq Martin Luther King, Emilio Camilleri and
It-teknologija Moderna, Pjazza Patri Redent
Gauci: Level 2 and 3**





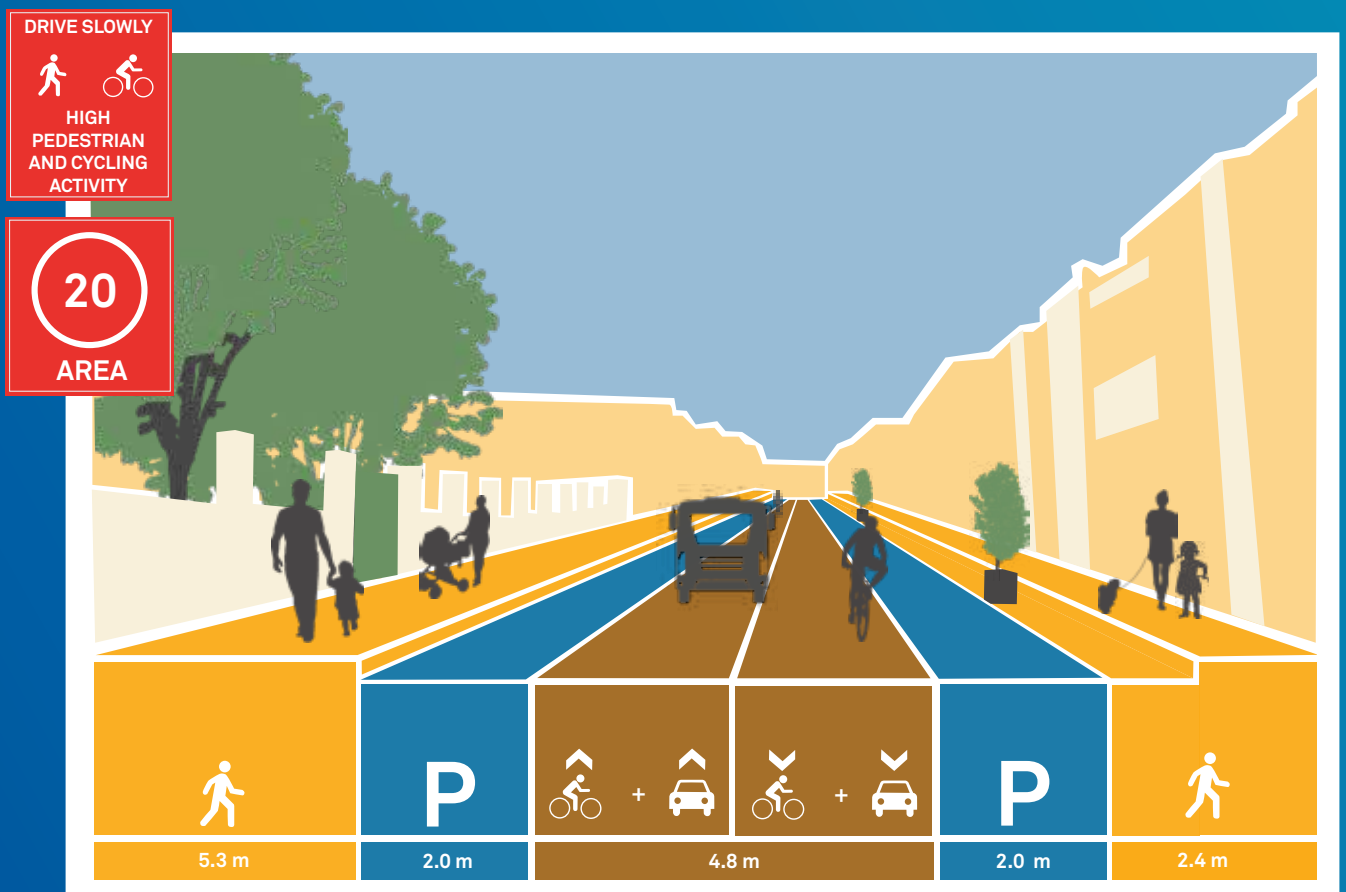
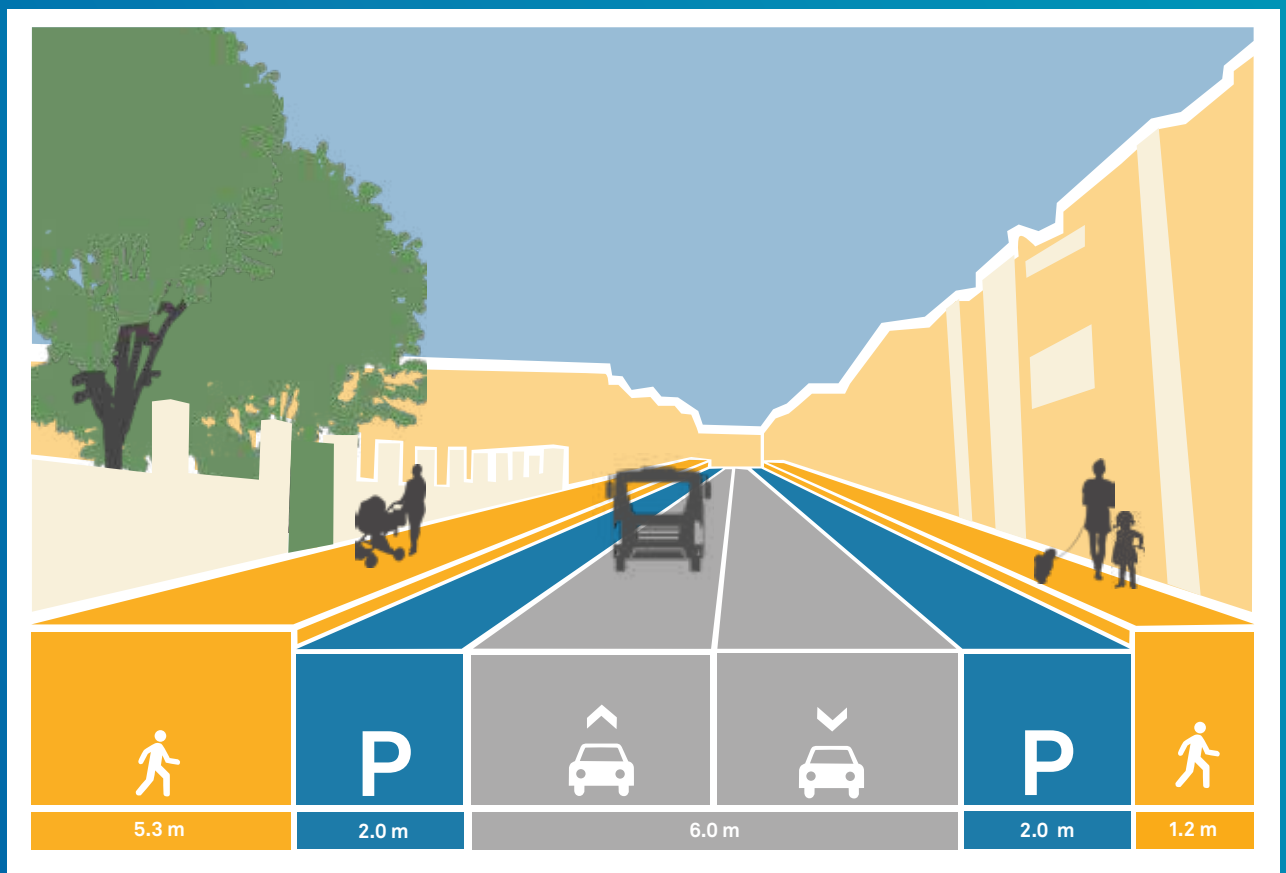
Intervention 5

Triq Is-Sur: Level 3 and 4



Triq Is-Sur is a relatively wide road running alongside the Fgura Primary School. It is therefore proposed to reconfigure the street and also install safer crossings at intersections. The width of the two-way road can be reduced from 6m to 4.8m (in line with the DC2015 regulations) and the additional 1.2m can be reconfigured into additional pedestrian space with a green buffer. Signage will emphasise slow car speed (20km), signal the sharing of the road with cyclists, and alert high pedestrian and cycling activity with the Slow Streets Network branding.



