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TACTICAL URBAN INTERVENTIONS AS INITIATORS OF LONG-TERM TRANSFORMATIONS IN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

TAKTIČKE URBANE INTERVENCIJE KAO POKRETAČI DUGOROČNIH PROMJENA U JAVNIM OTVORENIM PROSTORIMA



Figure 1: Times Square's transformation through the years
Slika 1: Transformacija Times Square kroz godine

The subject of this research is tactical urban interventions in public open spaces, analyzed through their role in initiating long-term transformations within the urban structure.
The dynamics and adaptability of tactical urbanism form the basis of its transformative potential, allowing tactical interventions to continuously respond to the ever-changing challenges of urban environments. Defined as temporary, low-cost, flexible, and participatory, these interventions are increasingly used as tools for revitalizing neglected areas, testing new urban planning solutions, and addressing socio-economic and environmental challenges. Although temporary in character, tactical interventions can initiate long-term spatial, social, and functional changes in public open spaces. While their short-term effectiveness has been extensively researched, the conditions under which such interventions evolve into enduring urban transformations and the factors that influence their long-term sustainability remain insufficiently explained.

Predmet istraživanja su taktičke urbane intervencije u javnim otvorenim prostorima, analizirane kroz njihovu ulogu iniciranja dugoročnih promjena u urbanoj strukturi.
Dinamika i prilagodljivost taktičkog urbanizma predstavljaju temelj njegovog transformativnog potencijala, koji omogućuje taktičkim intervencijama da se kontinuirano prilagođavaju stalno promjenjivim urbanim izazovima. Takve intervencije, definirane kao privremene, niskobudžetne fleksibilne i participativne postaju sve učestaliji alat u revitalizaciji zapuštenih prostora, testiranju novih urbanističkih rješenja te odgovoru na suvremene socioekonomske i okolišne izazove. Iako privremenog karaktera, taktičke intervencije mogu inicirati dugoročne prostorne, društvene i funkcionalne promjene u javnim otvorenim prostorima. Premda je njihova privremena učinkovitost u značajnoj mjeri istraživana, nedovoljno je razjašnjeno pod kojim uvjetima takve intervencije prerastaju u dugoročne urbane transformacije te koji čimbenici utječu na njihovu dugoročnu održivost.

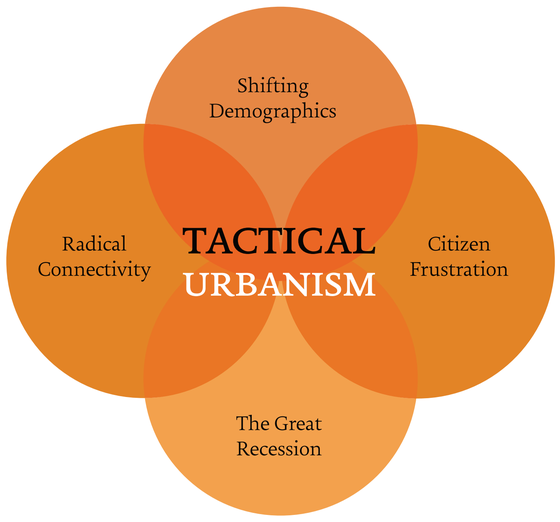

Figure 2: Four converging trends and events have helped increase the use of Tactical Urbanism interventions (Source: Lydon, M., & Garcia, A. (2015). Tactical Urbanism: Short-Term Action for Long-Term Change. Island Press.)
Slika 2: Četiri istodobna trenda i događaja potaknula su širu upotrebu taktičkog urbanizma



Figure 3: Building from the success of the early pilot projects, the New York City Police Athletic League established a summer play streets program in 1914, which included supervised car-free areas for children to play sports and games and take part in cultural activities (Source: Lydon, M., & Garcia, A. (2015). Tactical Urbanism: Short-Term Action for Long-Term Change. Island Press.)
Slika 3: Nakon uspjeha ranih pilot-projekata, Policijska atletska liga New Yorka 1914. godine pokreće ljetni program Play Streets s nadziranim zonama bez prometa, namijenjenima dječjoj igri, sportu i kulturnim aktivnostima

