Citizen Responses to Tactical Urbanism Initiatives in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Tactical urbanism promises a cheap, fast, and adaptive way to alter streetscapes to encourage walking and cycling, and to discourage motorized transport. We extracted six main themes from interviews with 13 stakeholders responsible for a New Zealand-wide tactical urbanism campaign; resistance, aesthetics and experience, working with the community, understanding tactical urbanism, management, and data collection. Public resistance resulted from the removal of parking and restriction of car use. Residents were more likely to accept aesthetically pleasing installations of high quality. Involving the community increased ownership of the projects and built local capacity. Our interviewees spoke of a lack of understanding by both themselves and the community, recommended breaking large projects into smaller steps, and collecting data through non-official channels. Our research will be of use to the planning of tactical urbanism projects.

Key words: *Aesthetics, Community involvement, Innovating streets, Tactical urbanism, Resistance*

INTRODUCTION

Climate change is a problem requiring "unprecedented and urgent action" (IPCC, 2018, p. 17), but action is happening too slowly (Höhne et al., 2020) and is often met with resistance from the public. Resistance can be driven by cognitive biases (DeCaro et al., 2017), for example, according to prospect theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979), individuals assess change relative to a reference point – often the status quo – and are more willing to accept changes that they perceive as gains than those they perceive as losses (Vis, 2011). In fact, people are loss averse, whereby losses are perceived much more negatively than equivalent gains. Such loss aversion causes people to resist change and support the status quo (Kahneman et al., 2000). Change can also be hard for the public to visualise (Radywyl & Biggs, 2013). Tactical urbanism may be a mechanism to address cognitive biases and reduce public resistance to attempts (such as 'not-in-my-backyard' responses) to alter urban environments to meet climate-change objectives (Lydon & Garcia, 2015). Sadik-Khan and Solomonow (2016), for example, stated that changes to streetscapes are resisted by people who value the status quo, but that once the change is in place, the changed environment becomes the status quo and is equally defended. They said that attempts to reverse the changes to the newly pedestrianised Times Square were "passionately" opposed by New Yorkers (p. 292).

Lydon et al. (2016) described tactical urbanism as "a city, organizational, and/or citizen-led approach to neighbourhood building using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions to catalyze long-term change" (p. 12). Tactical urbanism involves introducing temporary changes to the urban environment. Such changes can be implemented quickly and cost-effectively (Roe et al., 2019), which Fabian and Samson (2016) point out is particularly important in the face of current economic and environmental challenges. Tactical urbanism approaches also allow greater feedback and interaction with the community, giving communities more control over their environment (Lak & Kheibari, 2020), compared to expensive, permanent changes to infrastructure (Stevens et al., 2019). Temporary interventions allow communities to experience an existing space in a new, non-threatening (Rowe, 2015) way to gain insights into the types of interventions that would improve the use of the space (Marshall et al., 2016). There is also experimental evidence that simple, cheap, and temporary tactical urbanism installations that introduce shade, seating, and artwork can reduce stress, and increase perceived restoration, and social well-being of the people who use that space (Roe et al., 2019).

Tactical urbanism has been successful in many situations around the world. For example, in May 2009, New York city's Times Square was closed to traffic and the space occupied instead by lawn chairs which were quickly appropriated by pedestrians. The initial 6-month experiment resulted in the permanent implementation of a pedestrian plaza in Times Square (Radywyl & Biggs, 2013). In Barcelona, during the COVID-19 pandemic, street lanes were temporarily blocked to cars, successfully reducing vehicular traffic in those streets without producing an increase in the neighbouring area (Nello-Deakin, 2022). Similarly, a "slow streets" programme was implemented in several American cities during the pandemic, where various tactical urbanism projects created temporary pedestrian and cycling paths in city

streets (Kim, 2022a). The outcome was overall positive, and many of the cities planned to make the changes permanent (Kim, 2022a).

