



TACTICAL PLACEMAKING



PLANNER'S PORTFOLIO

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PLANNER'S PORTFOLIO **TACTICAL PLACEMAKING**

- 1 OVERVIEW**
- 2 DEMONSTRATION**
- 4 PILOT PROJECTS**
- 6 PERMANENT INSTALLATION**

Planner's Portfolio Series

The Planner's Portfolio Series is an outreach effort developed by Delaware County Council in order to explore the planning concepts available for communities to take advantage of the unique opportunities across Delaware County.

The pattern on the cover page, and found throughout this series, represents the importance of each individual component in the larger network. The Planner's Portfolio Series explores several of these components and how they can support community character in Delaware County.

For more information, contact the Delaware County Planning Department at 610-891-5200 or visit www.co.delaware.pa.us/planning to see the complete Planner's Portfolio series.

OVERVIEW

Tactical placemaking is an increasingly popular approach to planning that emphasizes testing projects through a series of phases rather than constructing projects straight from the drawing board. Common examples include crosswalks, pedestrian plazas, and bicycle lanes. Projects begin as demonstrations, become pilot projects, and then, if successful, are installed permanently. Though projects might not follow these steps exactly, they are useful in understanding the ideas behind tactical placemaking and why the approach is advantageous. The iterative process of tactical placemaking has the benefit of incremental development. Projects begin short-term, low-risk, and inexpensive but lead to long term installation. Projects are often DIY and hands-on, engaging the public in a way traditional construction projects cannot. This also means the public has more input, making tactical placemaking an important tool to help address community needs. For these reasons, and many more, tactical placemaking can be a powerful tool for both planners and communities.

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrations are temporary, inexpensive and experimental installations



PILOT PROJECT

A pilot serves as a short-term, intermediary phase that involves organizational support.



PERMANENT INSTALLATION

Permanent installations use the earlier research to create long-term structures.



DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrations are small, often citizen-led, temporary installations. They use inexpensive and easy to obtain materials, such as traffic cones and chalk, to experiment with potential project designs. Projects are somewhat informal, but leaders should coordinate with PennDOT as necessary. Some of the most common demonstrations are painted crosswalks and bike lanes on high-volume streets or curb bump outs to reduce crossing distance. Many projects are case studies for long term projects. For example, a bike lane outlined with traffic cones for a demonstration may later become a permanent bike lane. Other demonstrations are temporary, centered around events rather than long term projects. Pop-up dining events are a great example of this. Streets are blocked off to traffic, allowing people to use the streets as a pedestrian and community spaces.



Springfield Township, PA



Lewiston, ME (street-plans.com)