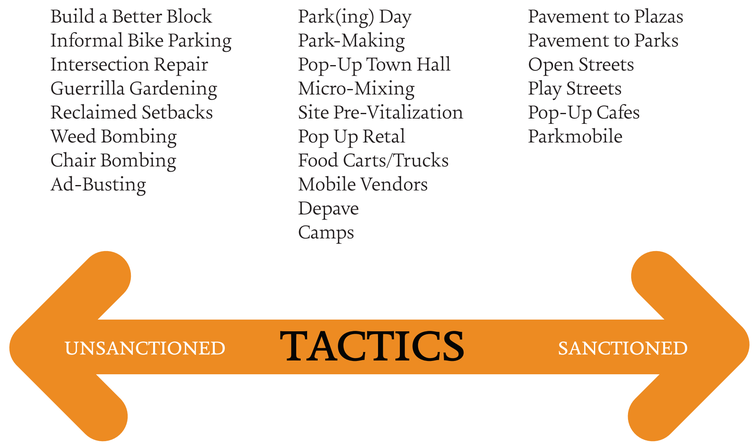

Figure 4: The Tactical Urbanism spectrum: Well-considered projects that begin as unsanctioned often become sanctioned over time (Source: Lydon, M., & Garcia, A. (2015). Tactical Urbanism: Short-Term Action for Long-Term Change. Island Press.)
Slika 4: Spektar taktičkog urbanizma: Promišljeni projekti koji započinju kao neslužbeni često s vremenom postaju službeno odobreni

The aim of the research is to systematize examples of tactical urban interventions that have gradually evolved from temporary actions into long-term urban transformations and to identify common patterns that contribute to their successful spatial and social integration. The study applies a comparative tabular analysis of twenty international examples, selected based on their transformation from temporary to long-term spatial solutions. The analysis encompasses a set of variables that include the city, initiator, timeframe, level of community participation, spatial context, institutional support, and key success factors.

Cilj istraživanja je sistematizirati primjere taktičkih urbanih intervencija koje su od privremenih postupno prerasle u dugoročne urbane transformacije te utvrditi zajedničke obrasce njihove uspješne prostorne i društvene integracije. U okviru istraživanja provodi se komparativna tablična analiza dvadeset međunarodnih primjera taktičkih urbanih intervencija, odabranih prema kriteriju njihove transformacije iz privremenih u dugoročna prostorna rješenja. Analiza obuhvaća skup varijabli koje uključuju grad, inicijatora, vremenski okvir, razinu sudjelovanja zajednice, prostorni kontekst, institucionalnu podršku te ključne faktore uspjeha.

City	Intervention name	Year of initiation	Year of permanence	Community role	Type of space	Institutional support	Key success factors
Copenhagen	Strøget Pedestrianization	1962	1964	Moderate – initial opposition, later acceptance	Main urban street	High – municipal decision and implementation	Gradual implementation, empirical evaluation, political support
Pontevedra	Pontevedra Pedestrian Transformation	1999	2001	Medium – gradual inclusion and consensus	Historic center / streets	Very high – long-term city policy	Policy consistency, performance measurement, safety
Melbourne / Sydney	Public Space Public Life – Pilot Projects	2005	2007	Medium – observation and surveys	Squares and streets	High – strategic urban planning	Empirical evaluation, gradual approach, people-oriented design
San Francisco	Park(ing) Day	2005	2010	High – global civic participation	Parking spaces	Gradually increasing – recognized through parklet programs	Simplicity of concept, visual appeal, participation
New York	Pavement to Plazas	2007	2010	Medium to high – BIDs and local associations	Streets / parking lots transformed into plazas	High – NYC DOT program	Pilot phases, partnerships with BIDs, quick testing, evaluations
New York	Times Square Redesign	2009	2017	Medium – support from businesses and BIDs	Traffic street / square converted to pedestrian space	Very high – NYC DOT + City	Temporary prototypes, measurable safety and economic impacts
Dallas	Better Block	2010	2012	Very high – grassroots volunteers and merchants	Streets and squares	Medium – later recognized and supported	Low cost, visibility, rapid prototyping
London	Play Streets / School Streets	2013	2018	High – parental and school initiatives	Streets around schools	High – municipal support policies	Shared interest of parents and authorities, safety, health
Barcelona	Superblocks (Superilles)	2016	2020	Medium – inclusion through public discussions and surve	Street networks / blocks	High – city strategic program	Political will, measurable environmental effects, model flexibility
Paris	Rue de Rivoli	2017	2021–2022	Medium – strong public interest, city-led	Main urban street	High – Ville de Paris, Plan Vélo	Rapid temporary implementation; safety; sustainable mobility
Toronto	King Street Pilot	2017	2019	Medium – evaluation and public debate	Traffic corridor	Very high – municipal transport department	Performance data, evaluation, and political support
Milan	Piazze Aperte	2018	2019 – ongoing	High	Square / pedestrian zone	High – Comune di Milano, AMAT, GDCI, Bloomberg Associates	Community participation; mobility; safety; environmental impact

Table 1: Thirteen representative cases out of twenty analyzed tactical urban interventions are presented (Source: Author's comparative analysis, 2025.)

