

OPEN STREETS NASHVILLE

COMMUNITY GUIDE & TOOLKIT



FEBRUARY 2026

Welcome

This is a publication from Walk Bike Nashville and the Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure authored by:

CALAH GIPSON

OPEN STREETS COORDINATOR, WALK BIKE NASHVILLE

MEREDITH MONTGOMERY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WALK BIKE NASHVILLE

KOBY LANGNER

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST,
NASHVILLE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND
MULTIMODAL INFRASTRUCTURE

GRAPHIC DESIGN BY **HALUPKA STUDIO**

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Introduction



› What are Open Streets?

› History of Open Streets Nashville:
All Streets Used to Look Like "Open Streets"

› Types of Open Streets



What are Open Streets?

Open Streets are community based opportunities to temporarily make street space available to people by closing them to cars and other motor vehicles. They are designed to stir the imagination and remind us that our streets can have a multitude of uses.



As our largest form of public space, streets should be the heartbeat of the city. When they are safe, vibrant, accessible, and inclusive they can connect neighbors and communities, fuel a healthy economy, and foster independence for people of all ages and abilities.

Open Streets are more than street festivals or block parties; they're a chance to reclaim public space as your own. When a street is temporarily closed to cars, people are encouraged to reconnect to their community, traverse their city, get active, support local businesses, and make their own fun. Adults slow down to enjoy impromptu social connections with friends and neighbors as kids feel a sense of freedom roaming newly car-free spaces. Setting up lawn chairs and picnic tables, drawing and creating art, going on walks or teaching kids how to ride bikes are all welcomed and encouraged.

Additionally, Open Streets are a simple and economical way to create safe multimodal infrastructure; without cars, a whole street can become a walking and biking boulevard. The possibilities are endless.

We at Walk Bike Nashville and The Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure (NDOT) are working to create a more walkable, bikeable, and livable Nashville. Through Open Streets, we aim to promote multimodal transportation (transportation that consists of more than just driving a car) and safe, inclusive infrastructure that allows us to move around this city in a way that is right for each of us. We also want streets that bring people together, because when individuals come together in a shared space, mutual trust and a sense of connection grows.

This toolkit is designed to help you organize your own Open Street, with tips, tricks, and insights into bringing neighbors together and fostering a street for people, not just cars.

All streets used to look like “open streets.”

They weren't just transportation thoroughfares. They were places where vendors would sell goods, kids would play freely, neighbors would socialize, and more.

Once cars started growing in popularity in the 1920s, fatal and serious crashes became more common, and traffic regulations pushed non-car users out of the streets.

The Open Streets concept, as it is known in Nashville today, originates from Bogotá, Colombia and Ciclovía, where they turn 75 miles of city streets into car-free spaces every Sunday. Since its inception, many cities across the country and the world have since adopted and adapted the tradition into the fabric of their civic life, like Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Tucson, and more.

Open Streets Nashville began in 2015 in collaboration with Walk Bike Nashville and the city of Nashville. As of 2024, 11 Open Streets have been hosted by Walk Bike Nashville, most recently in partnership with NDOT. With the help of this guide, we hope to see many more hosted by the community around the city.



Types of Open Streets

With support from
NDOT and Walk
Bike Nashville, three
types of Open Streets
are available for the
Nashville community
to utilize.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PERMIT NEEDED	NOTES
1. Neighborhood Open Street	A Neighborhood Open Street is a one-day, full street closure on a neighborhood street. Vehicles are not permitted.	NDOT Block Party Permit	Neighborhood Open Streets can be hosted in local, residential streets in your neighborhood
2. Open Streets Festival	An Open Streets Festival is a one-day, full street closure on a collector or arterial-boulevard street. Vehicles are not permitted.	Mayor's Office / Metro Special Events Permit	Open Streets Festivals are similar to the ones Walk Bike Nashville has hosted around town- hosted on a major road for all of the community to come out
3. Slow Street	A Slow Street is a long-term, partial street closure on a neighborhood street. Local traffic, delivery vehicles, emergency vehicles, and school buses are permitted with a 15 MPH speed limit.	NDOT Tactical Urbanism Application	Want your Open Street to last longer than a day? Slow Streets extend the concept of the Open Street by prioritizing people walking, biking, and playing over cars at all times.



