This report was funded with support from:

www.gehlstudio.com

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Special Thanks
San Francisco Planning Department,
City Design Group and Yerba Buena
Center for the Arts

Noun project icon by Christoph Robausch, p 17
Cover photograph courtesy Tommy Lau, Public Ping Pong Tables, Galen Maloney, Noah Marjani, Dominic Fontana, Joaquin Sorro, and Andy Co
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“The idea that action should only be taken after all of 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 variable has been controlled.”

- Jaime Lerner
Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil
How to use this document

Gehl Studio conducted an evaluation and analysis of the Market Street Prototyping Festival to connect the Festival’s process and outcomes with the urban design goals of the Better Market Street Project; festival funders’ goal of promoting diverse, integrated public spaces that support civic life; and YBCA’s goals around creative placemaking and generating culture that moves people.

This evaluation, and the recommendations that result from it, are summarized in two documents:

1. **Makers on Market** summarizes key findings and insights from the Festival, identifies prototypes with potential of influencing the design of Market Street, and outlines a framework for using prototyping events as a way to engage members of the public in finding solutions to public challenges.

2. **Planning by Doing** is a guide for citizen-powered, city-sanctioned public space pilot projects in San Francisco and beyond. It outlines key questions to ask at the outset of a project, details different ways to structure an action-oriented planning project, and provides evaluation protocol. This document is for civic leaders, planners, citizen activists, arts organizations, and others seeking to use prototyping and other Action-Oriented tools to make change in their cities.
PART I Planning by Doing
Defining “Action Oriented Planning”

PART II Steps to a Successful Project
Three key steps in the iterative loop
• Empowering Change
• People-First Success Criteria
• Eye-Level Project Evaluation

PART III Case Studies: Scaling Up
Iterating Action-Oriented Planning to expand impact
• Six Case Studies
• Market Street Prototyping Festival
PART I

PLANNING BY DOING

Defining “Action-Oriented Planning”
Introduction

Action-Oriented Planning

Need for a new planning approach
The current process of public realm planning in the United States typically takes a linear path towards realizing a project, with a limited time-frame for community input. Though improved from an earlier era of planning marked by lack of public engagement, the system has developed in such a way that often gives people who want to stop progress the most prominence. Action-Oriented Planning aims to reverse this tendency by actively encouraging and inviting yes-sayers to take part in a process that makes real use of their input.

Brief history of engagement in planning
Between the 1950s-80s, urban renewal-era "campaigns," instigated by politicians and undertaken by city planners, ushered in strategic planning projects and large scale infrastructure projects that expanded highways and built skyscrapers in almost all US cities. This top-down approach was challenged and ultimately replaced between the 1980s-2000s by a focus on community engagement and consultation, prioritizing the human experience, community desires, and marginalized groups.

Unfortunately, an unanticipated consequence of the success of community-driven planning is that many projects end up getting stalled in a formal decision-making process. Overworked and underfunded, municipal divisions are often unable to do meaningful outreach, or have outreach-fatigue. Historic lows in civic participation nationwide, the increasingly complex and dynamic nature of cities, and the fact that community involvement is often hijacked by a vocal minority, mean many communities have developed a culture of "no" rather than a culture of possibility.

City managers and other development agents adjust presentations and expectations so as to make as few changes as possible as a result of public feedback. The system of community outreach in our urban change process is not fully leveraging residents as resources, in part because of this well-meaning, but poorly functioning process.

The result is an expensive and time-intensive outreach processes that has little impact on development projects; dedicated community advocates frustrated by both planning fatigue and by not having their input taken seriously; and the mediocrity of design-by-committee.

EXAMPLES OF OTHER ACTION-ORIENTED PLANNING PROJECTS

THE YARD AT MISSION ROCK
A pop-up neighborhood testing open space, food, drink, and retail concepts on an existing parking lot in advance of a large waterfront development.
San Francisco, CA.

THE MOVEMENT CAFÉ
A temporary cafe on the future site of a real estate development, intended to catalyze growth.
Greenwich, London, GB

GAP FILLER
A series of artist-and community-led actions and structures initially launched to bring life back to a downtown decimated by an earthquake.
Christchurch, NZ
A platform for “yes”
Culture at large is full of good, bold ideas to make our cities better for people. We just often don’t have the right system set up to take advantage of them. While no silver bullet, the mindset and suite of tools we are calling “Action-Oriented Planning” is intended to re-introduce legitimate community feedback into the process. Action-Oriented Planning uses pilot projects as community engagement tools in-and-of-themesselves, and as tools to learn about how design decisions actually hit the ground, thereby improving the final implementation.

