

# SLOW STREETS

January 2021



KUNSILL LOKALI  
ISLA

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

**Project Team – studjurban**

Dr. Antoine Zammit  
Tala Aldeiri  
Amaryllis Bista  
Shannon Farrugia  
Steve Montebello

**Project team – Studio Tom Van Malderen**

Tom Van Malderen  
Anna Horvath  
Daniel Lupi

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**Published by:**

Local Councils' Association  
Local Government Building  
Local Government Road  
Marsa  
Malta  
Tel: (+356) 25968000  
Email: lca@lca.org.mt  
Website: www.lca.org.mt

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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](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.

# Isla

Isla is a compact and densely populated town located on a peninsula in the Grand Harbour, with beautiful traditional alleys, historic buildings, breathtaking harbour views and a picturesque waterfront to be explored. The town's centre is relatively walkable since distances are short, but the topography can be challenging with several streets having steps. Services are easily available and largely within good reach; and narrow streets provide much-needed shade during the hot summer months. Many of these streets, which are very characteristic in nature, are also in need of traffic calming measures in order to be used as quality public spaces by residents and visitors alike.

Due to most streets being very narrow or stepped, Isla is continuously battling parking shortages, with many cars illegally parking and taking over the already limited pedestrian walkways. The waterfront makes Isla an attractive destination, also attracting residents from neighbouring localities. This, however, increases the number of cars within the locality at certain times, with drivers circulating the waterfront and the locality's streets

in order to seek on-street parking and to park as close to their destination as possible. Last but not least, industrial lorries drive the entire waterfront up and down to reach the Boilers Wharf at the other side of the peninsula.

The main aim of Isla'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 and residential neighbourhoods. 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 connecting with the important bus routes that navigate within the centre of the locality. A number of key street sections 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.

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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ACTIVITY  
ZONES



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DESTINATIONS



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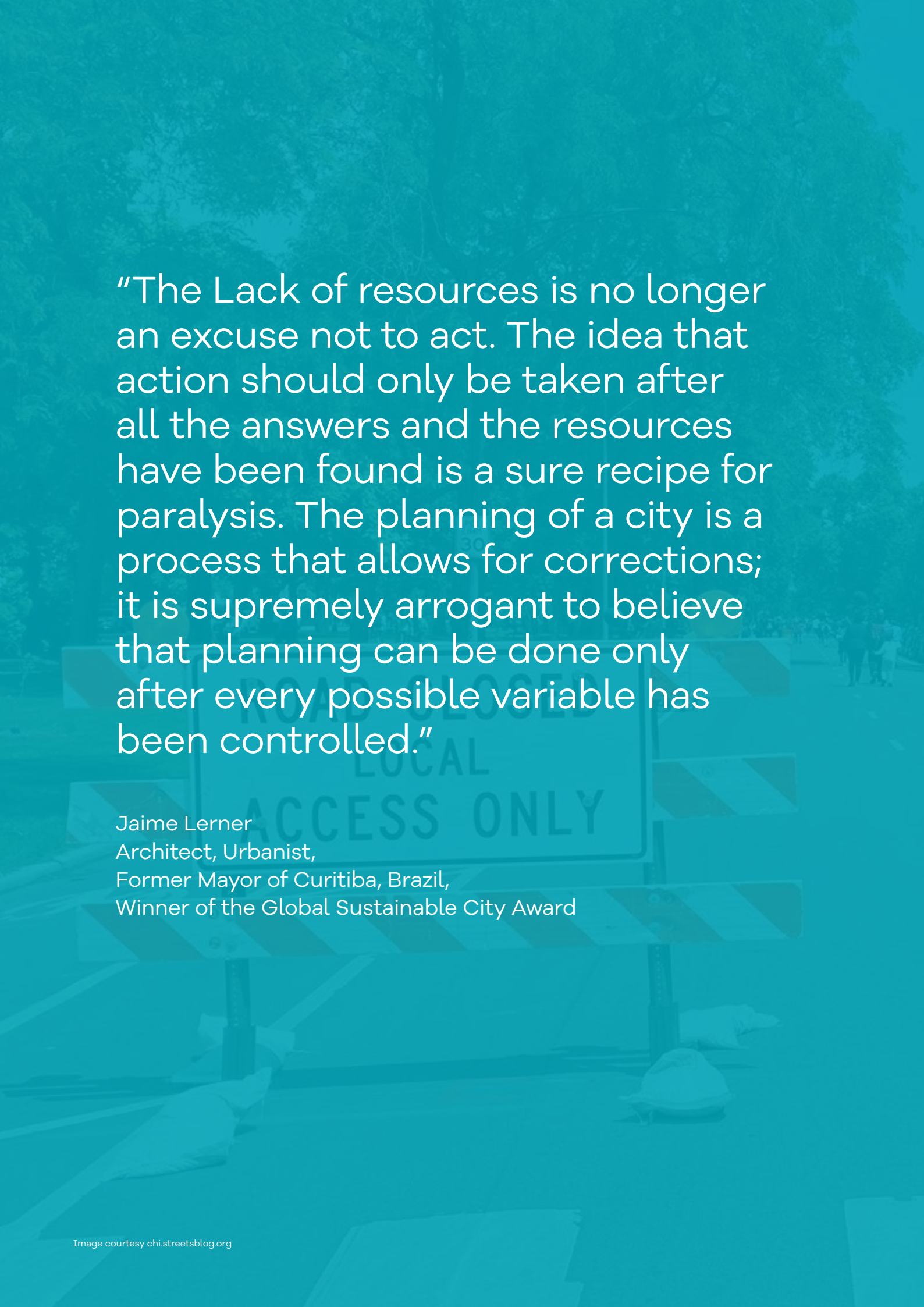
NETWORK



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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