Fun Fact: Play Streets have been in Nashville's Code of Ordinances since the 1990s.

What Open Streets Can Look Like



Neighborhood
Open Street

Neighborhood Open Streets prioritize play, community building, and safety for all ages on a local road. These could be hosted nearby homes, schools, and even parks.



Open Streets
Festival

Open Streets Festivals highlight neighbors, businesses, and more along a major road within a community.



Slow Street

Slow Streets are a long-lasting approach to promote play in the streets, safe speeds, and more in a neighborhood.





Case Study: Neighborhood Open Street

College Students in Their Neighborhood

Neighborhood Open Streets are fairly simple to pull together. Walk Bike Nashville *Streets for People* intern Izi Witt recently organized a Neighborhood Open Street and shared some tips from her experience.



"I cannot stress enough how simple it was to do as a first timer, even though I knew no one in the neighborhood and had no funds backing it. Get creative with it and enjoy the open street!"

**— IZI WITT, WALK BIKE NASHVILLE
STREETS FOR PEOPLE INTERN**

Tips from a College Student who hosted an Open Street:

- ✓ **Find support in your neighborhood**—someone who is supportive of the concept and can help spread the word and advocate for the event to happen. As long as you have support, it should be an easy process.
- ✓ **Check for conflicting event dates** that could affect attendance or the road closure, especially if your location is in a busier community or around schools.
- ✓ **Collecting signatures may be a little time consuming.** It took a couple rounds to get all of the signatures because people are home at different times, they may not answer the door, etc.
- ✓ **Start the permitting process before getting signatures.** It would be smart to start a month in advance of your planned date. I started the permitting process two weeks before the event and I already had flyers to distribute when I collected the signatures.
- ✓ **The hardest part is conveying your message** and getting support (depending on where you live). Center it around an activity—something that can be promoted; I had a musician and s'mores.
- ✓ **Complete your permit process at least a week before the event** to have time to share flyers and figure out any issues.
- ✓ **Make plans to provide your own signs and barriers** for the road closure, either from the NDOT Open Streets Sign Share or through a traffic control company.

Neighborhood
Open Street

Open Streets Coordination



- Build Your Team
- Establish the Basics
- Activate Your Open Street
- Dimensions of Diversity



Build Your Team

Consider forming a group of invested stakeholders to lead the planning.

This steering committee can be made up of neighbors of all ages, experiences, and backgrounds that are committed to helping host the Open Street. As a group, decisions like what activities will be offered and what day it will happen on, as well as tasks like completing permitting needs and inviting partners and vendors are finalized and delegated.

For a Neighborhood Open Street, your steering committee may just be you and a neighbor, but it's always beneficial to have the support of others.

Consider who to include in these conversations:

- ✓ Neighbors who are active in the community
- ✓ Teachers and educators
- ✓ Artists, musicians, and business owners
- ✓ Parents and caregivers
- ✓ Long time neighbors with history in the area
- ✓ People who walk or bike frequently
- ✓ Leaders of local religious institutions

It is important to have a variety of perspectives and support to make Open Streets successful. Build a group that accurately reflects the makeup of your neighborhood by making sure neighbors of different ethnic and racial backgrounds, genders, ages, and abilities are included. This is an opportunity to meet new neighbors, build new relationships, and form a stronger community.

You can also reach out to your [council member](#), local school board member(s), or other elected officials to inform them of your plans and invite them to be involved. Not everyone may want or be able to commit to being a part of the steering committee, but make sure there are opportunities for all neighbors to be heard, informed, and contribute how they can. Everyone deserves to feel heard and included.

Action Steps: Steering Committee

- ✓ Find community stakeholders who will be accountable for staying involved in the planning process, and who are invested in making the event a success for their neighborhood
- ✓ Determine meeting schedule, agenda topics, and tasks to delegate



Tip: Create a List of Stakeholders

- ✓ **Generate a list** of neighbors, businesses, religious institutions, elected officials, and other stakeholders in your area.
- ✓ **Who can help with planning?** Consider inviting them to join the steering committee.
- ✓ **Who needs to be notified about the event and closure?** Make a plan for informing and engaging them.
- ✓ **Who could provide financial or in-kind support, or offer programming along the route?** Invite them to participate and make an ask for contributions.