Artists and community activists have long used the transformational power of physical experience to argue for alternative futures. The inventiveness of these insurgent actors has increasingly been borrowed by traditional institutions of urban change. As stakes are higher, budgets smaller, and communities more vocal, cities have turned to these action-oriented tactics to break through stalemates, generate new ideas for old problems, and to meaningfully engage communities in the process.

Action-Oriented Planning is distinguished from “Tactical Urbanism” by an increased emphasis on measurement and evaluation as the guiding star of strategy. Pilot projects can be worthless without strategic vision or when support for iteration is missing. Measuring impacts is one way to stay true to a strategic vision and to engage many perspectives by telling stories through objective measures.

A guide for practitioners
This report defines practices of Action-Oriented Planning. It is intended as a how-to for urban change managers interested in engaging communities in new ways to reach better outcomes in their cities.

The following sections outline how Action-Oriented Planning layers on to the traditional planning process, how to approach a pilot project, and how to establish evaluation and measurement methods. It creates typologies of projects using case studies that highlight the behind-the-scenes work involved, and the scale and timeframe of successful projects. Happy action-ing!
# Project Process

## Action-Oriented Planning in Context

### NEW TOOLS FOR PLANNING

This table identifies the relationship between traditional planning and Action-Oriented Planning. Both approaches can lead to success and come with trade-offs to consider. They often occur as complements of one another.

Action-Oriented Planning is a strong political tool for decision-making, as it directly shows how changes to the public realm affect city life. This process of showing the opportunities, rather than simply telling, is usually manifested in a “pilot project” or “prototype.” Both terms refer to the idea of implementing an interim project at a 1:1 scale to gain more knowledge about what type of intervention is most appropriate to address an identified need.

### Key Elements of Action-Oriented Planning

- **1:1**: experienced at human scale.
- **User-powered**: ideas generated (or highly influenced) by the public
- **Feedback loop**: iterative process incorporates lessons from evaluation
- **Multidisciplinary**: different perspectives bring new solutions to old problems
- **Rapid testing of solutions**: tests are always “working prototypes” for future solutions

### Theme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Traditional Planning</th>
<th>Action-Oriented Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Engagement</td>
<td>Citizen engagement and feedback is expressed through argument and stated preference</td>
<td>Citizen engagement and feedback is expressed through use and demonstrated preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engagements is usually “off-site”</td>
<td>Projects create direct links between citizen, action and leaders – the project is usually “on-site”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideation</td>
<td>Many ideas can be represented; testing relies on analysis and argument</td>
<td>A small number of ideas can be tested rapidly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bigger changes in existing conditions can be tested, but at larger risk and cost</td>
<td>Possibilities of tests are sometimes limited by existing conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focused on strategic vision</td>
<td>Focused on strategic vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of City Space</td>
<td>The project “site” is usually narrowly defined</td>
<td>Unlocks more civic assets as potential “sites”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The context or framework of the problem is strictly bounded</td>
<td>Enlarges the context of the problem or opens up for new context opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Envisioning</td>
<td>Relies on graphic representation to envision what is possible - it “tells”</td>
<td>Uses built examples to envision what is possible - it “shows”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Requires design background and literacy to understand possibilities</td>
<td>Everyday citizens can experience the vision in real life and real time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Makeshift installations can fall short of the project’s ultimate potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Vision</td>
<td>Design tends to be conservative, responding to a smaller set of consensus needs</td>
<td>Design can take risks and it responds quickly to changing and diverse needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Profile</td>
<td>Mistakes are difficult, expensive and take a long time to undo</td>
<td>The public may like the temporary intervention more than the full strategic vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It can be difficult to engage key stakeholders</td>
<td>Makeshift, “low-resolution” installations can undermine the high quality long-term vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Feedback</td>
<td>The project tries to avoid negative feedback at all costs</td>
<td>The project welcomes any kind of feedback; it makes the final project even better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criticism is high risk</td>
<td>Criticism is low risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Essential to any Action-Oriented Planning approach is effort and coordination that often cannot be seen on the surface. The groundwork that must precede any kind of intervention, and the evaluation work that happens during and after, are both extensive processes, requiring time and resources. If some of these steps taking place “under the surface” are not considered, it is at the risk of the success of the overall project and goal. However, if the “invisible” tasks are carried out well, then the visible part of the project – the actual intervention – can be invaluable to catalyze change.
Method
Iterating for Public Life