Tactical urbanism can be initiated by different actors from individuals and groups of citizens to businesses and non-profit organisations, and central and local governments (Lydon & Garcia, 2015; e.g., Berglund, 2020). However, governments are increasingly adopting tactical urbanism to "start a conversation" (Radywyl & Biggs, 2013, p. 162) with their community about changes to the urban environment. Local government is particularly well-placed to respond to climate change as they can affect sources of emissions, such as transportation (Betsill, 2001), often independently of central government (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2005). Moreover, new ideas can be tested and revised in practice relatively inexpensively (Stevens & Dovey, 2019). Local governments are also able to engage citizen participation and are experienced in addressing local environmental issues (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2005).

Traditional urban planning approaches are based on a long-term plan which informs a detailed system of land-use regulations (Clarke, 1995). Such land-use regulation has been successful in ensuring that undesirable development is prevented (Albrechts, 2004). Implementation of the plans involve formal procedures and organisations that tend to mirror those used by central government, and this form of urban planning has worked well in OECD countries (Clarke, 1995). However, traditional planning approaches are increasingly criticised for being static and rigid (Todes et al., 2010), and for their long timeframes and "top-down" approach (Clarke, 1995). Traditional methods of engaging citizens in the urban planning process, such as public meetings, formal submission processes, and focus groups, risk the exclusion of certain groups of citizens, such as younger people, immigrants and refugees, and those who are time-poor (Fredericks, 2019). Different locations and dwelling types attract people of similar socioeconomic status who are at similar life-stages, resulting in a certain homogeneity among residents of a community. Although such homogeneity supports place attachment (Scannell & Gifford, 2010), inhabitants of a low-wealth area will lack the resources to engage in collective action to improve their environment (Berglund, 2020), meaning that some communities will be especially unlikely to become involved in traditional planning processes.

Tactical urbanism, on the other hand, allows for a wider range of voices to be heard – including those of citizens who would not normally engage with the consultation process (Lydon & Garcia, 2015). It does so by bringing planning concepts to the people who actually use the spaces and testing their viability in situ (Lydon & Garcia, 2015). It can also build trust and increase public support for subsequent changes that are more permanent (Lydon, 2012). Involving the local community in decision-making is important, firstly, because such populations are knowledgeable about the local environment, and, secondly, because their involvement will be more likely to lead to a result that meets the needs and the culture of the local residents, and, hence, be more successful (de la Pena, 2020; Fredericks, 2019; Sandler, 2020). Community involvement may also reduce public resistance because involving a wider range of community members will ensure that public involvement does not only represent those who are most opposed to change (the "say no to everything" stakeholders; Lydon & Garcia, 2015, p. 15).

In 2018, Waka Kotahi (NZ Transport Agency; NZTA) established a tactical urbanism initiative called the Innovating Streets for People (ISFP; https://www.nzta.govt.nz/roads-and-rail/streets-for-people/) programme throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. The main objective of the initiative was to make streets safer, reduce reliance on cars, and to improve accessibility and liveability (Mackie Research & Waka Kotahi, 2021). Through the ISFP programme, 78 projects across 32 cities and towns in New Zealand received funding from a total pool of NZ$22.5 million, with each project ranging in cost from NZ$40,000 to NZ$1 million (Mackie Research & Waka Kotahi, 2021). Of the 78 projects, 62 involved a change to a street, such as temporary cycleways, one-way streets, installing safe crossing points, and traffic calming (Mackie Research & Waka Kotahi, 2021).

We interviewed 13 stakeholders involved in the ISFP programme to determine which variables influenced the likelihood of positive and negative public reaction to the projects, and whether negative public reactions contributed to the failure of some of the projects. We were broadly interested in the factors that stakeholders believed contributed to the success or failure of the projects.

While it may be the case that larger cities have different transportation issues than smaller cities and towns, the projects were all small-scale. Additionally, we explored aspects of tactical urbanism that appeared to be consistent across different urban scales. The target projects were selected to cover a range of different population densities (urban and rural), geographies (both in the North and the South Island of New Zealand), project types (town centres, low traffic neighbourhoods, and safe routes to school), and outcomes (accepted by the public and not). Target projects were selected by narrowing the full list of projects with these criteria in mind. Additionally, we sought advice from staff of Waka Kotahi who were familiar with all projects. They guided us to projects that involved a range of emerging issues, that were linked to knowledgeable project members who were willing and available to be interviewed and who occupied a range of different roles on the projects. We aimed to cover a range of perspectives, but, in this exploratory research, it was not feasible to be highly systematic in our approach.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 13 volunteers involved in the ISFP programme. Two were from Waka Kotahi NZTA, who had administrative oversight of a large number of ISFP projects. The remainder of the participants had worked at a local level implementing the ISFP installations. Consequently, they had deeper knowledge of one or a small number of installations only. Participants were recruited via email request initiated by Waka Kotahi on the basis of having been involved in selected target projects.

