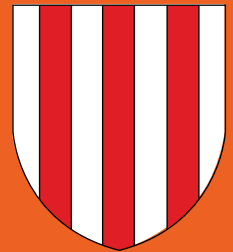


SLOW STREETS NETWORK

September 2020

ST JULIAN'S



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

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

© studjurban and Studio Tom Van Malderen, 2020

Acknowledgements

The project teams would like to express their gratitude to the Local Councils’ Association for its constant support, to Transport Malta for providing important geospatial datasets for the locality, and to the Planning Authority for providing the digital base plan of the locality.

Document images are cited by source. Unless otherwise specified, images have been produced by studjurban and Studio Tom Van Malderen.

Published by:
Local Councils’ Association
Local Government Building
Local Government Road
Marsa
Malta
Tel: (+356) 25968000
Email: lca@lca.org.mt
Website: localgovernment.gov.mt/en/LCA

Slow Streets is a project of the Local Councils’ Association’s Resident First vision 2024. Follow Resident First on <https://www.facebook.com/ResidentFirst>

CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Slow Streets Network	6
Implementation	18
Types of Interventions	22
Cycling	34
St Julian’s Interventions	38
Phasing	64
The Way Forward	72
Summary	74

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.



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.



What is 'tactical urbanism'?

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

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

Some examples of tactical urbanism strategies are:

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

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

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.

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

St Julian's

for different days of the week, in order to ensure that the selected strategy may be carried out successfully. These observations include:

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

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

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

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

St Julian's is a diverse yet challenging locality, since it is divided into a number of different neighbourhoods – around Balluta Bay, the older core (around Lapsi church), the area around Spinola Bay, Paceville, and residential areas at Ta' Giorni, the Gardens and Sacred Heart – all very diverse character areas that result in a somewhat fragmented locality. There is a significant percentage of elderly residents, few families (and therefore a small proportion of children), and simultaneously attracts young individuals and foreigners given that it is a popular destination for the beach, nightlife and dining. There are also numerous hotels and tourism establishments, as well as language centres. The highest development density is within and around the Paceville area, where numerous multi-storey towers and medium-rise developments are currently under construction. In turn, the Ta' Giorni area is characterised by a good proportion of social housing units, wherein the demographic fabric is more diverse.

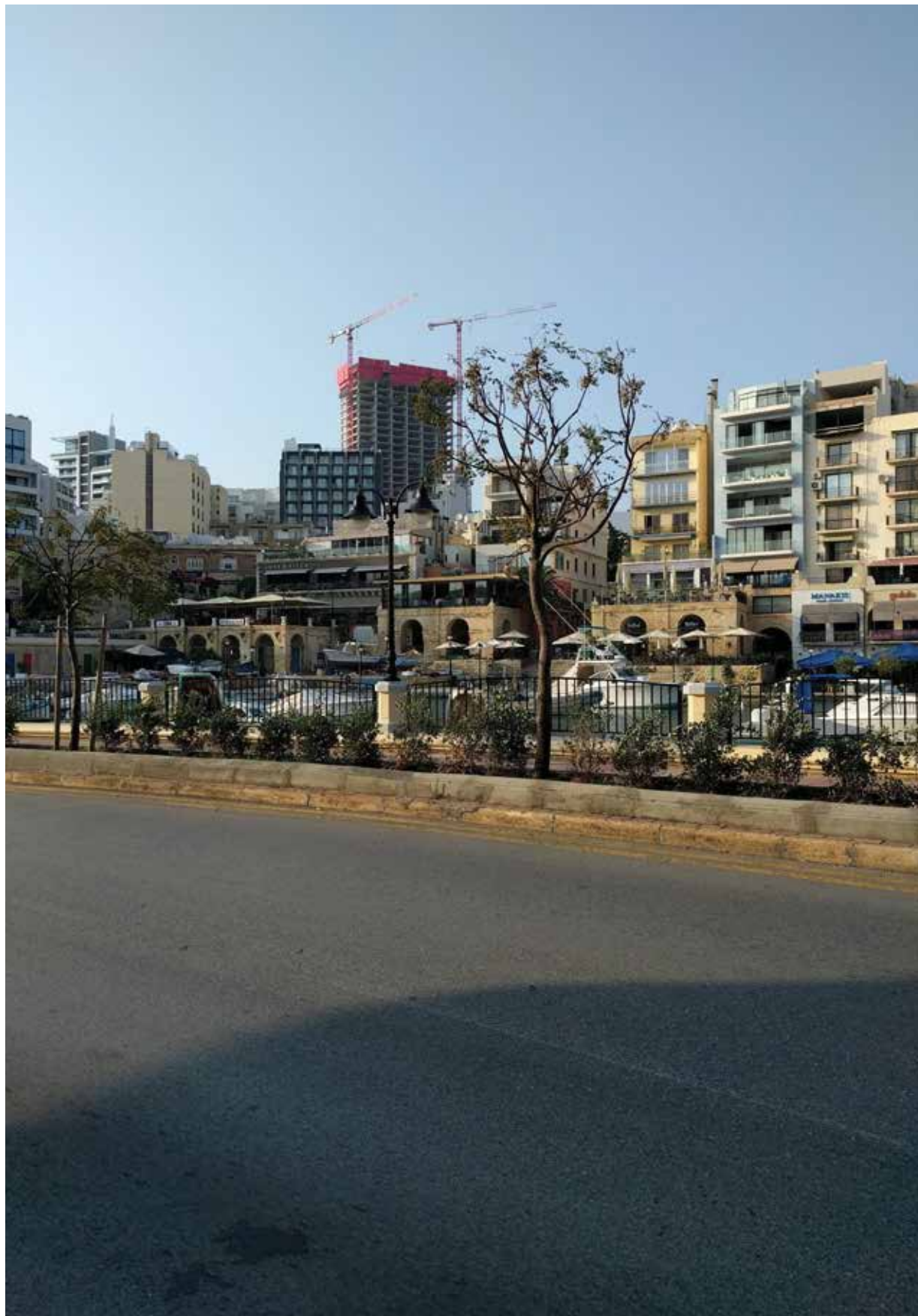
The locality contains an important node, namely Balluta Square, with the backdrop of the Parish Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Balluta Buildings, and other nodes which have been either relegated to becoming busy traffic junctions, such as that off Spinola Bay, or that have degraded into problematic, no-go areas, due to the presence of illicit and dangerous behaviour, such as Spinola Garden. Smaller urban pockets exist around Paceville, or are planned in the near future as part of the upcoming high-rise developments, and within Ta' Giorni, in this latter case these tend to be used exclusively by locals within this neighbourhood. In turn, the central older core is devoid of formal urban squares but is characterised by local landmarks such as Lapsi Church, and narrow roads that are often used as traffic shortcuts in order to avoid passing through other more appropriate routes, threatening the pedestrian safety and contributing to additional pollution levels therein.

