



13. RE-PLACING STREETS: PUTTING THE PLACE BACK IN STREETS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
PUBLIC SPACE AND THE NEED TO RE-PLACE STREETS.....	1
PLACEMAKING FOR STREETS.....	4
Design Techniques and Goals for Replaced Streets.....	5
STRATEGIES TO RE-PLACE STREETS.....	10
The Street’s Place in the Community.....	10
Placemaking Participants.....	11
The Placemaking Process.....	12



(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)



INTRODUCTION

Most American cities have come to view streets primarily as conduits for moving vehicles from one place to another (from A to B is the common expression). While moving vehicles is one of their purposes, streets are spaces, even destinations in and of themselves. Conceiving of a street as a public space and establishing design guidelines that serve multiple social functions involves several fundamental steps. Behind them all is a redefinition of whom streets ought to serve. By approaching streets as public spaces, local jurisdictions redirect their attention from creating traffic conduits to designing a place for the people who use the street.

PEOPLE PUT THE PLACE BACK IN STREETS

This chapter describes the need for local jurisdictions to “re-place” their streets—make streets places and refocus their purpose on the people who use them—and how local jurisdictions can do so. The chapter outlines the key features and functions of re-placed streets and the design elements used to achieve re-placed streets. The chapter concludes by describing the process local jurisdictions can follow to ensure streets come to reflect a community’s strengths, needs, and aspirations.



*Las Olas Street Fair, Fort Lauderdale
(Credit: Urban Health Partnerships, Inc.)*

PUBLIC SPACE AND THE NEED TO RE-PLACE STREETS

Public spaces are the stages for our public lives. They are the places shared by all members of a community, of any size. Quality public spaces are places where things happen and where people want to be, vital places that highlight local assets, spur rejuvenation, and serve common needs.



Streets comprise a large portion of publicly owned land in Broward County. Streets are a huge part of any community's public space network, and historically served as meeting places, playgrounds for children, marketplaces, and more. As populations spread out from city centers, streets lost many of these functions and were instead designed and planned for one use: mobility. At best, streets conceived as complete streets address the mobility needs of all street users (pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit riders). During the last century, however, automobiles have been prioritized over people as users of our streets.



*Pavement to Parks program: San Francisco, CA
(Credit: Sky Yim)*

As part of the public realm, successful streets have a variety of functions beyond allowing automobiles to travel rapidly. For this reason, placemaking, or celebrating and maximizing Broward's many diverse open spaces, must be at the core of the planning and design of our streets to meet the following challenges:

- Population growth and urbanization. People moving back into cities will need to be accommodated in limited space, putting greater demands on existing streets. If streets continue to largely function to move people traveling in motor vehicles, they will not be able to accommodate this growth. Streets will need to enable people to do more while traveling less and to travel more efficiently.
- The need to maximize social and economic exchange. Streets will need to serve the highest and best use for the land they are on, and mobility is only one among many possible uses. Streets need to be designed to maximize social value, which also spurs healthy economic exchange. In this way, streets become arteries distributing prosperity. Streets that invite social interaction are more likely to ensure healthy growth.

"We have inadequate sidewalks, poor street lighting, fast moving traffic on third avenue and no bike lanes. The majority of the properties are dilapidated and it feels dangerous...I ... don't feel comfortable walking my dog at night."

- (Broward Complete Streets survey respondent)



- The need to reduce energy consumption and induce sustainable growth. Streets that are places promote locality. They enable people to travel comfortably by non-motorized modes, which in turn shortens travel distance demand. With growing concerns regarding fuel resources and climate change, this shift will be critical. Because re-placed streets spur locality-serving commerce and social venues, they also set the stage for and enable healthy and environmentally sustainable practices/behaviors in the surrounding built environment.
- A desire to create public space. Beyond being the frames for other development, streets can be public spaces themselves. Access to public space is critical to safe, healthy, and successful communities. When streets are designed as great spaces for people, they reinforce a sense of belonging and build on the strengths of the communities they host.