Saxer Avenue, Springfield, PA



Saxer Avenue, Springfield, PA



Media, PA

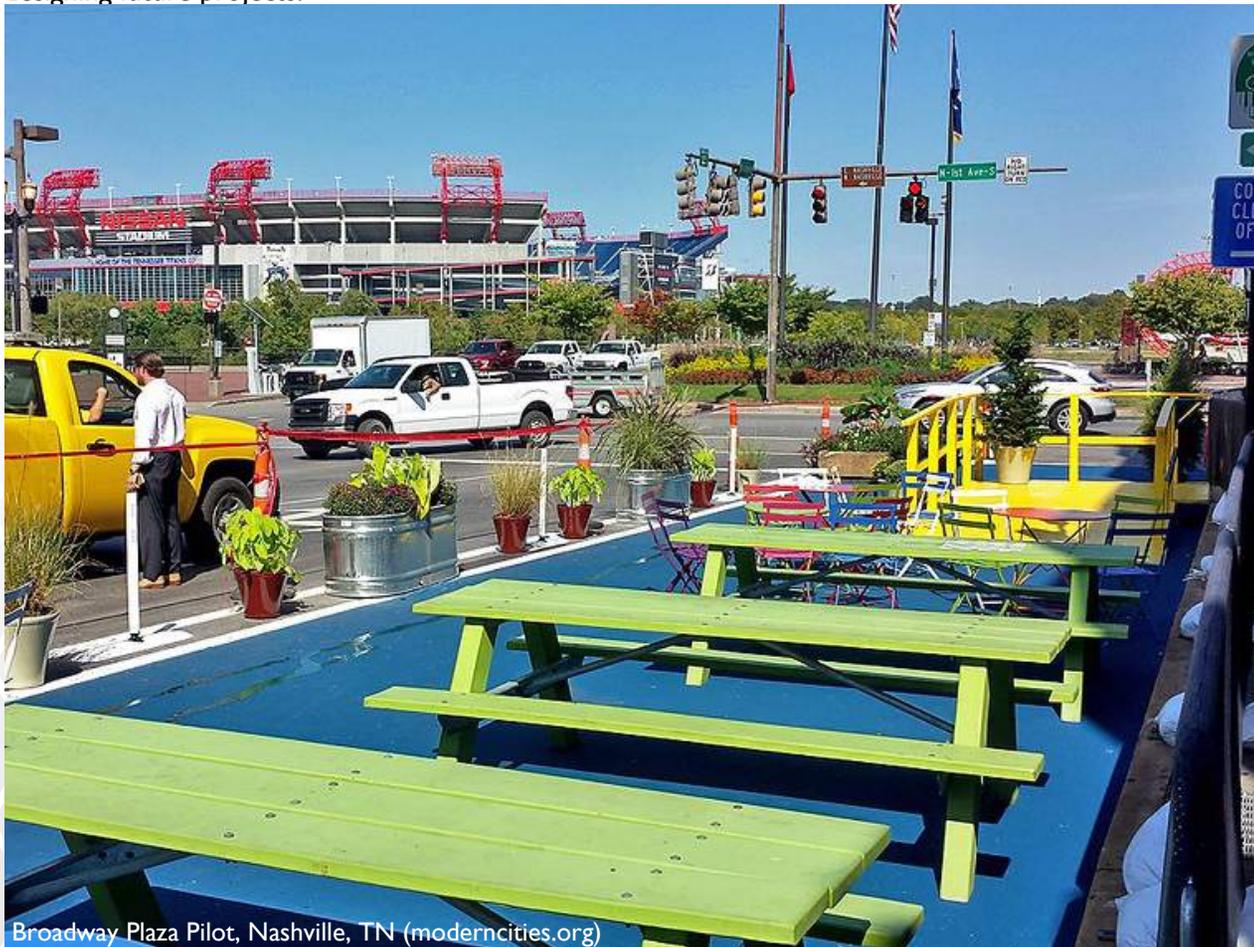


Media, PA

Event-centered demonstrations can provide fun community spaces for locals to interact. Dining Under the Stars is a pop-up dining event that occurs every Wednesday in Media in the summer. Pop-up dining on Saxer is a similar event that occurs in Springfield. As pictured above, pop-up dining provides a great public space for people to come together and enjoy their community. Events like these not only give citizens a greater sense of community, but they also bring people to small businesses, helping to support the local economy.

PILOT PROJECTS

Pilot projects involve larger budgets and greater degrees of sophistication than demonstrations. This phase serves as an intermediary between a simple demonstration and a permanent installment. It is not necessary for a pilot to begin as a demonstration, but demonstrations are a good way to identify public needs. Pilot projects use more durable materials such as traffic paint, steel furniture, and planters. A demonstration that marked out a curbside extension with traffic cones might be improved by a pilot project with bright paint and decorative barriers. Better materials have higher aesthetic value than demonstrations, resulting in more public use. Street-to-plaza conversion projects rely on pilots as they require experimentation before implementation. It is important to carefully research public input during the pilot. This research is not only essential in creating a well-designed final installment, but also in designing future projects.



(Oregon Department of Transportation)



Lansdowne, PA



Lansdowne, PA



Lansdowne, PA

In Delaware County, there is currently a pilot underway in Lansdowne Borough for a new plaza. The area is a parking lot that has long served as a public meeting place. Some events held in this parking lot include the Lansdowne Farmer’s market, the Memorial Day 5K, and the Christmas tree lighting. Events like these are good examples of public demonstrations that point out ideal locations for pilot projects.

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PERMANENT INSTALLATION

Permanent structures are installed after thorough consideration and experimentation. With the benefits of public input from the demonstration and experimentation in the pilot project, final installations are built to last. Work on permanent installments is more expensive than in previous phases, but they are far more likely to succeed than without the iterative process provided by demonstrations and pilot projects.

Permanent structures use sophisticated and long-lasting materials such as concrete, tiling, and railing as it is unlikely changes will be necessary. With better materials, there is also higher aesthetic value and utility than in the pilot phase, making installations more appealing and useful to the community. Through tactical placemaking, permanent projects are better designed and significantly less risky.



Baltimore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA



Baltimore Avenue (Photo Courtesy of University City District)

The corner of Baltimore Avenue and 48th street in Philadelphia provides a unique example of tactical placemaking. Rather than relying on cones to outline a curb extension, one naturally occurred in the snow as vehicle and foot traffic compacted high use areas. This naturally eased traffic and created pedestrian space. Planners, observing these patterns, later created a permanent curb extension, helping traffic calming and providing dining space at the café.

PERMANENT INSTALLATION

Plum Street Mall is a plaza in Media with access to local shops and seating open to the community. People can come in and enjoy coffee and food or play board games. Though the mall was not created through the iterative process, it is a great example of the kind of project that would be successful with a tactical placemaking framework.



Plum Street Mall, Media, PA



OTHER PLANNER'S PORTFOLIOS:



COMPLETE STREETS

April 2016



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April 2016



DOWNTOWN CASE STUDIES

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Media, Pennsylvania 19063

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