St Julian's promenade, as a continuation of the Sliema promenade, is characterised by the presence of numerous commercial amenities (particularly catering-related), thus making it an attractive destination in its own right and also attracting residents from neighbouring localities. This, however, further increases the number of cars within the locality, with drivers often opting to circulate around the locality's

SLOW STREETS NETWORK

internal street network in order to seek on-street parking and to park as close to their destination as possible. Apart from the walkable promenade, the individual neighbourhoods identified above are relatively walkable in their own right but are problematic at the interfaces between them. In addition, the older core, while offering a number of potential links to the promenade and having more characteristic streets that are further well-shaded during the hot summer months, is also challenged by topographical considerations that are not to be underestimated.

The main aim of St Julian's Slow Streets strategy, therefore, is to liberate local streets 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, much-needed change to the entire network and enable a stronger and safer street environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike. This includes the rethinking of certain portions along the promenade, which could build on the success of existing nodes (such as Balluta Square) or which could create better, safe, public open space (such as around Spinola).



SLOW STREETS LOCALITY

ST JULIANS



SLOW STREETS ACTIVITY ZONES

ST JULIANS



LEGEND

Public open space

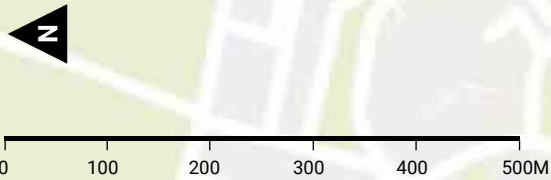
Activity zone

ST GEORGE'S
BAY

SPINOLA
BAY

BALLUTA
BAY

ZAMMIT CLAPP
HOSPITAL



SLOW STREETS DESTINATIONS

ST JULIANS



LEGEND

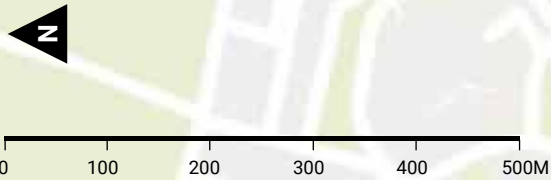
- Public open space
- Activity zone
- Health centre
- Sports facilities
- Educational centre
- Civic centre
- Religious centre

ST GEORGE'S BAY

SPINOLA BAY

BALLUTA BAY

ZAMMIT CLAPP HOSPITAL



SLOW STREETS NETWORK

ST JULIANS



LEGEND

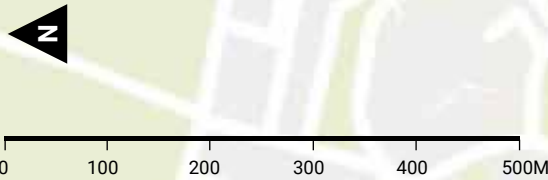
- Public open space
- Activity zone
- Health centre
- Sports facilities
- Educational centre
- Civic centre
- Religious centre

ST GEORGE'S BAY

SPINOLA BAY

BALLUTA BAY

ZAMMIT CLAPP HOSPITAL



“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

St Julian's 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.



source: Pikist



source: Transport Auckland



source: Londenplay.org.uk



source: houstonpublicmedia.org

IMPLEMENTATION



source: Auckland Council



source: Auckland Council

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: Chicago Tribune

IMPLEMENTATION

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.



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),



‘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 – 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.



■ **‘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.



SLOW STREETS NETWORK

ST JULIANS



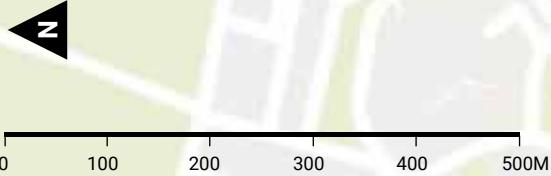
SLOW STREETS INTERVENTION

ST JULIANS



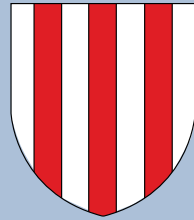
LEGEND

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



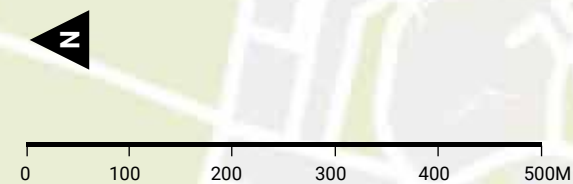
SLOW STREETS INTERVENTION

ST JULIANS



LEGEND

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



Cycling

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

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

This is further reflected in the words of Transport Malta's National Cycling Strategy (2018, p.46): 'The promotion of cycling as an alternative mode of transport is considered to be an essential part of any scheme or strategy to promote sustainable mobility through which transport authorities can address traffic congestion, improve accessibility, promote personal health, reduce air pollution as well as contribute towards lower greenhouse gas emissions, all of which are attributes necessary to improve the quality of life of any community.'

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



Cycle paths therefore improve both the connectivity and the overall liveability in localities. The real added value of cycling is experienced through a combination of all environmental, social and health benefits combined.

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

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

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



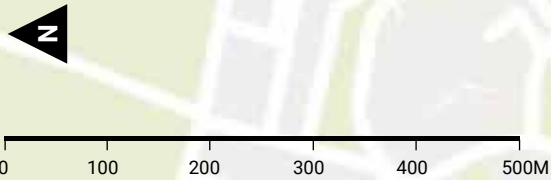
SLOW STREETS CYCLING NETWORK

ST JULIANS



LEGEND

Shared road,
clear signage and
reduced speed

Dedicated cycling
lane

St Julian's 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 St Julian's is to decongest the narrower local streets from extraneous, through traffic and instead divert drivers onto more prominent routes, particularly the arterial road network.

