

ResidentFirst

# SLOW STREETS

November 2020



KUNSILL LOKALI  
GĦARB

ResidentFirst

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

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# Contents

Introduction	2
Slow Streets Network	6
Implementation	20
Types of Interventions	22
Cycling	34
Għarb Interventions	38
Phasing	56
The Way Forward	64
Summary	66



# Introduction

Streets in Malta and Gozo 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 and Gozo, 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](https://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.



source: Chicago Tribune



source: changing-transport.org

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.

# Għarb

The small village of Għarb lies at the western part of Gozo and is characterised by its residential character and quiet nature. Whilst this village has one of the smallest populations, it is surrounded by large stretches of agricultural land and countryside lanes, and features a number of attractors which make this village a unique one.

Along the eastern edge of the locality lies one of the largest and recently upgraded tourist attractions on the island - the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of Ta' Pinu, featuring Neo-Romantic architecture with vast land-views and sea-views. Closer to the residential area other attractions can be found such as the Parish Church in the centre dedicated to the Visitation of Our Lady to St Elizabeth, 'Taž-Żejt' Chapel -- the older Parish Church of the village, the Chapel of San Dimitri, a number of local history museums and Ta' Borom Windmill at the entrance of the village.

Whilst most of the residential local roads are quiet and carry low traffic volumes, the main spine of the village leading to the central square (Triq il-Knisja) carries

through traffic, specifically those travelling towards the north-western coastline. This road would therefore benefit in a reduction of through traffic and would be better utilised by pedestrians to access the main square if it is safer and more walkable. In addition, the other residential roads would also benefit from being more pedestrian-oriented as these would link better to the main square.

The main aim of the Slow Streets strategy, therefore, is to liberate local streets, specifically the main spine, from extraneous traffic that could instead be safely used by residents. By using different schemes of traffic management, including both rerouting opportunities 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 routes have also been identified for potential reconfiguration since they could provide critical and much-needed change to the entire network and enable a stronger and safer street environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike.



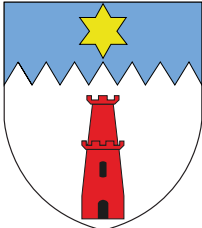
Pavements and roads are further measured on site in order to sketch an accurate section for each of the selected streets. This exercise is crucial for determining the possible intervention within each street, based on the available road space, and taking into account both the activities and characteristics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

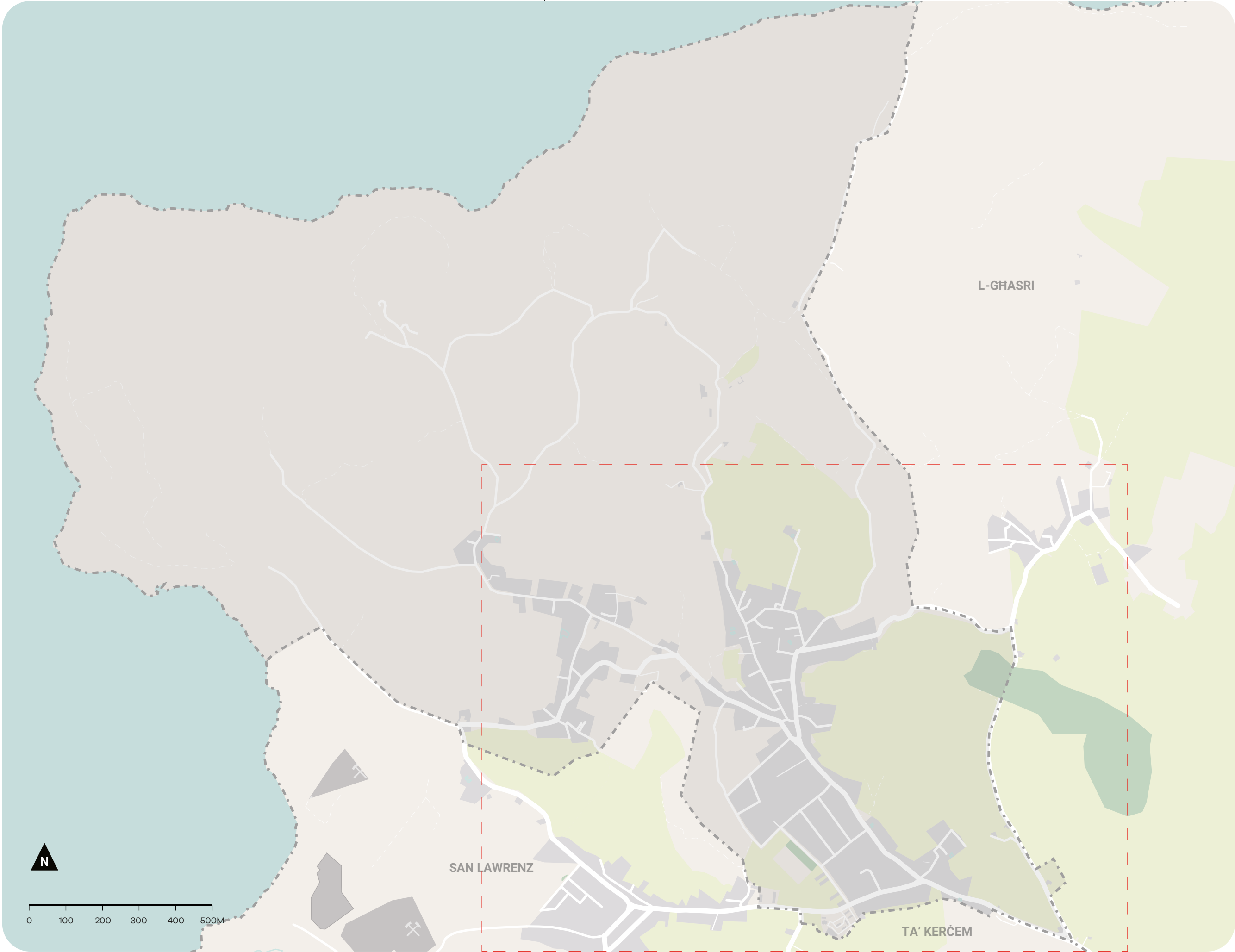
The strategy is finally concluded once it may be established that the individual interventions are able to coexist seamlessly, without creating any unwanted repercussions and while further considering potential extensions with neighbouring localities.

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.

LOCALITY

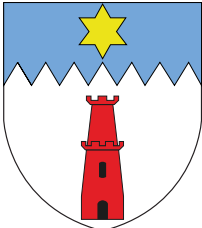


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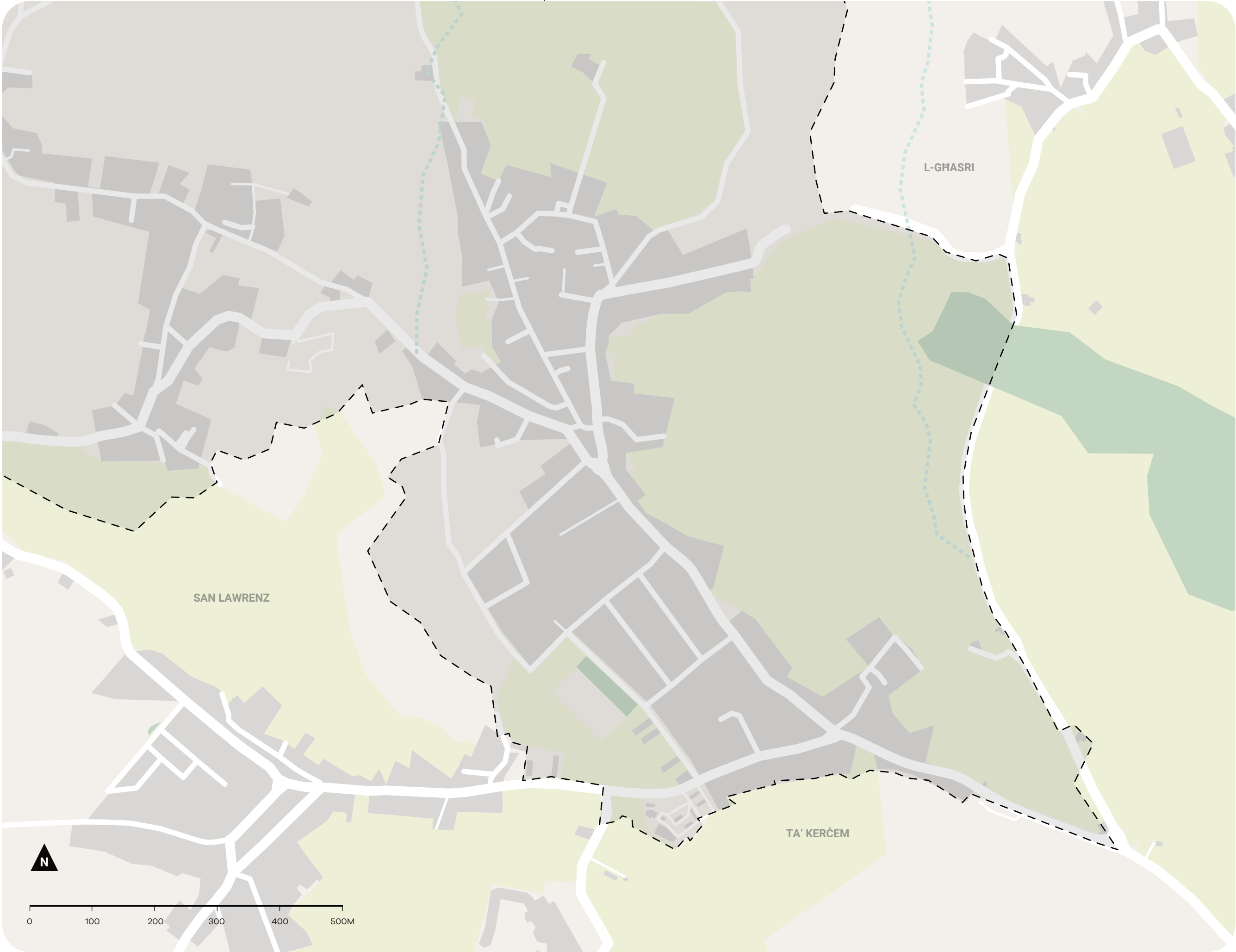