Slow Paths

Play Streets

Extensions

### Cycling

### Island 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.

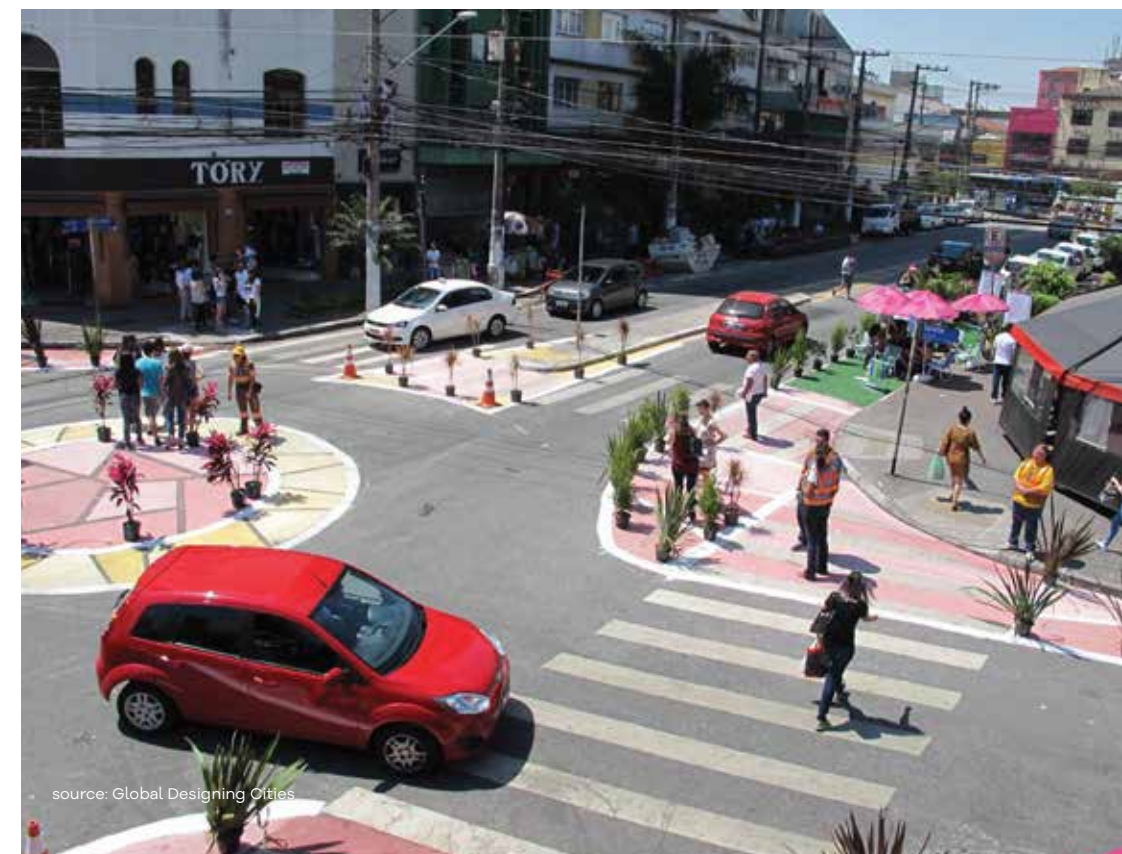






## Play streets – programming

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).



## 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



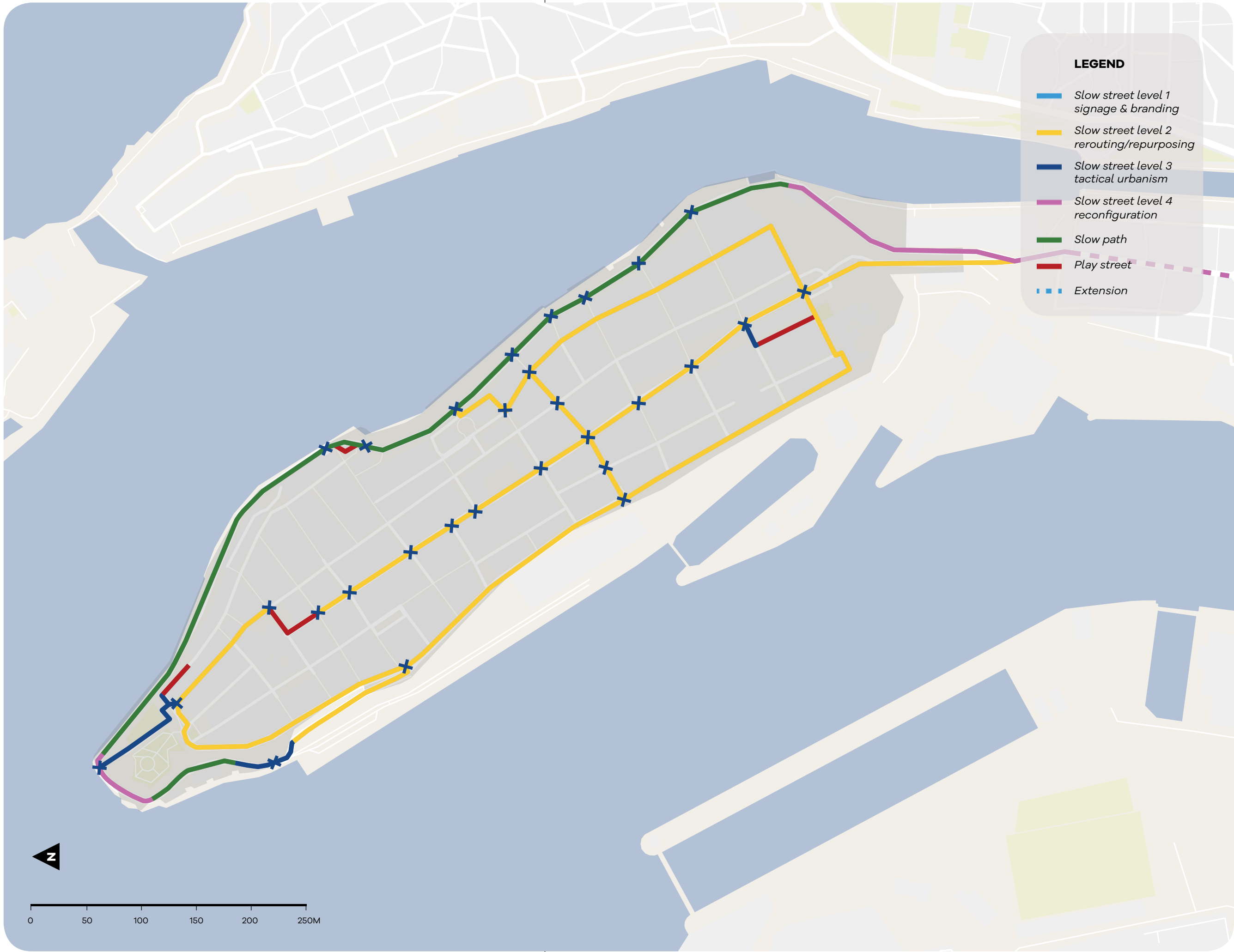
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INTERVENTION



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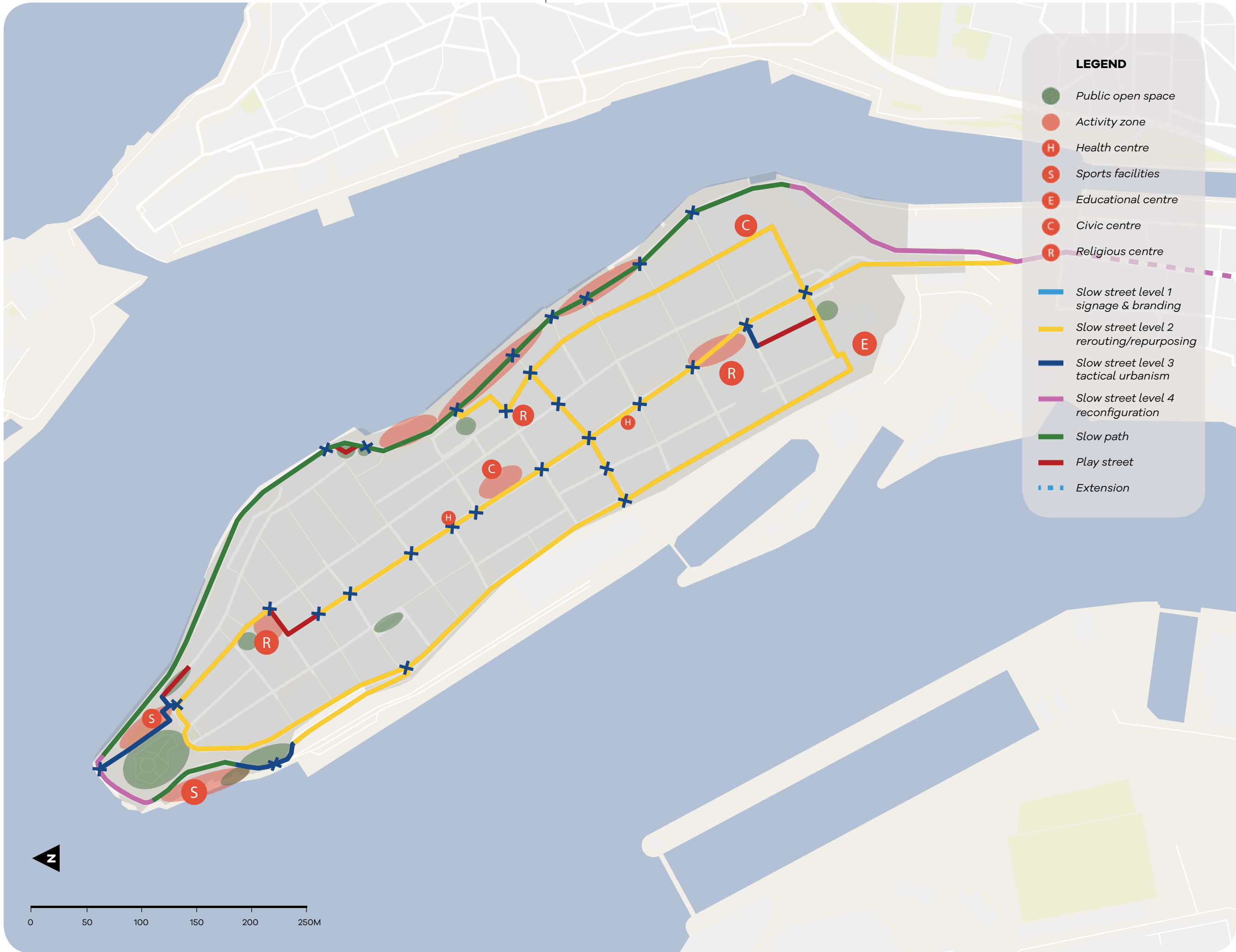