Intervention 1

Ix-Xatt Ta' San Gorg: Level 2 and Play street

Saint George's Bay is a popular beach and dining destination, so users cross the street very frequently. The proposal is for the beach strip to become no access to through traffic, and vehicles would instead use the arterial road and the wide Triq il-Professur W. Ganado to access Pembroke and the surrounding area. The proposal could be tested on weekends or at specific times on weekdays, and the road may be converted into a play street. This intervention aims to give back areas of high activity and important destinations back to the residents.



Intervention 2

Triq Santu Wistin: Level 2 and 3



This street is a commercial and entertainment node and highly used by residents of all localities and visitors alike. There are also several language schools and other amenities located in the area, such as a car park. The proposal is twofold. First, to pedestrianise (maintaining access for servicing and to the hotels) Triq George Courte and the upper section of Triq Santu Wistin in the direction of Triq is-Swieqi, until the top of the road. Second, maintaining Triq Santu Wistin in the direction of St George's Bay as is but introducing appropriate signage in order to slow down vehicular speeds, such that vehicles may be able to access Triq Dragunara and exit from the car park using this route.

This would have the additional benefit of alleviating the congestion at the top of the street at the intersection with Triq Sqaq Lourdes and Triq is-Swieqi and reducing the amount of vehicles in this area. The intersection with these two roads should have floor markings to further increase pedestrian and cyclist safety. Clear and large pedestrian walkways and crossings are also to be provided. The crossings are to have appropriate signage to slow down traffic. As a future project, a traffic island would provide a further safe zone by splitting the crossing in two.

This vision could be tested on Sundays and subsequently be extended to the entire weekend. If the strategy proves to be beneficial, it could be implemented permanently.



Landscaping elements

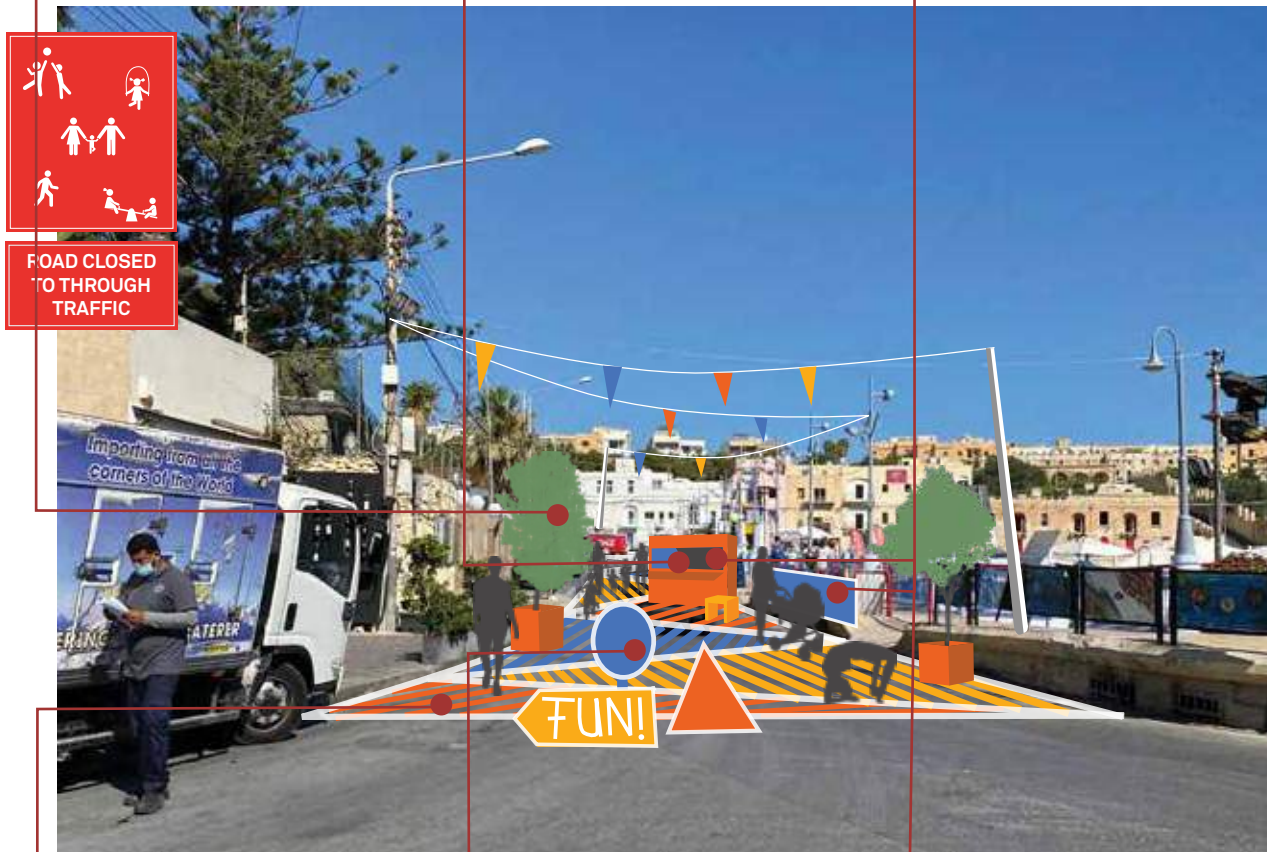
plants and trees go a long way in making an inviting space to play and socialize

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

or slow street branding and explanation and to communicate traffic regulations for street use

Street furniture

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



Intervention 3

Paceville Piazza: Level 3

The Piazza is an important node in the area, being the intersection of five important routes that cut across Paceville. It currently works as a pedestrian area during the night. During the day, this existing use should be formalised through the use of Tactical Urbanism. From the analysis that has been carried out, it has been noted that the asphalted vehicular area is oversized and largely acts as a transition space. Through Tactical Urbanism interventions, areas within this space may be designated for the eventual redesign of this node that could include some seating areas, shaded with planted trees, providing a space for people to stay and sit.

Through the inclusion of signage and floor markings, and eventually appropriate urban furniture, it should be made evident to all street users that it is a zone where the pedestrian takes priority over the vehicle. The opportunity to add artistic road markings would have the added benefit of creating a better sense of identity within the piazza, potentially becoming a more attractive public urban pocket for residents and visitors alike.