Action-Oriented Planning uses a “Measure-Test-Refine” method to evaluate options in a low risk environment with maximum input from members of the public and other urban stewards. With these three steps, interim initiatives are tested and evaluated to inform more permanent and refined decision making.

Public Life
Measure existing public life using observational studies, quantitative data collection, and qualitative surveys. Measure pedestrian counts and flows, types of stationary activities and user diversity and demographics.

Public Space
Measure existing public space using qualitative and quantitative assessment tools. Study the quality of facades and the functions in the buildings surrounding the public space.

User Experience and Needs
Investigate people’s needs through intercept studies, both qualitative and quantitative. Questionnaires must be completed by at least 1,000 people to be representative for a quantitative study. Anecdotes and personal experiences can be collected from just a few representative users.

Establish New Behavior
Implement a pilot project that answers some of the needs established through the measure phase. Test how the use of the public space changes when the physical environment is altered. Are there new patterns of usage and users?

Feedback on Experience
Investigate people’s new needs based on the impact of the pilot project on the public space and public life. Are users more or less happy to spend time in the public space? Are all socio-economic groups represented?

Evaluate
Consider how the project has been successful, how it could be more successful, and whether there is a basis for more tests or for permanent implementation.

Better Chance of Success
Use the learnings from the first two phases to refine the project’s next steps and/or permanent implementation. The next project implementation should have an even better chance of success based on the feedback loop.

Investment Benefits
Long-term projects will be more cost-efficient and resilient if their performance has been tested and evaluated in advance. If the first pilot project does not reach the goals, consider running more tests until the right needs are met.

Acceptance and Ownership
Projects that grow out of tests of real needs are more likely to be adopted by the community, which ensures long-term use and therefore a more successful project.
EXAMPLES OF APPLIED “MEASURE-TEST-REFINE” METHOD

São Paulo, Brazil

Measure Before: Empty plaza with metro fences and parking

Test Everyday activation: a place is defined by wooden decks and movable urban furniture

Refine Special event activation: a destination is established with cultural programs and evening activities

The Porch at 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, USA

Measure Before: the space in front of the station is a parking area and no one lingers there

Test Project Phase 1: the plaza is pedestrianized and movable furniture and a pop-up cafe implemented

Refine Project Phase 2: Semi-permanent installation, The Porch Swings, refines Phase I
PART II

STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

Three key steps in the iterative loop
1. Defining the scope

Empowering Change

DEFINING OUTCOMES + SCOPE
The first step of any Action-Oriented Planning project is to clearly define the focus and purpose of the project, and how it will be implemented. The following checklist is intended to bring clarity to instigators of Action-Oriented-Planning projects at the beginning of their process.

Project Focus
What problem are you solving for? Or, what untapped resources are you trying to reveal?

Learning from the Past
What has been successful and unsuccessful about other solutions you have tried?

Ease of Implementation
How feasible is the intervention in terms of time and resources? Who needs to be involved? Do they want to be involved? Who are your prototypers? What disciplines/type of people do you want involved?

Iterative Loop
What is your measure/test/refine feedback loop? Who is your audience? What is your platform for feedback? How are you evaluating feedback and measuring success of your prototype?

Public Impact
Does the project respond to feedback from public engagement? Will it impact people’s quality of life? How visible will the project be, both physically and via other platforms?

Long-term Perspective
Does the project support a long-term strategy? Can it work as a demonstration project for other parts of the city? Does it fit into statistical projections for future challenges and opportunities?

Collaboration & Stakeholder Interest
Does the project relate to the goals of core stakeholders? Does the project test new stakeholder/implementer relationships that can set an example for other processes?

Alignment with Ongoing Projects
Does the project support ongoing city projects? Are there any private initiatives or interests that align (or conflict) with the project?