INTERVENTION



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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

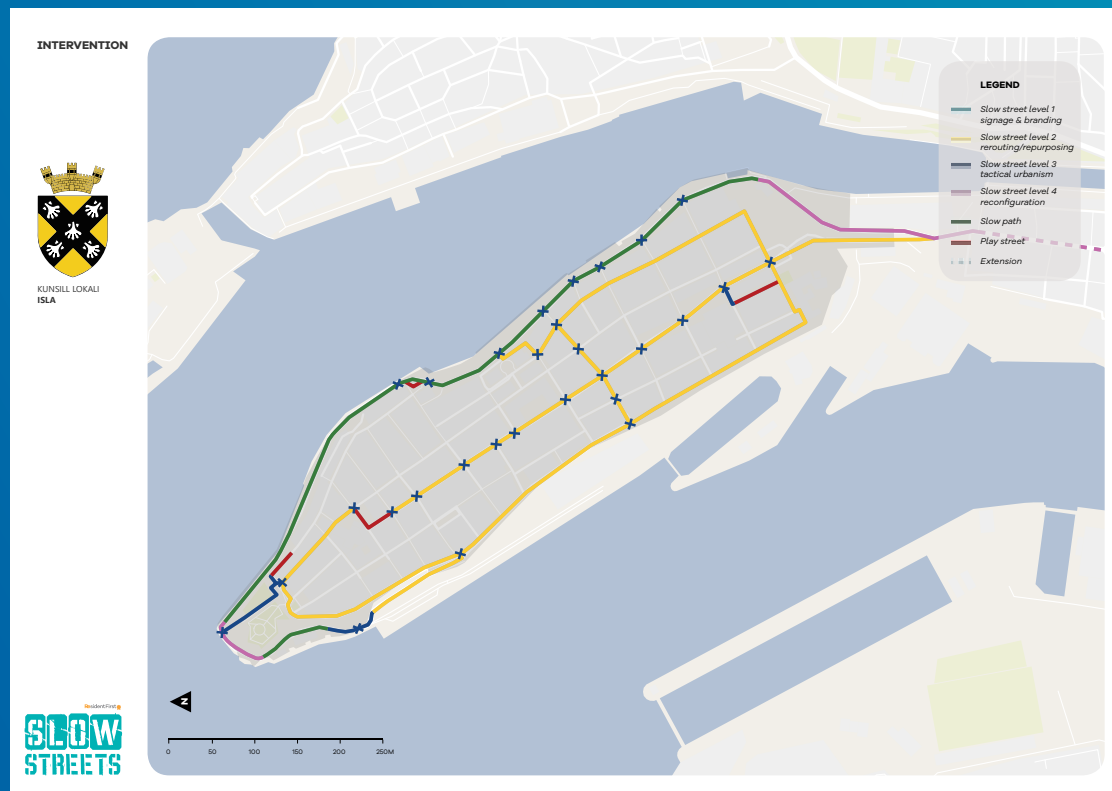


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# Isla Interventions

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.



## Intervention 1

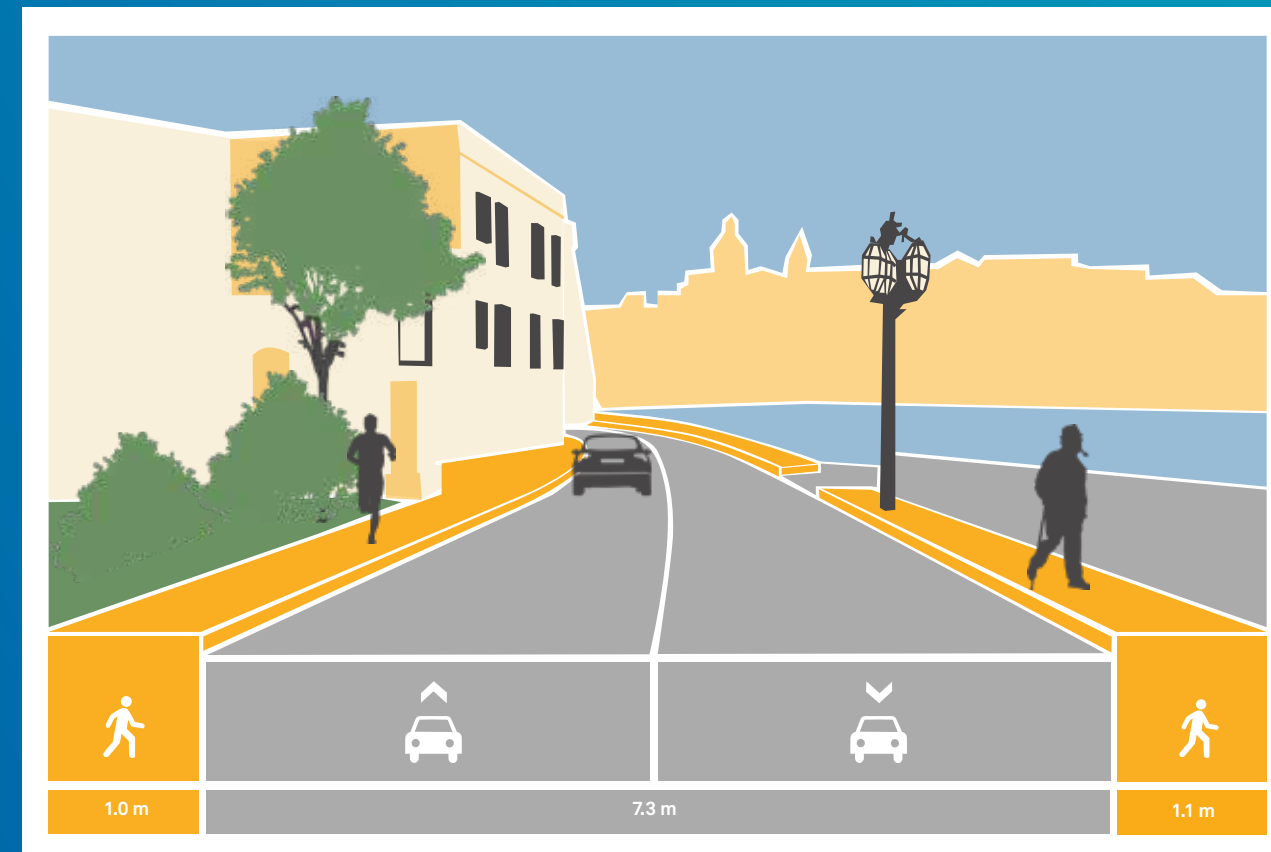
### Triq 31 Ta' Marzu: Level 4

The first intervention focuses on one of the two entry points to the peninsula. By means of inexpensive tactical urbanism tools, the ramp leading down to the waterfront could easily be reconfigured in a much more pedestrian and cycling friendly environment. The road available to cars can be trimmed to 5.5m (in line with DC2015 regulations) in order to transfer an additional 1.8m of pedestrian zone to one of the existing narrow pedestrian walkways. This can happen by placing free-standing delineators, traffic cones or narrow planters and using bright coloured floor paint to mark the extra pedestrian zone. Narrowing the actual space for cars will automatically slow down their speed and raise awareness for pedestrian priority.

