

# auri research brief

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## Street Revitalization based on Tactical Urbanism

### Introduction

Generally speaking, street-based Urbanism considers the street to be a space where roads, public areas, and surrounding buildings are integrated. Street space is understood as the constituent unit of urban planning and design. Street-based Urbanism has become a global urban design trend, emphasizing the importance of street revitalization when engaging in urban regeneration and livable city-making. The political trend of street revitalization also serves political focuses from vehicle-oriented streets to more pedestrian-oriented environments.

This political trend serves to change street space and other urban environments by encouraging their flexible utilization. General urban development and design trends be less likely to respond to the changes and movements of street spaces and their surrounding environments, due to rigid and irreversible designing characteristics. Urban planners and designers have endeavored to provide various alternative suggestions and proposals in response to the limitation of general urban development.

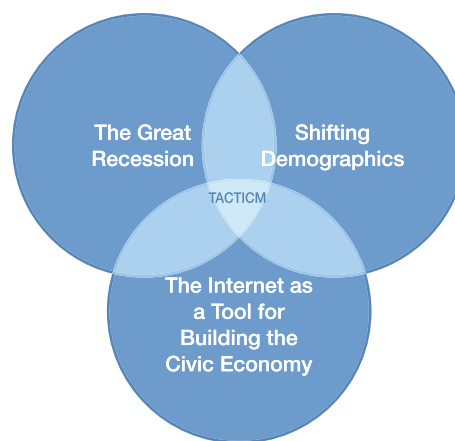
Other countries have approached the creation of more flexible and responsive streets by applying Tactical Urbanism, a philosophy characterized by small-scale and temporary treatments such as Pilot Treatment, Quick-Fix-to-Permanent, and Informal Improvement types of techniques. Tactical Urbanism-oriented

street revitalization is likely to yield temporary and smaller-scale treatments, facilitating the evaluation of project results/performances in order to determine if such projects should be extended or expanded. This type of approach is a necessary shift away from the quantitative growth and large-scale development towards more qualitative improvements and small-scale revitalization.

It is difficult, however, to find Tactical Urbanism-oriented urban planning/design techniques and practices in Korea. These planning techniques and institutionally applicable support plans in Korean environments should be studied; this would encourage more flexible utilization of street spaces and a greater amount of street revitalization. Therefore, this research identifies Tactical Urbanism-oriented planning and designing techniques that could contribute to street revitalization in Korea. This research also proposes institutional implementation plans.

### Concepts and Characteristics of Tactical Urbanism

Tactical Urbanism can be understood as a practical urban planning and design theory that has emerged to overcome the limitations of the New Urbanism. New Urbanism was a response to reflections on the 20th century and certain failures in modern city planning popular at that time. This type of city planning was characterized by features such as the recurrence of high-rise buildings and sweeping standardization, the separation of use based on functionality, disconnection of pedestrians from vehicles via road expansion, and the securing of open spaces within the city. These features resulted in an increased crime rate, higher maintenance costs, and inflated traffic volume that comes with urban sprawl. Responding to these problems, New Urbanism proposes the pedestrian-friendliness, mixed use, diversity, sustainability, and so on. New Urbanism focuses on human-scale urban planning and design and the restoration of locality.



Background of Tactical Urbanism

In the aftermath of the sub-prime mortgage crisis of 2008, the global economic downturn and the social changes such as slow economic growth, low birth rate, and a general aging of the population, have led to efforts towards urban regeneration in order to revitalize declining cities (as opposed to) planning and developing new areas. Existing rational and comprehensive plans are less likely to work in these conditions, due to the dramatic changes that have occurred in the political, economic, and social systems we once expected would last forever. Examples of malfunctioning comprehensive plans include the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the bankruptcy of transnational corporations, and the general uncertainty attached to human civilization resulting from natural disasters such as climate change, earthquakes, and tsunamis.