Finding your Champion
Who is best suited to incorporate lessons into future planning efforts and drive the project forward?

Flexibility & Resilience
Can the project adapt to feedback? Is it costly to alter parts of the design or can this be done on a regular basis in response to success?

Diversity & Inclusiveness
Does the project support a socioeconomically diverse range of stakeholders and users? Does it provide something for an under-represented group in the city?

Connectivity & Accessibility
Does the project support walking, biking or public transit? Can the project link together neighborhoods or existing important destinations in the city? Is it accessible?

Case Study of Moving Across the Compass

Park(ing)
[2005]
User Instigated / Short Term

Park(ing) Day
[2006]
User Instigated / Short Term

Parklet Pilots
[2009]
Officially Managed / Short term

Parklet Design Standards
[2015]
Officially Managed / Long term
A tool to understand how a project can be scoped and implemented at different scales, time-frames, and typologies

SCOPE COMPASS

Instigated/Managed Officially

+ The project can align with other official initiatives
+ The project can adapt easily to feedback
- The project might not align with the needs of the users
- The project might not create sufficient impact

+ The project aligns with other official initiatives
+ The project can create sufficient impact
- The project might not align with the needs of the users
- The project might have difficulty adapting to feedback

Short-Term /Temporary

+ The project has ownership amongst the users
+ The project can adapt easily to feedback
- The project might not align with other projects in the city
- The project might not create sufficient impact

Long-Term /Permanent

+ The project has ownership amongst the users
+ The project can create sufficient impact
- The project might not align with other projects in the city
- The project might have difficulty adapting to feedback

Instigated/Managed by the Users

+ pro
- con
2. Setting Goals

People-First Success Criteria

Short-term projects provide lessons that planners and urban change agents can apply over the long-term using a Measure/Test/Refine method. Clear metrics are essential to set benchmarks and assess the success of prototypes. Measuring prototype performance against success criteria can help vet potential prototype concepts, guide iteration, and evaluate success. Each project must define its own criteria of success early in the process. As the process moves forward, these could change. Below are example goals from the Market Street Prototyping Festival.

SAMPLE GOALS + EVALUATION METRICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A STREET FOR PEOPLE</th>
<th>ENGAGED COMMUNITIES</th>
<th>SHARED CIVIC SPACES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>evaluation questions</td>
<td>evaluation questions</td>
<td>evaluation questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How successful was the prototype in creating more invitations for lingering and walking?</td>
<td>• Were communities engaged in the prototyping process?</td>
<td>• How successful was the prototype in inviting diverse audiences in terms of age, gender, neighborhood, income, and racial identification?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Did the prototype improve the perception of this place for a diversity of users?</td>
<td>• How did the prototype reflect the wishes of the neighborhoods it is in?</td>
<td>• Did the prototype present opportunities for mixing between people of different backgrounds?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How successful was the prototype in bringing new resources and services to the street that expand cultural and economic opportunity and access?

Did the prototype present opportunities for mixing between people of different backgrounds?

How successful was the prototype in building social capital and skills in its participants and organizers?

Did the prototype present opportunities for mixing between people of different backgrounds?

Is this prototype set up to succeed during the time it is installed? Are proper maintenance and management entities stewarding its success?
3. Evaluation

Eye-Level Project Evaluation

Evaluation occurs at the scale of impact, at eye level, the human scale. To be robust, evaluation occurs before, during, and after the prototyping process.

**EVALUATE THE BASELINE**

*Before*

Measuring a baseline before implementation is important to understanding impact.

Certain success criteria need a baseline to compare against. Be sure to set time aside to evaluate baseline conditions before you begin a project if this is the case. A baseline could mean a survey of the general public, core stakeholders, and/or designers or implementers.

**MEASURE SUCCESS INDICATORS**

*During*

The success criteria/indicators must be defined according to each project’s defined goals and criteria of success. These are examples.

**Publicly Available Statistics**
- Reduction in traffic injuries
- More public transportation users

**Observational Analysis**
- Increase in pedestrian activity
- Increase in people on bikes
- More people lingering
- Greater variety of activities

**Qualitative Analysis**
- Better quality of urban environment
- More active frontages
- New functions or more diverse functions

**Surveys and Interviews**
- New social encounters
- Stronger sense of community
- Increased feeling of safety
- Increased sense of identity
- Public capacity building

**Engagement and Social Media**
- Spontaneous programs happen
- Increase in social media hits
- Positive business and retail impact
- Engaged local stakeholders

**EVALUATE PROJECT SUCCESS**

*After*

Be sure to evaluate success from different perspectives. The learnings can be used to adapt other/future interventions.