The bright coloured pedestrian walkway can be continued all the way down to meet the existing pedestrian walkway at the edge of the water. It will alert cars using the small parking lot about the pedestrian presence and priority. It is also suggested to make the road shared with bicycles by means of clear roadside signage and markings on the road surface itself. There are ample tools to emphasize the sharing of the road and raise awareness for the cyclists' safety. Signage will indicate slow car speed (20km), signal the pedestrian walkway and the narrowing of the road, whilst alerting a high pedestrian and cycling activity with the Slow Streets Network branding.







DRIVE SLOWLY  
HIGH  
PEDESTRIAN  
AND CYCLING  
ACTIVITY

20  
AREA





## Intervention 2

### Triq It-Tarzna and Ix-Xatt Juan B. Azopardo: Level 1, 2, 3 and 4 and Play Street



The Isla waterfront already is an excellent pedestrian environment and provides for easy moving around by foot. It is mostly a matter of reassuring that a clear pedestrian passage is maintained at all times given that parked boats and expanding kiosk terraces tend to take over if not kept in check. In order to reduce the actual car traffic, and especially the bowzers going up and down to Boilers Wharf a proper traffic management study and plan is needed. It would need to cater for nearby park and ride strategies to bring visitors to and from the Isla waterfront and organize an alternative access to Boilers wharf that is passing from the actual harbour area.

The intervention therefore focuses on providing a large number of safe pedestrian crossings to keep the speed of traffic low and emphasize pedestrian priority around the Isla waterfront area. The existing crossings can be made more evident by means of using bright paint marks (or art works) on the floor and a large number of new crossing points could be added. Signage will include a speed limitation of 20km, indicate all crossing points, clearly communicate the sharing of the road with cyclists, alert a high pedestrian and cycling activity and promote the Slow Streets Network.



The little square formed by the widening of the pavement at the start of Triq L-Arkati could be used as a Play Street during designated times and/or days. 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, and promote the Slow Streets Network.







## 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.

## Barrier elements

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



## Surface treatment

can be used to further define the playstreet

## Signs

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

## Street furniture

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





source: Talk Wellington



source: Times Of Mail

At the tip of Isla the existing pedestrian walkway unfortunately stops suddenly and it is suggested to reconfigure this area in order to include a clear pedestrian walkway to provide a continuous and safe passage. Further tactical urbanism tools can be used to install a clear passage across the road and the parking lot to connect with the sports pitch and the public staircase. Signage will include a speed limitation of 20km, indicate all pedestrian zones, signal the crossing, clearly communicate the sharing of the road with cyclists, alert a high pedestrian and cycling activity and promote the Slow Streets Network.



source: Real Hartford



source: Seattle Streets Illustrated

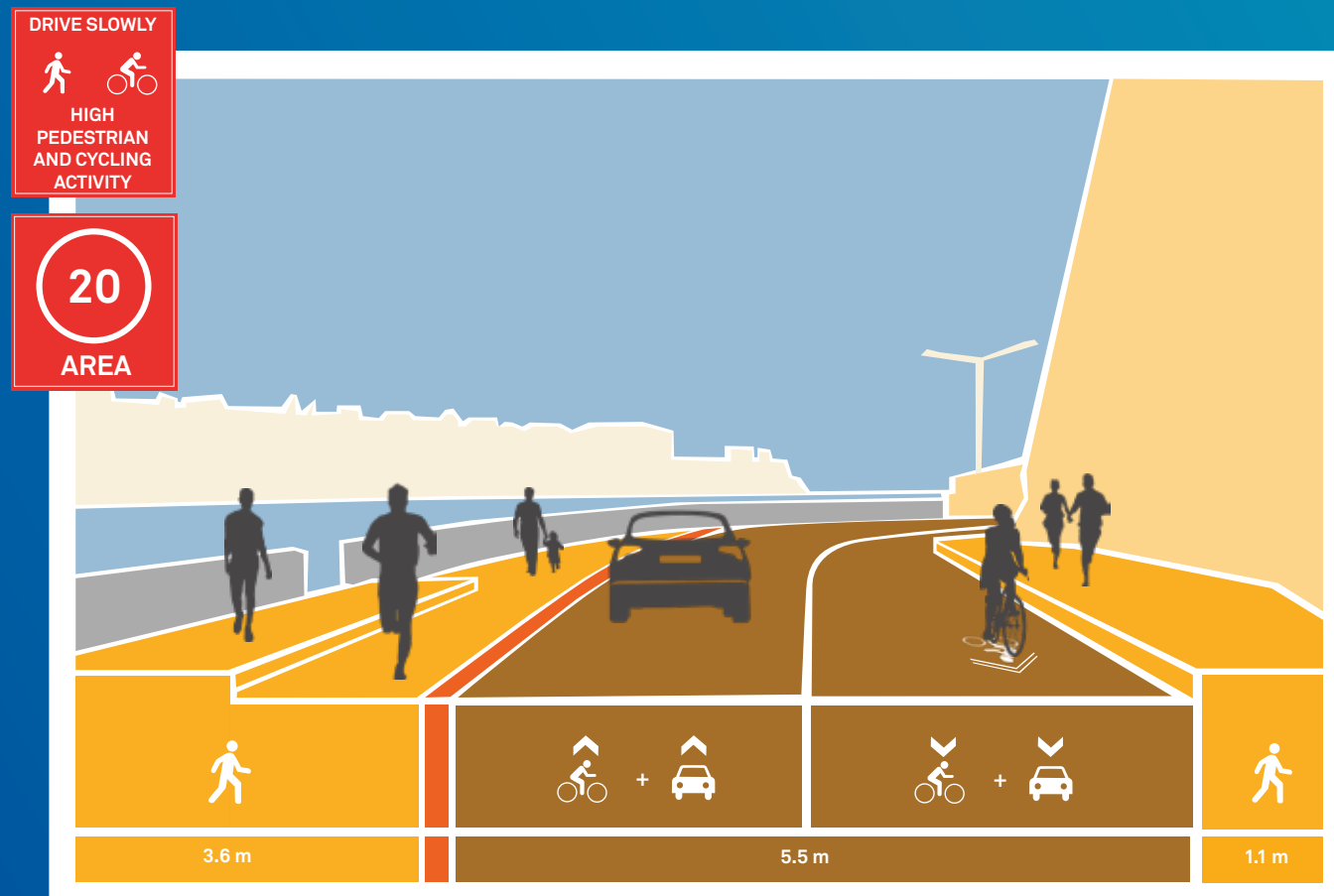
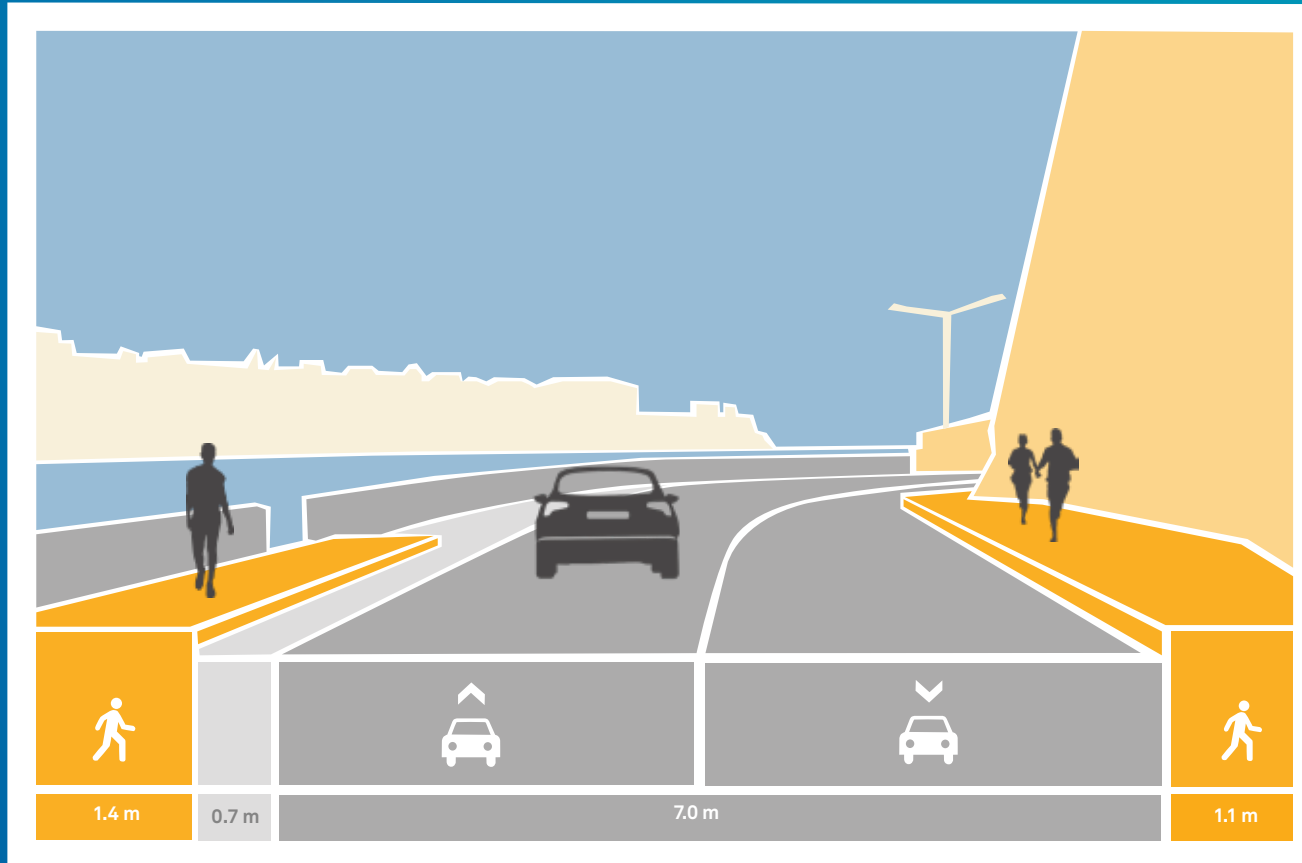