Establish the Basics

Determining these essential logistics will help guide the details of your planning, decision making, and community engagement process to achieve a successful Open Street.



Kick off your planning by establishing a few basic components:

- ✓ **Where:** What stretch of road will the Open Street be on?
- ✓ **When:** What day and at what time?
- ✓ **Budget:** What will it cost? Consider permitting fees, logistical needs, and any additional expenses associated with programming. (Refer to the Permitting section for cost estimates and potential resources to utilize.)
- ✓ **Motivation:** What makes you want to host an Open Street in your neighborhood? Some reasons may include bringing people together, highlighting the history of your community, or bringing attention to an important local issue.
- ✓ **Programming:** What kind of activities will you host? Consider local art and music, games and activities for kids and families, and coordinating with schools, libraries, and organizations to engage the neighborhood.
- ✓ **Success:** What does success look like to you? At previous Open Streets, kids learned how to ride bikes, neighbors were more engaged in their community, and organizers garnered support for an advocacy topic.

Activate Your Open Street

Once you've established the basics, the steering committee can decide how you want the street to be activated.

This doesn't require a significant budget—engaging activities can be pulled together by talented neighbors, local businesses and organizations who have something to offer, impromptu games, and more. You also don't have to offer any special programming at all... the street itself, a blank canvas for make-your-own-fun activities, is the main event!

The possibilities are endless when you close a street to cars and open it to people. Check out our list—next page!





Activate Your Open Street

The possibilities are endless when you close a street to cars and open it to people. Here are a few activities hosted at Walk Bike Nashville's past Open Streets*:

- ✓ Installation of Tactical Urbanism projects and ground murals
- ✓ Small businesses set up and even launch their businesses, featuring hand-poured candles, sweet treats, and more
- ✓ Local musicians, bands, and entertainers of all experience levels perform for attendees
- ✓ Local advocacy organizations educate the community on the issues important to the city and offer ways to get more involved
- ✓ A nearby church holds their Sunday services outside, and afterwards joins in on other festivities throughout the day
- ✓ The Nashville Public Library and Studio NPL have offered fun and interactive storytimes, a small checkout library, their seed library, arts and crafts, and more
- ✓ Local food trucks have provided their specialties, sometimes selling out
- ✓ Leisurely parklets are laid out to enjoy the nice day and spend time in the street
- ✓ Fish fry community fundraiser
- ✓ Bike rodeos to teach kids how to ride bikes
- ✓ Clay charm making, bag decorating, improv games, and other creative art-making workshops
- ✓ Local artists set up selling their pieces ranging from large canvas and prints, to hand-made trinkets and pottery, to jewelry and accessories
- ✓ Pet adoption and animal rescue organizations share about their services, and even introduce some pets to neighbors
- ✓ Small used book sale from a neighbor's personal collection
- ✓ Local gyms bring out pads and gear to offer demos for the community
- ✓ Community canvas that anyone could paint on and contribute to
- ✓ Bouncy house for neighborhood kids to play around in

**Depending on the type of Open Street you host and the permit you submit, certain activities may not be allowed directly on the street if it is expected to obstruct the right of way. Refer to the Permitting section to read more.*

Dimensions of Diversity

Now that you’re bringing this event together, keep in mind the different backgrounds and lived experiences of your neighbors.

Every person has intersections of diversity that shapes them, and being attentive to the heritage, culture, and make-up of your community can make your Open Street more memorable and welcoming to a broader range of people.