Grad	Naziv intervencije / Intervention name	Godina početka	Godina prelaska u trajno	Uloga zajednice	Vrsta prostora	Institucionalna podrška	Ključni faktori uspjeha
Copenhagen	Strøget Pedestrianization	1962	1964	Umjerena – početno protivljenje, kasnije prihvaćanje	Glavna gradska ulica	Visoka – gradska odluka i provedba	Postupna provedba, empirijska evaluacija, politička podrška
Pontevedra	Pontevedra Pedestrian Transformation	1999	2001	Srednja – postupno uključivanje i konsenzus	Povijesna jezgra/ulice	Vrlo visoka – dugoročna gradska politika	Dosljednost politike, mjerenje učinaka, sigurnost
Melbourne/Sydney	Public Space Public Life – Pilot Projects	2005	2007	Srednja – promatranje i ankete	Trgovi i ulice	Visoka – strateško planiranje gradova	Empirijska evaluacija, postupnost, dizajn za ljude
San Francisco	Park(ing) Day	2005	2010	Visoka – globalno gradansko sudjelovanje	Parkirališta	Postepeno rastuća – prepoznato kroz parklet programe	Jednostavnost koncepta, vizualna privlačnost, participacija
New York	Pavement to Plazas	2007	2010-	Srednja – visoka (BIDs i lokalne udruge)	Ulice/parkirališta pretvorena u trgove	Visoka – NYC DOT program	Pilot-faze, partnerstvo s BIDs, brzo-testiranje, evaluacije
New York	Times Square Redesign	2009	2017	Srednja – podrška gospodarstvenika i BIDs	Prometno čvorište/ pretvoreno u pješački prostor	Vrlo visoka – NYC DOT + grad	Privremeni prototipovi, mjerljivi sigurnosni i ekonomski učinci
Dallas	Better Block	2010	2012	Vrlo visoka – grassroots volonteri i trgovci	Ulice i trgovi	Srednja – naknadno prepoznato i podržano	Niska cijena, vidljivost, brzi prototipovi
London	Play Streets / School Streets	2013	2018	Visoka – roditeljske i školske inicijative	Ulice oko škola	Visoka – gradske politike podrške	Zajednički interes roditelja i uprave, sigurnost, zdravlje
Barcelona	Superblocks (Superilles)	2016	2020	Srednja – uključivanje kroz javne rasprave i ankete	Uličnе mreže / blokovi	Visoka – gradski strateški program	Politička volja, mjerljivi ekološki učinci, fleksibilnost modela
Pariz	Rue de Rivoli	2017	2022	Srednja (izražen javni interes, vođeno od grada)	Glavna gradska ulica	Visoka (Ville de Paris, Plan Vélo)	Brza privremena implementacija; sigurnost; održiva mobilnost
Toronto	King Street Pilot	2017	2019	Srednja – evaluacije i javne rasprave	Prometnica	Vrlo visoka – gradski prometni odjel	Podaci o učinkovitosti, evaluacija i politička podrška
Milano	Piazze Aperte	2018	2019– u tijeku	Visoka	Trg / pješačka zona	Visoka (Comune di Milano, AMAT, GDCI, Bloomberg Associates)	Sudjelovanje zajednice; mobilnost; sigurnost; ekološki učinci

Tablica 1: Prikazano je 13 reprezentativnih primjera od ukupno 20 analiziranih taktičkih urbanih intervencija (Izvor: Autorična komparativna analiza, 2025.)

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS: institutional support - community participation - phased implementation - empirical evaluation - political support - public visibility
KLJUČNI FAKTORI USPJEHA: institucionalna podrška - sudjelovanje zajednice - fazna provedba - empirijska evaluacija - politička podrška - javna vidljivost

Early and strong institutional support, active community participation, and a phased approach to implementation have been identified as key factors contributing to their successful transformation. Based on these results, the research will proceed with a detailed analysis of tactical urban interventions within a selected geographical area and timeframe, aiming for a deeper understanding of the relationship between the short-term effectiveness of tactical actions and the long-term transformations they generate within urban environments. This in-depth analysis may lead to the identification of specific models that embody the logic of these interrelations and their corresponding procedural frameworks.

Rana i visoka institucionalna podrška, aktivno sudjelovanje zajednice te fazni pristup provedbi identificirani kao ključni čimbenici njihove uspješne transformacije.
Na temelju dobivenih rezultata, istraživanje će se usmjeriti na daljnju detaljnu analizu taktičkih urbanih intervencija odabranog geografskog područja i vremenskog okvira, s ciljem dubljeg razumijevanja međusobnog odnosa između kratkoročne učinkovitosti taktičkih intervencija i dugoročnih transformacija koje one potiču u urbanim okruženjima. Dubinska analiza tog odnosa može dovesti do identifikacije specifičnih modela koji utjelovljuju logiku odgovarajućih odnosa i njihovu pripadajuću proceduralnost.