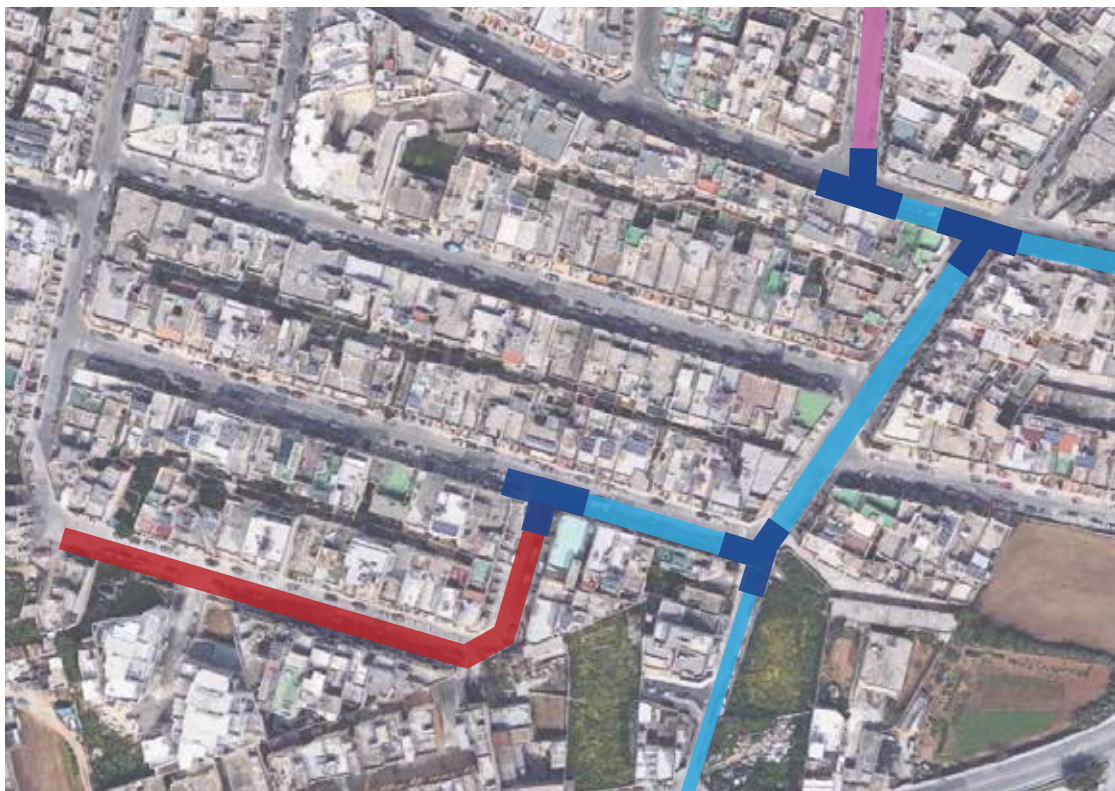


Intervention 6

Triq Il-Merhba, San Xmun and Il Falkunier: Level 1 and 3



These streets complete the network towards the southern end of the locality and intervention focuses on limiting the speed of traffic to 20 km, on sharing the road and improving pedestrian safety with the introduction of tactical urbanism at all the main crossings along this track. Signage for slow car speeds, for the promotion of the Slow Streets Network, for the sharing of the road and pedestrian and cyclist priority will be introduced, including bright paint markings at crossings.





Intervention 7

Triq Rghajja and I Gharnuq: Play Street

This play street has been particularly chosen to serve the residential area around it and in order to have a good geographical spread of such spaces throughout the locality. Signage will communicate a slow car speed (20km), the frequency and use of the Play Street, together with a temporary closure of the street for through traffic and promote the Slow Streets Network.

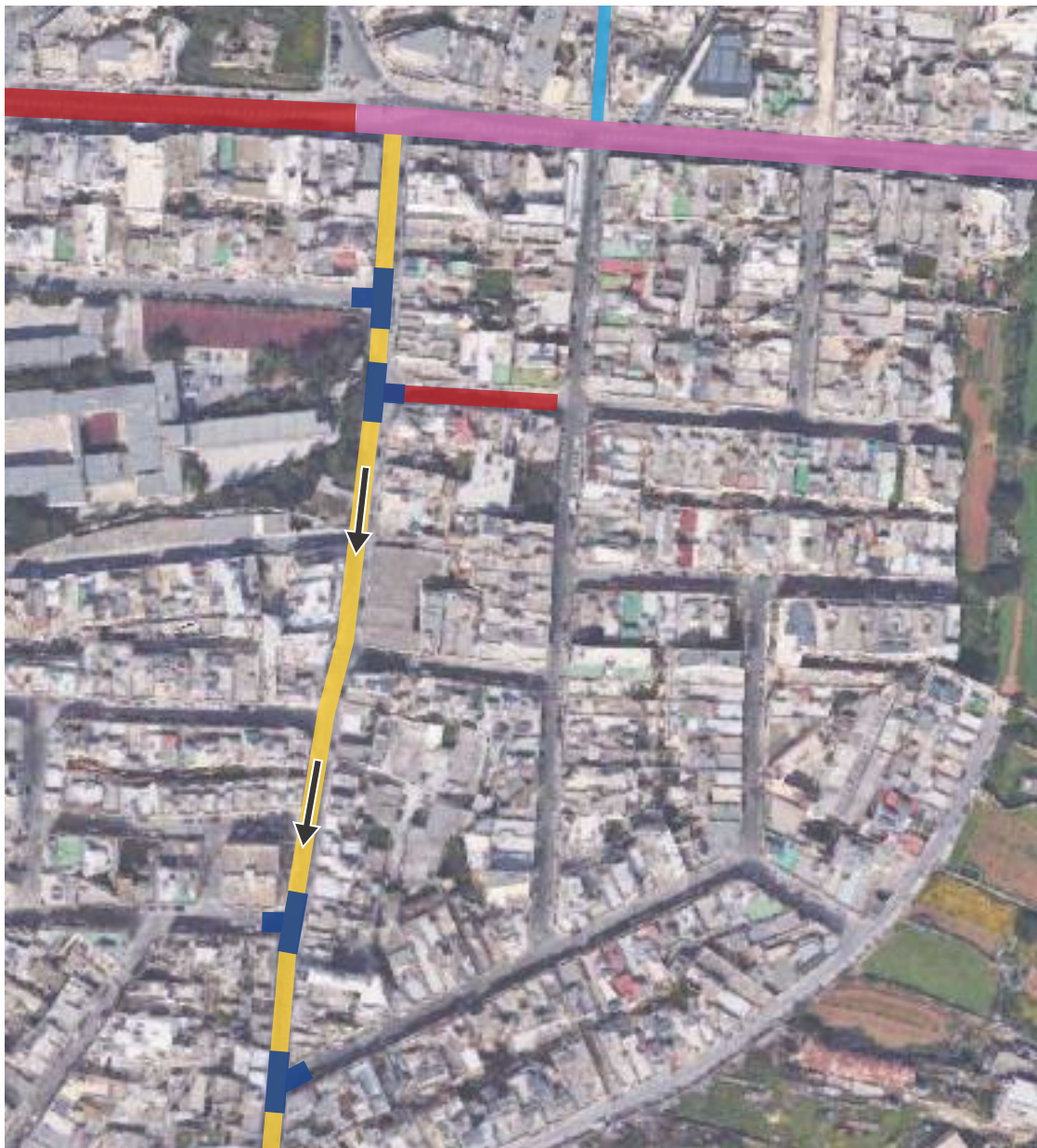


Intervention 8

Triq Il-Karmnu: Level 2 and 3



The Local council expressed their intentions to make this relatively busy one way road, a one way road in the other direction. It will therefore no longer be used to funnel traffic in from Tarxien and the Bulebel industrial zone, and should limit car traffic along this spine. It is therefore suggested to make it part of the Slow Streets Network, to calm traffic with clear signage and the introduction of several crossing points in bright colours. Additional signage will clearly indicate and timely announce the one-way road situation, emphasise slow car speed (20km), signal the sharing of the road with cyclists, and alert high pedestrian and cycling activity with the Slow Streets Network branding.