LOCALITY

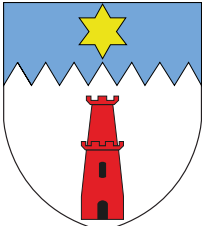


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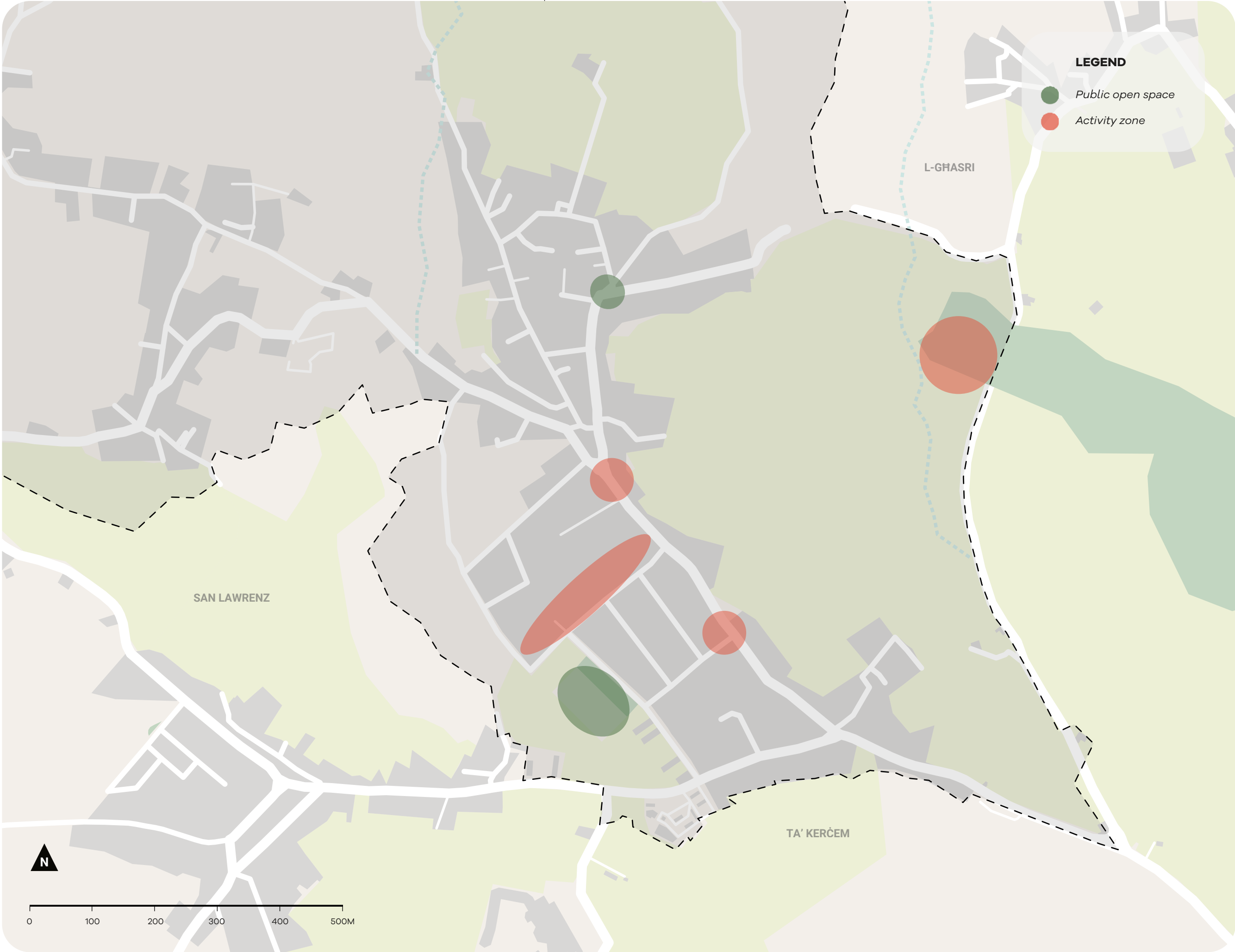




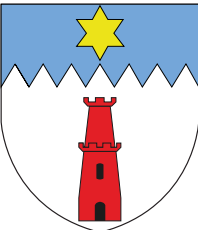
ACTIVITY  
ZONES



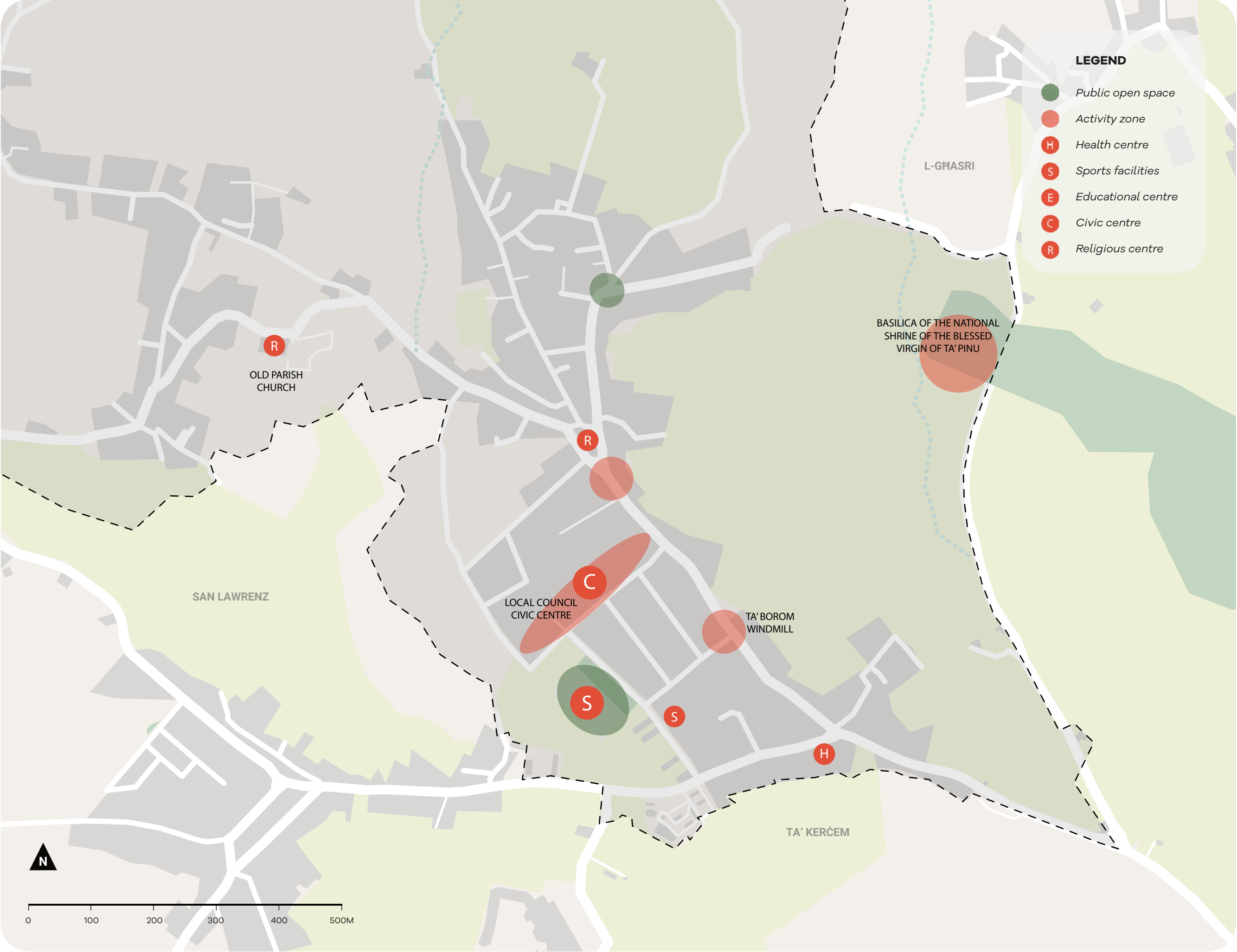
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DESTINATIONS

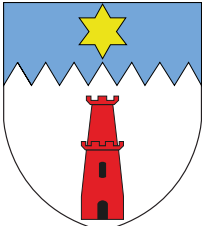


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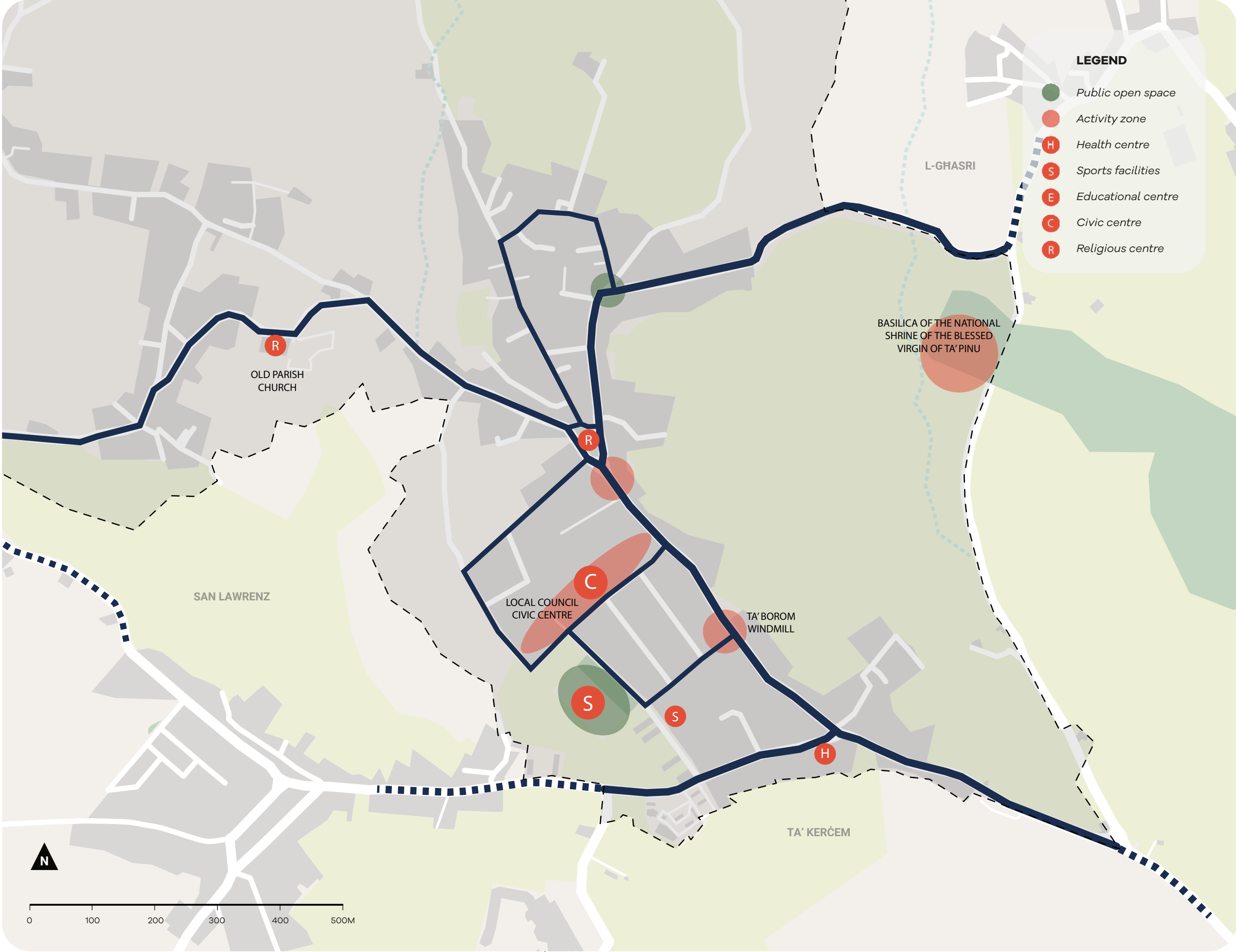