Intervention 4

Triq il-Wilga: Level 2 and 3

This busy street is a critical link as it connects the main node down towards the sea. It is nicely paved and hosts many restaurants and food kiosks. The experience for people wanting to eat would be much improved if the street is pedestrianised, and no vehicular access (with the exception of emergency and service vehicles, the latter at designated times) is allowed. Tactical urbanism interventions may be applied at each intersection of this street with Triq Ball and Triq Paceville for increased pedestrian and cyclist safety.



Intervention 5

Triq Paceville: Level 1

This street also hosts many restaurants and bars. These catering establishments often appropriate the sidewalk with tables and chairs, making sidewalks narrow and less pleasant to walk. Through appropriate signage it should be made evident to all street users that it is a zone where pedestrians and cyclists take priority over the vehicle.



Intervention 6

Triq Gort (upper section between Triq is-Swieqi and Triq San Gorg): Level 1



For this section of Triq Gort, given that it is an important connection for vehicles, and there is already a designated slow speed of 30km/h this could be formalised further as a slow route to complete the slow street network. This would be done through the use of appropriate signage and branding.

Triq Gort (lower section off Triq San Gorg connecting to Our Lady of Good Counsel Church on Triq il-Knisja): Level 3

At the crossing point, at the intersection of Triq Gort with Triq San Gorg, there is currently a small paved segment which is a pedestrian path. This path may be strengthened and made more attractive with the introduction of floor markings and signage to direct people to the rest of the network. This street connects further

down to an important landmark, Our Lady of Good Counsel Church. Applying tactical urbanism interventions at the bend with Triq Ball, at the intersection of this street with Triq Pacveille and at the bottom end of Triq Gort where the pavement widens, would signal to drivers to slow down as they approach the entry to this road, providing a safer crossing for pedestrians.



Intervention 7

Triq il-Knisja: Level 3

In order to strengthen the pedestrian crossing to Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, the tactical urbanism interventions discussed previously could be extended further onto this road.



Intervention 8

Triq M. Mangion and Triq Elija Zammit: Level 1

These two streets are used to access Triq Santu Wistin via Triq is-Swieqi or the Paceville Piazza. Signage highlighting slow vehicular speeds would be important for both pedestrian and cyclist safety.



Intervention 9

Bend joining Triq Gort to Triq Santu Wistin: Level 3

Currently, this road connects the arterial road network (Triq Mikiel Anton Vassalli) via Triq Gort with the upper part of Triq Santu Wistin, and does not have a pavement even though it is also a highly used pedestrian connection. Therefore, in the short term, clear and bright pavement markings are being proposed further to the current road marking, in order to clearly delineate the space for pedestrians, and for drivers to be alerted to slow down. Floor markings should be bright and well lit at night. In the long term, there should be a total rethink of this area in infrastructural terms in order to create safer, dedicated pedestrian and cycling routes.

IMPLEMENTATION

Intervention 10

Triq San Gorg: Level 1, 2 and 3



Triq San Gorg is a critical spine within St Julian's, having a distinct character and amenity value for residents and visitors, and providing a very important link for pedestrians. The proposed intervention divides the street into two segments. The segment from Paceville Piazza until Triq Ross is proposed to have signage for low speed limits and pedestrian and cyclist priority. In turn, the segment from Triq Ross down to Spinola Bay is proposed to be closed to through traffic, only left accessible for public transport and timed access for servicing and parking. Vehicles approaching Spinola Bay from Triq George Borg Olivier would be able to use Triq Mikiel Borg in order to access Paceville via the arterial road (Triq Mikiel Anton Vassalli). In this manner, Triq San Gorg could instead be transformed into a destination fully catering for people. This intervention could be the prelude to an important redesign of the entire pedestrian stretch, which could eventually include a comprehensive landscaping design providing well shaded areas for people and cyclists alike.



source: Green Auckland



Triq San Gorg is envisioned to become a main public open space and pedestrian and cycling spine, reinforced by the various commercial activities which are already present. This transformation would greatly improve the amenity of the existing ancillary spaces, namely Spinola Garden and the area around the Love monument, wherein more space for people may be generated. There is a further opportunity of the addition of artistic road markings that would have the added benefit of improving the character of the entire area and providing a strong identity to the public space, becoming more attractive to both residents and visitors.

Around the Spinola roundabout, traffic is proposed to be restricted to the minimum essential width for buses and emergency vehicles. Vehicles from the direction of Sliema to St Julians would be routed onto the arterial road network, or allowed to navigate around the roundabout, while vehicles approaching the bay from the arterial road network would either be allowed to turn into Triq Wied Ghomor or to navigate around the Spinola roundabout, but would not be able to enter Triq San Gorg.

Bollards or planters would be necessary to direct traffic better and to preclude double parking from occurring, thereby increasing pedestrian safety. In front of the Police Station, it is proposed to extend the curb and shift parking closer to the roundabout, such that the road may be turned into one lane. Furthermore, the space could be formalised through floor paint and the placing of bollards so as to prohibit illegal parking.



Intervention 11

Triq Ross: Level 4

The first proposed intervention is to provide two new crossings for a better connection between Spinola Garden and the new open space/pedestrian spine along Triq San Gorg. Second, the Bus Stop 'Ross' (in the direction of Swieqi) may be shifted into



the pedestrian space at Triq San Gorg such that no vehicle congestion would be added to the street, and the bus stop would be in a safer and more accessible location. Third, the road width may be reconfigured in order to enable the introduction of two dedicated cycle lanes in each direction, which would increase the safety of cyclists. This would narrow the existing road width, such that vehicles may slow down; particularly relevant given the presence of taxis in this stretch of road.