*Lauderdale-by-the-Sea
(Credit: Alena Alberani)*



*Downtown Hollywood
(Credit: City of Hollywood)*



PLACEMAKING FOR STREETS

In order to be places, streets must:

- Augment and complement surrounding destinations, including other public spaces such as parks and plazas
- Reflect a community's identity
- Invite physical activity through allowing and encouraging active transportation and recreation
- Support social connectivity
- Promote social and economic equity
- Be as pleasant and accessible for staying as for going
- Prioritize the slowest users over the fastest
- Balance mobility and public space functions



*Good public space invites social interaction
(Credit: Dan Burden)*

So that people can

- Walk and stroll in comfort
- Sit down in nice, comfortable places, sheltered from the elements
- Meet and talk—by chance and by design
- Look at attractive things along the way
- See places that are interesting
- Feel safe in a public environment
- Enjoy other people around them
- And get where they need to go!



*Hollywood Broadwalk
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)*

Re-placed streets must be slow streets that are inviting and filled with human activity. This is the most important distinction between streets designed for maximal car throughput and re-placed streets; it requires the necessary scalar adjustment from car to people-focused street



planning. Streets designed for fast and far movement favor people moving by motor vehicles, not people moving under their own power. Human energy limits people to slow and local movement.

Because people, not motors, are essential to long-term growth in places of all kinds, human-scaled streets are an inducement to healthy lifestyles and economic resilience.

DESIGN TECHNIQUES AND GOALS FOR REPLACED STREETS

A re-placed street balances the moving and staying needs of its users and has multiple, people-serving purposes. The design techniques and goals detailed below describe how to create re-placed streets.



Street performer (Credit: Ryan Snyder)

Support and Encourage Activities and Destinations

- Widen sidewalks to accommodate multiple activities
- Open streets to multiple activities
- Encourage/provide active ground floor uses in adjacent buildings
- Cluster activities and amenities
- Allow street vendors and performers

Design Street Elements and Adjacent Buildings for the Human Scale

- Use amenities that are pedestrian-scaled including:
 - Signs
 - Lighting
 - Seating
- Encourage building design (e.g., through zoning regulations and design guidelines) that is scaled to the human body, such as:
 - Frequent building entrances
 - Building transparency at street level
 - Interesting facades



Public art in traffic circle median: Lauderdale-by-the-Sea (Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)



*Walk streets used as play space:
Manhattan Beach, CA
(Credit: Dan Burden)*



*Transparent storefronts blur the distinction between
indoor and outdoor space, and public and private space:
Avalon, CA
(Credit: Ryan Snyder)*

Provide a Feeling of Safety and Security on Streets

- Keep streets well-maintained and both the street and surrounding buildings well-lit
- Select streets adjacent to round-the-clock-active buildings and public spaces
- Invite diverse people and uses throughout the day
- Slow traffic to a comfortable speed to mix with other travel modes through
 - Low speed design elements
 - Traffic calming techniques
 - Shared space
- Maintain a buffer between pedestrians and vehicles when there is fast moving traffic using
 - Planters
 - Bollards
 - Parked cars
 - Kiosks, newsstands, public toilets, lampposts



*Wide comfortable sidewalks tend to lead to safe
destinations
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)*



Connect Both Sides of the Street

- Shorten crossing distance through
 - Narrow travel lanes
 - Curb extensions and pedestrian islands
 - Building activities connected to the street
- Invite people to cross in more places by
 - Slowing vehicular traffic
 - Establishing mid-block crossings
 - Making shared streets



*Landscaped buffer between pedestrians and motor vehicles
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)*



*Landscaped curb islands, decorative pavers, and no centerline stripe
help give this festival street a sense of place while calming traffic
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)*



Show a Sense of Ownership

- Provide for maintenance and cleanliness
- Engage community/local residents in maintenance
- Accommodate diverse programming appropriate for the season and time-of-day, such as:
 - Greenmarkets/farmers' markets
 - Street fairs and festivals
 - Ciclovía-style events
 - Volunteer events
 - "Open-street" events
 - Celebrations of Broward's diverse cultures



Street fair
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)