To respond to such changes timely and appropriately, Tactical Urbanism proposes beginning with temporary and small-scale urban treatments to evaluate their long-term growth potential in urban areas. This feature serves as a highly useful solution for modern cities experiencing transformations in the social structure, pressure to reduce the financial expenditures, a transferring of planning authority to the community, and the participation of local residents and various stakeholders. Because of the characteristics of such temporary and small-scale urban projects, Tactical Urbanism is sometimes referred to as Guerilla Urbanism, Pop-up, or Trial-and-Error Urbanism. Since project plans are often realized by the intended users, it has also been referred to as DIY, Spontaneous, or Ad-hoc Urbanism. When an unauthorized plan is implemented, Tactical Urbanism is called Informal Urbanism.

Tactical Urbanism refers to a method of verifying the effects of urban design in advance, through temporary designs and applications implemented before a long-term policy plan is established. Tactical Urbanism can also be understood as an approach to exploring the potential of a space through temporary and small-scale changes, followed by discussing the direction of sustainable urban planning. Tactical Urbanism is a method of long-term change via short-term applications, an urban theory mainly applied to small urban space units such as a streets, blocks, and buildings.

Tactical Urbanism is based on various types of urban design. If the existing urban design has worked within a long-term planning framework. Tactical Urbanism approaches can be assessed through interim tests; if the evaluation is favorable, they can be transferred to permanent urban designs. In this sense, Tactical Urbanism can be understood as a preliminary stage of urban design.

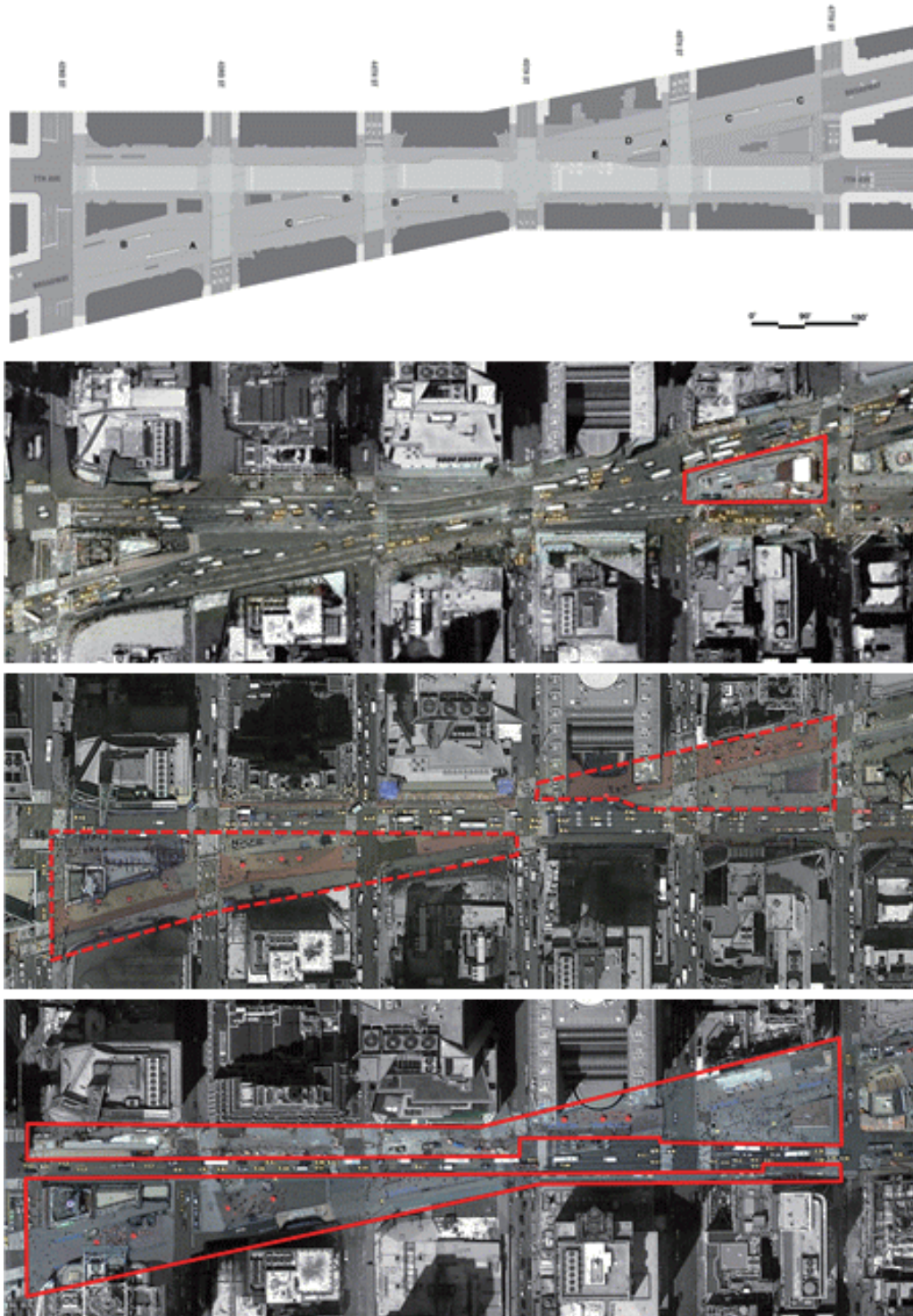
## Overseas Case Studies of Tactical Urbanism