Intervention 12

Triq Spinola / Triq il-Knisja: Level 2

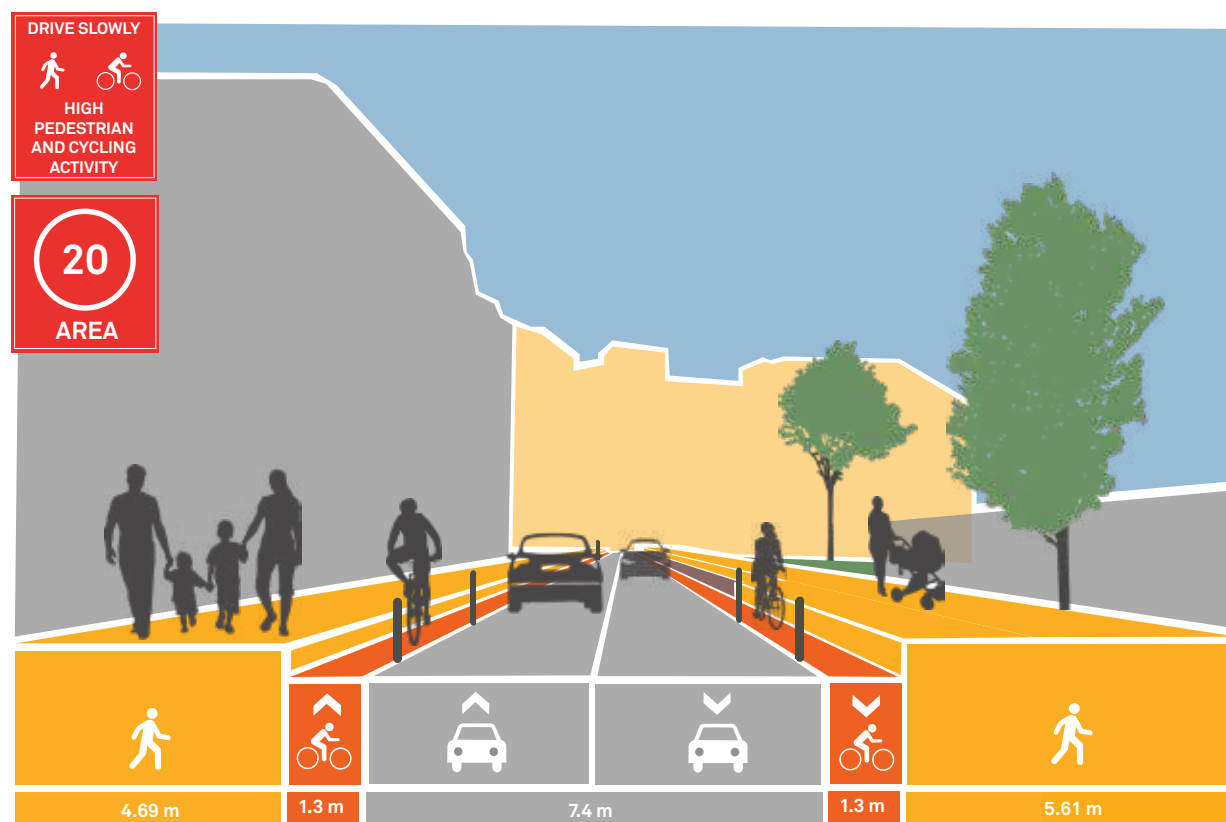
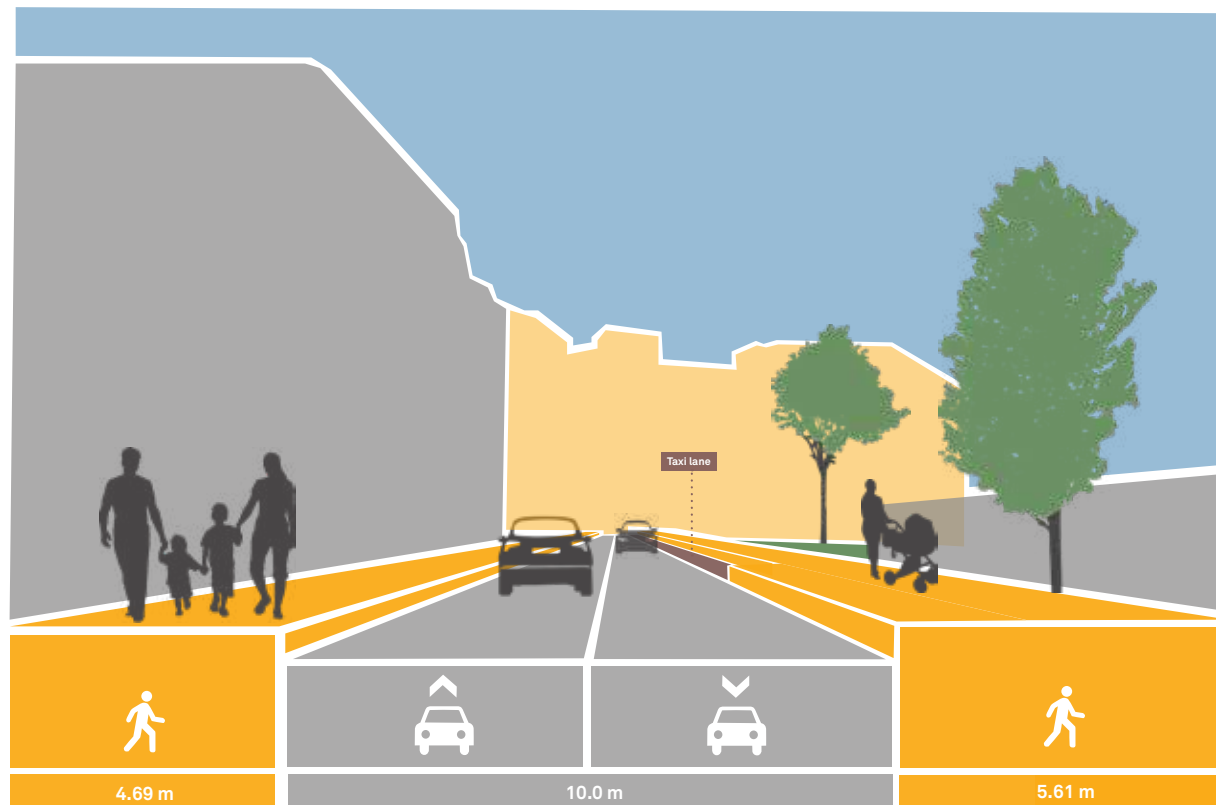
Triq Spinola is currently a one-way road that feeds into Triq San Gorg. Due to the new open space/pedestrian spine in Triq San Gorg, vehicles in this street would not be able to drive through the public space and so this street would automatically become a dead-end. This strategy would be necessary for the intervention along Triq San Gorg to be implemented successfully. As a result, Triq il-Knisja would change into a one-way route upwards towards Triq Ross as opposed to downwards, such that vehicles may exit Triq Spinola. Any vehicles parked at the end of Triq Spinola may manoeuvre given that the road widens in this part. Furthermore, at Triq Spinola, floor markings are being proposed at the intersection of Triq il-Knisja and the stairs down to the beach, in order to highlight pedestrian priority.