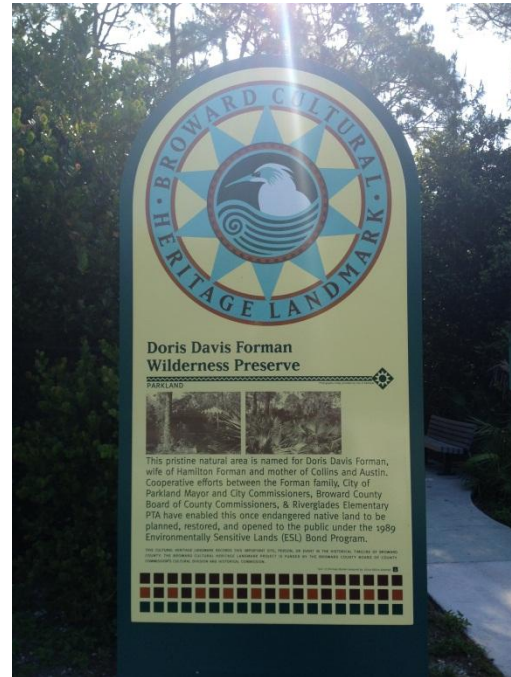
Ciclovía, Bogotá, Colombia
(Credit: Stewart Robertson)



Reflect Community Identity

Unique community identity draws from the natural setting and local history, as well as the cultural backgrounds of community residents and their architectural tastes.

- Showcase local assets including:
 - Monuments and building architecture
 - Views
 - Trees and other plants
 - Other natural features (water, topography)
 - Parks and plazas
 - History
 - People
 - Intersections transformed into meeting places
- Invite a diversity of users
- Reference or preserve continuity of local aesthetics



*Broward Cultural Heritage Monument Sign
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)*



*Sidewalk through mature tree canopy with well-placed street furniture
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)*



Move Community towards
Local Sustainability

- Utilize on-site and local resources where possible
- Use surface area for energy capture
- Use effective stormwater management techniques including
 - Bioswales
 - Rain gardens
- Use open space for growing food (community gardens)



*Rain garden as buffer between pedestrians and motor vehicles
(Credit: Stewart Robertson)*

STRATEGIES TO RE-PLACE STREETS

Re-placing streets requires building streets around a community's vision that the street can support. Re-placing a street is an opportunity to open a process wherein communities remind themselves of their strengths and establish a shared and sustainable vision for their future. Before a city can proceed with street redesigns that create a sense of place, it must address the following issues.

THE STREET'S PLACE IN THE COMMUNITY

Streets, the built environments they connect, and the people who use them compose a community. Thus, it is important to situate the street in its spatial context and identify the places it connects. It is equally important to identify whose needs the street should serve. This may include tenants and property owners, students, employees, local civic associations, and religious institutions.



*Pavement emblems in a sidewalk
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)*



PLACEMAKING PARTICIPANTS

At the heart of placemaking is the idea that each community has the means and the potential to create its own public spaces. Before a city can proceed with street redesigns that attend to the multiple functions of public space through placemaking, it is important to identify who needs to be involved to frame the meaning of place and the vision for that community and to provide the needed information, resources, and expertise to realize that vision.



*B-Cycle Station well-situated within the public space
(Credit: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.)*

The Community

Since place is an outgrowth of community character, re-placing should invite the collective influence of a community's diverse residents and users. In re-placing a street, it is important to establish who has a stake in the neighborhood, and give all of these groups and individuals the opportunity to come to the table and contribute. As noted above, the groups may include tenants and property owners, students, employees, and community-based groups like civic associations and religious institutions. The appropriate public space functions of streets should be defined by these multiple users, often referred to as "stakeholders."

Multiple Agencies

Within a local jurisdiction, multiple agencies should be included and engaged in re-placing a street. A department of transportation alone cannot create a street that is a place. Any agency with responsibility for the regulation, construction, operations, or maintenance on or adjacent to the street should be included in the project early in the process. In addition to the department of transportation, this might include public works, the parks department, utilities, and the planning or zoning department. All agencies must bring their needs and constraints to the table, but more importantly they must understand the community's vision and goals for making the street a place. They can then begin considering what they need to do to carry out the will of their community.



A Multi-Disciplinary Team

A successful street is a complex place, and the information, insight, and skills required to make it a successful place are many and diverse. It is beyond the experience of any one profession to deal with any of these issues. The role of professionals is as a resource for the community and to implement the community's vision.

