Bibik Nataliya, PhD
O. M. Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv, Ukraine

TACTICAL URBANISM AS A MODERN ALTERNATIVE WAY OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

In the pursuit of progress, citizens are typically invited to engage in a process that is fundamentally broken: rather than being asked to contribute to incremental change at the neighbohood or block level, residents are asked to react to proposals that are often conceived for interests disconnected from their own, and at a scale for which they have little control. In the pursuit of resilient neighborhoods, cities, and metropolitican regions, surmounting the challenges inherent to this «public» process continues to prove difficult.

Improving the livability of our towns and cities commonly starts at the street, block, or building scale. While larger scale efforts do have their place, incremental, smallscale improvements are increasingly seen as a way to stage more substantial investments. This approach allows a host of local actors to test new concepts before making substantial political and financial commitments. Sometimes sanctioned, sometimes not, these actions are commonly referred to as «guerilla urbanism», «popup urbanism», «city repair», «D.I.Y. urbanism» or most common as «tactical urbanism».

The term tactical urbanism is often used to refer to low-cost, temporary interventions that improve local neighborhoods. The term «tactical urbanism» came into common use in 2010-2011 when a group of young urbanists created the publication Tactical Urbanism: Short-term Action, Long-term Change, which showcased temporary public space improvement projects from across North America. The authors define tactical urbanism as small-scale, short-term interventions meant to inspire long-term change, adding that tactical urbanism as a city-building approach features five characteristics:

• A deliberate, phased approach to instigating change;
• An offering of local ideas for local planning challenges;
• Short-term commitment and realistic expectations;
• Low-risks, with possibly a high reward; and;
• The development of social capital between citizens, and the building of organizational capacity between public/private institutions, non-profit/ NGOs, and their constituents.

Tactical urbanism is also a way to build public awareness among those not directl involved wit the physical intervention. Again, in Portland, Oregon, a «guerilla crosswalk» was painted across a busy street with inexpensive white paint and rollers. Although the city typically removes unauthorized signs and pavement markings in short order, the temporary improvement directly communicated the need, and a real desire for better pedestrian infrastructure. Similarly, the Toronto-based Urban Repair Squad maintains a website that gathers images of D.I.Y. urban repairs in public spaces. They recently featured images of symbols painted on

ordinary roads indicating the need for future extensions of the city's bicycle network. In some cases, cities follow the lead of their citizens by implementing short-term, low-budget livability improvements initiated by citizen-activists. In other cases, it's the city who takes the lead. New York City, for example, is currently designing and implementing more permanent changes to it's many street design «pilot projects». Such project have cost very little and have largely been deemed a success. Numerous other cities are now undertaking a similar approach. The tactical approach to street design is the pattern, and New York has become the pattern city

Tactical and temporary urbanism appears to hold potential to be incorporated within professional urban planning practice. Small-scale, temporary projects allow planners to observe interventions on the ground and make adjustments before committing the time and resources needed to complete long-term projects. Planners can also use temporary projects as a mechanism to actively engage citizens in the process of citybuilding.

Further, temporary and pilot projects can improve the responsiveness of planning departments, allowing projects to develop incrementally and to make use of local resources more effectively and creatively. Successfully incorporating tactical and temporary projects into the practice of urban planning does require consideration of planners' professional responsibilities, and the underlying practices of good planning should always lead the way. As planners seek to improve local communities and support the well-being of citizens, temporary interventions should be adapted to address the local context and conditions of where they are being placed. Projects are also likely to have more support from community stakeholders, and politically, if they are grounded in the vision statement of a City or respond to an expressed policy goal or need. Planners also need to be conscious of the limitations of tactical and temporary urbanism as tool; however, an incremental and experimental approach to planning can be useful for improving public space design, fostering citizen leadership, and encouraging new forms of community and economic development. Overall, tactical and temporary projects appear to offer planners an opportunity to respond to local needs by improving the resilience and adaptability of both planning processes as well as the policies they create. However, the role that planners play with respect to tactical and temporary urbanism is not one-size fits all. The degree to which planners are active in the implementation of projects and their comfort with leading projects involving some uncertainty can inform how they might perceive their role. Further, the expectations of local stakeholders, the structure of municipal bureaucracy, and the degree to which uncertainty and risk are accommodated within the planning culture of each municipality will likely impact how a planner engages with these projects.