Selection of Target Projects and Interviewees

The target projects were selected to represent a range of different population densities (urban and rural),

geographies (both the North and South Island of New Zealand), project types (town centres, low traffic neighbourhoods, and safe routes to school), and outcomes (accepted by the public or not). Target projects were selected by narrowing down from the full list of projects with these diversity criteria in mind, and then seeking advice from staff within Waka Kotahi who were familiar with the projects.

Interview Procedure

The interviews of approximately 1 hour were conducted via videoconference. At the start of each interview, the interviewer obtained informed consent from each participant. The interviews were semi-structured in that, generally, the interviewer asked each of the questions one-by-one and in sequence. Broadly, these questions covered the participant's role in the project, the background and objectives of the project, its planning and design, communication strategy, monitoring and evaluation, public acceptance and rejection, areas for improvement, and general observations. Participants answered each question without interruption until they had finished their answer. If the interviewer felt that the participant had not fully completed their answer, the interviewer prompted the participant for more (e.g., "was there anything else that you'd like to add?"). The project received ethical approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Division of Arts, Law, Psychology, and Social Sciences of the University of Waikato (FS2021-45).

Interview Transcription, Cleaning, and Coding

All interviews were transcribed by automated transcription software, and then refined manually. Two members of our research team independently coded the transcripts for the purpose of inductive thematic analysis (e.g., Miles et al., 2014). The two researchers' initial codes were compared and found to be overall very similar. These codes were then iteratively coalesced and adjusted until a smaller number of coherent themes emerged. Based on their content and meaning, labels were then applied to each theme.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

We developed six main themes from the interviews that described key contributors to the success of the projects, some of which related to positive and negative public reactance to the tactical urbanism installations: 1) resistance, 2) aesthetics and experience, 3) working with the community, 4) understanding tactical urbanism, 5) management, and 6) data collection.

Resistance

In terms of resistance, interviewees generally described a "wave of negative feedback" (TF) from the public, with one interviewee stating that "everyone was so against anything" (SH). Interviewees described the intense level of backlash they experienced from the public: "The roadblocks were removed with a forklift by the residents" (Anon 1), and from the business sector: "It [a community meeting] turned to kind of custard and it just ended up being more businesses complaining and everyone getting really upset" (JP).

The first, and possibly biggest complaint was related to the removal of parking: "They hated a speed bump and the removal of parking" (CD); "That was the biggest, biggest thing that we kept being faced with: "The majority of people who opposed were local residents and the concerns were about loss of parking" (GP). Secondly, they disliked being forced to change their behaviour: "You've ruined my life because I can't move around this area like I used to" (Anon 1). The loss of parking spaces is a common complaint in response to tactical urbanism installations (e.g., Littke, 2016; Taylor & Tight, 1997). Our interviewees also noted that the public were resistant to measures that interfered with their ability to drive their cars: "People are very, very precious about their vehicles" (CD). Thirdly, they complained about the cost of the installation (e.g., "They just wondered why we were spending money on a roading project when, you know, people need food" (Anon 3), an obstacle also mentioned in relation to the Park(ing) Day movement in San Francisco (Littke, 2016), and, fourthly, the disruption caused by the construction associated with the installation.

On the positive side, arguments that the installation would improve safety reduced resistance. Additionally, less resistance was experienced for installations in lesser-used spaces such as those on the fringes of cities. One interviewee said: "The fact that there was nothing there before, I think that helps a lot because there's no attachment to what exists already" (EY).