This research investigated Tactical Urbanism-oriented street revitalization cases in the United States, Japan, and the United Kingdom. Tactical Urbanism has been globally branded in the United States; the Street Plans Collaborative is working on tactical approaches in New York, San Francisco, and Miami. In particular, the New York City Department of Transportation is pursuing various Tactical Urbanism-oriented street revitalization initiatives based on local community participation. In Japan, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism has engaged in a number of experimental projects, evaluating their performance and looking for possible street revitalization initiatives prior to the implementation of major road policies. In the United Kingdom, the central government has required spatial planning in local communities to prepare the foundation for small-scale urban improvement projects to be led by local governments and residents. In particular, various small-scale street revitalization projects were promoted in London, featuring Tactical Urbanism techniques such as a step-by-step approach and rapid application. In spite of differences in their street environments and backgrounds, this research found that these overseas cases represented common types of Tactical Urbanism-oriented street revitalization techniques and project initiatives.

In this research, these overseas cases were categorized by the types of spaces targeted. First, the techniques and initiatives were examined to determine whether the measures were implemented in existing pedestrian or traffic spaces. When the treatments were introduced in pedestrian locations, the cases were divided into idle space utilization and commercial space activation type, based on whether or not commercial facilities were considered in each. With treatments introduced in traffic spaces, cases were divided into car-free streets, squares and parks, or pedestrian and bicycle road spaces, according to the type of road space conversion.

The implications of the above overseas Tactical Urbanism-oriented street revitalization cases are as follows: ①the establishment of public/private governance through the street revitalization projects that focus on community problems promoted by the public offering; ②effective phased project implementation through a dedicated organization; and ③immediate responses to local community problems through simplified procedures.





(From the top) Design of pedestrian plaza in Times Square in New York City, Former Times Square(2008.4.), Temporary prohibition of vehicle entry and the creation of provisional plaza(2010.6.), Permanent vehicle traffic ban and the creation of pedestrian plaza(2016.6.)

Sources : (Design Plan) Snohetta(Unknown), "Times Square Reconstruction", Snohetta, <http://snohetta.com/project/9-times-square-reconstruction>.(Date of web search: 2017.4.26.); (Photo) Google Earth, Image correction and editing after using the timeline)





(Top Left) Provisional plaza painted in red after temporary road closure by arranging movable tables and chairs, (Top Right) Permanent creation of pedestrian plaza in Times Square, (Middle) Times Square separated from vehicle roads, (Bottom) Small tables and chairs in Times Square.

Sources : (Top Left) Lydon et al(2012b), Tactical Urbanism 2. New York: Street Plans, p.18, Direct Quotation; (the rest) 2017.5.16. Direct photography.