Wheel of Diversity

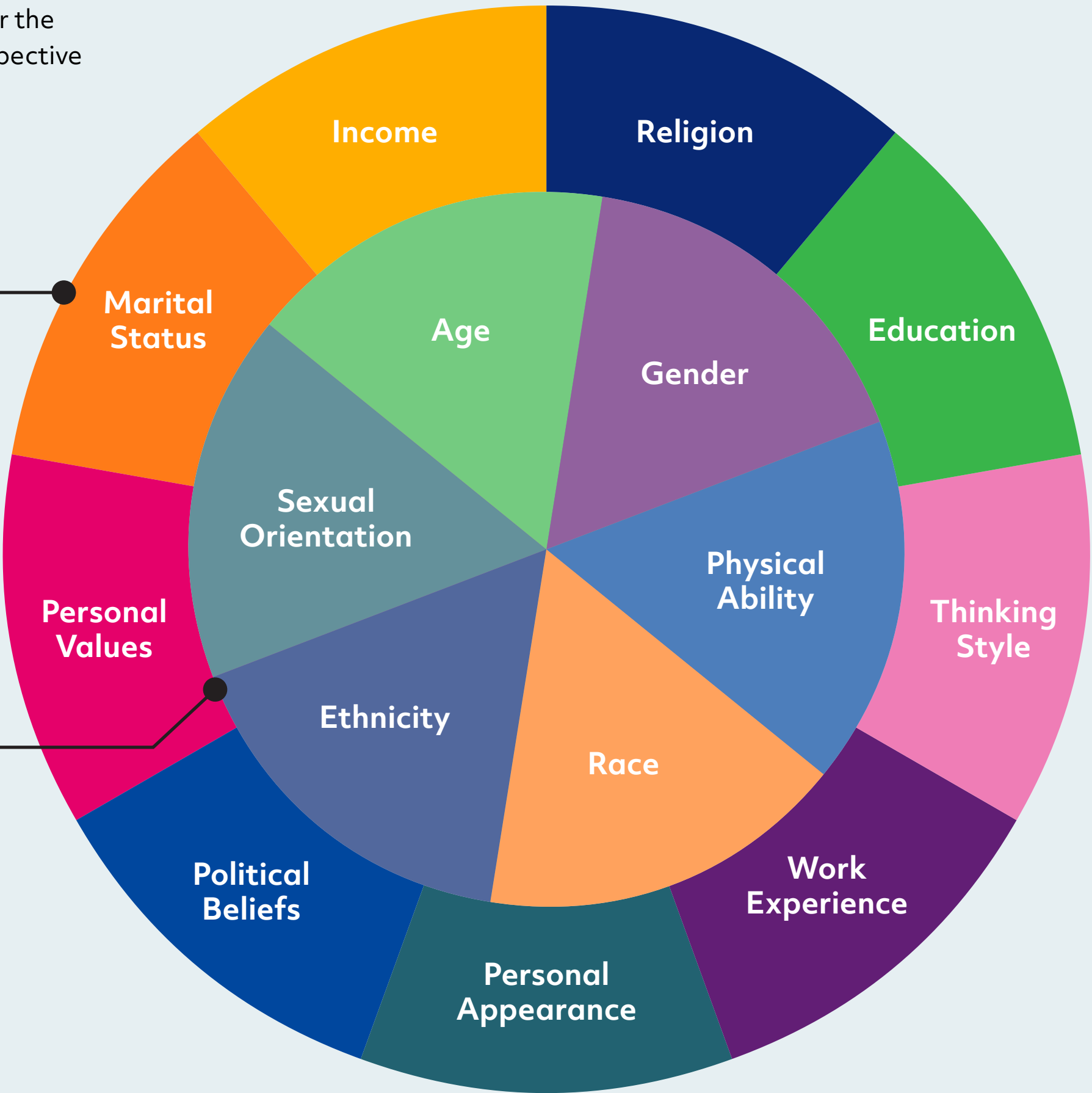
If you’re curious about the other intersections of diversity your neighborhood could have, refer to a “Diversity Wheel” to consider the different ways a person’s perspective can shape their experiences.