source: shutterstock

There are another few small interruptions or weaker points in the pedestrian walkway between the Regatta Club and the start of Boilers Wharf. Similarly to the reconfiguration of the road discussed above, smaller tactical urbanism interventions can be used to ensure a good and safe continuation of the walkway. The road space needed for cars can be curtailed to the minimum needed with all excess space transferred to pedestrians.







It is also suggested that the very last part of Triq Ix-Xatt Juan B. Azopardo is turned into a local access only road. Ideally, non-resident-vehicles are prohibited to drive up the ramp and to venture into the actual town. Visiting vehicles should return and make their way out from the waterfront. Given that the stretch of road going up to town is limited in width, it should be turned into a shared space between pedestrians, cyclists and cars. Signage will include a speed limitation of 20km, indicate the streets as local access only, clearly communicate the sharing of the road with high pedestrian and cycling activity and promote the Slow Streets Network.





### Intervention 3

#### Triq Is-Sur/ Ir-Rampa Ta' L-Isla: Level 2 and 3



Triq Is-Sur/ Ir-Rampa Ta' L-Isla is a long continuous stretch along the western upper side of town and provides a great pedestrian connection between the Gardjola Gardens and the rest of town. Hence, there is the potential to consider the entire stretch for more active pedestrian and cyclist use by turning it accessible only to residents and making it a space shared by pedestrians, cyclists and local cars. It is therefore proposed to be closed to through traffic in its entirety with the inclusion of appropriate signage that would allow for resident access only. Signage will include a speed limitation of 20km, indicate the streets as local access only, clearly communicate the sharing of the road with high pedestrian and cycling activity and promote the Slow Streets Network.



### Intervention 4

#### Triq Is-Sirena : PLaystreet



It is not so easy to identify potential Play Street areas in the dense urban fabric of Isla. Triq Is-Sirena, which is connected by stairs to Triq Is-Sur and Triq Iz-Zewg Mini, overlooks the harbour with views towards Valletta and Fort St. Angelo and could be programmed as a Play Street during designated times. 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 the frequency and use of the Play Street and promote the Slow Streets Network.





## Intervention 5

### The Public stairs between Triq Is-Sirena and Ix-Xatt Juan B. Azopardo: Level 3

It is also suggested to include the public staircase to the Isla Slow Streets Network, given that it is the only connection between the upper and lower point of town at the tip of the peninsula. Tactical urbanism could strengthen the pedestrian path and make it more evident through the use of colour and signage, such that visiting pedestrians may be aware of its presence and may be further incentivised to use the stairs as a connecting route. Adding appropriate signage at each entry point explaining the route's destination will increase the foot traffic. Painted artworks will make the stairs feel more 'public', generate a feeling of safety and in turn motivate even more people to use this connection. The lower access point can be further embellished using planters.



## Intervention 6

### Triq Iz-Zewg Mini: Level 2 and 3

This intervention proposes to turn this road into a shared zone with pedestrians and cyclists. The existing road space and walkways are very limited and the intervention should focus on reducing the speed of traffic to 20 km and adding clear signage for the sharing of the road with pedestrians and cyclists. It will be even more efficient to introduce tactical paint marks along the entire street surface to emphasize pedestrian priority.



## Intervention 7

### Piazza Francesco Zahra: Level 2, 3 and Playstreet

This beautiful square flanking the St. Philips' Church is totally taken over by parking and traffic. Whilst it would be unwise to affect any of the existing parking without any strategy to provide alternatives, it could be interesting to organise a Play Street from time to time on the square. It would reinstall the square for a moment in its former glory and make it truly part of the community. Traffic can be temporarily redirected via Triq Sant' Anglu with signage announcing the temporary closure well ahead of time. 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. Signage will communicate the frequency and use of the Play Street, and promote the Slow Streets Network. The Play Street area could even be extended to include the last stretch of Triq Il Vitorja.





## Intervention 8

### Triq Il Vitorja: Level 2 and 3



Triq Il Vitorja is the main thoroughfare of the inner part of Isla, with most of its shops, facilities and public transport concentrated around it. The intervention focuses on reducing the speed of traffic and on accentuating a high level of pedestrian activity. With the use of well-placed tactical urbanism interventions at all intersections and a strategic promotion of the Slow Streets brand, the street could become a more pleasant environment to move about by foot. Signage will include a speed limitation of 20km, clearly communicate high pedestrian and cycling activity and promote the Slow Streets Network.