Some of the resistance reflected status quo bias, in that our interviewees reported that the public often did not support any changes to their communities. The status quo bias is a well-substantiated finding in many areas of human behaviour (Anderson, 2003). One reason for people reporting a preference to continue with the current situation or behaviour is the potential cost of the proposed change (Anderson, 2003). Most of the tactical urbanism projects we described involved measures to encourage walking and cycling and to reduce or limit the use of private vehicles by reducing speed limits, narrowing or closing roads, and removing car parks. Those who resisted the projects were particularly opposed to the reduction in their ability to use their vehicles, a finding also reported in response to a project to improve walking, cycling, and placemaking in Auckland, New Zealand (Mackie et al., 2018), where researchers reported that patterns of car use were "deeply entrenched" (Macmillan et al., 2020, p. 7). Such resistance likely reflects loss aversion (Kahneman et al., 2000). Restricting vehicle use – at least in the short term – may come at a cost, and represent a loss, to citizens who are heavily reliant on their cars, as New Zealanders are (e.g., Sivasubramaniyam et al., 2020). Resistance to projects was often counter to data showing the positive impacts of the installation in terms of traffic calming and safety, such that the data were at odds with the negative public perception: "The hard data supported those aspirations towards modal shift, etc…but then the actual public perception data suggest otherwise - that it doesn't work" (Anon 3). Given the level of public resistance to the installations, tactical urbanism may not reduce opposition to change compared to traditional top-down planning approaches.

Another aspect of resistance noted by our interviewees was the idea that the 'squeaky wheel gets the grease' – the perception that the resistance came from a fairly small number of people, but that their views had greater influence than those who supported the installations due

Figure 1. *Planter Boxes in Two Different Installations*

Note. Photo credit for left image: Rebecca J. Sargisson; Right image: Photograph courtesy of the Otago Daily Times (used with permission) https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/petition-calls-council-remove-%E2%80%98weed-troughs%E2%80%99

to the strength of their resistance. Specifically, our interviewees said: "We got those vocal voices coming down going 'what the hell is this?' and all the other profanities that came with it" (Anon 3); "in [location], there is a, you know, strong and vocal group of people who are comfortable with their current situation and weren't open necessarily to alternatives" (GP); and "The people that hated it were really, really vocal…much more vocal than the people that liked it" (MP). Taylor and Tight (1997), reporting on the public consultation process to traffic calming measures in Britain, also spoke of a dissenting minority who were very vocal in expressing their disapproval.

The finding that resistance was led by a small number of vocal community members was at odds with the claim that tactical urbanism facilitates involvement by a wider range of residents (Lydon & Garcia, 2015). Seemingly, more effort must be devoted to ensuring that all voices are heard in relation to tactical-urbanism installations, and that these initiatives are not weaponized for political gain. Given that negative stories were publicised in the news media, perhaps tactical urbanism teams could issue press releases to highlight successful tactical urbanism projects.

Aesthetics and experience

Another main finding was that aesthetics were very important: "It's really just about what they look like" (JM); "Aesthetics and placemaking...those are really crucial fundamental parts of these projects staying in and being successful" (AN). Installations that used quality designs and materials were more likely to be accepted than those that looked cheap and ugly. For example, both of the images in Figure 1 display projects where planter boxes were installed. The installation on the left was more accepted by the public than the one on the right. In relation to the installation shown in the right-hand photo on Figure 1, one interviewee said:

> *"The negativity wasn't around the project per se, it was around the look of what we actually ended up putting on the road, so very much the whole kind of construction look and feel of the infrastructure as opposed to our original vision of beautiful hand-painted planter boxes and beautiful kids' artwork."* (CD).

Similarly, in the discussion of the installation displayed in Figure 2, one interviewee said:

> *"… they invested in the quality of their design and materiality…and so, they have done this very, very beautiful and really well executed, very creative response. The quality, aesthetic quality, is remarkably important." (TF).*

The important aspect of quality design, in this context, was to ensure that aesthetics was considered in the design rather than installations being purely functional and budget conscious. The use of higher quality materials often helped.