Intervention 13

Triq il-Qaliet / Triq L. Apap: Level 2

Triq il-Qaliet is a one way-road that is accessed from Triq San Gorg. Given that vehicles would be unable to access this street due to the proposed intervention in Triq San Gorg, this street would become a dead-end, accessible in the reverse direction. This means that Triq L. Apap would become a one-way route downwards from Triq Ross to Triq il-Qaliet.



IMPLEMENTATION

Intervention 14

Spinola Garden: Level 1

As the current garden is underused during the day and used for illicit activities during the night, radical changes are required to its design and configuration. Although strictly speaking this is beyond the scope of Slow Streets, it is critical that this space works well for the network, not least for the intervention planned for Triq San Gorg, such that it may not remain a no-go area. In the short term, it is proposed to increase both visual and physical access to the park. Visibility is very important for successful public spaces, as people would feel more safe and encouraged to use them. In the long term, a proper redesign of this garden would convert the garden into a public square with accessible, direct and clear connections to the existing street network and the new pedestrian spine along Triq San Gorg.



Intervention 15

Triq il-Mensija / Triq Forrest / Triq Wied Ghomor: Level 1

This route runs through a dense residential area, so it is important to have signage enforcing slow speeds and pedestrian priority. Slower car speeds would make the connection towards and from Spinola Bay better and safer for all the residents.



source: no source

Intervention 16

Trig it-Torri: Slow path

The promenade connecting to Sliema is heavily used by cars, cyclists and pedestrians. Pedestrians have access to the wide pavement next to the sea, which acts as a slow path in its own right. For bicycle users, the street would be shared with vehicles, thus appropriate signage is important to remind drivers that the street is being shared.



Intervention 17

Balluta Square: Level 3 and 4

The intervention aims to make Balluta a safer destination and public space. Access to the side road along Balluta Buildings would be closed off for cars, using planters and bollards, retaining access for servicing during strict designated times. This would connect the park to the building frontages and various commercial outlets

and amenities. Parking could also be controlled at specific times or on particular days in order to increase the pedestrian nature of this street. The ends of this street could become more identifiable through the use of coloured floor markings and appropriate signage.

With regard to the existing steep ramp and stairs connecting the square to Triq Scicluna, the space could be embellished in the short term through the use of paint and planters, with a potential permanent redesign in the longer term. A workshop with the residents could be held in order for the residents of St Julian's to personalise the space themselves, providing them with a greater sense of ownership.



IMPLEMENTATION



Along the outer edge of Balluta Square, it would be important to provide safe crossings across Triq George Borg Olivier. Tactical urbanism interventions, in the form of floor markings along the entire bend and two additional zebra crossings, would inform drivers that this is a heavily used crossing, and caution should be taken.

Intervention 18

Triq Telghet San Giljan: Level 1 and 3



source: HD Supply

This one-way street is an important route for pedestrians who reside in the upper part of St Julian's and who want to access Balluta Bay. Therefore signage for low speeds and pedestrian priority is essential to encourage more people to walk down to the promenade instead of drive.

Intervention 19

Triq il-Kbira: Level 1 and 2

The segment of Triq il-Kbira connecting to Spinola is currently a residential road, characterised by amenity issues therein due to the presence of fast-moving through traffic, particularly taxis, that uses the connection to access Spinola rather than Triq Goerge Borg Olivier. To discourage the use of Triq il-Kbira as a through link, it is proposed to change the current direction of traffic from Spinola going uphill to the bottom of Triq Lapsi. In this way access safety for both pedestrians and cyclists would be improved.