Outer Sphere

Which we have some control over and which may or may not change over time

Inner Embedded Sphere

Which we have no control over as we are born with these aspects of diversity



(Credit: University of Sydney Anthology [Wheel of Diversity](#))

Dimensions of Diversity

Racial and Ethnic Inclusivity

- ✓ Be purposeful in informing and inviting all your neighbors. Consider language barriers and translate flyers and handouts.
- ✓ Online resources like DeepL.com and Translate.com are great starting points for written materials, and local translation services from Acutrans or the Tennessee Language Center can provide in-person services.
- ✓ Look for ways to make your Open Street culturally relevant. How can you connect with your community in universal ways, like through music or sports? What activities can be offered in different languages? How can specific parts of your community be highlighted in their art, culture, or language?
- ✓ Make it inviting for all neighbors and consider ways to connect with others beyond just familiar faces. Local organizations, religious institutions, and small cultural businesses like restaurants can help make the community feel more connected through shared customs, or can create an atmosphere of togetherness through learning about others.
- ✓ Consider what “safe streets” may look like across different perspectives. Safety can mean many things, from preventions against speeding cars, to security and trust amongst community members, to protection from discrimination and external factors. Foster community and listen to diverse perspectives to build up multiple forms of neighborhood understanding and safety.

Accessibility

- ✓ Accessibility should be considered in all decisions to ensure your Open Street is open to all, and no one feels excluded.
- ✓ Consider the need for ramps, easy access to the street for all, and other ways people can come out regardless of mobility status (access to transit stops, accessible parking if that is applicable).
- ✓ Consider having access to seating, drinking water, and rest stops if hosting an Open Street Festival. Make the street engaging and enjoyable even if not traversing the entire closure.

Reach out to local advocacy and affinity groups to learn more about the experiences of your community and invite them to participate at the Open Street as well.



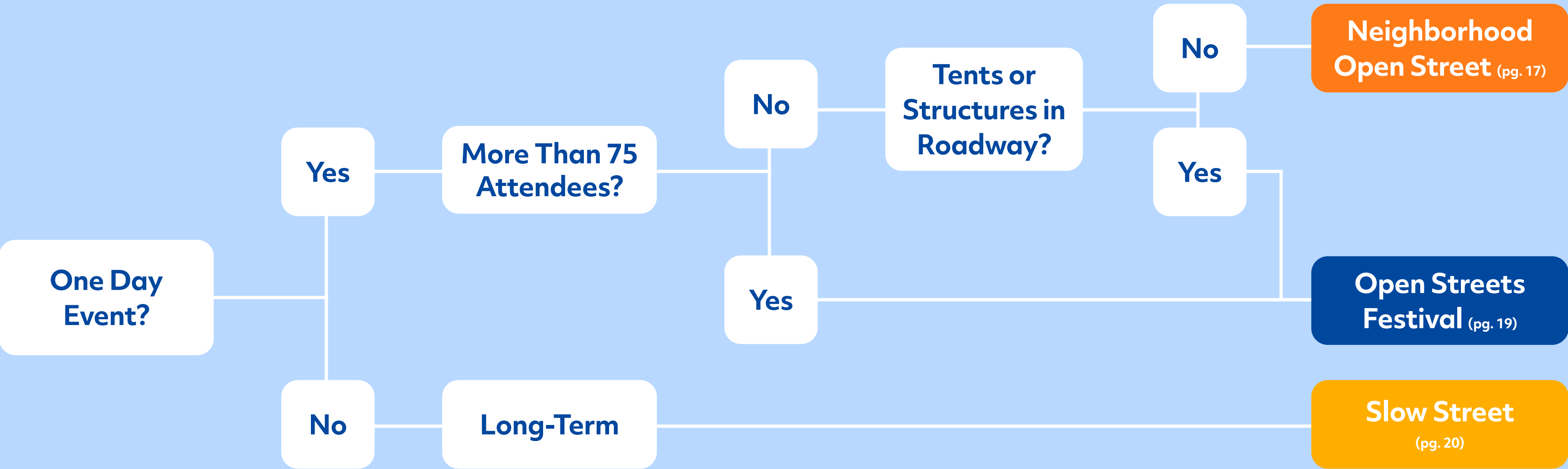
Permitting

- Permitting
- Open Streets Festival
- Neighborhood Open Streets
- Slow Streets



Permitting

Since an Open Street depends on the closure of a street to cars, permitting is required. To determine which permit you are required to apply for, refer to this flowchart to see the differences between the various permit types.