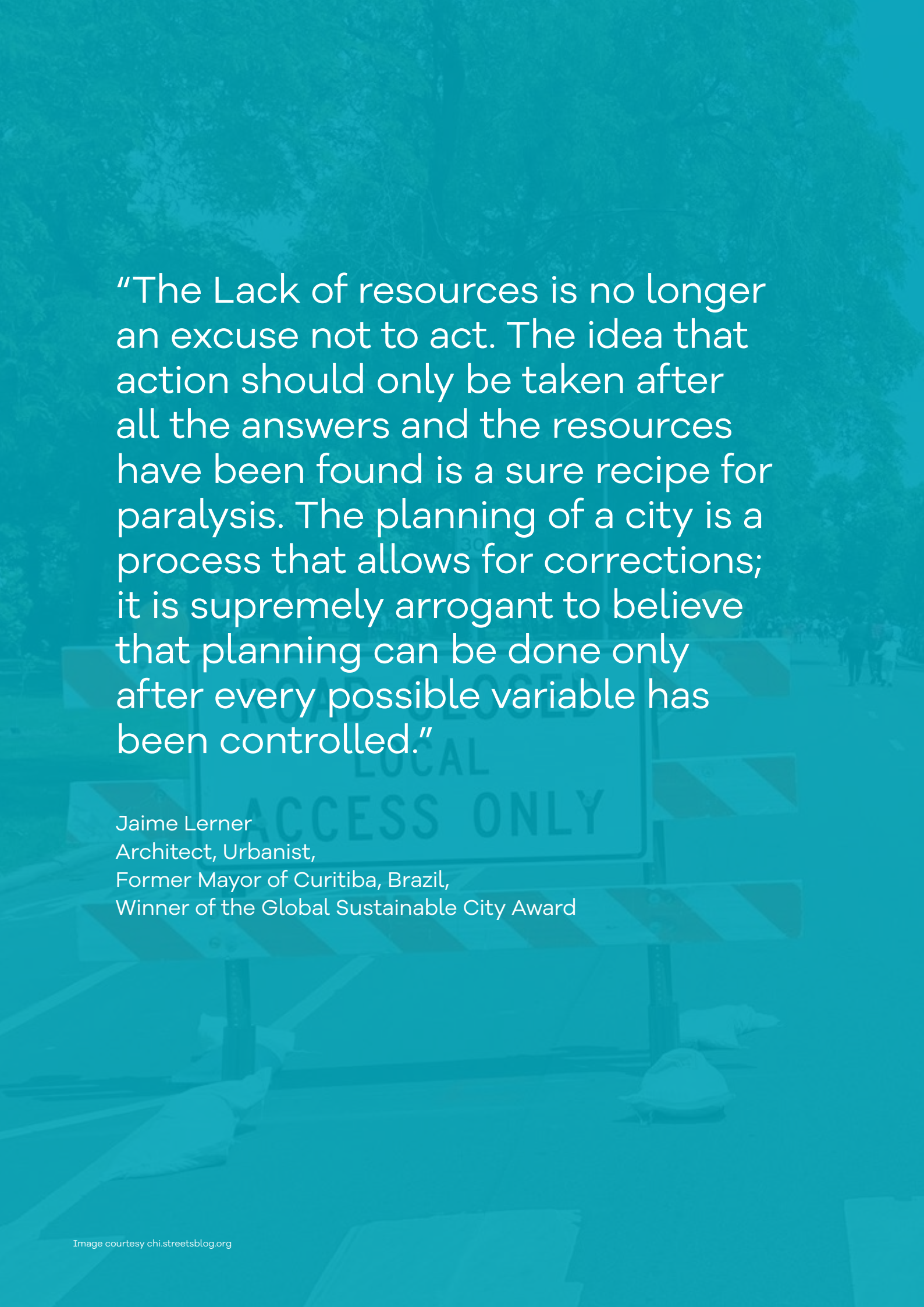


NETWORK



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“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**

**Play Streets**

**Extensions**

### Cycling

### Għarb 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.







source: Smart Growth Online

## 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.



source: South Carolina Safe Routes



source: publicspace.org



source: Cadence



source: designcouncil.org.uk

## 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.



source: Tactical Urbanism Guide



source: Talk Wellington





## 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).

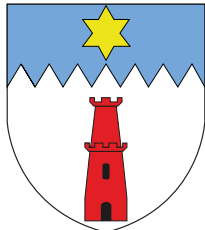


## Extensions

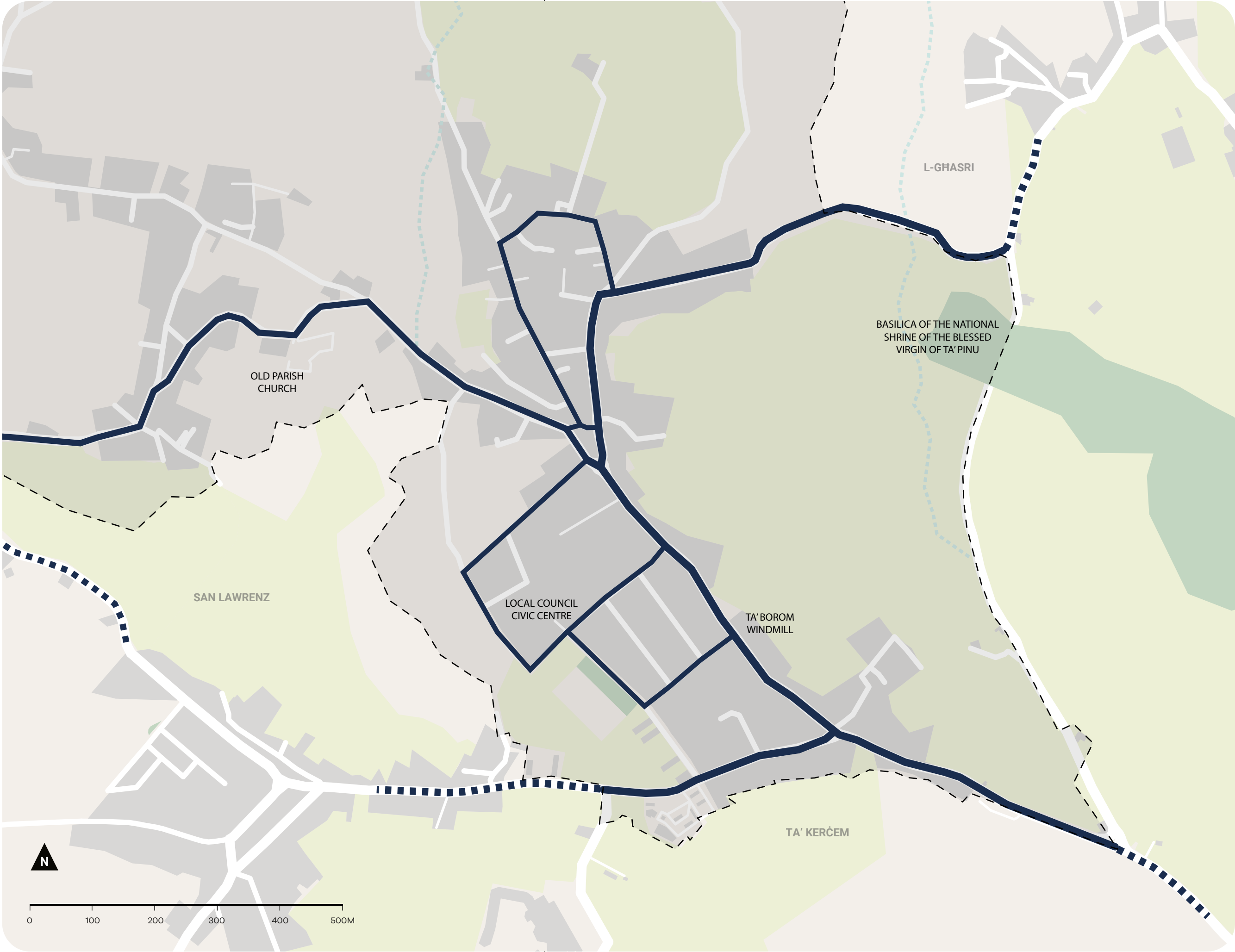
The last type of intervention refers to ‘extensions’ with adjacent localities and /or within the same locality. These links are important as they represent the future potential expansion of the network, resulting in even better connectivity for local and /or neighbouring residents. Such expansion may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



NETWORK

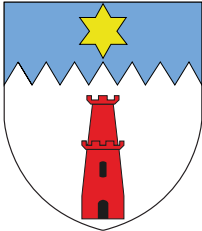


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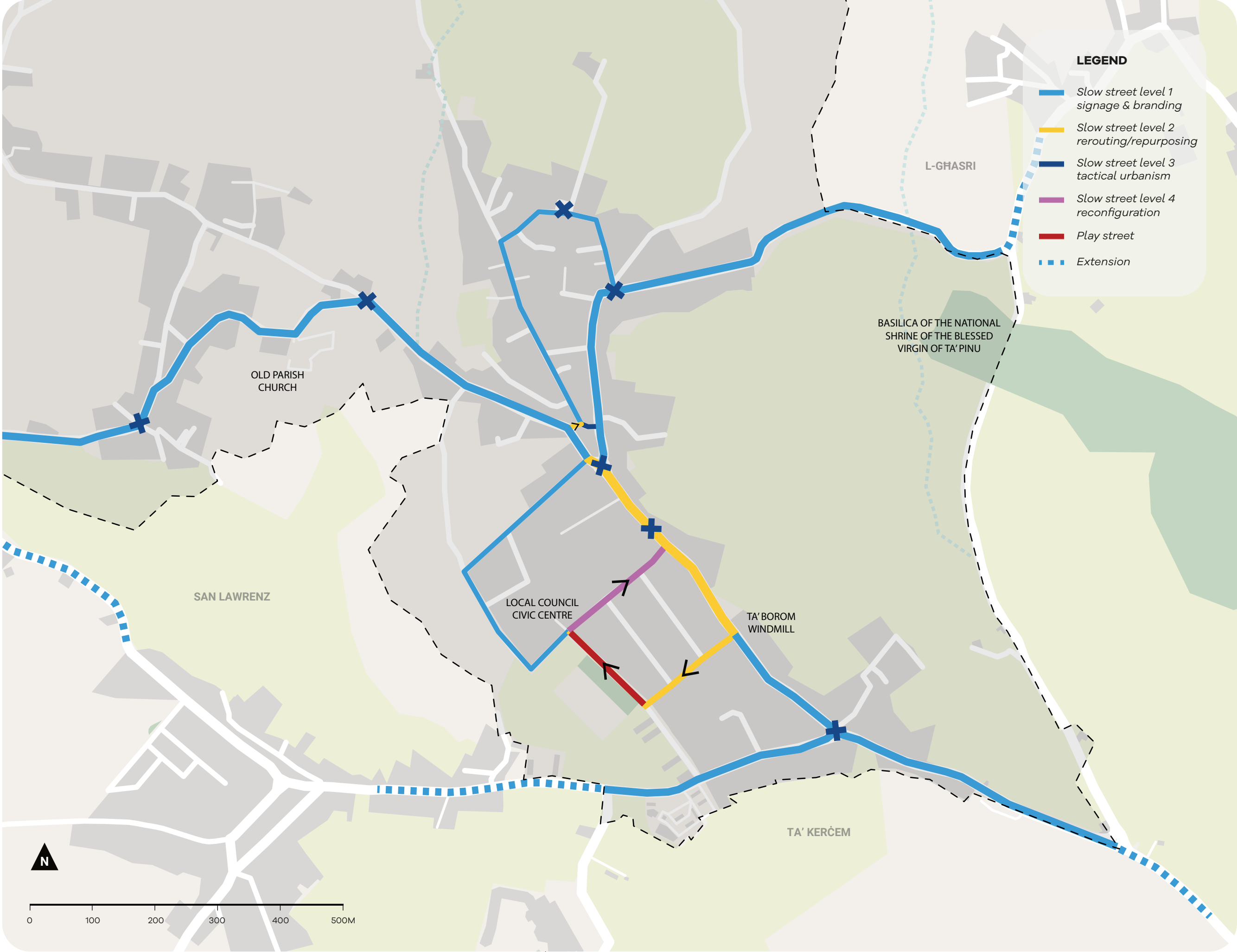




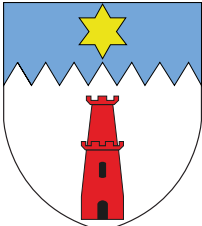
INTERVENTION



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INTERVENTION



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# 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.