## Intervention 9

### Triq Il-Migja Tal-Papa, San Guzepp and Il-Mina Tax-Xatt: Level 2 and 3



These roads were chosen to form part of the Isla Slow streets network to reassure a continuous loop around town without the use of staircases. Whilst parts of these roads remain steep and fall outside the official gradients permitted by Access for All regulations, they remain one of the few options to make it from the waterfront to the centre of town without the use of steps. Therefore, the intervention focuses on making these streets more pedestrian friendly by making them a shared space with priority for all non-car users.





To help reduce car traffic on these roads and in the inner town in general, it is also recommended to turn these roads into local access only roads and emphasise the prioritisation of pedestrian movement and the sharing of the road with pedestrians and cyclists. Car speed will be limited to 20km, with signage communicating the road sharing with pedestrians and cyclists whilst promoting the Slow Streets Network. Tactical urbanism interventions on all crossings can help reminding cars of the pedestrian priority on these streets.



## Intervention 10

### Triq San Guzepp and Il-Habs L-Antik: Level 2 and 3

It is imperative to include a good walkable connection to and from the Local Council. Whilst the streets are narrow and don't allow to expand the existing narrow pedestrian walkways, it is suggested to turn both streets into a shared space with priority for pedestrians. Triq Il-Habs L-Antik would benefit from additional tactical urbanism painting accents across the entire street to make it more inviting to walk whilst at the same time clearly alerting car drivers that they have entered a pedestrian priority street. Signage will include a speed limitation of 20km, clearly communicate high pedestrian and cycling activity and promote the Slow Streets Network.

The steps on Triq Il-Habs L-Antik, leading to the playground, bocci club and school, could benefit from some tactical urbanism interventions. Attractive signage, plants and some colourful floor markings could give them more prominence and stimulate even more people to use this connection. Additional signage will communicate the school activity in the area up and around the school.



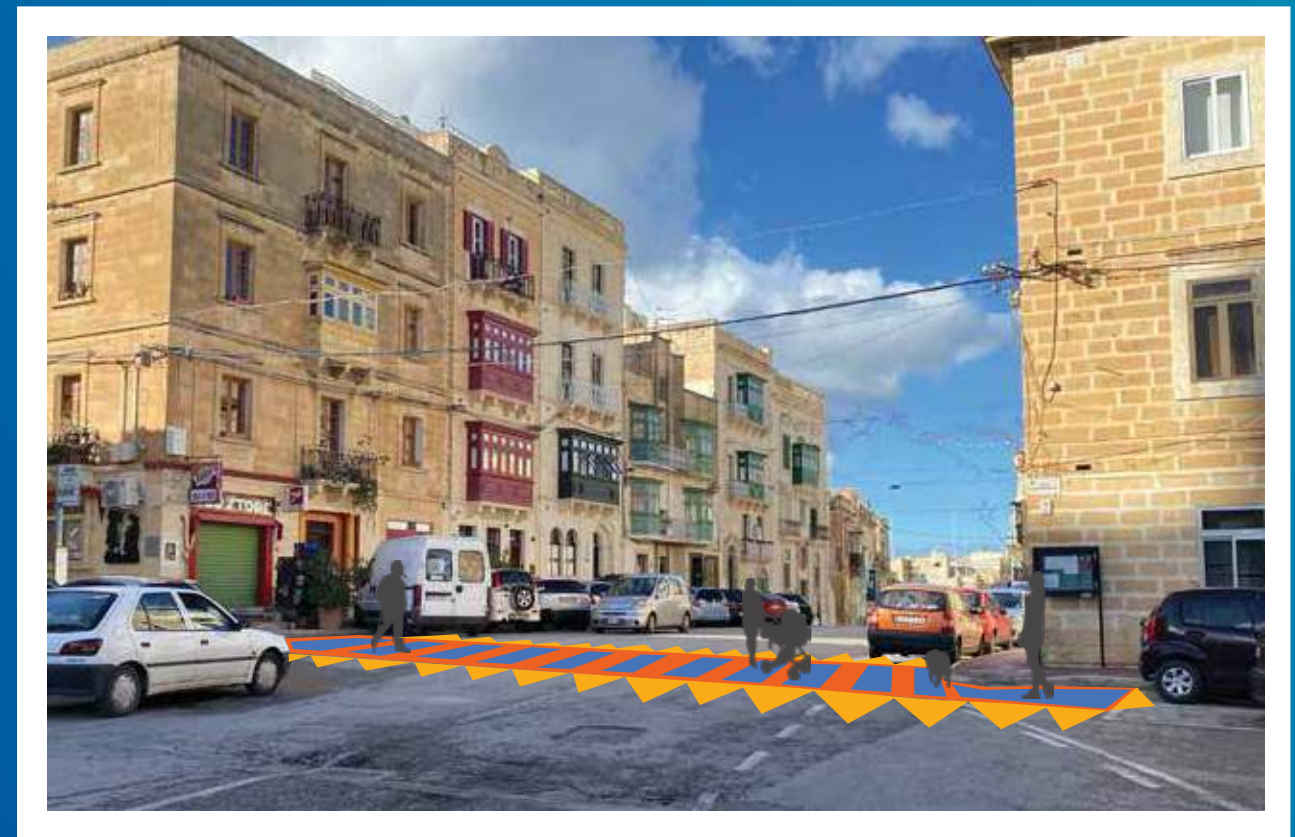
## Intervention 11

### Misrah Il-Papa Benedittu XV and George Mitrovich, Triq L-Arcisqof Mattei and Il-Monsinjur Panzavecchia : Level 2 and 3

This succession of streets and squares that form the main access to the inner core of Isla are currently very car dominated, and could benefit from tactical urbanism interventions to give more attention to all the non-car users of these spaces. The existing crossing points can be given more prominence with the use of vibrant floor paints and it is suggested to add a number of additional crossings. Where possible it is also recommended to accentuate and define pedestrian walkways in a more prominent fashion. It will help people on foot and bicycle to find an easier and safer way to and from Cospicua and the ferry to Valletta.



Signage will include a speed limitation of 20km, signal all pedestrian crossings, clearly communicate high pedestrian and cycling activity and promote the Slow Streets Network. It is also suggested to make these streets and squares local and public transport access only, and keep all non-resident cars out of the centre of town. This will not only reduce traffic but also help preserve parking spaces for residents.







source: RS-G940



source: South Bay Bicycle Coalition



source: slowerstreets



## Intervention 12

### Triq Il-Vittmi Tal-Gwerra: Level 2 and Play Street



source: Biki Santa Cruz County

As pointed out earlier on, it is not that easy to identify Play Street opportunities within a dense urban fabric like Isla. In order to provide for a Play Street in this area of town, the last intervention proposes to use Triq Il-Vittmi Tal-Gwerra as a Play Street during designated times and/or days when traffic use is low and very localised. This space may also connect to the adjacent playground and bocci club. The Play Street would therefore become an extension of the playground, thus increasing its use and activity. 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. Traffic speed will be limited to 20km, clearly communicate high pedestrian and cycling activity and promote the Slow Streets Network.



source: publicspace.org



# 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.



## Isla

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, it is suggested to start testing and implementing the main access and spine of the town, as well as the access to the waterfront and the first stretch of it.

During the second phase, the entire waterfront can be completed together with the remaining internal streets that have been identified for the Slow Streets Network.

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.