## Domestic Case Study of Tactical Urbanism

This research examined domestic cases of a Tactical Urbanism-oriented street revitalization approach. The domestic cases selected for this research included the 2013 Ecomobility World Festival in Haenggung-dong, Suwon, the Pine Street revitalization in Joongang-dong, Cheongju, the Songjeong Station market revitalization in Gwangju Metropolitan City, and the Toegyero reorganization plan case in Seoul. This research also compared these domestic cases with overseas Tactical Urbanism approaches and derived implications.

The 2013 Ecomobility World Festival case was an expanded car-free street project. For one month (September, 2013) the entirety of Haenggung-dong was designated to a car-free district. Residents and visitors were only allowed to use non-motorized vehicles in the area. For this temporary but a large-scale project, the Suwon city government operated a dedicated department for efficient administrative support and promotion. Based on the level of local community participation, the Suwon city government decided to further promoted an eco-mobility village program and certain infrastructure development. As of 2017, the Suwon city government was still promoting a “temporary” car-free street program. Compared to overseas cases, the 2013 Ecomobility World Festival exhibited a type of spatial use similar to that of the Play Street cases in the United States and the United Kingdom. In terms of the project promotion method, the evaluation of temporary project results to determine whether a project should be expanded or extended and the institutionalization of resident participation through public offerings are similar to what can be seen in the overseas cases, especially the New York City pedestrian square and plaza program. The 2013 Ecomobility World Festival, however, has primarily been led by Suwon city government in terms of planning and implementation, as well as the operation and management of the target area.

The Pine Street revitalization case was a combination of car-free street project and youth plaza project in Cheongju City, which also incorporated street revitalization programs such as a flea market, street performances, and guerrilla gardening by an association of local merchants and residents. The Pine Street revitalization was similar to certain pedestrian square and plaza projects in the United States, in that local residents performed the application, operation, and management of the street space, with the local government’s support. In particular, Pine Street is similar to the Business Improvement District’s operation and management of New York City’s pedestrian plaza areas. The programs put forth by the Pine Street revitalization project, such as car-free streets and various efforts to utilize the street space, were similar to car-free and guerrilla gardening projects seen in the United States. The Pine Street revitalization, however, did not evaluate project performances to engage in phased implementation of their small-scale efforts.



The Songjeong Station market revitalization case was a commercial street revitalization effort to restore the competitiveness of a traditional market space. The Gwangju Metropolitan City government and Hyundai Motor Group established the Gwangju Creative Innovation Center and operated a pop-up store in order to support young entrepreneurs and the utilize empty storefronts in the market. This pop-up program is less likely to be considered a Tactical Urbanism approach because it was not designed to utilize public spaces in front of stores (like the pop-up cafes overseas), but rather made uses of empty storefronts on a weekly for-rent basis. Nevertheless, improving commercial public spaces by refining signboards and remodeling storefronts, and filling empty storefronts via a micro-mixing method, can be understood as Tactical Urbanism-oriented street revitalization.

The Toegyero reorganization plan was a street environment improvement scheme to expand walking areas and green spaces by reducing traffic lanes. This plan considered the limitations of existing pedestrian environments and the local culture and landscape characteristics of Toegyero. This street environment improvement effort is similar to bicycle lane projects in the United States and Japan, in that they created bicycle-only lanes by reducing roadways. This plan, however, is difficult to categorize as a Tactical Urbanism approach because there was no process for evaluating project performances (i.e., the implementation of temporary bicycle pathways). Nevertheless, the fact that the Seoul city government set up a plan to reduce traffic lanes and to improve the walking environment is a useful example for other local governments engaging in street revitalization efforts.