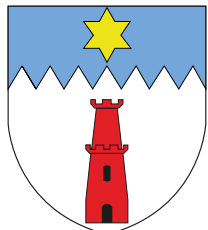
In narrower streets characterised by less space, signage is being proposed to slow down cars and raise the awareness of shared space with cyclists. These streets are included within the Level 1 interventions discussed previously.

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



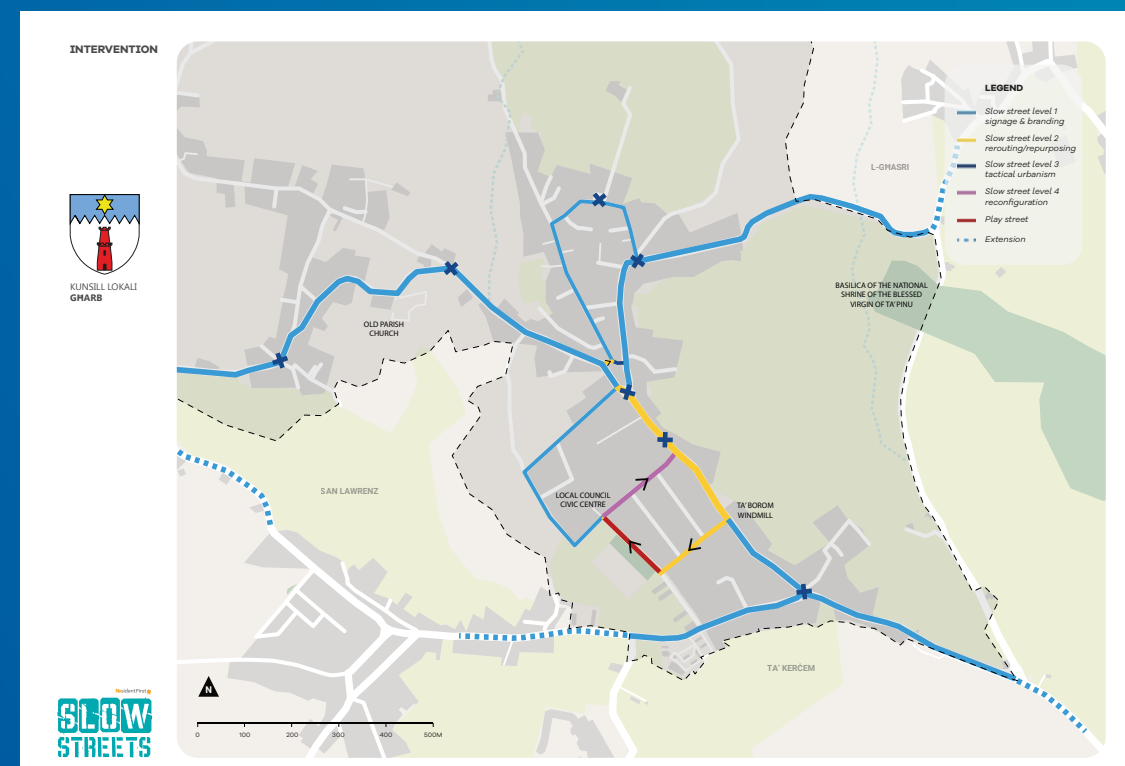
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# Għarb Interventions

The Slow Streets route encompasses various interventions that were decided upon based on the individual nature of the streets and the need to resolve particular traffic issues within the locality. One of the main challenges in Għarb is to decongest the narrower main spine leading to the central square from extraneous, through traffic and instead divert drivers onto more peripheral routes. The second challenge is to identify walkable routes that link residential areas better to the centre, so as to avoid a fragmented network disconnecting the edges of the development area from the rest of the urban fabric.



## Intervention 1

### Triq l-Għarb, Triq il-Knisja (southern part) and Triq Frangisk Portelli: Level 3

The village of Għarb is mainly accessed vehicularly from the local road Triq l-Għarb which opens up into Triq il-Knisja, the main spine leading to the main square, and Triq Frangisk Portelli, leading to a secluded residential area of San Lawrenz.

Tactical urbanism is being proposed at the intersection where these three roads meet and around the existing bus stops in order to alert drivers to slow down when entering the village and in turn provide a safer environment for pedestrians. In addition, adequate signage is being proposed for slow speeds and sharing of road space between cyclists and drivers. With respect to Triq il-Knisja, signage would continue up until Triq Karmni Grima.



#### LEGEND

##### Signage/Tactical Urbanism

- Fully pedestrian space
- Floor marking - slowing cars
- Car parking space
- Physical barrier (bollard)
- One-way
- Limited access

##### Traffic Management

- Private Cars
- Public Buses
- Bicycles
- Pedestrians
- All modes of transportation
- Cars + Buses
- Buses + Bicycles
- Bicycles + Cars

#### Triq l-Għarb, Triq il-Knisja and Triq Frangisk Portelli Għarb



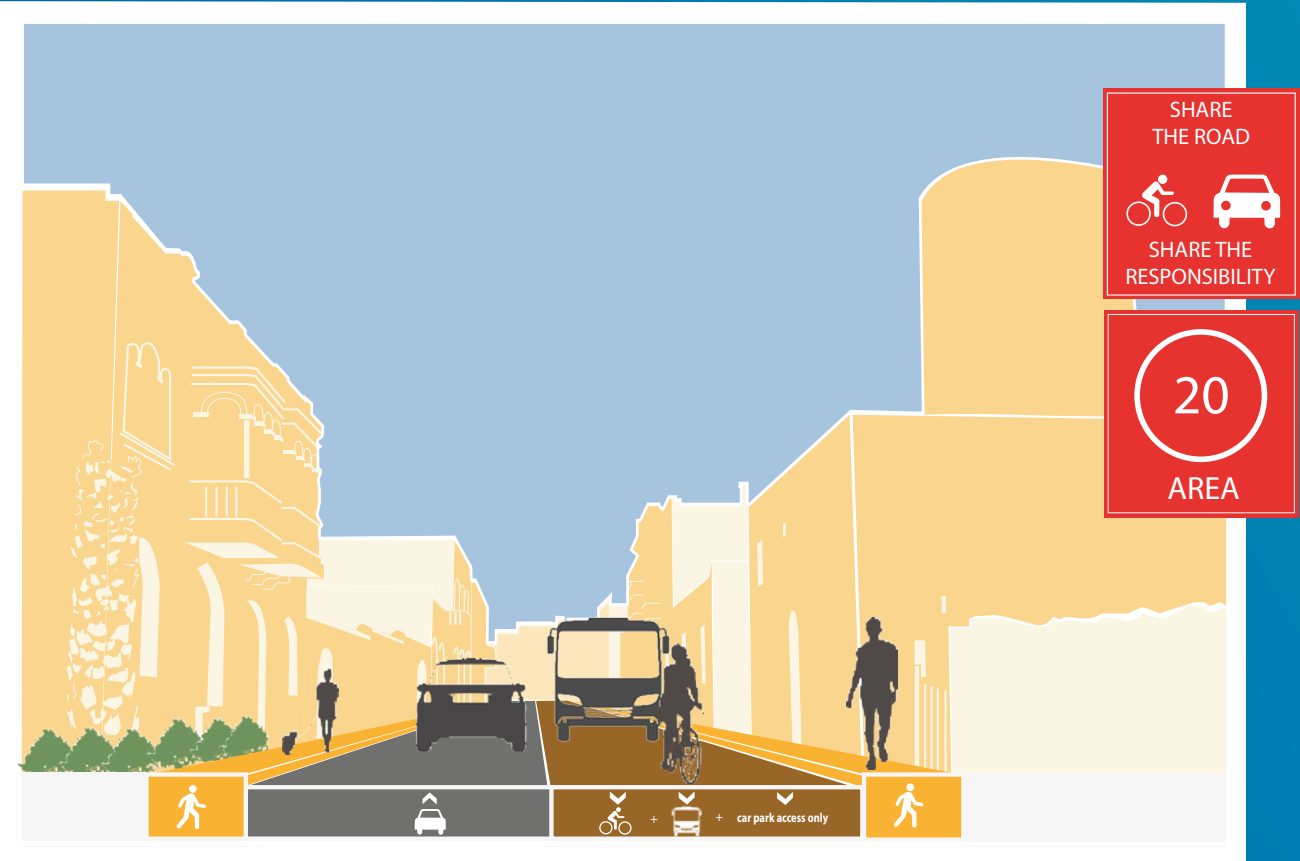
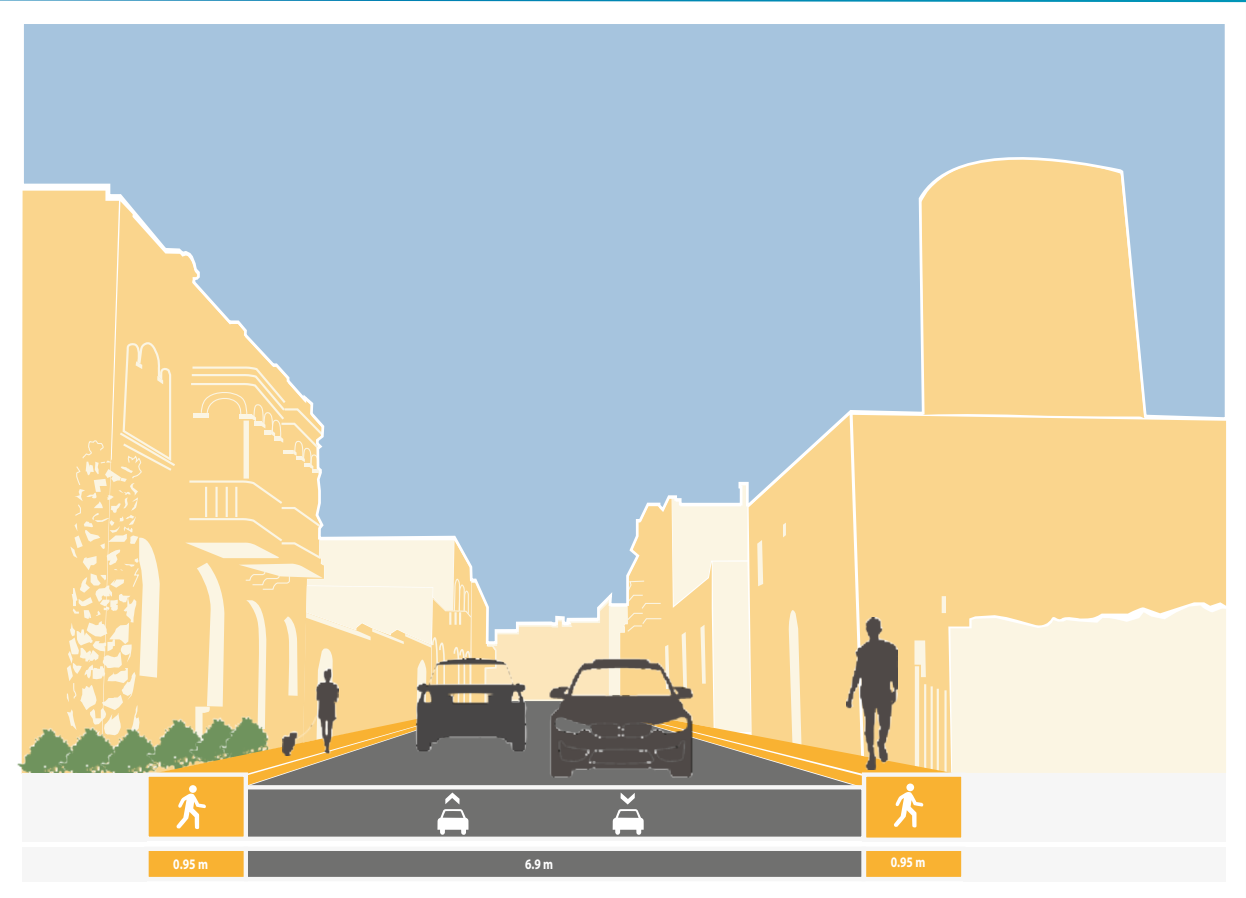