Intervention 9

Triq L-Iskola: Play Street

The part close to the School could easily be closed off at certain times and days when traffic is less busy in the areas. This play street has been chosen to serve this part of town and in order to have a good geographical spread of such spaces throughout the locality. As well as immediate benefits, the Play Street can help to bring about a longer-term culture-change, where streets are safer and friendlier at all times. Signage will communicate the frequency and use of the Play Street, together with a temporary closure of the street for through traffic and promote the Slow Streets Network.



Intervention 10

Triq Haz-Zabbar and Hompesch Road: Level 3 and 4, and Play Street



The main thoroughfare of Fgura is the commercial beating heart of the town but also under constant pressure of the relentless through traffic. In order to balance out this contemporary condition and return some qualities in favor of pedestrians and cyclists, several initiatives are being proposed for the intervention on Triq Haz-Zabbar.

Starting with improving the mobility for visitors and users on foot, it is suggested to add additional crossing points, as much as strengthening the existing ones by using tactical urbanism tools, preferably with bright paint markings so that they become clearly visible for approaching cars. Additional signage will emphasise slow car speed (30km), and alert high pedestrian and cycling activity with the Slow Streets Network branding.

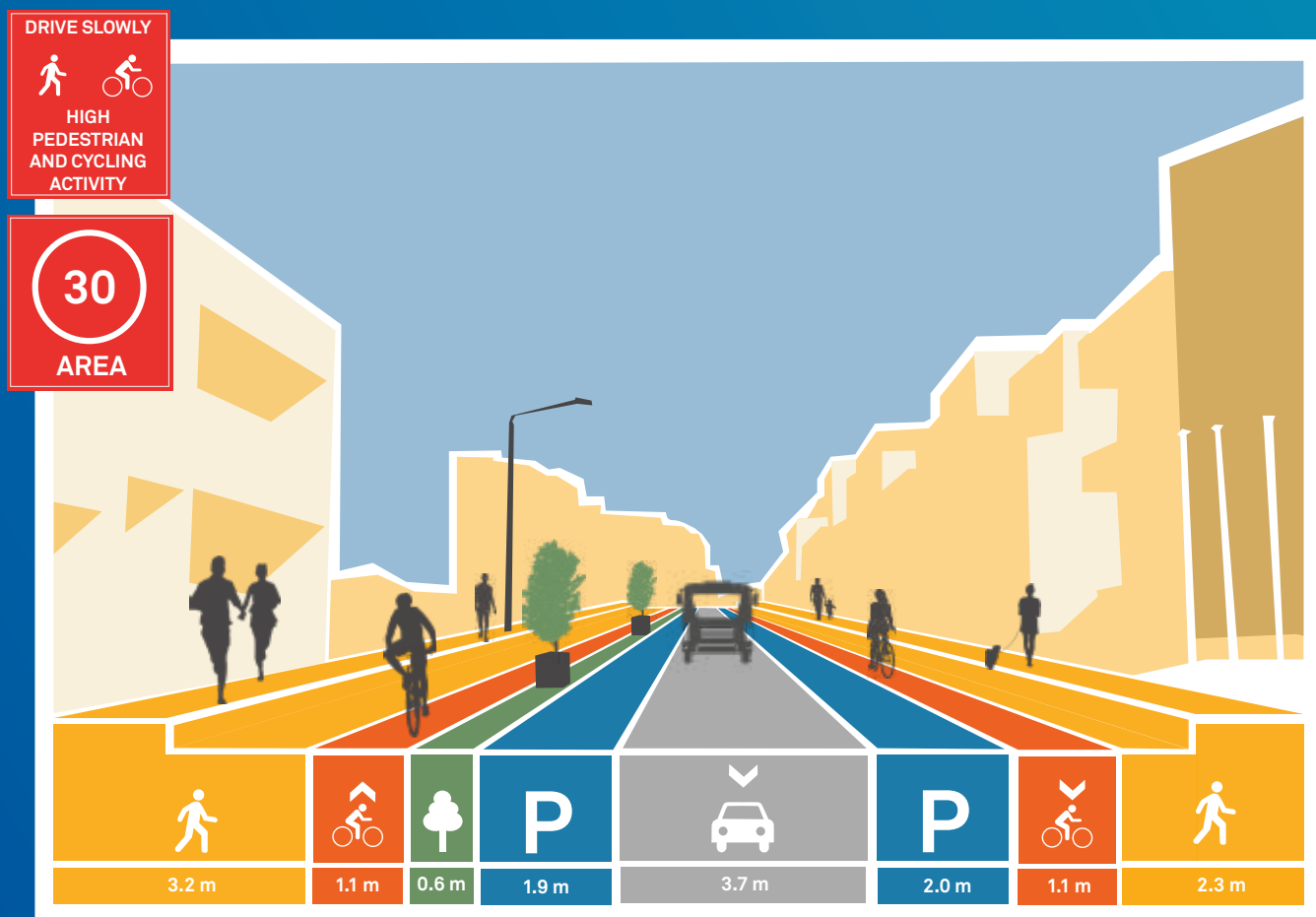
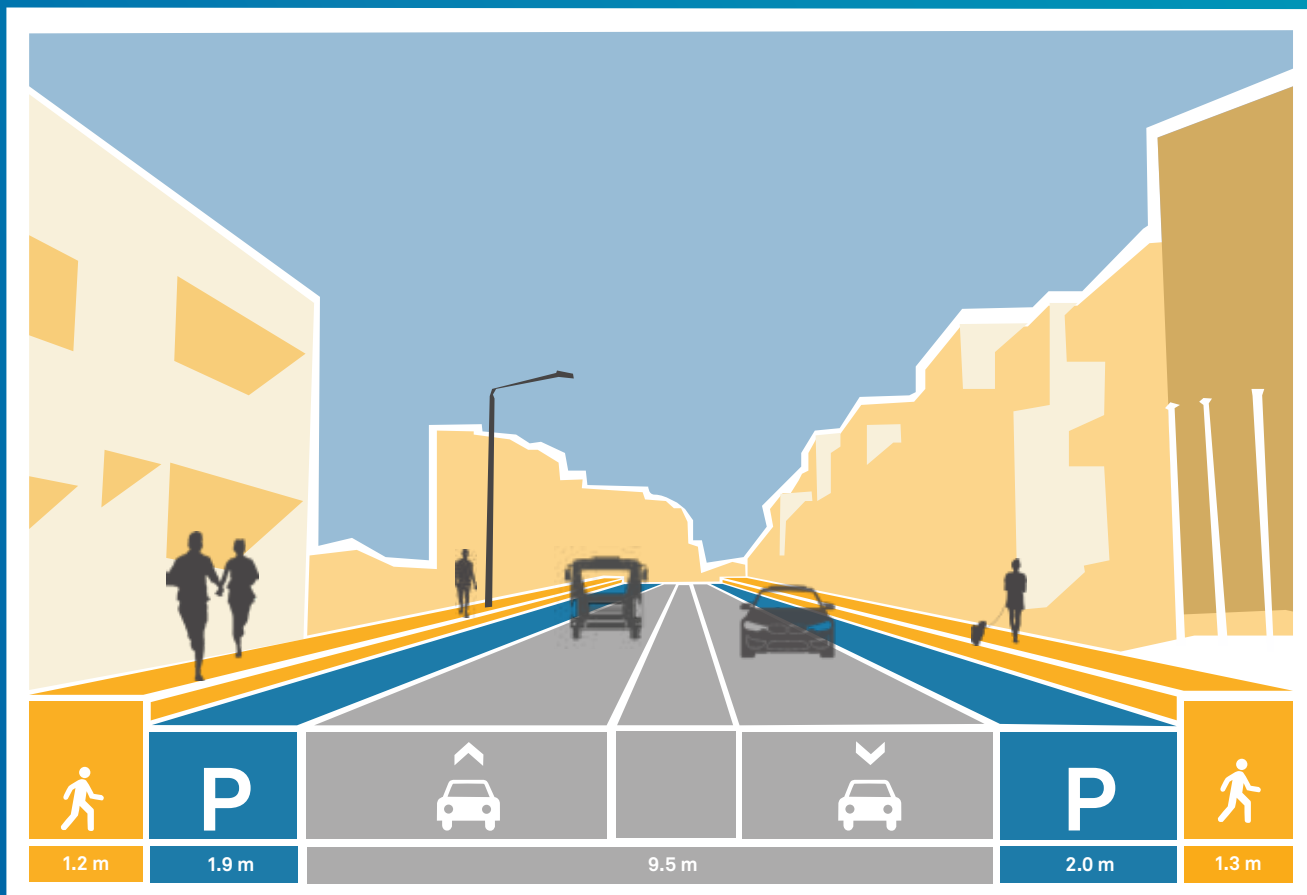