These results are like those found by Taylor and Tight (1997) who reported that the highest level of support from

Figure 2. *Street Art and Road Narrowing with Outdoor Seating in one of the Innovating Streets Projects*

Note: Photo credit: Whanganui District Council Town Centre Regeneration team (used with permission).

Figure 3. *Street Party with Live Local Band to Open an Installation*

Note. Photo credit: Andy Deighton (used with permission).

community members was achieved by the traffic-calming installation that used high quality materials. At least in the context of forest management, researchers have found that people who judge a landscape as beautiful also find the management of that landscape to be acceptable (Ribe, 2002). Indeed, Ribe (2002) suggested that planners could use the public's perception of scenic beauty as a "proxy for management acceptability" (p. 776). Ribe proposed that the strong positive affect produced by an aesthetically pleasing scene overrode cognitive considerations. Such a conclusion is supported by Ulrich's (1973) findings in which, for more than half of their trips, commuters chose a slower route to the supermarket over a faster one primarily due to the visual appeal of the longer route.

However, one interviewee commented that the attractiveness of the installation can only mitigate some of the resistance from the public: "I can only change the physical acceptability of them…in terms of the design, making them look beautiful and more attractive spaces, but it's still gonna be a road closure. It's going to affect them. In that way, doesn't matter. You… know, for them it's still lipstick on a pig" (Anon 1).

Additionally, installations were more likely to be accepted by the public when they created opportunities for placemaking (communal spaces for residents) and after opening events such as street parties. This is illustrated in Figure 3, and one interviewee said: "One thing that was a key success point for [installation] was our opening street party…it became very difficult to critique the project after the success of such an awesome event" (EY).

We also learned that "the art is quite, can be, quite divisive, can't it, you know, quite polarising at times" (MP); "You had some people say, 'I really like the blue colour but don't like the green'. And then you had other residents say 'we really like the green but we don't like the blue'" (Anon 3), but artwork could also create opportunities for working with the community.

Working with the community

Working with the community was extremely important for the acceptance of the installation. Getting "everybody involved…from the very beginning" (Anon 2) led to more positive outcomes. One interviewee explained that "the fact that the community were involved in building it was huge…It's hard to criticize a project that you've worked on" (EY). Other researchers have discussed the value of encouraging a sense of ownership by the community (e.g., de la Peña, 2020; Fredericks, 2019). Fredericks (2019) suggests that a sense of ownership can be achieved by "bridging the gap between top and bottom contributions" (p. 15).

One interviewee described how community involvement could be a double-edged sword. They said that, in some projects where the community was heavily involved, very little pushback was experienced and "any negative feedback is quickly addressed by the community. So, the community will stand up and say 'well, we were a part of this. We will answer any questions you have'" (AN). However, in other cases, involving the community in decisions about the project opened the project up to criticism. For example, a community was upset that their plans had to be changed due to logistical problems, and, sometimes, the reasons for the need to change the plans were not well communicated. In one case, locations of street crossings had to be moved and the community "felt like it was betrayed…and, in those cases, the community didn't want to stand up and own the project" (AN).

Inclusion was important: "We did have…a lot of good positive feedback on the project and they liked the fact that the co-designers, which included obviously ourselves, were taking account of the needs of the different user groups" (MP). Cultural and local awareness was also crucial to the acceptance of an installation: "It's not just a speed-management installation, it's also a piece of art that tells the story of the area" (JM). This comment reflected a similar comment made by an interviewee in the study of Raerino et al. (2020) who explained that expressing mātauranga Māori (Indigenous knowledge) in urban transformations helps to "anchor" residents' identities in a particular place and learn about the important features of a place. de la Peña (2020) also stated that the community should determine its own identity, tell its own stories, and set priorities for change. When a project was changed as a result of community feedback, there was little pushback: "They said [the community], well, some of these things are interesting, but they're not what we want. This is what we want for our community. And the project team shifted, you know, the outcome to that and it was very

representative of that community. And, yeah, I haven't heard that they've had project problems with it" (TF).