Intervention 2

Triq il-Knisja (central part): Level 2 and Level 3

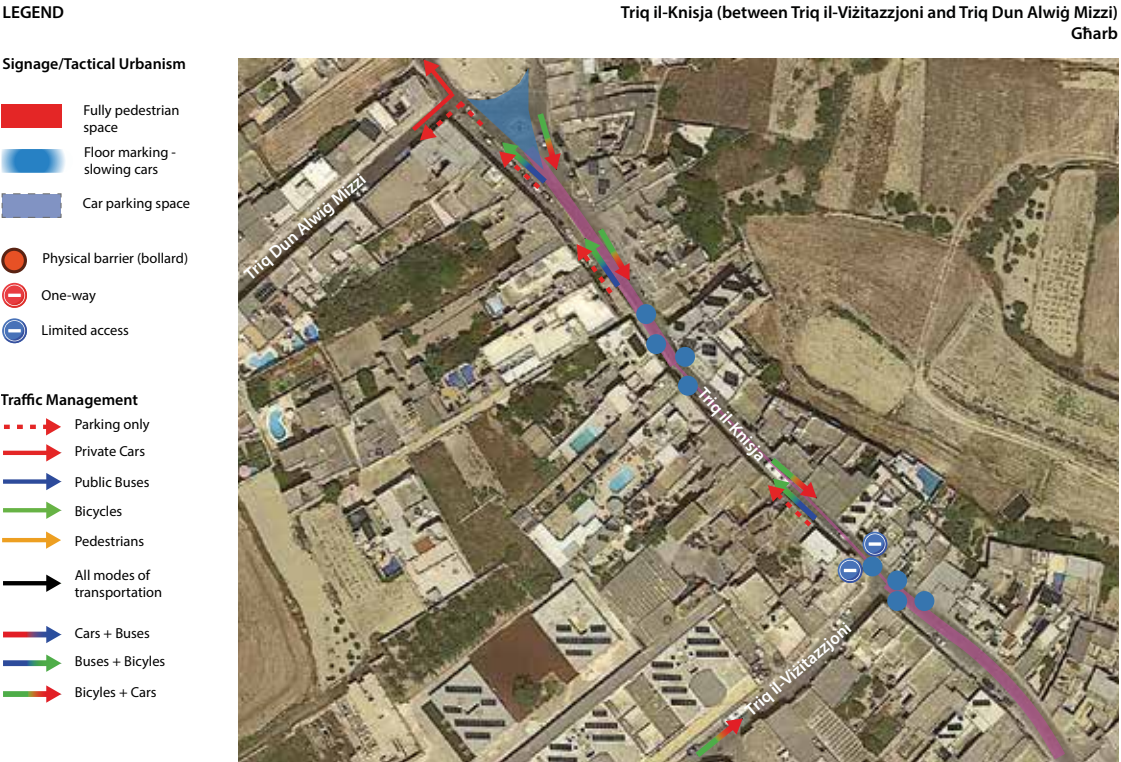
Whilst the first section of Triq il-Knisja is being proposed to have adequate signage for slow speeds and sharing of road (Intervention 1), the second section from Triq Karmni Grima up until the Parish Church (intersection with Triq Dun Alwig Mizzi) is being proposed to be rerouted from its current two-way configuration to a one-way road for general traffic, direction south, coming from the central square and exiting from Triq il-Vizitazzjoni (Intervention 5).

Whilst through traffic would be directed to another route to access the central square (discussed in Intervention 3), public transportation, cyclists and those looking for parking would still be able to use Triq il-Knisja in both directions. This intervention would drastically reduce the vehicular conflicts occurring within this part of the road because of its narrow width and limit vehicular access to increase pedestrian and cyclist safety.





To better alert drivers of the road section which drastically narrows down (the stretch of road between Triq il-Viżitazzjoni and Triq Dun Alwiġ Mizzi), tactical urbanism is being proposed in the form of colourful markings. In addition, adequate signage is also being proposed for limited access, sharing of road and further slow speed signs.



### Intervention 3

#### Triq Karmni Grima: Level 2

#### Triq Feliċ Grech and Triq Dun Alwiġ Mizzi: Level 1

Triq Karmni Grima is being proposed to be rerouted from its current two-way configuration to a one-way road, in tandem with Triq Dun Tumas Cassar and Triq il-Viżitazzjoni, which would also be turned into one-way routes creating a clockwise vehicular loop for general traffic (from Triq Karmni Grima to Triq Tumas Cassar to Triq il-Viżitazzjoni). Through this intervention pedestrians would have safer and more walkable routes in addition to new signage for slow speeds and sharing of roads between cars and bicycles, promoting multiple modes of transportation.

In turn, Triq Feliċ Grech and Triq Dun Alwiġ Mizzi are being proposed to have adequate signage for slow speeds so as to increase the safety of pedestrians within these streets. Car access to the main square from Triq Dun Alwiġ Mizzi would not be allowed, with exit from this street only possible upwards towards Triq il-Madonna tal-Virtut.

This intervention would limit car access towards the square from Triq il-Knisja due to its narrow street character (as discussed in Intervention 1) and similarly ensure that cars do not take the alternative route to Triq Dun Alwiġ Mizzi so as to enter the square.



### Intervention 4

#### Triq Tumas Cassar: Level 4 and Play Street

Triq Tumas Cassar, forming part of the proposed vehicular loop (discussed in Intervention 3), is a very important street with residential units on one side and a playground and football grounds on the other, thus attracting a number of visitors daily. However, its pedestrian amenities are lacking, such as the existing pavement which is interrupted by trees. It is therefore being proposed that the left-over road space gained from the removal of one vehicular lane would be better configured for a more pedestrian-oriented street.

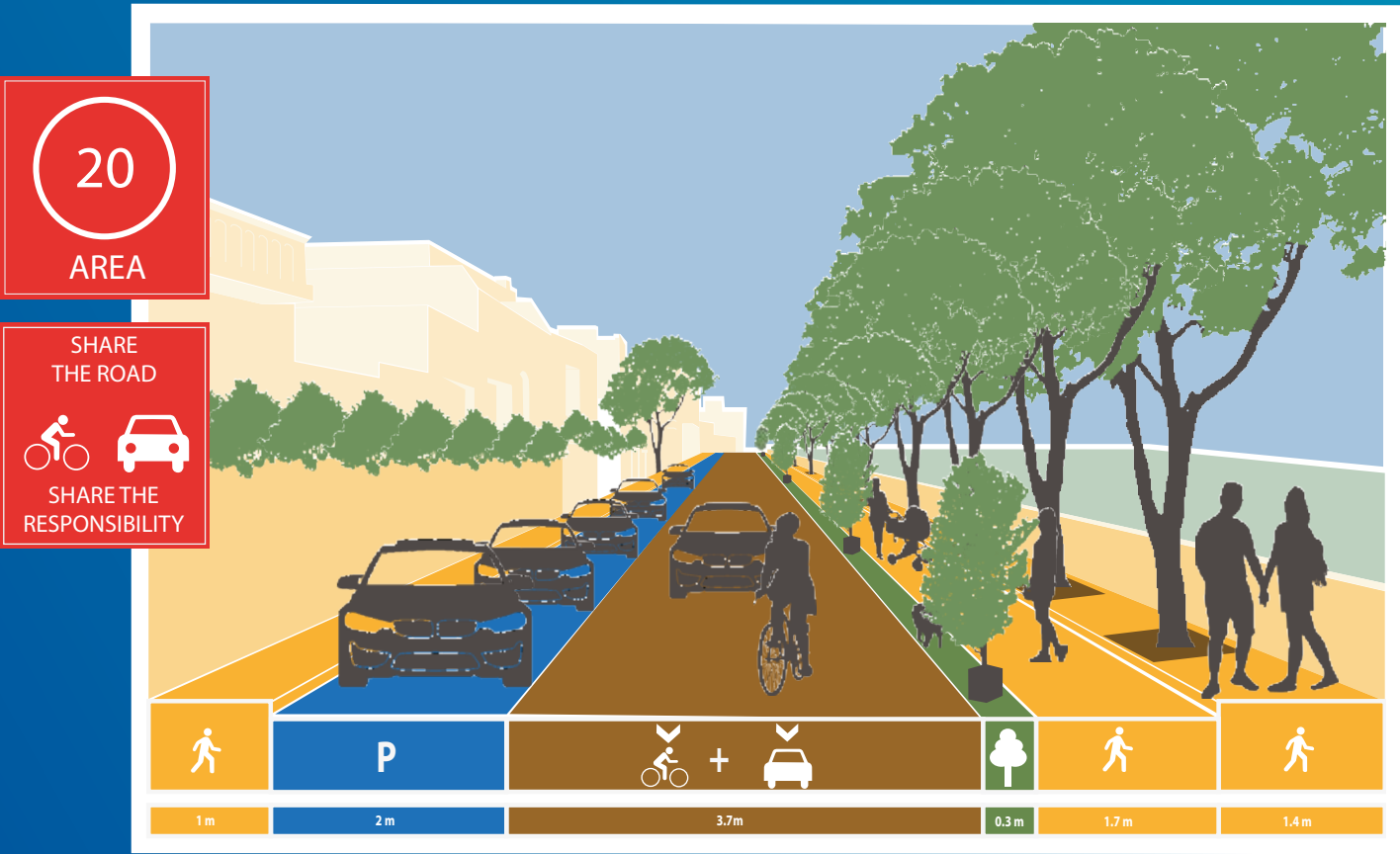
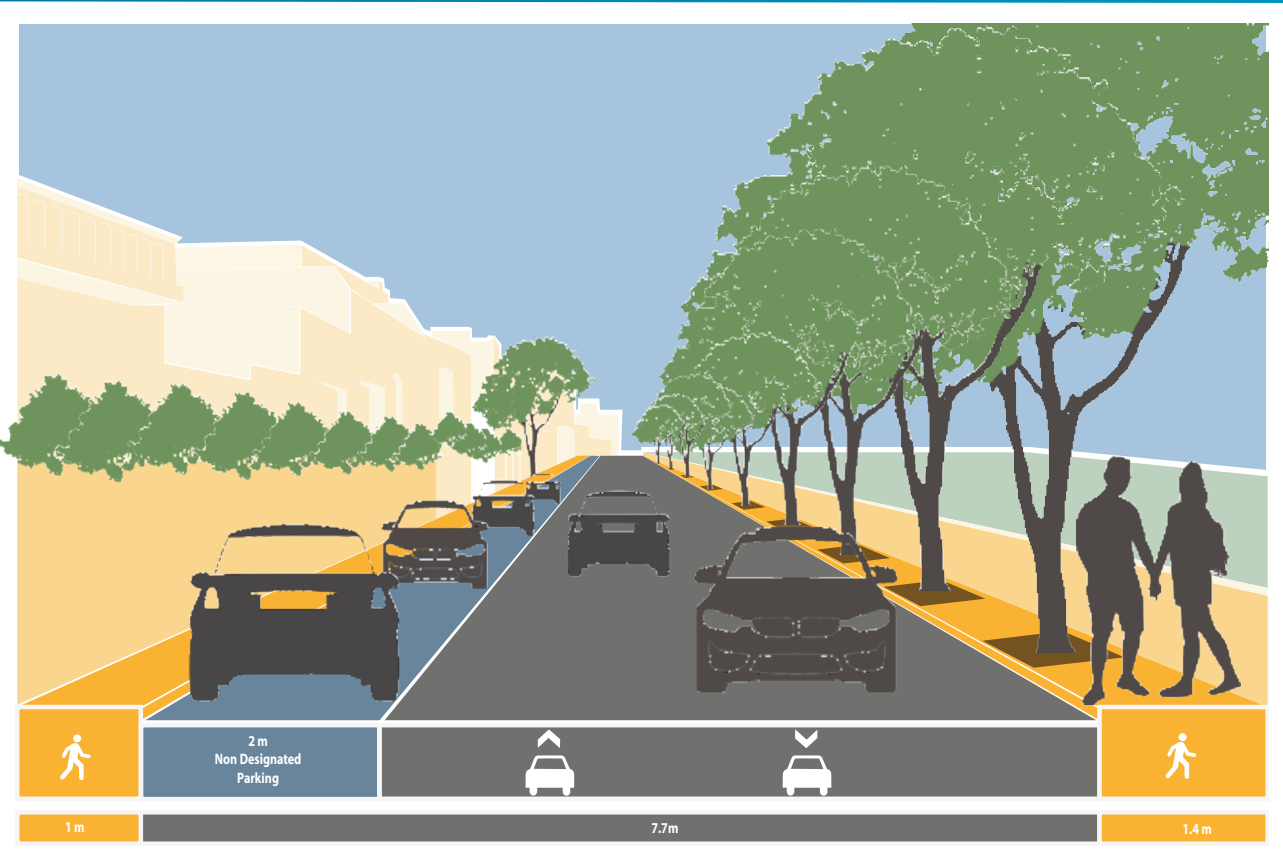
Tactical urbanism in the form of floor markings would be introduced to formally designate parking spaces along the residential side of the street to cater for existing residents and visitors. The other side of the street, fronting the recreational areas, would have floor markings to designate additional pedestrian space and potentially include