Neighborhood Open Street

Required Permit: Block Party Street Closure Permit

Who can apply?

All residents in neighborhoods in Nashville; business owners are not allowed to use this permit on behalf of their business location

What are the parameters?

No more than 75 people can be expected in the street at any one time; large structures, like performance stages or bouncy houses, cannot obstruct the right of way so emergency vehicle access is maintained; activities that can easily and/or quickly be moved from the road if necessary are still allowed.

When should I apply?

At least 2 weeks before the chosen date for your Open Street to make sure the permit has time to be approved and/or adjusted as needed.

How do we close the street?

Signage and barricades are required for the street closure to keep non-residential cars from using the road as a thru street. A limited supply of these materials are available to request through NDOT Open Streets Sign Share. You can also use simple materials like cones, yard signs, household items, and personal vehicles to block the road.

What does the permit cost?

The permit is free.

How do I apply?

Submit your application through [NDOT's ePermits website](#).

Requirements for Approval:

- ✓ **Signatures from residents** representing at least two thirds of the residential addresses on the closure.
- ✓ As long as **approval is demonstrated by the community**, these can be collected in various ways including going door-to-door to collect handwritten signatures, or soliciting them digitally (something as simple as a Google Form indicating name and residence)
- ✓ **A traffic control plan** demonstrating where the street closure will be and where closure signage and barricades will be placed. NDOT has a sample traffic control plan for Neighborhood Open Streets you can use.

To learn more about the **Block Party permit process**, visit NDOT's Open Street Program page. Walk Bike Nashville's [Host a Block Party](#) web page also has a few tips and resources on steps to take.



Tip: Navigating the NDOT ePermits Website

- ✓ Go to ePermits website
- ✓ Click "New NDOT Permit"
- ✓ "What type of Permit are you applying for?" dropdown box, select NDOT Closure Permit
- ✓ "What is the sub-type of Permit are you applying for?" dropdown box, select NDOT Street Closure for Block Party
- ✓ Scope of Work can state "Neighborhood Open Street"
- ✓ Continue with permit

Tip: Designate a Captain

If this is the first time your neighborhood has hosted an Open Street, you may want to designate a Street Captain, or someone who can make sure all signage is in its proper place and is available to escort any local residents who need to access their home through the street by car.



Case Study: Neighborhood Open Street

Glenclyff Neighbors Bring Safety Back

In the winter of 2024, an elderly neighbor was fatally struck in a hit-and-run crash while on her daily walk in her Glenclyff neighborhood on a Sunday afternoon. After this occurred, many neighbors said they no longer felt safe walking on the streets just outside their front door.

Working together, residents planned a vigil and walk in her memory, and decided to apply for a Neighborhood Open Street so they could feel comfortable gathering near the crash site. Within a week, neighbors collected all the needed signatures, and were able to borrow barricades from Walk Bike Nashville's supplies. On the day of the vigil, more than 50 community members came out to honor the life of their neighbor and call for safer streets in their neighborhood.

Once the walk ended, with the Open Street still up afterwards, many families stayed to enjoy the car free space, walking with each other and riding bikes with their kids. The barricades were easily moved when neighbors needed to slowly drive in and out of the closure. There was a mutual understanding of the importance of safe streets and the potential Open Streets have to foster this change.

Neighborhood
Open Street



Required Permit: Special Events Permit (SEP)

Who can apply?

Residents and community organizations can request an Open Streets Festival on a street classified as collector or arterial boulevard (i.e. major thoroughfares with frequent car traffic); check your street classification here: <https://maps.nashville.gov/MCSP/>

What are the parameters?

A Special Events Permit is required regardless of roadway classification if the applicant expects more than 75 participants at any given time and/or plans to place structures in the street.

This permit is used by many different organizations and businesses for various types of events. Some of the questions on the application and requirements of the permit may not seem relevant to an Open Street. Communicate openly with the Film and Parade Office and ask for clarity as you complete your required documents.

When should I apply?

No less than 45 days before the chosen date for your Open Street; at minimum, 3 months is encouraged for all planning and logistics for the Open Street Festival.