One of our interviewees also told us that their project built capacity in the community:

> *"Drawing on resources from your local community in terms of champions is really valuable and that worked quite well for us in [location]. People who are really engaged already, [we] just need to give them a helping hand to sort of lift them up and give them the skills they might need to sort of push forward with the project. And that has other benefits obviously for your community as well."* (JM)

This thread of building local capacity was echoed in an Auckland urban design project, where an interviewee spoke of the importance of building the capacity of local Māori artists (Raerino et al., 2020). Similarly, Herman and Rodgers (2020) reflected on a project in Christchurch that involved university students, and how the opportunity for "hands-on" experience benefitted the students' education.

However, better national communications about the ISFP initiative were needed: "We could have had a really good strong media piece from Waka Kotahi about the funding before it was launched. What it is, what communities might expect if their community's participating in one of the projects…people just didn't get it" (CD). Another interviewee said:

> *"Comms and engagement are such a critical part of the project that we needed more time to embed and massage the messaging to the general public…if we did have more lead-in time, we could…stagger the messaging more so that by the time the installation hit the ground, people would be like 'oh I get it', or 'oh, I know I can be involved and these are the ways that I can be involved'."* (JP)

Understanding of tactical urbanism

Interviewees noted that a lack of understanding of tactical urbanism on the part of both the community and the project leaders was a roadblock to success. The public were not accustomed to being "consulted in this way… and so were really unfamiliar with the process" (Anon 3). The public did not always understand the temporary, experimental nature of tactical urbanism. As noted by Kim (2022b), planners need to ensure effective public messaging about the projects, including the rationale for specific installations. Additionally, the project leaders did not always have time to thoroughly learn about tactical urbanism: "we didn't exactly…put our noses in a whole lot of tactical urbanism books and study up beforehand…because we also were met very, very early on by our elected members saying 'We know what tactical urbanism is. Hurry up and get on with it'" (JP).

One interviewee said:

> *"it could be true that the full process was too much for any one group or person to understand in one bite. You know, there was a lot of new procedure to try and put into one practice, one example. So, I think there were realistically people at the end that said, 'look, I've gotta confess, I never really even read the whole handbook.' Yeah, they never knew that process."* (TF)

Responsiveness to public feedback on the part of project leaders, and an understanding of tactical urbanism, facilitated acceptance. For example, "when a team really understood the point of tactical urbanism, they would ride the corridor with those cyclists and be able to respond to those complaints right away" (AN). By riding with local cyclists, the project leaders adhered to one of the major lessons learned by architects involved in guerrilla urbanism in Barcelona, that is, to "become the resident" (de la Pena, 2020, p. 132) by embedding themselves in the lives of the residents.

Management

In relation to issues of management, our interviewees spoke about a lack of time and resources as contributing to the stress of the installations and ultimately their success: "A lot of the pain came out of the lack of time that the project team had" (Anon 1); "…the nature of the resourcing and the timing…meant that we sacrificed a fair bit" (JP); "So if I were to start over again, I would really focus on resourcing the team" (AN). They also recommended a smaller scope – they suggested that projects begin with a small, non-contentious change so that it can be resourced appropriately, and the small success can garner support from the community for larger changes. For example, one of our interviewees described a project which planned to change a major traffic circulation by closing a road but started with a half-day test using cones. The same interviewee said, "Let's break those down a little bit…you, know test them" and "do something small, do it well, and build trust with the community" (TF). A staged approach was also recommended in the analysis of community responses to an initiative to encourage cycling in Auckland, leaving more contentious changes to later stages of development (Thorne et al., 2020). Counterintuitively, de la Pena (2020) stated that "slowness" is key to the sustainability of tactical urbanisms, stating that connecting smaller projects to a larger process will make the smaller projects meaningful.

Data collection

Lastly, interviewees spoke of the value of data collection both prior to the beginning of the project, and ongoing data collection to inform iterative changes to the installation.