planters to further buffer the pedestrian space from the vehicular lane being shared between drivers and cyclists. This intervention would prevent vehicles from parking on the recreational area side of the road, further enforcing it as a pedestrian-priority stretch.

In addition, considering that Triq Tumas Cassar already attracts a number of visitors due to its uses, it is being proposed that this road be used as a play street during designated times and/or days, acting as an extension of the existing play spaces within the road.

Programming the space for various potential activities could attract even more residents from a wider catchment within the community and would not need to be limited to the residents on this particular street, given that this road may easily be reached by pedestrians from the surrounding residential areas via the proposed Slow Streets network.







## Programming

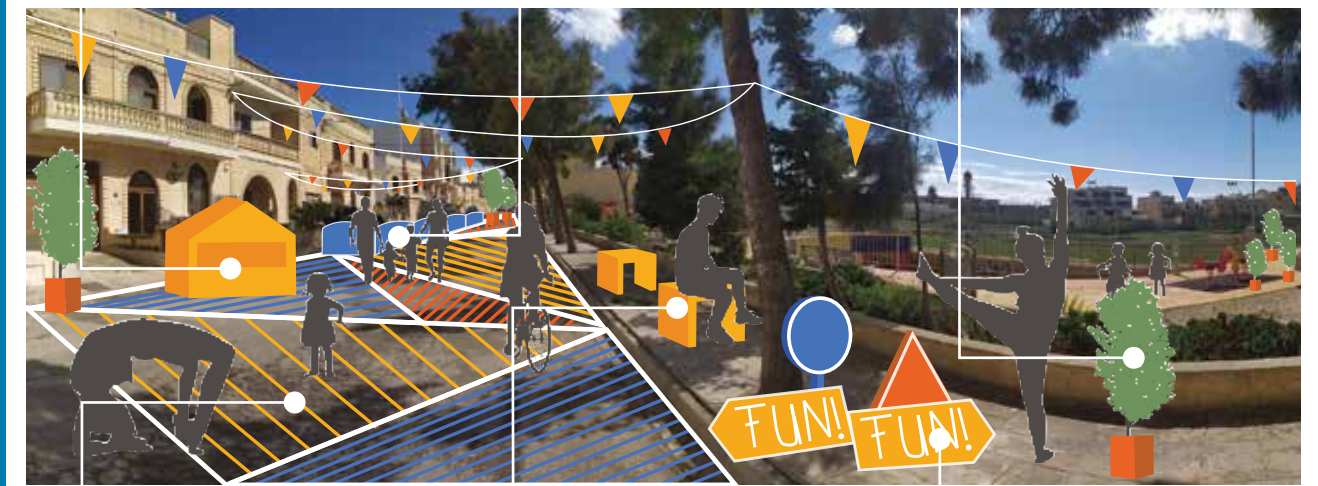
activating play streets with programming is key to success. Events and activities can include exercise classes, live music, food trucks, markets, etc.

## 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



## Surface treatment

can be used to further define the playstreet

## 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

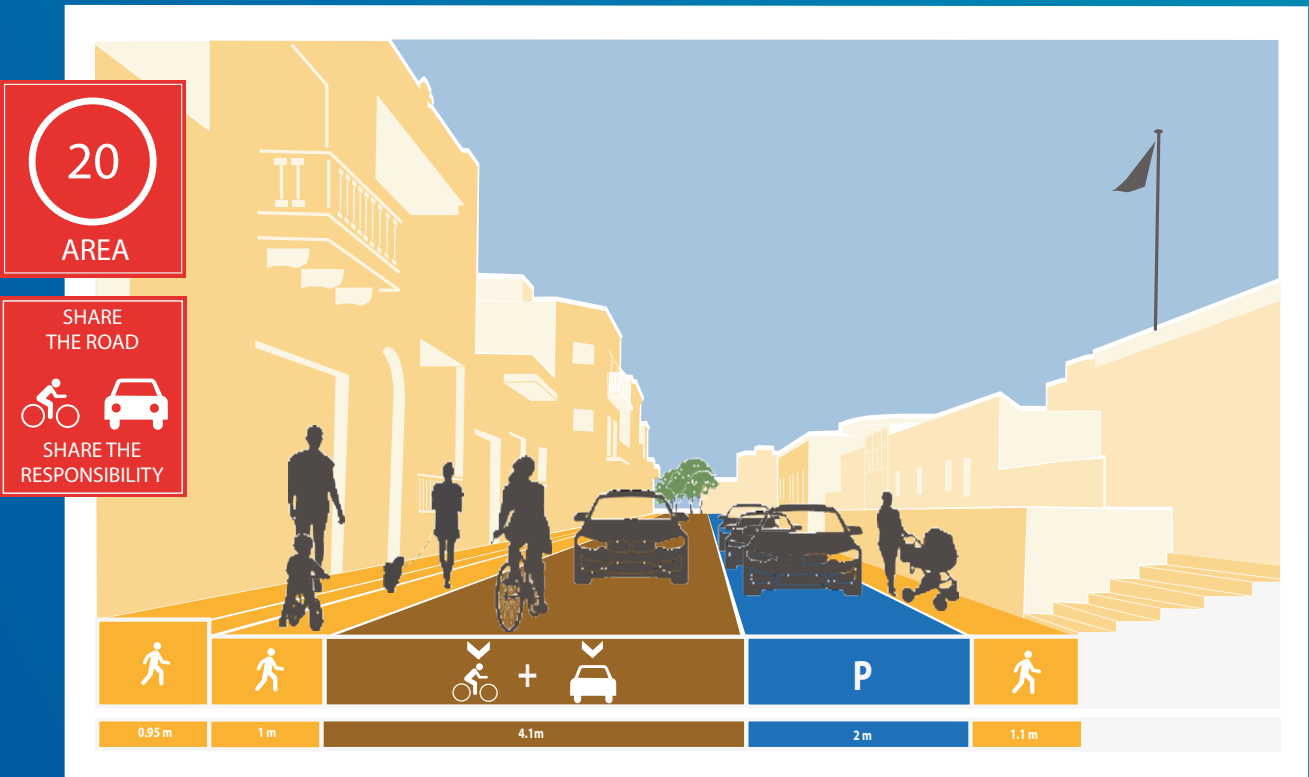
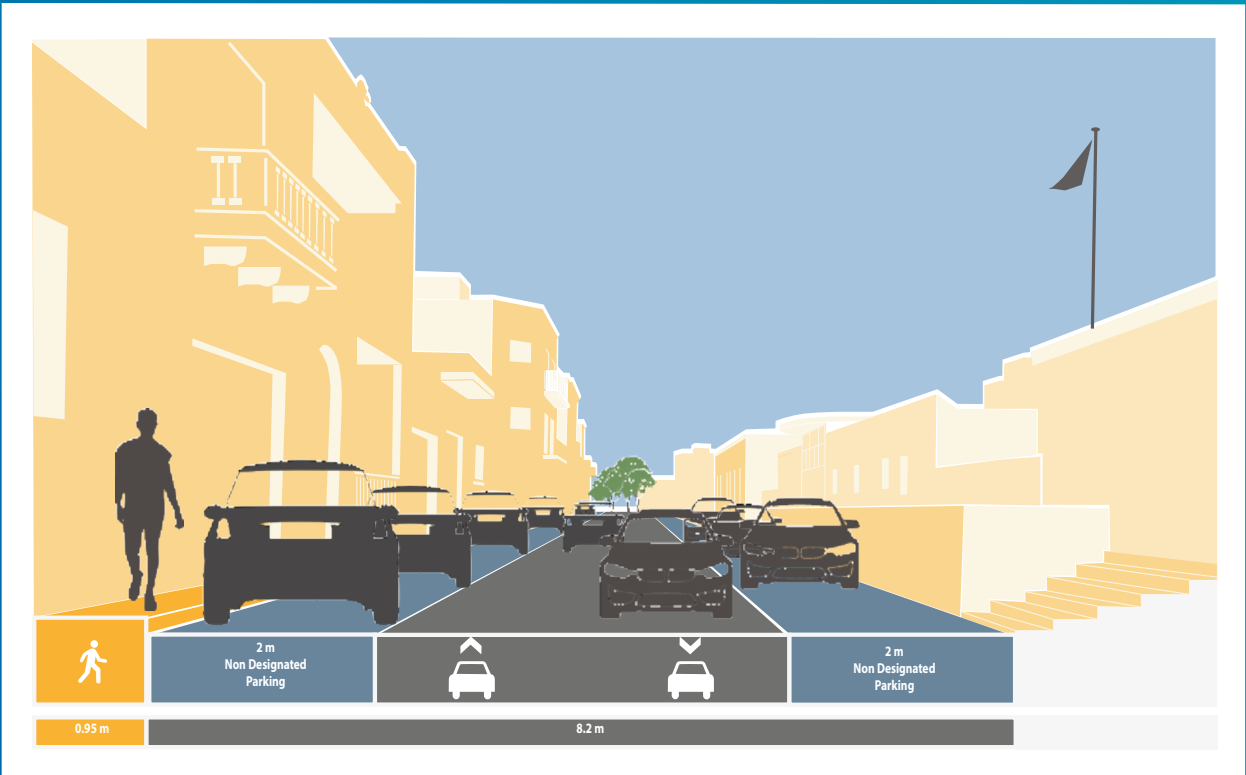
Intervention 5