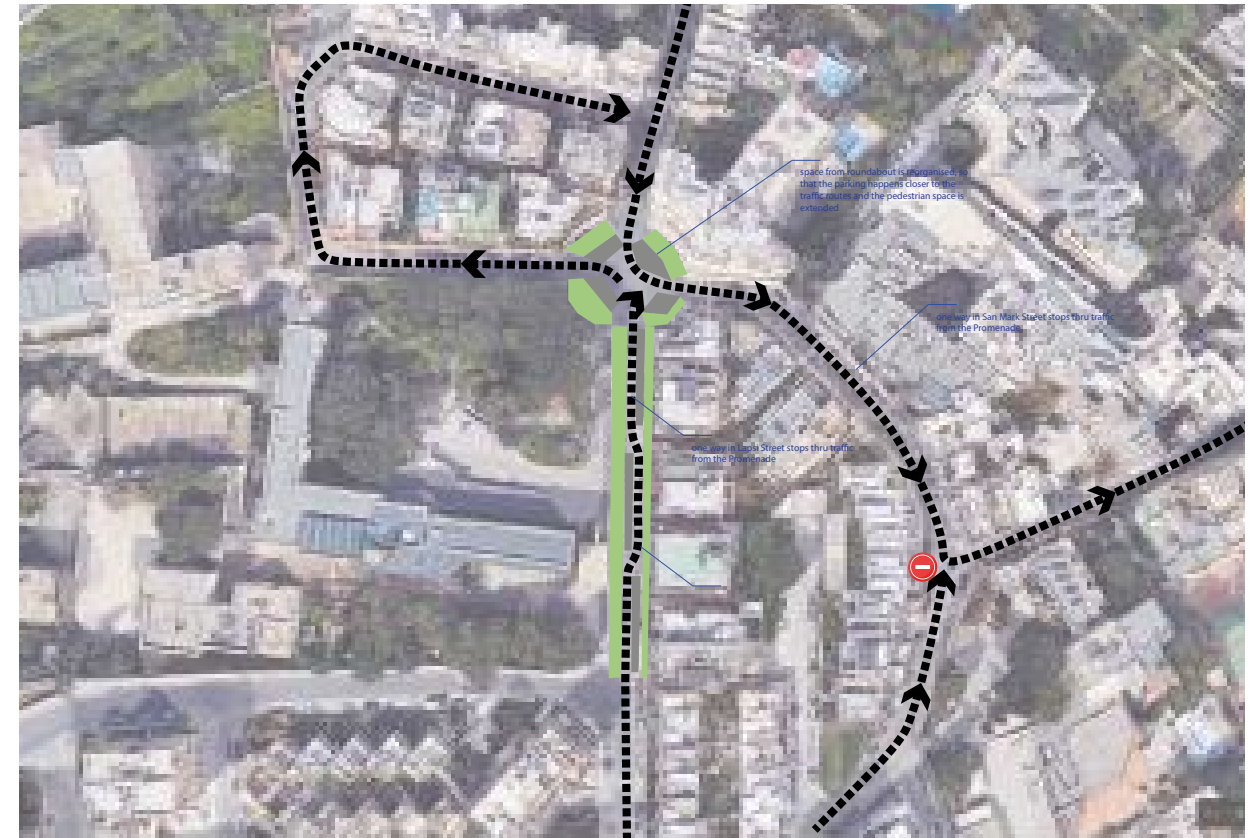
Intervention 20

Triq Lapsi: Level 3 and 4



Triq Lapsi is proposed to turn into a one-way street, in two opposing directions meeting at the intersection with Triq San Mark such that vehicles would stop using this route as an exit from St Julian's and instead use the arterial road network. Vehicles coming up Triq Lapsi from the promenade would not be allowed to continue along the entire road, and would be diverted downwards towards the promenade again at Triq San Mark. In addition, parking could be alternated in Triq Lapsi to slow down traffic by obstructing a clear straight path. Both interventions have the intent of discouraging through traffic within the local residential streets, particularly in this part of St Julians which is characterised by narrow streets.

Additional space could be gained in the intersection of Triq Lapsi and Triq San Mark, and parking could be reorganised and shifted closer to the vehicular routes thus extending the pedestrian space outwards. Tactical urbanism may be used in front of the Al-Fateh Arab School in order to emphasise slow speeds and prioritise pedestrians, especially students and parents.



Intervention 21

Triq San Mark: Level 4



This street is being proposed as a one-way route following on from the previous intervention.

Intervention 22

Triq Ta' Giorni: Level 3 and 4



Triq Ta' Giorni is an important residential link for both pedestrians and vehicles, connecting St Julian's to the neighbouring locality of San Gwann. The street is characterised by oversized vehicular lanes and parking along its entire length. This configuration lends itself to speeding vehicles along the entire stretch of road.

In order to avoid a straight and fast route for vehicles, it is proposed that the parking along this stretch of street would be alternated, such that a car would have to meander its way through Triq Ta' Giorni, slowing down the speed at which it could physically move through the street. Triq Ta' Giorni would also benefit from more brightly coloured and adequately lit crossings.

Intervention 23

Telgha Ta Birkirkara: Level 1 and 4



The intervention is divided into two proposals. Within the first segment, from Triq San Mark to Triq Sant' Anglu, alternating on-street parking would slow car speeds and contribute to safer local streets for residents, and also discourage traffic from using these local streets. The second segment, from Triq Sant' Anglu to Triq il-Kbira, is proposed to have appropriate signage for pedestrian priority and low speed limits.

Intervention 24

Triq Sant' Anglu / Triq B. Ilg / Triq Maurois Savelli/ Triq Lapsi (intersecting with Telgha Ta Birkirkara): Level 1



These streets are proposed to have signage for slow speeds and pedestrian priority to encourage residents to walk or cycle with increased safety.

Intervention 25

Triq F. Balbi: Level 3 and Play street



Within the social housing zone in Ta' Giorni, there is an existing playground adjacent to a soccer field. The surrounding Triq F. Balbi is proposed to be inaccessible for car traffic on weekends, and eventually permanently, given that vehicles may easily be re-routed through the adjacent streets. The street may serve as an extension of the play space for children and residents for activities such as bike riding, roller blading, etc. As a future project (beyond Slow Streets) it would be ideal to add more seating and large potted trees to provide for shading in the street. Residents would then be allowed to stay and enjoy the space during all seasons. Floor markings would be essential on both entrance/exit points of the play street in order to alert car drivers about the presence of children and pedestrian activity.





Intervention 26

Triq Birkirkara: Level 3 and 4



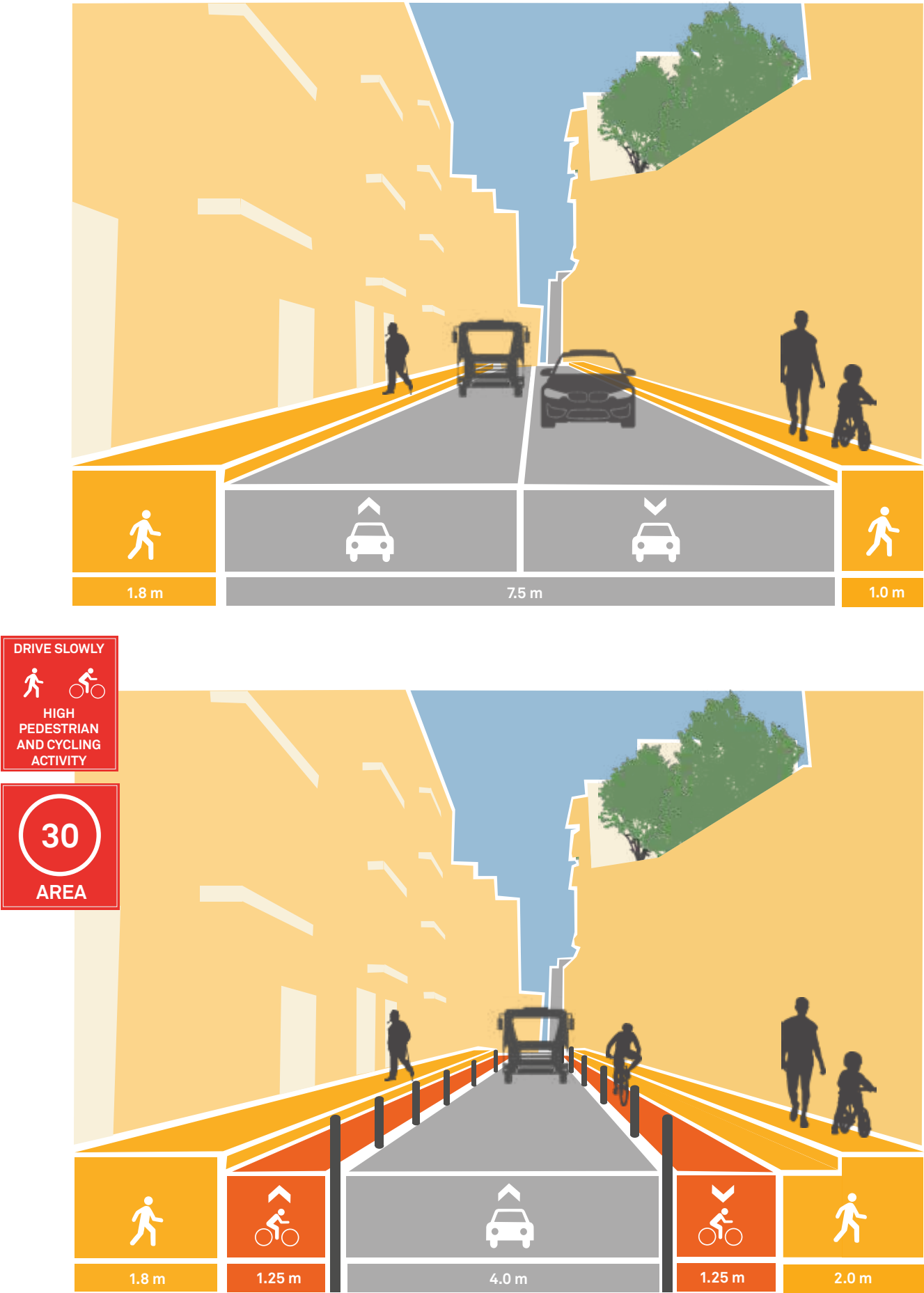
This street is an important route between St Julian's, Sliema and San Gwann. The intervention proposes converting the existing two-way extent of this road into a one-way for cars towards Sliema and Balluta Bay, greatly reducing the congestion in the street. Traffic may also enter St Julian's and Sliema from the arterial road network, accessed through Triq Birkirkara, and exit St Julian's and Sliema again onto the arterial road via Triq l-Mrabat.