> *"I'd run the co-design workshops quite differently next time. I'd be doing more site visits. I'd be doing a lot of that baseline-data collection much, much, much earlier and making sure that… the results from that…informed why we picked the street and what changes we are making to the street."* (JP)
>
> *"…a tracking camera…tells you where people are going and…it was quite obvious that the cycleway wasn't working and we needed to do something about it. Pretty quick. And so that monitoring was key to us."* (Anon 2)

Interviewees recommended the use of social media to seek responses to installations rather than only using

official websites. One interviewee said: "We did get a lot of traction through social media. Not necessarily on our own channels, but through other channels, which is where we actually managed to pick up a lot of information around what people had liked and what [they] hadn't" (JM). They also spoke about the importance of communicating the data about the outcomes of the projects back to the public:

> *"…in some places where the vehicle speeds had dropped from, you know 48 kilometres an hour in front of schools to 22 kilometres an hour in front of the schools we collected that data and we're like, yes, this is a success, but we weren't as great in communicating that data back out to people and saying, look what we've done. Like, I know you have to go over rubber raised platforms but like look at these speeds now. It's a survivable speed."* (AN)

Limitations and future research

We acknowledge that the views expressed by our interviewees are only from the perspective of the managers and planners of the projects. It would also be extremely valuable to interview the residents, including and prioritising the voices of local Māori communities, about their experiences of the ISFP programme. Particularly, it would be interesting to investigate whether residents' views of the projects aligned with those of the professionals, and such triangulation would further support our findings. At the same time, the focus of our project was to investigate the experiences of those tasked to implement tactical urbanism initiatives.

At the time of our interviews, the ISFP projects were either fairly newly completed, or were still in progress. Therefore, we cannot comment on the long-term success of the projects, or whether public opinion changed after prolonged experience with the installations. It would be useful to revisit the projects to investigate whether further changes have been made, and whether public opinion has changed.

CONCLUSIONS

Our interviewees reported a great deal of public resistance to the tactical urbanism projects, particularly when these projects involved reduction in parking or restrictions in vehicular traffic. Resistance was reduced by appeals to improved safety and in lesser-used spaces. Changes to lesser-used spaces may be less likely to invoke status quo bias, as residents are not as invested in the current configuration, and changes are not as costly to residents in such spaces. Interviewees recommended breaking large projects into smaller ones and beginning with less controversial instalments. Thus, perhaps gaining public support for changes to less-used spaces can facilitate support for larger changes in well-used spaces. Resistance to the ISFP projects was largely led by vocal minorities, suggesting that these tactical urbanism projects were not successful in gathering feedback from all groups in the community. A slow, staged approach to implementation was suggested as a way to ensure that planning concepts are brought to and tested with the people who actually use them. A further benefit of a slower approach is that it can help to address some of the challenges posed by insufficient time and resources. Such challenges can also be addressed by keeping the scope of the project small at first. Small, successful changes can build trust with the community before embarking on larger, more contentious ones.

Collecting data both before and during the project is important to inform decisions and iterate changes. Social media was seen as a particularly potent source of public feedback, as well as a way to communicate project outcomes. Social media, as opposed to official feedback mechanisms, could also provide an avenue for gaining more representative feedback from residents. Also important is ensuring the public receives information about the successful outcomes of the project, particularly given the negative focus of news media.

Another key finding was that aesthetics are important. Even though tactical urbanism is touted as low-cost and temporary, project leaders should invest in high-quality, aesthetically pleasing installations, preferably incorporating local artists and those with local or Indigenous knowledge of the area. Benefits of including residents in the design and building of the installations are that the residents feel ownership of the project, and will therefore often defend the installation against nay-sayers, and it leads to capacity building in the community. Involving the community in decision-making is therefore important, but care should be taken to communicate the reasons for altering plans devised by residents to avoid criticism. Projects may also be more successful when the project leaders attempt to view the environment from the residents' perspective and immerse themselves in the local context, for example, by cycling, driving, and walking in the community.

Overall, despite experiencing public resistance, the ISFP projects appear to have been largely successful, and many lessons have been learned regarding how to implement such projects in the future. Although it is difficult to experimentally compare the success of traditional planning approaches with tactical urbanism approaches, one avenue for future research could be to use questionnaires to learn more about the acceptability of these two approaches to residents. We hope that the lessons learned through our research will be useful to local governments and other agencies seeking community support for tactical urbanism projects to improve infrastructure for cycling and walking, and to reduce the use of cars, so as to support climate-change mitigation measures.

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