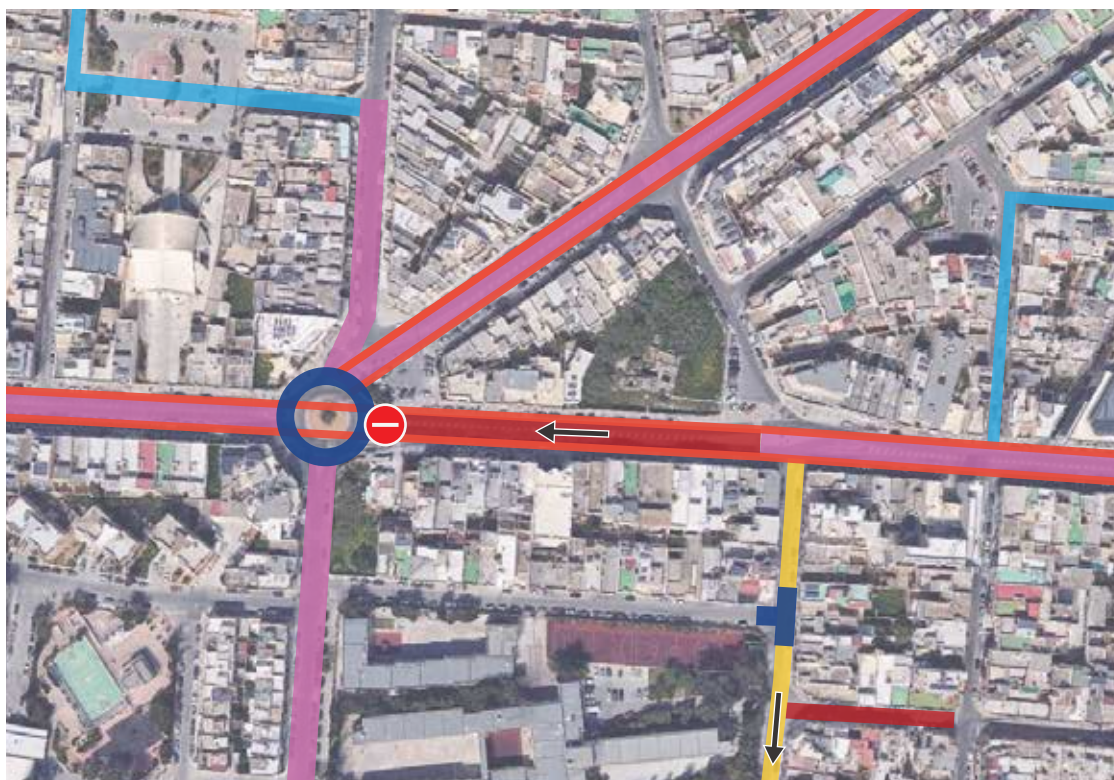
The actual vehicular road width is on average 9.5m wide. This will easily allow for designated 1 m cycling lanes to be added on each side of the road, leaving ample space available both ways for regular traffic. These dedicated cycling lanes are ideally marked by a continuous vibrant and very visible colour. Reducing the road width will also limit the current abuse of illegal double parking on the road side. The introduction of adequate (un)loading bays and delivery time policies can help rectify this situation further.



Following up on the Council's intentions to restructure traffic around the local Council building and regularly organise a Play Street In front, it is suggested to start experimenting with the rerouting and reconfiguration of the street according to the section shown. This will allow the Council to firm up their plans and stimulate any substantial infrastructural investments. It is proposed to keep traffic one-way direction Paola and reroute traffic the other way via Vjal IL-Kottoner and around the triangular block formed with Vjal IL-Kottoner and Triq Bormla. Cyclists will be allowed to continue both ways, using a designated lane each. The street could therefore be reconfigured in favour of people walking and cycling with a reduction of the car road width to the legal minimum of 3.7m to reassure the largest fire engine can pass.







Intervention 11

Triq Sant Antnin, Il-Pepprin and Il-Misk: Level 1 and 3 and Play Street



In order to link up this part of town to the Slow Streets Network, the intervention proposes the introduction of a more pedestrian and cyclist friendly route through these streets with improved signage. The streets should have signage for low vehicular speeds (20km), indicate them as shared with cyclists, and include the promotion of the Slow Streets Network. With the introduction of some planters and a splash of colour the parking area in Triq Sant Antnin could easily be embellished and even reorganised.



A Part of Triq Il-Misk could easily be closed off at certain times and days when traffic is less busy in the area, and become a local Play Street for the residents of this neighbourhood, returning a community feeling in the long run. Signage will communicate the frequency and use of the Play Street, together with a temporary closure of the street for through traffic and promote the Slow Streets Network.