The street section may then be reconfigured to include designated two-way cycling lanes of 1.25 metres each, with a 4-metre wide car lane in between the cycling lanes, lined with bollards. An additional 1 metre may also be added next to the existing narrow pavement.



Intervention 27
Triq Il-Kullegg and Telghet San Giljan: Level 1
and 3

To connect from Triq Birkirkara down towards the promenade and sea, connection would be made through Triq Il-Kullegg and Telghet San Giljan. These streets are to be made safer through the provision of better pedestrian crossings, marked through signage and floor markings at intersections with main roads. This would control vehicular speeds and elevate pedestrian priority to encourage residents to walk with no safety concerns.



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 the proposed play street, 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 intervene on important connector routes and often requires more investment in order to build on Phase 1, such as designating cycling lanes.

Phase 3 - Completing: Concluding the Slow Streets network, with branded signage, completing necessary rerouting and making testing of street closures more permanent

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.



IMPLEMENTATION

St Julian's

The simplest interventions to implement first would be the play streets, tactical urbanism interventions (namely floor markings) and temporary signage. Floor markings at intersections and critical crossings can be carried out first as pedestrian priority is the primary concern of the Slow Streets initiative. Specifically at intersections at Spinola Bay and Balluta Bay, pedestrians would feel safer to cross the road to access the busy public spaces.

Play street closures during this phase may be carried out on designated days and at times when traffic is already low. Testing for the closure of Triq San Gorg, Balluta Bay, and Triq Paceville should begin testing on Sundays during this phase using temporary signage and protective barriers.

During the second phase, the interventions for the reconfiguration of Triq Ta' Giorni could be carried out, as it would be an important axis for the pedestrian network. Simultaneously, the proposal for the pedestrianisation of Triq San Gorg may extend over the entire weekend, while the testing for the interventions within the inner local roads could occur at designated times. All signage for Level 1 interventions should be permanent during phase 2. Finally for phase 3, the implementation of all interventions at their full scale is envisioned to occur.



SLOW STREETS PHASING: STARTING & TESTING THE NETWORK

ST JULIANS



LEGEND

Slow street level 1
signage & branding

Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing

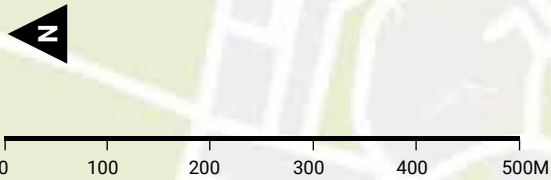
Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism

Slow street level 4
reconfiguration

Slow path

Play street

Extension



SLOW STREETS PHASING: STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK

ST JULIANS



LEGEND

Slow street level 1
signage & branding

Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing

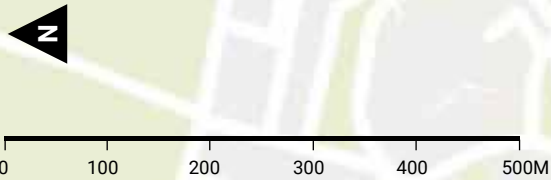
Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism

Slow street level 4
reconfiguration

Slow path

Play street

Extension



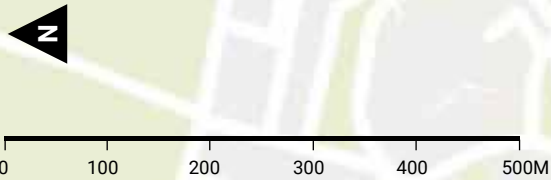
SLOW STREETS PHASING: COMPLETING THE NETWORK

ST JULIANS



LEGEND

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



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.

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.

St Julian's is a popular destination for the beach, dining and nightlife for many users, ranging from tourists to students and local residents. The locality has a fragmented composition along an extended coastline, with roads along the waterfront being heavily used by cars in order to access Paceville, Pembroke and Sliema. The main aim of the Slow Streets strategy is liberating space in these streets that have potential for very valuable public space by using better traffic management and tactical urbanism that shifts priority within these streets to pedestrians and cyclists rather than cars.

The strategy therefore deters drivers from driving along active parts of the promenade and seeks to eliminate through traffic from local streets. This encourages drivers to make use of the upgraded arterial road infrastructure and simultaneously releases important safer public space for pedestrian and cyclist use while still retaining the important bus routes that navigate within the locality

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

- 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.



ResidentFirst 