#### Classification of domestic and international examples of street revitalization based on Tactical Urbanism

Classification type	Overseas examples	Domestic examples
Utilization of unused space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guerilla gardening in the U.S.</li> <li>• Ecological swimming pools in the U.K.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1913 Songjeong Station market, Gwangju Metropolitan City</li> <li>• Pine Street, Cheongju-si</li> </ul>
(Commercial) space revitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pop-up cafes and moveable shops in the U.S.</li> <li>• Small-scale mixed-use shops</li> <li>• Open cafes in Japan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1913 Songjeong Station market, Gwangju Metropolitan City</li> </ul>
Streets without cars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street without cars in the U.S.</li> <li>• Street playgrounds in the U.K.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EcoMobility World Festival Suwon</li> <li>• Pine Street, Cheongju-si</li> </ul>
Roads, parking lots ► Squares, parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian plazas and parklets in the U.S.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pine Street, Cheongju-si</li> </ul>
Roads ► Pathways, bicycle lanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bikes-only lanes in the U.S.</li> <li>• One-way traffic for bicycles, bikes-only lanes, and eco-friendly traffic changes in Japan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toegyero, Seoul</li> </ul>
Comprehensive application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green codes in Buffalo, U.S.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pine Street, Cheongju-si</li> </ul>



The implications of the above domestic street revitalization cases are as follows: ①the recognition of the importance of urban street revitalization and projects promotion; ②the promotion of local issues related to street revitalization projects, and a clear division of the roles of local governments and communities; and ③the establishment of administrative foundations through dedicated organizations or departments.

### Street Revitalization based on Tactical Urbanism

This research proposed Tactical Urbanism-oriented street revitalization as a policy direction for local governments, based on the above Tactical Urbanism concept review and major case study results. This research suggests that local governments need to recognize the importance of street revitalization for refining urban environments and improving the quality of residents' lives. This research also suggests that local governments need to take appropriate measures before problems before local streets deteriorate, and consider the implementation of phased projects from temporary and small-scale initiatives in order to evaluate project performances. This study also proposes three policy measures for street revitalization, based on Tactical Urbanism.

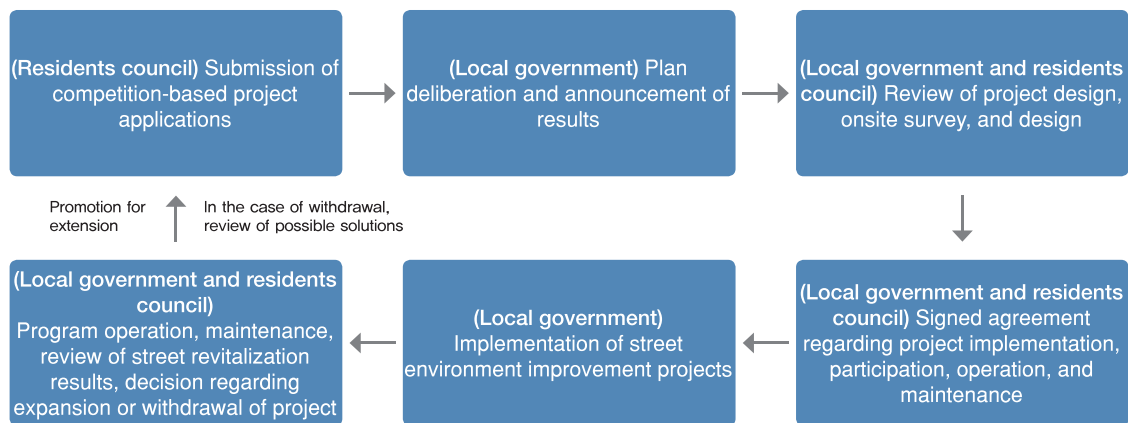


### Participants and their roles in competition-based street revitalization projects based on Tactical Urbanism

First of all, this research suggests that efforts at street revitalization by local governments should be pursued through public offerings. In this way, the local community could assist in

formulating plans specific to local problems. Local governments should clarify the roles of the local community and the governments by providing guidelines for participation in the public offering.

Secondly, the practicability of street revitalization projects and programs could be improved by simplifying the administrative process related to introducing temporary, small-scale street revitalization efforts. This would ensure that such measures respond to the local community problems in a timely fashion.



#### Promotion procedure for competitive street revitalization projects based on Tactical Urbanism

Thirdly, this research proposes that a dedicated department need to be organized and operated to promote temporary and small-scale local government street revitalization efforts and to realize their phased expansion and extension after the evaluation of the project's results and performances.

**Keywords :** Tactical Urbanism, street revitalization, street environment improvement, public space, public offering, strategically phased approach