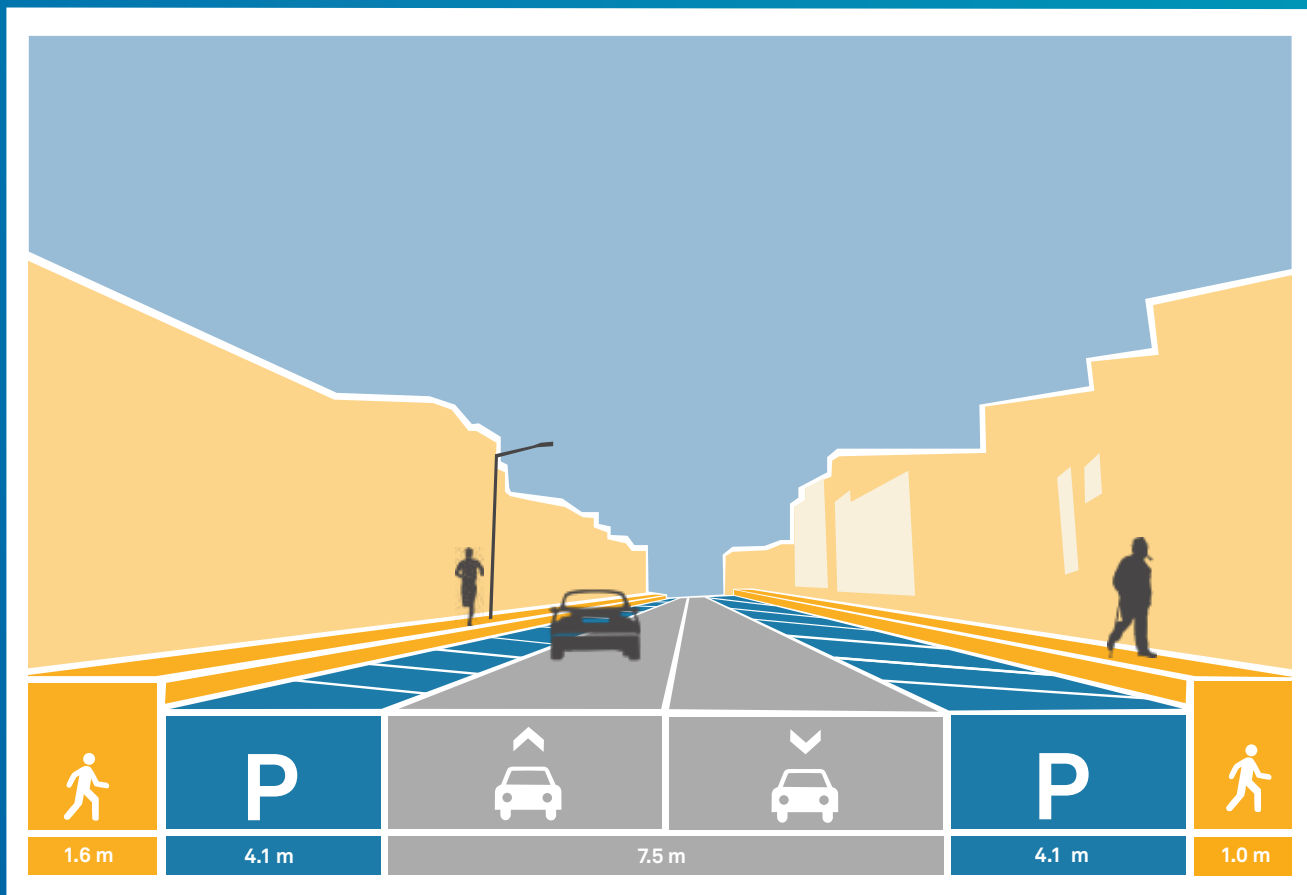


Intervention 12

Vjal Il-Kottoner: Level 4 (Cycling)

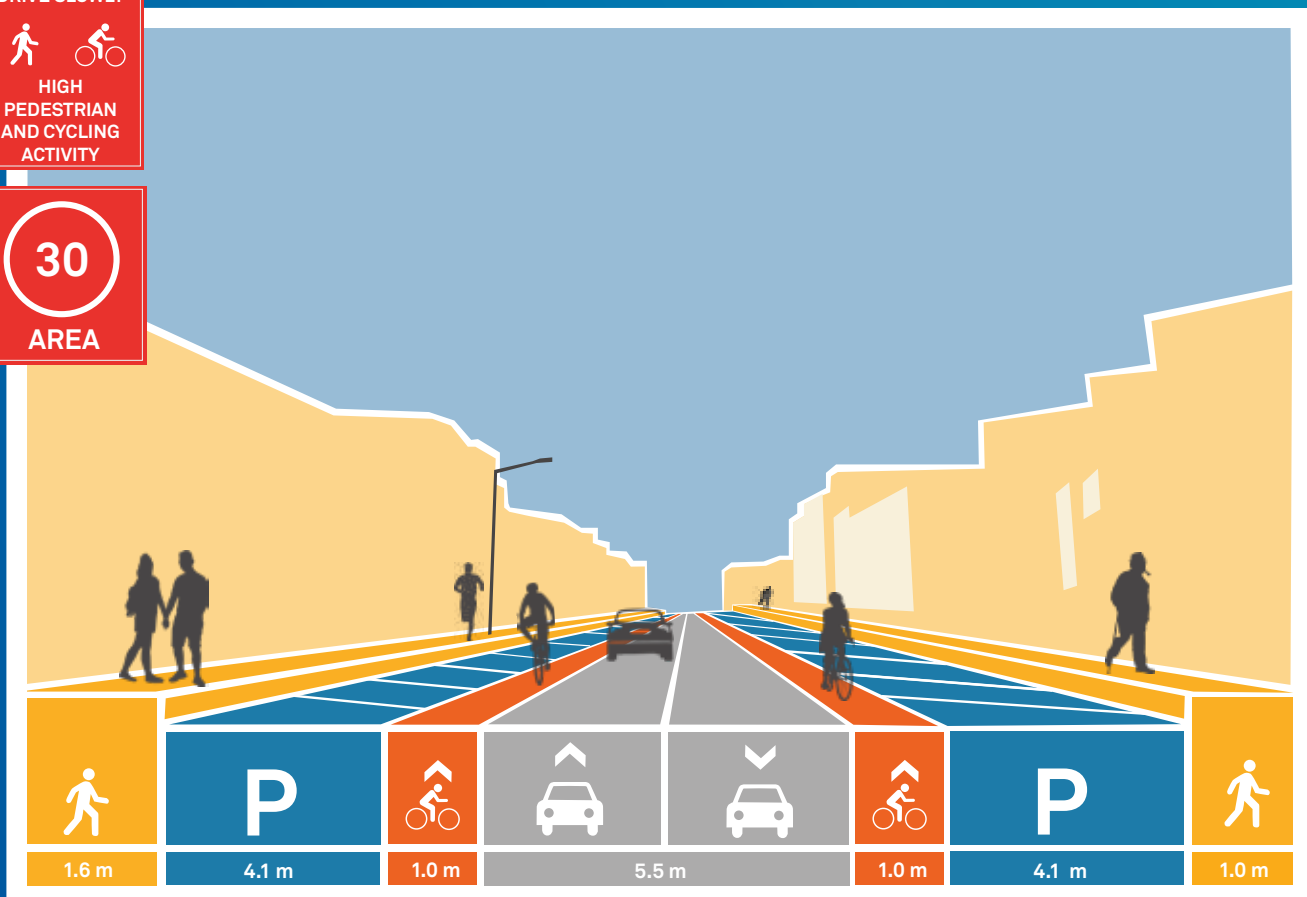
In order to promote the use of bicycles both for local and cross-council movement, it is suggested to add designated cycling lanes both ways in a vibrant colour and install adequate signage to remind and alert parking cars to be vigilant, cautious and give priority to cyclists at all times. Additional signage will emphasise slow car speed (30km), the designated cycling strips, and alert high pedestrian and cycling activity with the Slow Streets Network branding.