Triq il-Viżitazzjoni: Level 4

Triq il-Viżitazzjoni is a critical spine within the locality of Għarb and an important reference point for the entire community. It would therefore benefit from an intervention that would make it better oriented for pedestrians through a reconfiguration of its street section (similar to Triq Tumas Cassar), made possible through the reduction of one vehicular lane and its transformation into a one-way road that forms part of the proposed vehicular loop (discussed in Intervention 3).

Within the gained space through this reduction, additional pedestrian space could be introduced on either side of the traffic lane, which in turn would be shared between drivers and cyclists. This could be designated through the addition of floor paint.

Additional tactical urbanism in the form of floor paint is also being proposed to be introduced so as to formally designate parking on one side of the road, providing a buffer between designated pedestrian space and the traffic lane.





# Intervention 6

## Triq il-Knisja (northern part - central square): Level 2 and Level 3

The central square which houses the Parish Church is currently accessed through Triq il-Knisja and is characterised by surface parking as well as two-way traffic. With the proposed interventions, discussed above, general traffic would be limited to access the square from Triq il-Knisja. While buses and cyclists would be able to proceed northwards beyond the square, cars accessing the square solely for parking reasons would not be able to proceed northwards beyond Triq Dun Alwiġ Mizzi (Intervention 3) and would exit via this latter road.

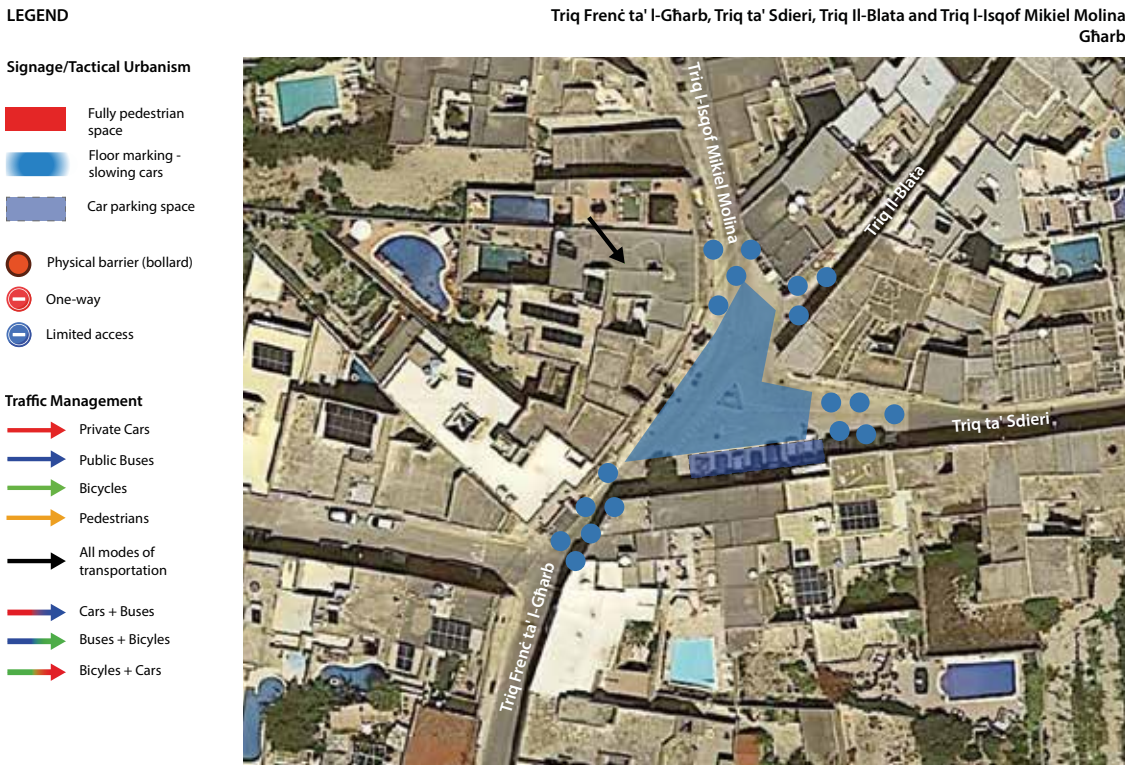
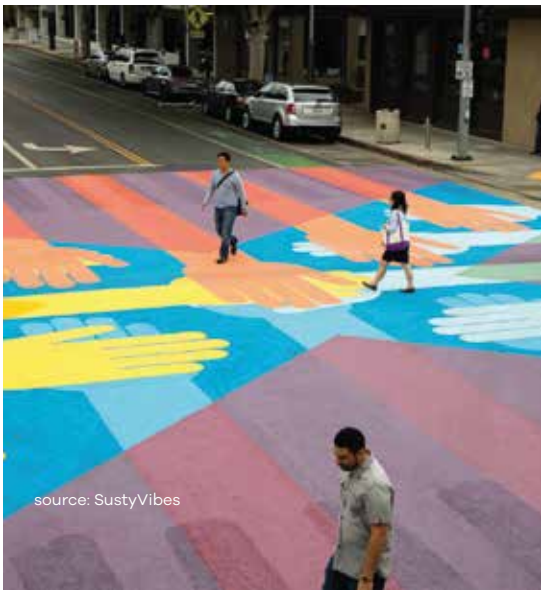
Within the square, tactical urbanism is being proposed in the form of floor paint to alert drivers to slow down, in turn having a more pedestrian-friendly square. In addition the roads lying north of the Parish Church (namely Triq tat-Trux and Triq Frenċ ta' l-Għarb) would retain their one-way status, with the narrow access between the two being retained two-way given the low vehicular volumes (which are envisaged to be decreased further) and the need to retain the connectivity between these local streets so as to avoid unnecessary rerouting that would create an additional car presence within surrounding local roads. In addition, adequate signage is being proposed for slow speeds and sharing of the road between pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.



# Intervention 7

## Intersection - Triq Frenċ ta' l-Għarb, Triq ta' Sdieri and Triq l-Isqof Mikiel Molina: Level 1 and Level 3

The intersection of these four streets is currently a vehicular-oriented open space leading traffic onto Triq Frenċ ta' l-Għarb to reach the square. In order to reduce this impact, tactical urbanism in the form of floor marking is being proposed at this open space's entry points, in order to slow down traffic. This would further increase safety for pedestrians who would be walking from the northern part of Għarb towards the square. This would be accompanied by improved signage so as to further encourage slow vehicular speed and sharing of roads between different road users.

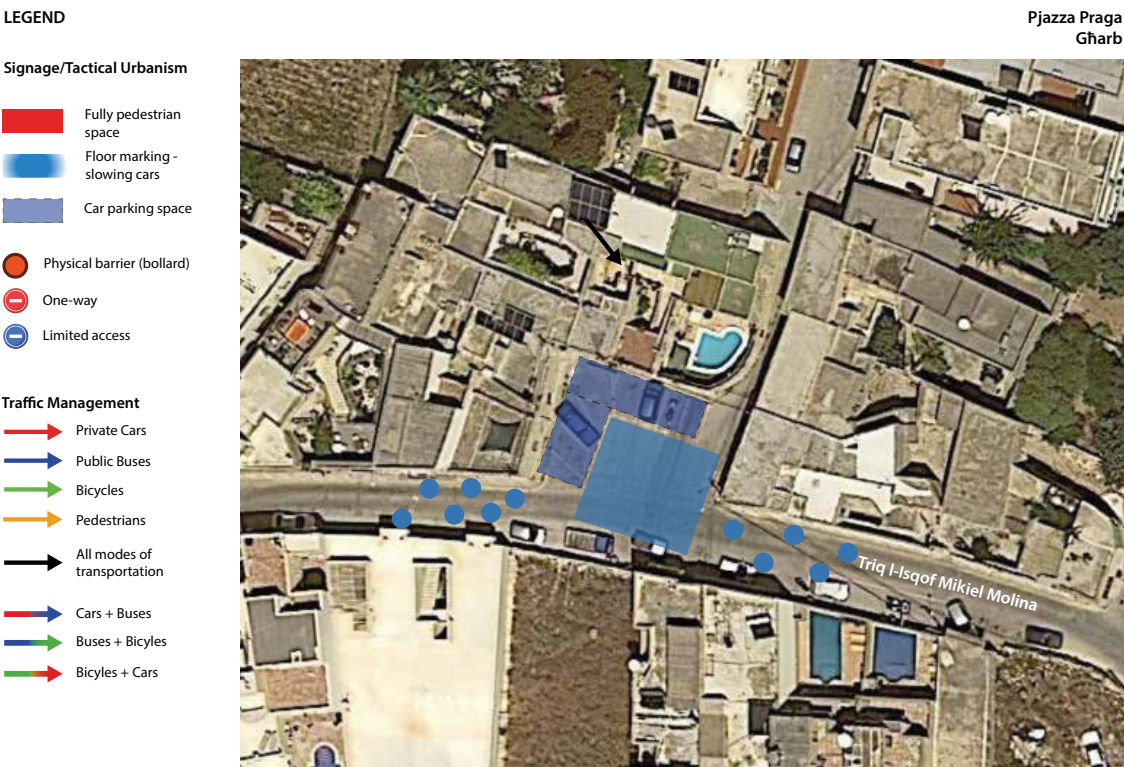




Intervention 8

Triq l-Isqof Mikiel Molina and Pjazza Praga:  
Level 1 and Level 3

Further North to the above intersection (discussed in Intervention 7), lies another open space, Pjazza Praga, which is mainly used as a vehicular parking area. To further slow down traffic travelling onto Triq l-Isqof Mikiel Molina (which is already a one-way street, direction east towards Triq ta’ Sdieri), specifically when approaching Pjazza Praga, tactical urbanism is being proposed in the form of floor marking. This intervention would alert drivers to slow down, in turn making this area safer for pedestrians. It would be accompanied by adequate signage for slow speeds and road sharing between drivers and cyclists throughout Triq l-Isqof Mikiel Molina. This intervention, together with Intervention 7, would reinforce a safer pedestrian link in order to reaching the main square from the northern area of the village.