1. **City Perspective**
   Focus on learning: What worked and what did not work? What issues (positive and negative) arose from implementation? Which issues (positive and negative) stem from the planning process? Are the issues design or program related? What unexpected opportunities (partners, usage of space, spin-off activities) appeared before, during and after the process?

2. **User Perspective**
   Focus on experience: How does this impact the user’s everyday routine? What is in it for the user? Did the user come away thinking that the public sector has his/her best interest in mind? Where/how/when is it possible for the user to have a say in these action-oriented initiatives?

3. **Maker Perspective**
   Focus on creation: How were implementers’ unique knowledge of design taken into consideration? Were they supported as creative citymakers? Did the project build their social capital and skills?
EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO MEASURE IMPACT ON PUBLIC LIFE AND AT EYE LEVEL

**Desktop Research**
- Engagement records keep track of engagement + other public data collection

**Social Media Analysis**
- Analyzing metadata of social media posts from project area during and after the intervention

**Online Surveys**
- Online surveys of the general public, community stakeholders, and designers to gauge impact of the intervention

**Intercept Surveys**
- Intercept surveys conducted with users of the site before, during and/or after the initiative has been implemented

**Observational Analysis**
- Quantitative data sets of pedestrian counts, age and gender registrations and observations of different types of staying activities

**Prototype Evaluation**
- The prototype can be measured against its own success criteria. Or, if there are multiple prototypes, measured against common criteria.

**Photo Documentation**
- Before, during and after photo comparisons can be strong indicators of a project’s physical impact

**In-Depth Interviews**
- Interviews with specific users and stakeholders to gain a detailed insight into the project’s performance
Photograph courtesy SF City Planning via flickr, Peepshow, David Baker Architects
PART III

CASE STUDIES: SCALING UP

Iterating Action-Oriented Planning to expand impact
## Case Studies

### Typologies of Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>What was the goal?</th>
<th>Scope Compass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> PARK(ING) DAY</td>
<td>Showing that car space is also public space that can be used for people activities instead</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed Officially Short-term Long-term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide / 2005-present</td>
<td>Insurgent Project + Tactical Project</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed by the Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> TIMES SQUARE</td>
<td>Creating a flagship project for the NYC Plaza program to catalyze the reimagination of public space</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed Officially Short-term Long-term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York, USA / 2008-present</td>
<td>Full-Scale Test + Demonstration Project</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed by the Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> OPEN STREETS</td>
<td>Reimagining the role of streets to connect people across neighborhoods and demographics</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed Officially Short-term Long-term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide / 1974-present</td>
<td>Tactical Project + Full-Scale Test</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed by the Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> VILLAGE ÉPHÉMÈRE</td>
<td>Bringing attention to some of Montreal’s underused public spaces with untapped potential</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed Officially Short-term Long-term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal, CA / 2013-present</td>
<td>Regeneration Catalyst + Tactical Project</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed by the Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> THE PORCH</td>
<td>Making the area in front of the 30th Street Station a lively place where people want to stay</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed Officially Short-term Long-term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia, USA / 2011-present</td>
<td>Full-Scale Test + Demonstration Project</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed by the Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> PROTOTYPING FESTIVAL</td>
<td>Generating bold ideas from the general public to incorporate into “Street Life Zones”</td>
<td><a href="#">Diagram</a> Instigated/Managed Officially Short-term Long-term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A key characteristic of Action-Oriented Planning is that actions often build momentum. Involving communities, agencies, and other stewards of urban change in short-term, experimental solutions to complex problems means that when actions iterate, they often scale up, too. Scaling up can mean a physical increase in size – from a parking lot intervention to a global one-day event – to an increased duration – from a one-day pop-up to a summer-long event. The following Action-Oriented Planning case studies were selected because they represent this spectrum of scale as well as different typologies on the “scope compass.”