THE PLACEMAKING PROCESS

The placemaking process should be fun, engaging, and empowering for a community; build on existing human resources; and result in increased community social capital. Chapter 3, "Community Engagement," provides the details of the type of public process that should be used to ensure community involvement and place-based planning. Below are processes especially important to placemaking.



*Active bus stop with bicycle commuters
(Credit: Bikes Belong Foundation)*

Establish a Community Vision of What the Street Is and Should Be

Infrastructure forecasts what later springs from the built environment: a street's public space functions can be an inducement to a community's growth aspirations and not just an accommodation of existing behavior. Determining the optimal uses and design for a given community's streets involves identifying the strengths and needs of its users. Because it involves a scalar adjustment, this is the most important distinction between a street designed to be a place, with many functions, and a street designed for the single function of maximizing car throughput. A process that allows the community of street users to define these strengths and needs and establish a vision for the street is critical.

Involve the Public in Assessing the Strength, Needs and Opportunities on the Street

The project must start by going directly to the residents and neighborhoods to evaluate and establish a vision for the street. A critical part of this will be an assessment of whether places on the street are performing well or need improvement. The assessment should include a grassroots identification of needs for enhancement of underperforming places and opportunities for the creation of new places so that the street can achieve the critical mass of places needed to function as a destination itself. In addition to places on the street, the community should be engaged in an on-site diagnosis of the street itself to determine how it is performing. A variety of tools and audits exist for such assessments, but at heart they should



engage the community in assessing the characteristics, described in the previous section, that make a street a place.

Establish a Community Vision Based on This Assessment

The community process should result in a community-generated vision for what the street can and should be, including the things people should be able to do on the street and the way that people feel doing them. The vision should be generated by people who use the street. Such a vision is generally quite realistic and practical yet contains innovative ideas because the vision is grounded in reality but isn't generated by just one individual or group.

The vision should contain:

- A mission statement of goals.
- A definition of how the street will be used and by whom.
- A statement of the desired character of the street.
- Suggestions and a conceptual idea of how the street could be designed.
- Models or examples of places that community members would like the street to be like or elements they would like to use.



*Sun Trolley on Fort Lauderdale Beach
(Credit: Luisa Fernanda Arbeláez)*

Develop a Plan Based on This Vision

There will need to be a plan for realizing the vision. It might not include every step to realize the vision, but it should begin to lay out next steps and identify things that all partners, including the agencies, the professionals, and the community, can do to move re-placing the street forward.

Prioritize Interventions Based on This Vision

The vision will contain many ideas. However, some will be more important or more critical than others. Additionally, some will be easier to implement than others. The community will need to prioritize individual ideas and strategies in order to begin to take action in re-placing the street.



Select and Implement Short-Term/Temporary/Pilot Projects

First on the action plan should be short-term or pilot projects. Such projects can be a way of testing ideas for long term change at a lower cost while providing flexibility for adaptation and change. Such projects also give people confidence that change is occurring and that the ideas they have contributed matter. This is important because re-placing streets takes time, and smaller, simpler changes can provide small steps that keep people engaged in the process of placemaking. Short-term and pilot projects allow people to see how the street is working with changes introduced gradually over time, enabling people's perceptions of how the street functions.

New York, San Francisco, Portland, and other cities have quickly transformed streets into vibrant public space with such techniques as

- Establishing non-vehicular space with planter boxes, temporary curbs, and wooden platforms
- Painting the pavement under the newly repurposed space
- Bringing in portable tables, chairs, and awnings
- Incorporating decorative street painting projects



*Examples of low-cost, short-term devices that transform streets:
San Francisco, CA (Credit: Sky Yim)*

Establish a Maintenance and Management Plan

Maintenance and management is critical because streets are not static—they change daily, weekly, and seasonally—and streets must adapt and be flexible to this change. Thus, public space management may be required. Management becomes especially critical where events, such as farmers' markets, fairs, festivals, and Ciclovías, are programmed. Great streets are also well loved and well used. To sustain a quality street environment, the community must commit to leverage local resources such as Associations and Improvement Districts for a long-term investment in the re-placed street.



Examples of low-cost, short-term devices that transform streets:
Broadway, New York, New York (Credit: Paul Zykovsky)



This page left blank intentionally.