Intervention 9

Triq il-Madonna tal-Virtut: Level 1 and Level 3

At a point throughout Triq il-Madonna tal-Virtut – which stems out of the central square – lies an intersection (with Triq Birbuba / Triq San Pietru) which currently caters for a small seating area on the side of the vehicular road. In order to reinforce the presence of this public seating area, and make it into a safer place for residents, tactical urbanism in the form of colourful paint is being proposed that would extend onto the street itself. This intervention would make this space more evident to pedestrians and also slow down approaching vehicles. Signage along Triq il-Madonna tal-Virtut is further being proposed for slow speeds and road sharing, in order to ensure a safer area for both pedestrian and cyclist activities.

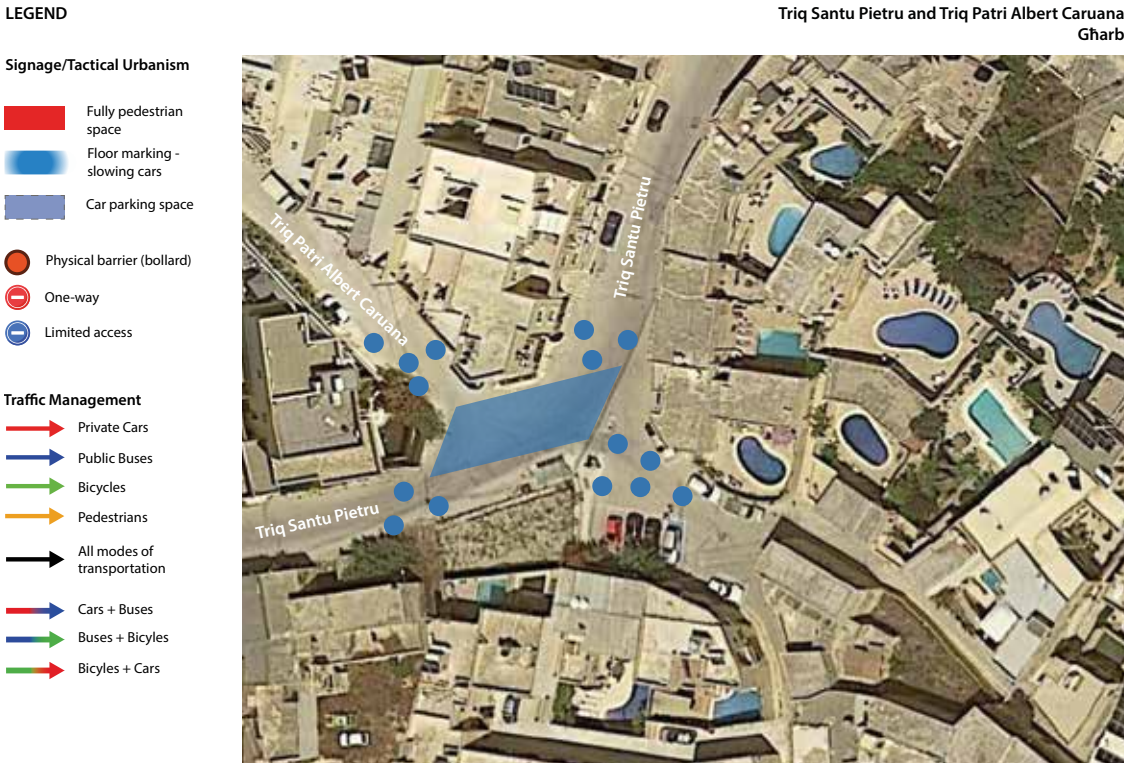




Intervention 10

Intersection - Triq Santu Pietru and Triq Patri Albert Caruana: Level 1 and Level 3

At the western residential area of Għarb is another, currently unarticulated and asphalted intersection which would benefit from tactical urbanism to designate the area better. Thus floor markings are being proposed before entering this space so as to slow down approaching vehicles. In addition, Triq Santu Pietru, which is one of the roads leading to and stemming out of this intersection, is proposed to have adequate signage throughout its length, so as to encourage slower vehicular speeds and to prioritise the sharing of the road among different users. This intervention would therefore link to Intervention 9, forming a safer walkable route from the west area of Għarb towards the main square.





# 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.



## Għarb

The simplest interventions to implement first would be the play street at Triq Tumas Cassar, different tactical urbanism interventions (namely floor markings) and temporary signage. Floor markings at intersections and critical crossings may be carried out first as pedestrian priority and safety is a primary objective of the Slow Streets initiative. Testing of the interventions along Triq il-Knisja could also take place in the first phase as this is the main spine of the village and is mostly used for through traffic. Such testing could commence on Sundays, possibly at designated times, in order to introduce the potential change gradually.

During the second phase, the interventions of local streets stemming out of Triq il-Knisja and around the proposed play street could be tested and eventually carried out, as this would provide important routes around the village and residential zone. Simultaneously, Phase 1 testing on Sundays may extend over the entire weekend, while the testing for the interventions within the inner local roads (Triq Karmni Grima, Triq Tumas Cassar and Triq il-Viżitazzjoni) could occur at designated times during the entire week, and possibly integrated more permanently.

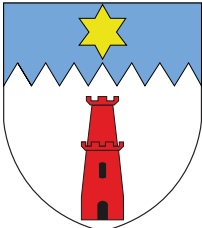
Finally for Phase 3, the implementation of all interventions at their full scale is envisioned to occur, including the north-eastern residential area and all outstanding Level 1 interventions that enable the network to be consolidated.





PHASING

STARTING &  
TESTING THE  
NETWORK

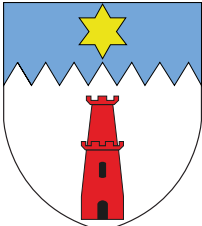


KUNSILL LOKALI  
GHARB



PHASING

STRENGTHENING  
THE NETWORK



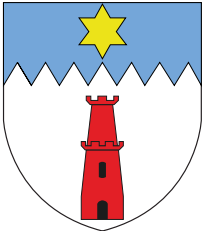
KUNSILL LOKALI  
GĦARB






PHASING

COMPLETING  
THE NETWORK



KUNSILL OKALI  
GHARB





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.

## 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.



The small village of Għarb lies at the western part of Gozo and is characterised by its residential character and quiet nature. Whilst this village has one of the smallest populations, it is surrounded by large stretches of agricultural land and countryside lanes, and features a number of attractors which make this village a unique one including, among others, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of Ta' Pinu, the Parish Church dedicated to the Visitation of Our Lady to St Elizabeth, 'Taž-Żejt' Chapel, the Chapel of San Dimitri, a number of local history museums and Ta' Borom Windmill. Whilst most of the residential local roads are quiet and carry low traffic volumes, the main spine of the village leading to the central square (Triq il-Knisja) carries an element of through traffic, specifically those travelling towards the north-western coastline. This road would therefore benefit in a reduction of through traffic and would be better utilised by pedestrians to access the main square if it is safer and more walkable. In addition, the other residential roads would also benefit from being more pedestrian-oriented as these would link better to the main square.

The main aim of the Slow Streets strategy, therefore, is to liberate local streets, specifically the main spine, from extraneous traffic that could instead be safely used by residents. By using different schemes of traffic management, including both rerouting opportunities 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 key route has also been identified for potential reconfiguration since it could provide a stronger and safer street environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike. In turn the numerous tactical urbanism interventions being proposed in this village would strengthen specific nodes, making them safer for residents who wish to use them more actively and potentially leading to their longer term transformation into more meaningful places.

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

## Summary

- 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
- 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 l-Għarb, Triq il-Knisja (southern part) and Triq Franġisk Portelli (tactical urbanism)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding  
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit  
Signage: share the road (cyclists and drivers)  
Tactical Urbanism: floor markings in the form of colourful floor paint

## Intervention 2 - Triq il-Knisja (central part) (rerouting and tactical urbanism)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding  
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit  
Signage: share the road (cyclists and drivers)  
Signage: one-way road except for public transportation and bicycles  
Rerouting: two-way road to one-way road (direction south only) with limited access (direction north) for public transportation, bicycles and access to parking.  
Tactical Urbanism: floor markings in the form of colourful floor paint

## Intervention 3 - Triq Karmni Grima (rerouting)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding  
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit  
Signage: pedestrian priority  
Signage: share the road (cyclists and drivers)  
Signage: one-way road  
Rerouting: two-way road to one-way road, creating a loop from Triq Karmni Grima to Triq Tumas Cassar to Triq il-Viżitazzjoni

## Intervention 3 - Triq Feliċ Grech and Triq Dun Alwiġ Mizzi (signage & branding)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding  
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit  
Signage: Exit from Triq Dun Alwiġ Mizzi towards Triq il-Madonna tal-Virtut only, no exit to main square

## Intervention 4 - Triq Tumas Cassar (reconfiguration and Play Street)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding  
Reconfiguration: reduce road width to 3.7m and introduce more pedestrian space, planters acting as buffers between pedestrian space and vehicular lane, and formally designated parking bays on the other side of the road  
Tactical Urbanism: floor paint to designate additional pedestrian space, new parking bays and planters  
Play Street: programming of activities

## Intervention 5 - Triq il-Viżitazzjoni (reconfiguration)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding  
Reconfiguration: reduce road width to 4.1m and introduce more pedestrian space (2 areas) and parking bays on the other side of the road  
Tactical Urbanism: floor paint to designate additional pedestrian areas and new parking bays

## Intervention 6 - Triq il-Knisja (northern part - central square) (rerouting and tactical urbanism)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding  
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit  
Signage: share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and drivers)  
Rerouting: limited access for cars (parking only), no car access to Triq il-Madonna tal-Virtut  
Tactical Urbanism: floor paint around the square, including the lower part of Triq Frenċ ta’ l-Għarb

## Intervention 7 - Intersection (Triq Frenċ ta’ l-Għarb, Triq ta’ Sdieri and Triq l-Isqof

Mikiel Molina) (signage & branding and tactical urbanism)  
Signage: Slow Streets Branding  
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit  
Signage: share the road (drivers and cyclists)  
Tactical Urbanism: floor marking at the entrances of the open space



**Intervention 8 - Triq l-Isqof Mikiel Molina and Pjazza Praga (signage & branding and tactical urbanism)**

- Signage: Slow Streets Branding
- Signage: 20km/hr speed limit
- Signage: share the road (drivers and cyclists)
- Tactical Urbanism: floor marking at Pjazza Praga

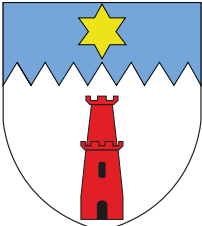
**Intervention 9 - Triq il-Madonna tal-Virtut (signage & branding and tactical urbanism)**

- Signage: Slow Streets Branding
- Signage: 20km/hr speed limit
- Signage: share the road (drivers and cyclists)
- Tactical Urbanism: floor marking from the seating area spilling onto the street

**Intervention 10 - Intersection (Triq Santu Pietru and Triq Patri Albert Caruana)**

- (signage & branding and tactical urbanism)
- Signage: Slow Streets Branding
- Signage: 20km/hr speed limit
- Signage: share the road (drivers and cyclists)
- Tactical Urbanism: floor paint at intersection between Triq Patri Albert Caruana and Triq Santu Pietru to alert drivers

TRAFFIC



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