### What was the action?
- To temporarily repurpose parking space
- To provide open source instructions for replication by anyone, anywhere
- To collect worldwide photos and stories of people participating in and contributing to the concept
- To temporarily pedestrianize Times Square
- To test alternative traffic conditions on Broadway
- To create a flagship project and a full-scale test of the NYC Plaza Program as inspiration for the wider initiative
- To close car corridors for the purpose of allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to take over the space
- To provide open source instructions for replication by anyone, anywhere
- To reduce pollution in car-dependent metropolises
- To make a temporary village “environment” with design installations, basic seating structures and activities
- To give local designers and architects a public platform
- To activate an empty site in the city
- To put out inexpensive furnishings and plants
- To curate food and events
- To observe, measure and learn from who stays, where, how long & why
- To provide 50 small sites and budgets
- To curate the city’s best user-generated ideas
- To facilitate 250,000 visitors and observers over three days

### What was the outcome?
- Global movement grows to repurpose parking spaces as people spaces
- Communities use event as organizing tool
- Cities provide increasing support
- Bold action and incentive to win over “nay-sayers”
- Building a shared understanding of the use and usability of civic space
- A pilot project became a successful permanent project
- Global movement to reclaim the streets on a temporary basis, usually combined with events
- Citizens were using a part of the city that they rarely visited
- A public temporary intervention has become permanent and adopted by the local community and private stakeholders
- Space becomes popular and defines district identity
- Reinvestment into higher quality design and furnishings
- Continued observation & measurement
- Many people encounter the event who aren’t reached by traditional outreach
- Most innovations involve sociability, public art and programming
- Several ideas rise to next round

### Was there long-term impact?
- Cities form parklet programs to allow longer impact
- New streetscape typology is established for permanent installations
- Times Square is now permanently a pedestrian plaza with granite paving and well-designed urban furnishings
- Today, cities all over the world host “Open Streets” and in some cases the opening of the streets to the pedestrians has also created the basis for permanent pedestrianizations
- One of the sites of a “Village Éphémère” intervention, a former snow-storage site, is now being continuously re-appropriated for events and art-related activities
- Provided a template for envisioning an enlivened University City District
- Design is being formalized and expanded to surrounding parts of the District
- Better Market Street Plan to incorporate greater emphasis on programming
- Sites for rotating user generated content incorporated in street redesign
- New template for community engagement

### Table of Case Studies

<table>
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<th>What was the outcome?</th>
<th>Was there long-term impact?</th>
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<td>To close car corridors for the purpose of allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to take over the space</td>
<td>Global movement to reclaim the streets on a temporary basis, usually combined with events</td>
<td>Today, cities all over the world host “Open Streets” and in some cases the opening of the streets to the pedestrians has also created the basis for permanent pedestrianizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide open source instructions for replication by anyone, anywhere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To reduce pollution in car-dependent metropolises</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To make a temporary village “environment” with design installations, basic seating structures and activities</td>
<td>Citizens were using a part of the city that they rarely visited</td>
<td>One of the sites of a “Village Éphémère” intervention, a former snow-storage site, is now being continuously re-appropriated for events and art-related activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give local designers and architects a public platform</td>
<td>A public temporary intervention has become permanent and adopted by the local community and private stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To activate an empty site in the city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To put out inexpensive furnishings and plants</td>
<td>Space becomes popular and defines district identity</td>
<td>Provided a template for envisioning an enlivened University City District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To curate food and events</td>
<td>Reinvestment into higher quality design and furnishings</td>
<td>Design is being formalized and expanded to surrounding parts of the District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To observe, measure and learn from who stays, where, how long &amp; why</td>
<td>Continued observation &amp; measurement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide 50 small sites and budgets</td>
<td>Many people encounter the event who aren’t reached by traditional outreach</td>
<td>Better Market Street Plan to incorporate greater emphasis on programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To curate the city’s best user-generated ideas</td>
<td>Most innovations involve sociability, public art and programming</td>
<td>Sites for rotating user generated content incorporated in street redesign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To facilitate 250,000 visitors and observers over three days</td>
<td>Several ideas rise to next round</td>
<td>New template for community engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Studies
Scaling up Actions

