



GrayIsGreen

Who are we?

Gray Is Green is an online gathering of older adult Americans aspiring to create a green legacy for the future. As environmentally conscious elders, we respond to a generational call: to co-create a future of economic justice, ecological sustainability and social justice.

We hold next generations of humans in mind and consider the future of ecosystems and other species. We are alert to the historic challenges facing our planet. And we are aware of the question arising from descendants generations hence:

What did you do, when you knew?

What do we do?

We aspire to embrace our eldership, living beyond consumerism and ageism. **Our Curriculum for Gray-Green Living** offers a variety of ways to join—and re-engage with—this elder movement.

We offer a periodic newsletter, a speaker's bureau, online resources, a [Facebook page](#) for relevant updates. In partnership with congenial organizations, we serve as a central clearinghouse of ideas and communications for older adults interested in greening their lives, learning about sustainability, advocating for sound public policy, being creative stewards or grandparents, emerging as elders, and mentoring young people.

*We invite **you** to get involved!*

www.grayisgreen.org

Community Resilience Tactical Urbanism

Tactical urbanism, also known as tactical placemaking, is a strategy for revitalizing cities and towns that allows citizens to take their public spaces into their own hands. Placemaking¹ is a way of city planning that tries to create places that foster community interaction and are deeply integrated into people's lives. However, this kind of planning is often difficult to get through slow moving or conservative government planning committees. Though the term was credited to Mike Lydon in 2010², tactical urbanism is a broad movement that empowers citizens to make places for themselves by coming up with inexpensive methods of changing the urban landscape around them.

Five Characteristics

The Street Plans Collaborative³ defines tactical urbanism as an approach to urban change that has these characteristics. Tactical urbanism works in phases to change the built environment of cities and towns. By making changes one step at a time, you can be flexible and respond to what works and what does not. To that same end, tactical urbanism should be short-term and realistic.

It's all about making little changes and easily executable plans so that your neighborhood can experience an immediate difference. Solutions should be cheap and easy to

set up, so that not too much is invested if things go differently than expected. Tactical urbanism is a local project, and it involves people getting involved in their own neighborhoods and coming up with solutions that work for the places you know best. Ultimately, tactical urbanism is all about bringing people and local institutions together, so that each can benefit from the other.

Asphalt to Public Place

Some interventions that have been popular in tactical urbanism movements involve converting street space to other uses, either temporarily or permanently. For example, Park(ing) Day⁴ is a worldwide event where people in cities across the globe convert street side parking into public parks by setting up potted plants, seating, and other temporary landscaping. Pavement to Plazas⁵ is another method where people transform wide streets or parking lots into plazas where food carts, public seating, and greenery can turn asphalt into pedestrian friendly public space.

Though these initiatives are often short term until permanent changes can be made, the conversion of Time Square⁶ into a permanent pedestrian plaza was a monumental success of this strategy. Making streets narrower by adding bike lanes or pop-up cafes can also help make

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Community Resilience: Tactical Urbanism

streets into community friendly places, rather than just a way to get from one destination to the next.

Guerilla Greening

Green spaces in cities have a huge range of positive effects on human health and wellbeing.⁷ Tactical

urbanism provides tools to green neighborhoods without waiting for slow and expensive solutions. Citizens can remove a section of unnecessary pavement in a driveway or parking lot, and turn it into green space. Not only does this beautify the area, but it also

allows rainwater to be more easily absorbed into the groundwater, and reduces some of the harmful effects of runoff.⁸ Communities can also practice guerilla gardening by planting in vacant lots or uncared for sidewalk greenery.

1 see *Urban Placemaking* subtopic

2 http://islandpress.org/tactical-urbanism?utm_source=Bikes+and+Cities+Emial+with+Carlton+Reid+and+Mike+Lydon.&utm_campaign=date+change+and+panel&utm_medium=email

3 http://issuu.com/streetplanscollaborative/docs/tactical_urbanism_vol_2_final?e=4528751/2585800

4 <http://parkingday.org/>

5 <http://pavementtoplazas.com/about>

6 <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/bloomberg-crows-times-square-pedestrian-plaza-article-1.1557047>

7 see *Urban Greenspace and Human Health* subtopic

8 see *Challenge of Impervious Surfaces* subtopic



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