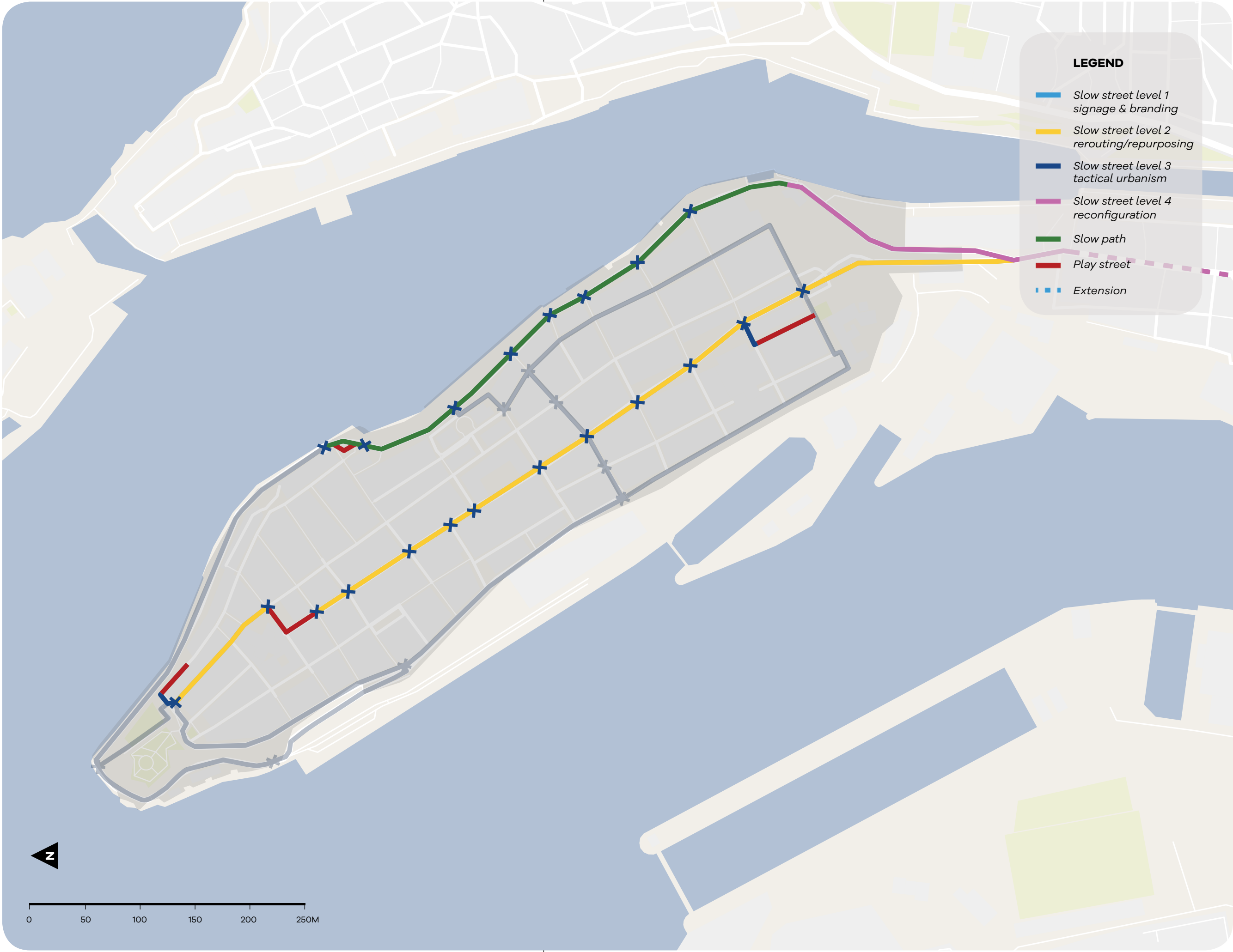


**PHASING**

STARTING &  
TESTING THE  
NETWORK



KUNSILL LOKALI  
ISLA

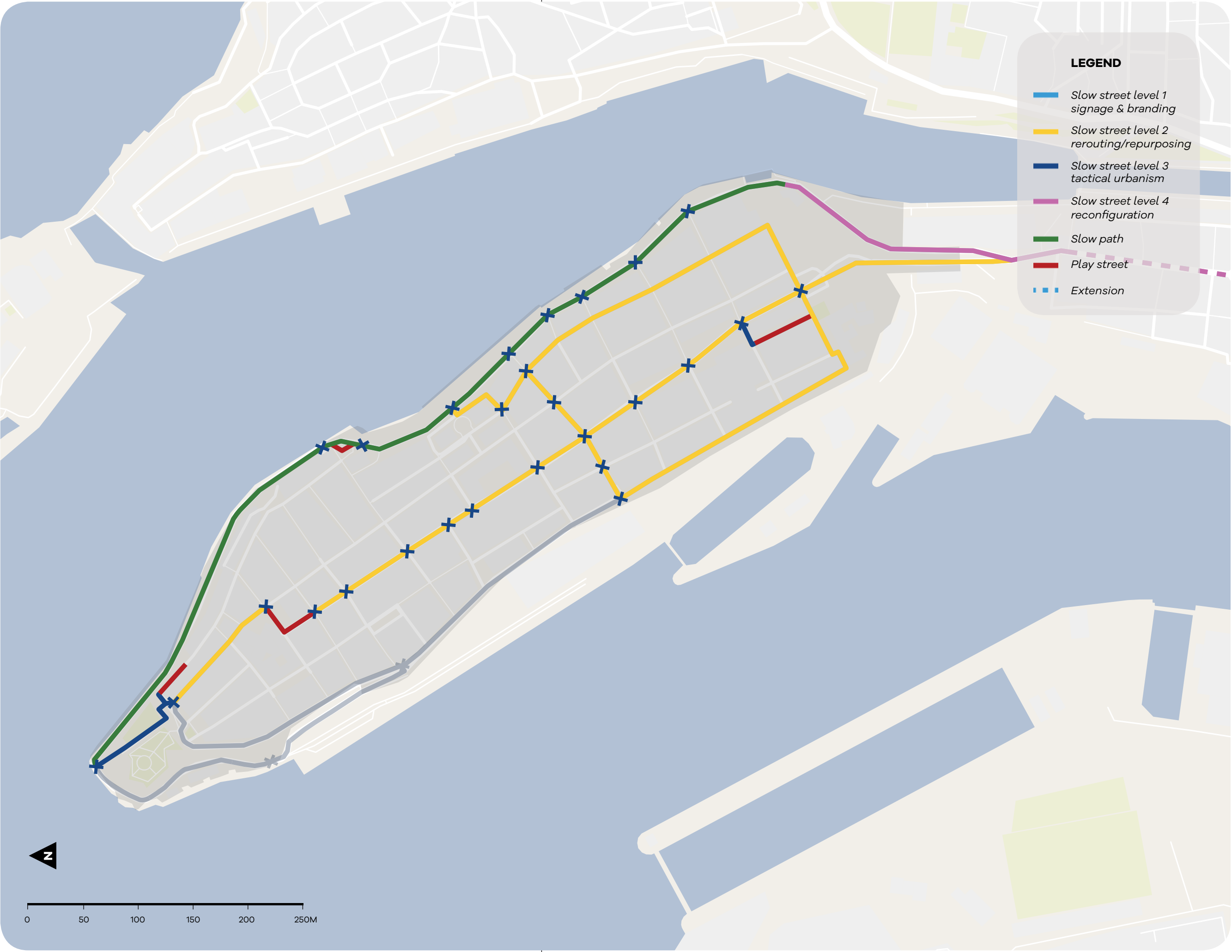


**PHASING**

STRENGTHENING  
THE NETWORK



KUNSILL LOKALI  
ISLA



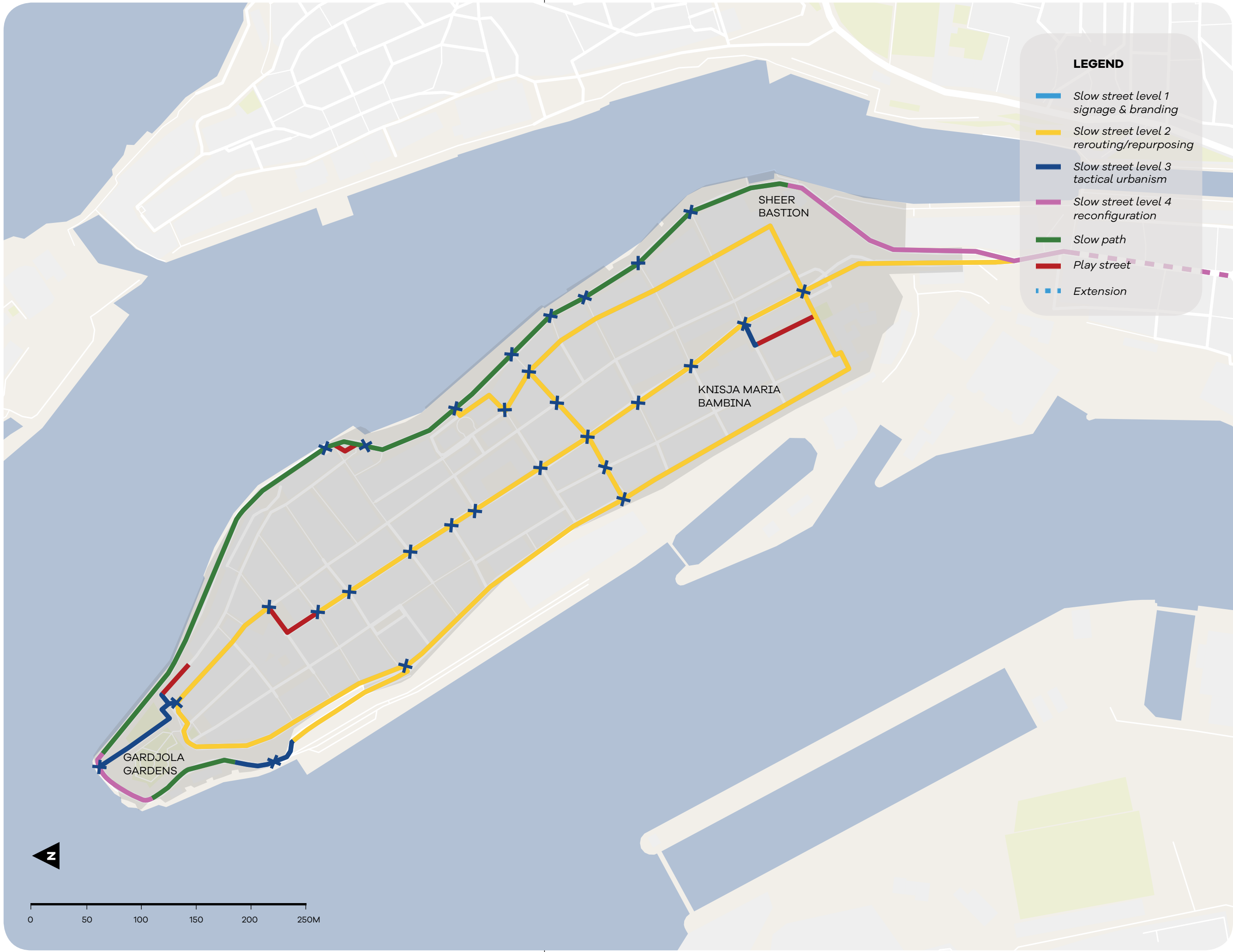


PHASING


COMPLETING  
THE NETWORK



KUNSILL LOKALI  
ISLA







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.



Isla is a compact and densely populated town located on a peninsula in the Grand Harbour, with beautiful traditional alleys, historic buildings, breathtaking harbour views and a picturesque waterfront to be explored. The town's centre is relatively walkable since distances are short, but the topography can be challenging with several streets having steps. Services are easily available and largely within good reach; and narrow streets provide much-needed shade during the hot summer months. Many of these streets, which are very characteristic in nature, are also in need of traffic calming measures in order to be used as quality public spaces by residents and visitors alike.

The main aim of Isla'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 31 Ta’ Marzu: reconfiguration

Signage: Slow Streets branding  
Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit  
Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity  
Reconfiguration: to trim the road to 5.5m and add an additional 1.8m pedestrian walkway connecting to the waterfront.

## Intervention 2 - Triq It-Tarzna and Ix-Xatt Juan B. Azopardo: signage and branding, rerouting, tactical urbanism, reconfiguration and Play Street

Signage: Slow Streets branding  
Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit  
Signage: Share the road (cyclists and motorised vehicles)  
Signage: Share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles) for the last stretch  
Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity  
Signage: Pedestrian crossing points  
Signage: local access only for the last stretch  
Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)  
Rerouting: the last stretch, the narrow ramp will become local access only  
Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pathways  
Reconfiguration: narrowing the road in order to provide for a pedestrian walkway  
Play Street: programming of activities

## Intervention 3 - Triq Is-Sur/ Ir-Rampa Ta’ L-Isla: rerouting 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  
Signage: local access only  
Rerouting: the inner city streets will become local access only  
Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pathways

## Intervention 4 - Triq Is-Sirena : Play Street

Signage: Slow Streets branding  
Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)  
Play Street: programming of activities

## Intervention 5 - The Public stairs between Triq Is-Sirena and Ix-Xatt Juan B. Azopardo: tactical urbanism

Signage: Slow Streets branding  
Tactical urbanism: embellishing the stairs through art works, signage and planters

## Intervention 6 - Triq Iz-Zewg Mini: rerouting 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  
Signage: local access only  
Rerouting: the inner city streets will become local access only  
Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pathways

## Intervention 7 - Pjazza Francesco Zahra: rerouting and tactical urbanism and Play Street

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: local access only  
Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)  
Rerouting: the inner city streets will become local access only  
Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pathways  
Play Street: programming of activities

## Intervention 8 - Triq Il Vitorja: rerouting 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  
Signage: local access only  
Rerouting: the inner city streets will become local access only  
Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pathways

## Intervention 9 - Triq Il-Migja Tal-Papa, San Guzepp and Il-Mina Tax-Xatt: rerouting 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  
Signage: local access only  
Rerouting: the inner city streets will become local access only  
Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pathways



**Intervention 10 - Triq San Guzepp and Il-Habs L-Antik: rerouting 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
- Signage: School activity
- Signage: local access only
- Rerouting: the inner city streets will become local access only
- Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pathways
- Tactical urbanism: embellishing the stairs through art works, signage and planters

**Intervention 11 - Misrah Il-Papa Benedittu XV and George Mitrovich, Triq L-Arcisqof Mattei and Il-Monsinjur Panzavecchia : rerouting and tactical urbanism**

- 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
- Signage: local access only
- Rerouting: the inner city streets will become local access only
- Tactical urbanism: designing and emphasizing clear pedestrian crossings and pathw

**Intervention 12 - Triq Il-Vittmi Tal-Gwerra: Play Street**

- Signage: Slow Streets branding
- Signage: 20 km/hr speed limit
- Signage: Drive Slowly, high level of pedestrian and cycling activity
- Signage: Play Street (communicating designated days and times)
- Play Street: programming of activities

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