1. Park(ing) Day (2005)

SCALE
- Region
- City
- District
- Block
- Site

Hours | Days | Weeks
This diagram maps six Action-Oriented Planning case studies onto two axes, physical scale and time. Several case studies have had more than one iteration in which they have transformed scale, some of them increasing their duration and physical scale with each iteration.
San Francisco, US
Market St Prototyping Festival

PROJECT TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Better Market Street (BMS) launches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>BMS visioning complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Street Life Zones &amp; LIZ codified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2014</td>
<td>First Living Innovation Zone opened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2014</td>
<td>MSPF call for submissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2014</td>
<td>selections announced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Idea Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2014</td>
<td>social media launch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Project Components

- **Strong collaboration between City agency and civic nonprofit organization**
  Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and the San Francisco Planning Department co-led the Festival, with the leadership balanced between the organizations.

- **Arts funding + city planning objectives**
  YBCA, an arts organization, acted as the fiscal sponsor and channeled funding from arts and civic philanthropy.

- **On-brand**
  Prototyping, making and innovating are part of the Bay Area’s brand. The Festival had key political support from the Mayor’s Office and department heads.

- **Agency staff ready to experiment**
  Several years of exposure to pilot projects, reviewing parklet designs, and operating in increasingly “experiment mode” prepared Public Works and SFMTA staff to support unconventional installations in public.

- **Tapping into local talent**
  The Bay Area has a large number of professional and amateur “makers”—designers, tinkerers, artists—who are passionate about public space.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Better Market Street (BMS) is a comprehensive program to reconstruct San Francisco’s chief cultural, civic and commercial corridor and the region’s most important transit street from Octavia Boulevard to The Embarcadero, a distance of 2.3 miles. The street is scheduled for physical reconstruction beginning 2019—a twice-per-century chance to rethink how space is allocated and how the street is designed. Market Street contains almost all transit lines serving the city, including BART (regional rail) and Muni Metro (subway), both underground, as well as city buses, taxis, and the city’s busiest bicycle route. Multiple city public agencies are involved in the process, including Public Works, City Planning and SFMTA. After an extensive public visioning and preliminary planning process, several conceptual design options began environmental review through California’s EIR process. A concept that emerged during the visioning process was “Street Life Zones” or places within the wide thoroughfare where staying activities could flourish through new designs and programs. From this seed grew “Living Innovation Zones”—a curated, long-term test of designs by local stewards—and the Market Street Prototyping Festival, an open event where anyone could propose an idea for Market Street.

THE PROJECT

Market Street Prototyping Festival took place between April 9-11, 2015, inviting designers, artists and makers to connect with the diverse neighborhoods along Market Street to develop and test ideas that enliven the sidewalks. The Festival prototyped Better Market St.’s concept of Street Life Zones, multi-use areas located within the existing sidewalk that invite diverse public life, “lingering” activities and a stronger district identity. After an open public call for submissions, fifty projects were curated by a jury of local design leaders. Project teams were provided $2,000 each to realize their projects during the three days of the festival.
MEASURES OF SUCCESS

A Prototyping Festival had never been tried in such a central place in San Francisco, so when no major issues resulted from fifty user-generated projects installed in the city’s busiest sidewalk for three days (no small feat for the producers), the project cleared a major hurdle. The more ambitious goals for the project included improving Market as a “street for people” by inviting for lingering, adding to the diversity of street users, and improving perceptions of the street. As a process, the Festival was evaluated on its ability to engage communities both in the production of the event and in experiencing the ideas proposed. In most all of these measures, the Festival was successful. Pedestrian movement increased by 30% during the Festival and lingering activities increased by 55 to 175%. By virtue of its public presence on the street (73% of participants ran into by chance), the event reached a much wider audience than BMS’s outreach process. Finally, the Festival indeed generated many useful new ideas for Market Street.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

In September, six projects were re-installed for one-month to test their durability and community appeal. The lessons from this iteration will inform BMS and other prototyping efforts. As of this report, Festival producers and city planners are still working to extract the insights to apply to the long-term capital improvement project of Better Market Street, as well as general lessons for the City’s public outreach process. The Festival’s strongest immediate impact may be on cities’ ideas about outreach. Thanks to close observation by visitors from other cities throughout the Festival, enthusiasm for replication has been widespread. The Festival made it clear that intensive programming and staffing buoyed the successful prototypes—an insight that could influence development of BMS’s eventual Street Life Zones.