DRIVE SLOWLY
HIGH
PEDESTRIAN
AND CYCLING
ACTIVITY

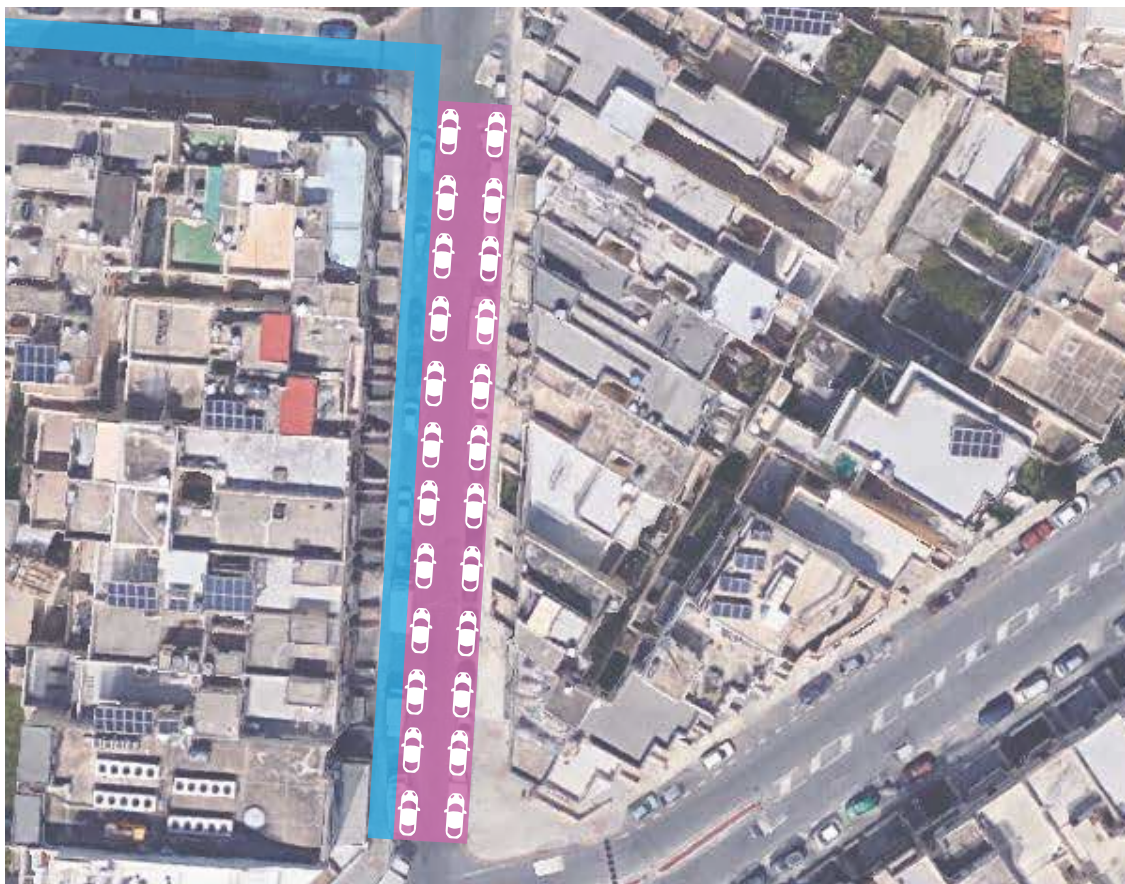
30
AREA



Intervention 13

Triq Is-Sur: Level 4

To continue the pedestrian network and stimulate movement by foot, the first part of Triq Is-Sur, a relatively spacious one way road of 5.7m wide can be converted to become a 3.7m (in line with DC2015 regulations) wide road. This will allow to extend the pedestrian walkway on the church side with 2m, including some green buffer elements to make the path even more attractive. The street should have signage for low vehicular speeds (20km), indicate the street as shared with cyclists, and include the promotion of the Slow Streets Network.



Intervention 14

Triq Anglu u Marianna Camilleri, Reggie Miller Gardens, Triq Il-Karmelitani, Il-Kampanella and Gorg Stevens: Level 1 and 3

To continue the Slow Streets Network in the direction of the three cities, it makes sense to lead the trail past the church, through the Reggie Miller Gardens and alongside the Gorg Stevens Square. It is recommended to establish a more pedestrian and cyclist friendly route through these streets with improved signage. The streets should have signage for low vehicular speeds (20km), indicate the road as shared with cyclists, and include the promotion of the Slow Streets Network. Safety can be further improved with a tactical urbanism pedestrian crossing zone where Triq Il-Kampanella runs alongside Gorg Stevens Square.



Intervention 15

Triq Il-Kampanella: Level 1 and 3



To reassure a safer pedestrian passage through the entire length of this dense residential neighbourhood it is important to control car traffic speeds by introducing signage for slow car speeds (20km), indicate the sharing of the road with pedestrians and cyclists, and increase the safety at all crossings. To improve further comfort of walking, the latter part of the road from Triq Ir-Rihan onwards direction Paola could possibly be reconfigured: the actual 5.4m car space could be limited to 4.1m, adding the extra space to one side of the pedestrian walkways.



source: Fox 12



source: Baltimore Express

Intervention 16

Triq Il-Geranju: Play Street

This play street has been chosen to serve this part of town and in order to have a good geographical spread of such spaces throughout the locality. It will also perfectly connect the Slow Streets Network with the field road leading to the three cities. Signage will communicate the frequency and use of the Play Street, together with a temporary closure of the street for through traffic and promote the Slow Streets Network.



Intervention 17

Triq San Pietru: Level 2 and 3

To provide the right density and connectivity, it is suggested to add Triq San Pietru to complete the network. In order to provide a worthwhile safe pedestrian connection, this one-way road can be rerouted into a local access only street, using appropriate signage to warn traffic timely. The intervention also proposes tactical urbanism to establish stronger pedestrian crossings at all intersections, preferably using bright paint markings so that they become clearly visible for approaching vehicles. This strategy will further shift the priority to pedestrians and increase the safety of crossings. Additional signage will emphasise slow car speed (20km), the local access only, the sharing of the road with pedestrians and cyclists, and alert high pedestrian and cycling activity with the Slow Streets Network branding.





Phasing Strategy

The interventions have been phased in stages, starting with those that are simple to implement and that could potentially catalyse bigger changes in the near future. The stages have been designed to facilitate the implementation of the overall Slow Streets vision.

Phase 1

Starting and Testing: Projects that are straightforward and easy to implement and that can provide the groundwork for a more significant future reconfiguration, thus requiring less initial financial investment. This phase includes the creation of play streets, tactical urbanism interventions and the testing of elements for eventual Level 4 interventions and are characterised by the use of temporary (removable or reversible) elements that could be deployed on certain days and during certain times.

Phase 2

Strengthening: This phase is envisioned to require more investment into signage and branding in order to build on Phase 1, and implement the necessary re-routing measures as discussed previously.

Phase 3

Monitoring: should be carried out simultaneously with execution, and post-implementation, in order to gauge whether the intervention is achieving the desired outcome, and if there are actions to be done that could achieve better results. Monitoring will determine whether the interventions could become permanent in nature, and eventually further transformed into more significant infrastructural changes.



Fgura

The best interventions to test and implement first are the Play Streets. Play Street closures during this phase may be carried out on designated days and at times when traffic is already low. Together with the Play Streets, Triq Haz-Zabbar, Triq Il-Kampanella and Triq Kent can be established as slow streets, including the necessary tactical urbanism interventions at intersections and critical crossings as pedestrian and cyclist priority is the primary concern of the Slow Streets initiative.

During the second phase, the focus could be directed to completing the Slow Street interventions for most of the north-south connections, and implementing all designated cycling lanes.

Finally for phase 3, the completion of the entire network and the implementation of all interventions tested during phase 1 and 2 at their full scale is envisioned to occur.



STARTING & TESTING THE NETWORK



LEGEND

- Slow street level 1
signage & branding
- Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4
reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension

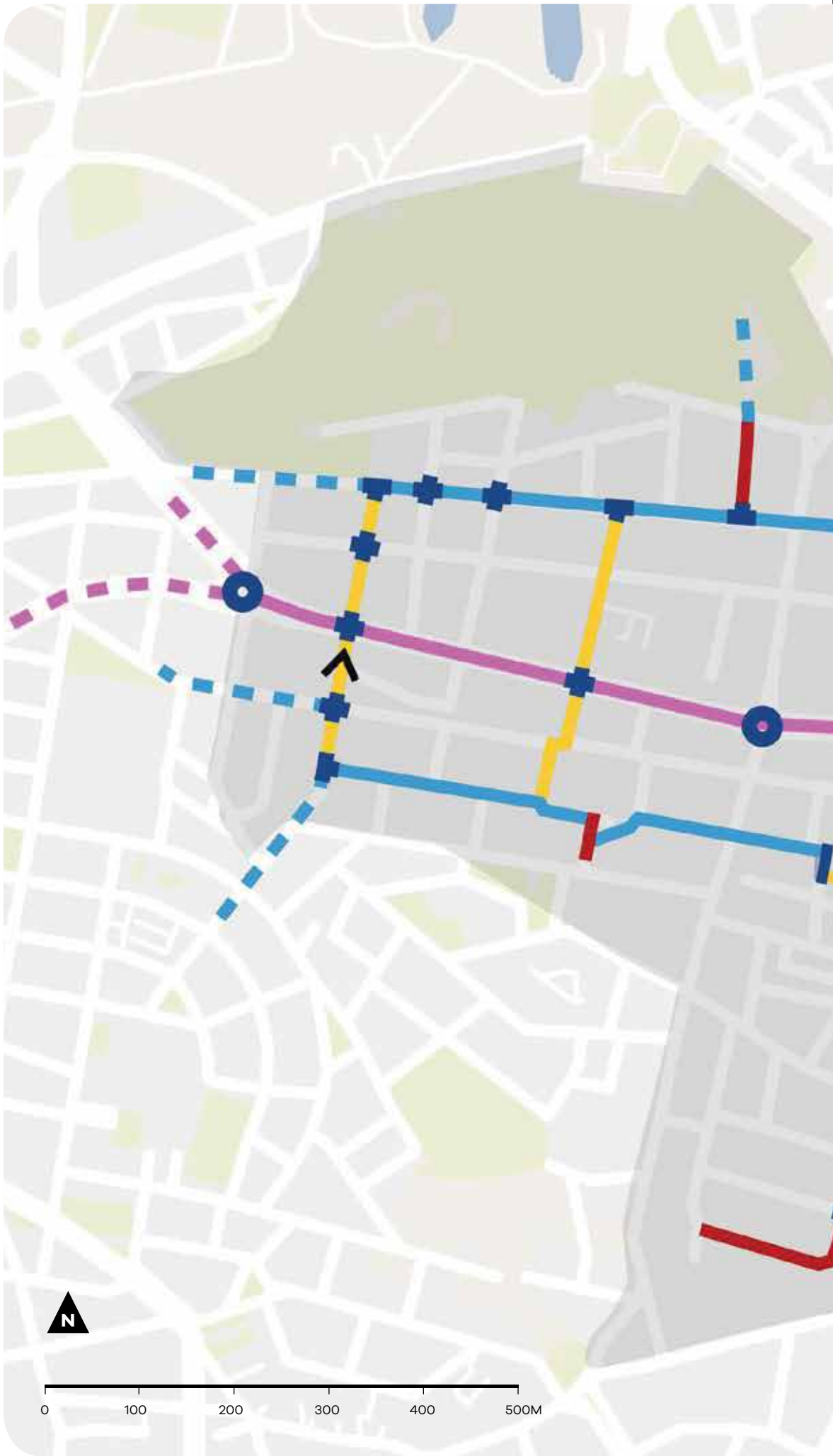


PHASING

STRENGTHENING
THE NETWORK



KUNSILL LOKALI
FGURA





LEGEND

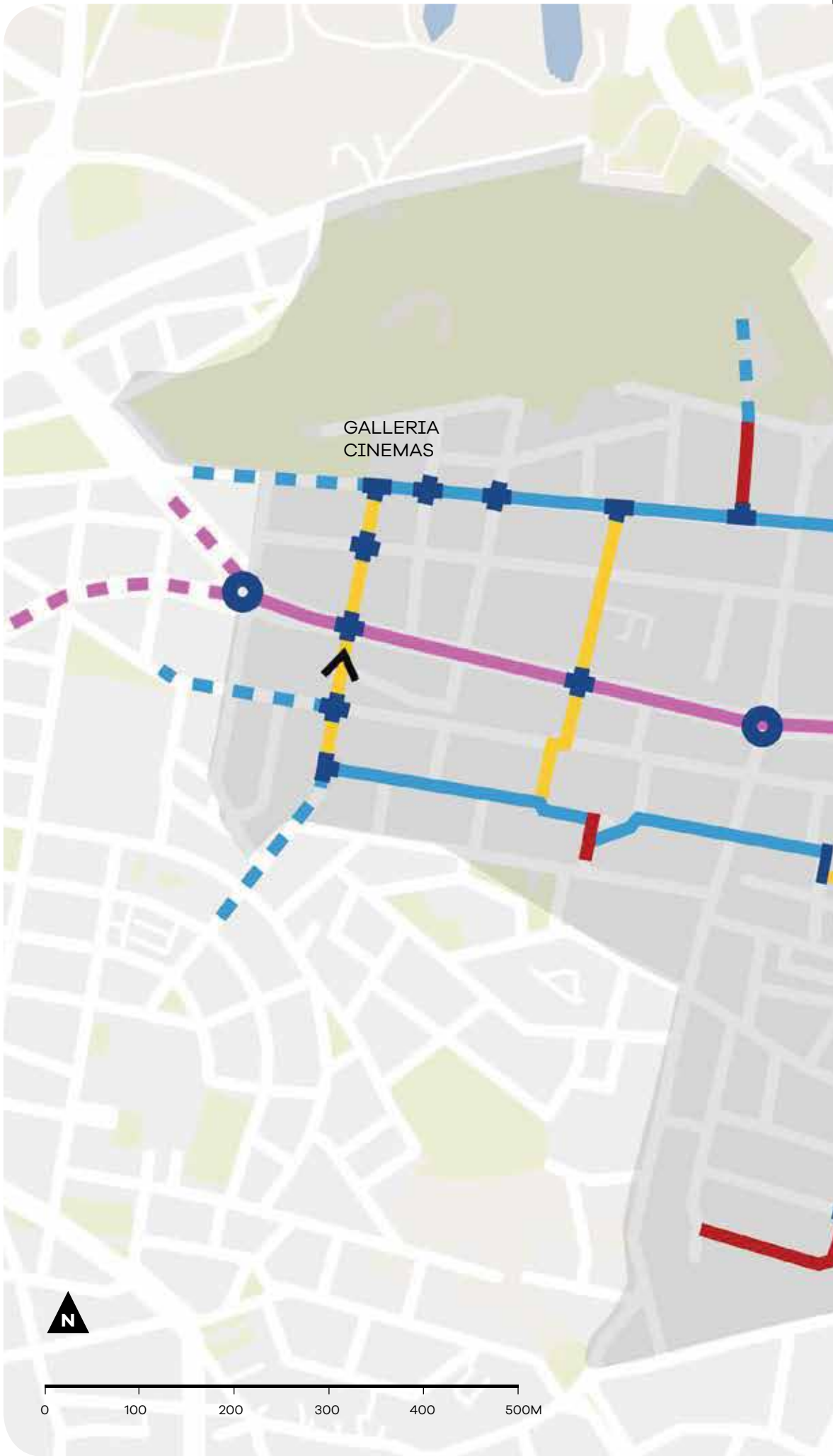
- Slow street level 1
signage & branding
- Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4
reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension

PHASING

COMPLETING
THE NETWORK



KUNSILL LOKALI
FGURA





LEGEND

- Slow street level 1
signage & branding
- Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4
reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension

FIGURA PARISH
CHURCH

LOCAL
COUNCIL

People traffic replaces car traffic, and the streets become 'paved parks' where people of all abilities can come out and improve their mental, physical and emotional health.

Slow Streets is a concept that can potentially extend to a permanent network of social places to stay, safe walkways and low-stress biking.

A photograph of a street closure. In the foreground, a white rectangular sign with black text reads "ROAD CLOSED" in large letters, "LOCAL" in smaller letters, and "ACCESS ONLY" in large letters. The sign is supported by two black posts. On either side of the sign are orange and white striped plastic water-filled barriers. The background shows a paved street with white lane markings, trees, and a few people walking in the distance. The entire image has a semi-transparent orange overlay.

ROAD CLOSED
LOCAL
ACCESS ONLY

The Way Forward

In order for Slow Streets to be successfully executed, a high degree of collaboration and communication is required between various stakeholders.

Whether at the testing or strengthening phase, projects require collaborations between Local Councils (as well as the Local Councils' Association and the Regional Committees) and local residents, with the involvement of other entities – NGOs and community groups such as the Bike Advocacy Group and Walking Malta, Transport Malta, Malta Public Transport, the Planning Authority, the Environment and Resources Authority and other government entities.

Partnerships are important for creating an agreed-upon plan for signage, programming, and for the creation of an ongoing management plan once the project is implemented. Specifically within tactical urbanism projects, a collaborative

effort with residents is beneficial for its successful implementation. The most successful plans for change often come from the residents themselves, as they centre on their daily needs. Therefore residents should be engaged throughout the entire process such that the outcome may be more fruitful.

Slow Streets involves a combination of strategies that aim to result in safer and more frequent use of streets by pedestrians. However, the future vision is for Slow Streets to incentivise larger scale projects that could give back high quality urban public space to the residents. For these future projects, partnerships, active resident involvement and participatory design will be essential.

Fgura is a recently developed residential area that expanded in all directions, to touch Bormla, Zabbar, Paola and Tarxien. Development happened so fast that soon Fgura became a densely populated and bustling town which is relatively walkable since distances are short, services are easily available and largely within good reach. Triq Haz-Zabbar and Hompesch Road are cutting right through the locality and form the commercial heart. They make it an attractive destination with all kinds of shops and businesses, also attracting residents from neighbouring localities. Located between many localities, the Fgura main roads also have turned into thoroughfares between these localities, resulting in a number of traffic issues that occur within its local streets, notably resulting from the occurrence of through traffic.

The main aim of Fgura's Slow Streets strategy is to identify and strengthen a walkable network by liberating and calming down local streets that can instead be safely used by residents through different schemes of traffic management, such as reconfiguration, rerouting and tactical urbanism, that shift the priority within these streets to pedestrian and cyclist use.

The individual strategies are categorised according to the level of interventions, which entail diverse tools of traffic management and tactical urbanism. These include:

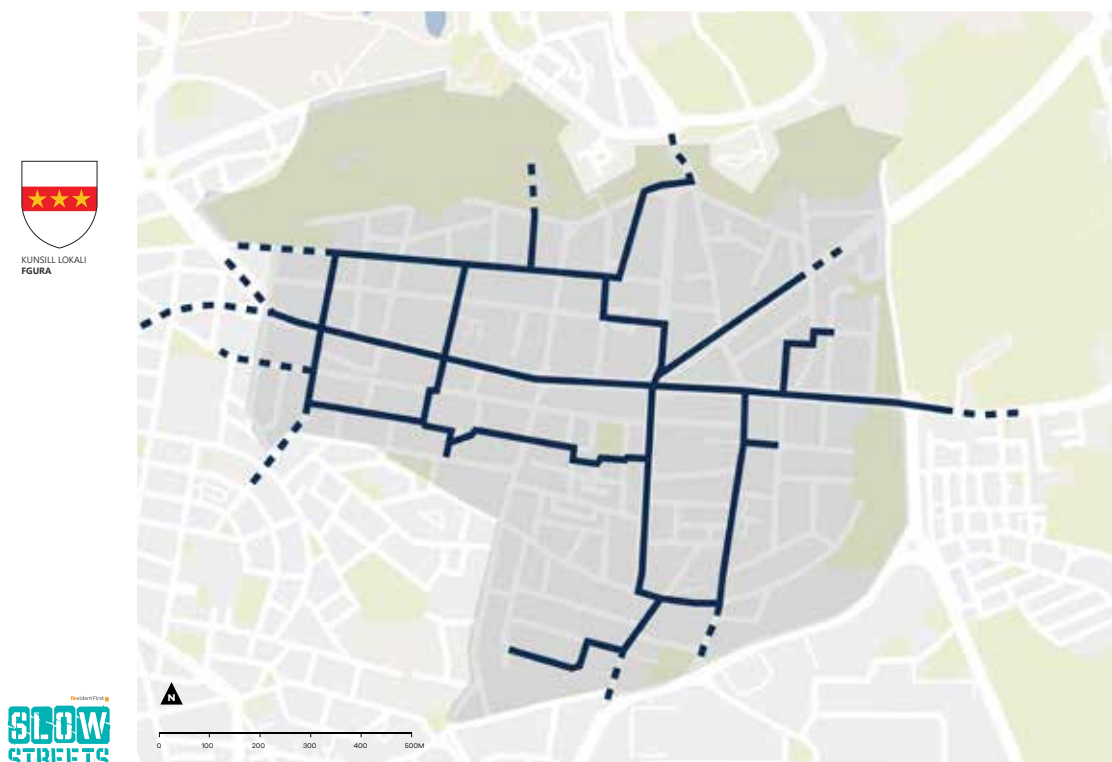
- Level 1 interventions: Introduction of signage which alerts drivers to slower speeds and increased pedestrian and cyclist presence and activity
- Level 2 interventions: Rerouting of traffic, which shifts priority of the spaces to pedestrian and cyclist use
- Level 3 interventions: Tactical urbanism initiatives – low cost and temporary solutions that are focused on reallocating more space to pedestrians and cyclists rather than cars and that can be used in the short term (to test Level 4 interventions) or the long term
- Level 4 interventions: Reconfiguration of the street section to allocate more physical space to pedestrians and cyclists
- Slow Paths: A designated slow section of the road, when intervening on the entire street is not possible, particularly for use in larger roads where slower-moving, more localised/dedicated slip roads are available, and where priority for pedestrians is often not considered

Summary

- Play Streets: A type of intervention where a local road is closed off to cars temporarily, for example on weekends, so that it may be transformed into a place where residents of all ages are free to gather, socialise and play
- Extensions: Important links that represent future potential expansion of the network, and better connectivity for residents of different localities

The phasing strategy is designed to begin with the interventions that are simple to implement and that could potentially catalyse bigger changes in the near future.

Slow Streets involves a combination of strategies that aim to result in safer and more frequent use of streets by pedestrians. In order for Slow Streets to be successfully executed, a high degree of collaboration is required among various stakeholders. Engaging the residents, preferably throughout the entire process, will produce the most successful plans for change.



Intervention summary street by street

Intervention 1 - Triq San Mikiel: rerouting and tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: local access only

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Rerouting: the street will become local access only

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and walkways

Intervention 2 - Triq Kent and Sqaq Il Koppla: signage & branding and tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and walkways

Intervention 3 - Triq Kent and Marzu 1972: Play Street

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)

Play Street: programming of activities

Intervention 4 - Triq Martin Luther King, Emilio Camilleri and It-teknologija Moderna, Pjazza Patri Redent Gauci: rerouting and tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: pedestrianised, no car access

Signage: local access only

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Rerouting: the street will become local access only

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and walkways, reorganising a parking strip

Intervention 5 - Triq Is-Sur: tactical urbanism and reconfiguration

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pedestrian walkways

Reconfiguration: trim the available road to 4.8 m and convert the gained space into a 1.2m additional pedestrian walkway with a green buffer.

Intervention 6 - Triq Il-Merhba, San Xmun and Il Falkunier: signage & branding and tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and walkways

Intervention 7 - Triq Rghajja and I Gharnuq: Play Street

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)

Play Street: programming of activities

Intervention 8 - Triq Il-Karmnu: rerouting and tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: pedestrianised, no car access

Signage: one way road

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Rerouting: the street will become local access only

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings

Intervention 9 - Triq L-Iskola: Play Street

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)

Play Street: programming of activities

Intervention 10 - Triq Haz-Zabbar and Hompesch Road: rerouting, reconfiguration, tactical urbanism and Play Street

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: one way road + rerouting

Signage: 30 km/hr speed limit

Signage: designated cycling lanes

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)

Rerouting: a section of Hompesch Road becomes one way

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings

Reconfiguration: installation of designated cycling lanes, and a section of Hompesch Road will have its road space for vehicles limited to 3.7m, in favor of more pedestrian and cyclists space.

Play Street: programming of activities

Intervention 11 - Triq Sant Antnin, Il-Pepprin and Il-Misk: signage & branding, tactical urbanism and Playstreet

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and walkways, embellishing of parking area.

Play Street: programming of activities

Intervention 12 - Vjal Il-Kottoner: reconfiguration for Cycling

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 30 km/hr speed limit

Signage: designated cycling lanes

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings

Reconfiguration: adding designated cycling lanes, both ways

Intervention 13 - Triq Is-Sur: reconfiguration

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Reconfiguration: trimming of the road to 3.7m, adding 2m additional walkway with green buffer

Intervention 14 - Triq Anglu u Marianna Camilleri, Reggie Miller Gardens, Triq Il-Karmelitani, Il-Kampanella and Gorg Stevens: signage & branding and tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and walkways.

Intervention 15 - Triq Il-Kampanella: signage & branding and tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings

Reconfiguration (optional): reducing section of the road to 4.1m and adding extra pedestrian space

Intervention 16 - Triq Il-Geranju: Play Street

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)

Play Street: programming of activities

Intervention 17 - Triq San Pietru: rerouting and tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding

Signage: local access only

Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit

Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles)

Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

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THE ARTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT



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Kunsilli Lokali**
Local Councils' Association Malta