What does the permit cost?

The base cost for the SEP is \$430, and an additional cost of \$100 is needed for the right of way (ROW) permit. The ROW permit is specifically needed for approving the street closure.

Additional expenses that can be associated with this permit type are signage, barricades, and security or traffic control officers (estimates for these services are between \$50 and \$90 per hour per officer; in order to direct traffic, these officers must be [POST certified](#)).

While NDOT Open Streets Sign Share may be utilized for signage and barricade needs for Open Streets Festivals as well, these types of closures typically need more signage than the Program has available. Please look into other local traffic control companies for your additional needs; these can often be rented by the hour from traffic control companies.

Requirements for Approval

- ✓ **Action Plan** for all security guard posts to be approved by Metro Nashville Police Department
- ✓ **Traffic Control Plan and ROW permit** approved by NDOT
- ✓ **Waste and Recycling Event Form** from Nashville Waste Services
- ✓ **Site Map** showing the event layout and the required 20 ft fire lane for approval from Metro Nashville Fire Department and Metro Nashville Police Department
- ✓ **ADA Compliance Permit for Special Events** to confirm your Open Street meets the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for accessibility
- ✓ **Certificate of Insurance** submitted to the Film and Parade Office
- ✓ **Community Notification Letter** and list of all impacted houses and neighbors within the closure that it will be distributed to
- ✓ **Attend SEP review call**, a short video call with various Metro entities to discuss basic components of your upcoming festival. You will be asked to describe your event and speak to any questions or concerns that Metro staff have about your application.
- ✓ **Communication with WeGo** if any bus routes will be impacted

If any additional documentation is required for your Open Street permit approval, it will be communicated with you through the initial approval email sent to you by the Film and Parade Office.

Required Permit: Tactical Urbanism Permit

Slow Streets are primarily applied for through NDOT's [Tactical Urbanism program](#). For the most in-depth information on the Tactical Urbanism application process, please refer to the [Tactical Urbanism Guide](#) (pages 47 and 48). Here is an introduction to the process and some basic information:

Who can apply:

Community organizations, neighborhood groups, individuals, and businesses (with the support from a community organization and/or neighborhood group)

What are the parameters?

A duration for installation must be selected:

- Pop Up (1 day or less)
- Short-Term (up to 2 weeks)
- Long Term (up to 1 year)

How do we close the street?

Signage and barricades are required for the street closure to keep non-residential cars from using the road as a thru street. You can request up to \$20,000 to purchase materials for the Slow Street through the Tactical Urbanism Program. You can also use simple materials like cones, yard signs, household items, and personal vehicles to block the road.

What does the permit cost?

Varies (depends on the permits deemed necessary to acquire after application review)

When should I apply?

Allow approximately 2 weeks for the application to be reviewed to make sure all documents have time to be approved and/or adjusted as needed. Refer to page 7 in the Tactical Urbanism Guide for a basic timeline of the application process and page 10 for a sample Project Planning Checklist

How do I apply?

Submit your application through [NDOT's ePermits website](#).

Action Steps: Permitting

- Complete permits and all associated requirements

Requirements for Approval

- ✓ **Design/Concept Plan** demonstrating where the street closure will be and where closure signage and barricades will be placed, as well as any additional materials intended to be used
- ✓ **Letters of Support** from community members and neighbors
- ✓ **Community Notification Letter** to distribute to all impacted houses and neighbors within the closure
- ✓ **Sponsor Commitment Letter(s)** partner organizations supporting this project (if applicable)
- ✓ **Certificate of Insurance**
 - ✓ Additionally, you will need to know the **approximate square footage** of the planned Slow Street
- ✓ You will also **submit this application document** in the [online portal](#)

Outreach & Promotion



- Talking about your Open Street
- Prioritize Notification
- Addressing Concerns
- Post-Event Feedback



Talking about Your Open Street

Community buy-in from the majority of your neighbors is crucial, and if your neighborhood has never had something like it, Open Streets can be an unusual pitch. Let your neighbors know what it is, what to expect, and what they can do.

You may be regularly asked why the street is being closed to cars so it's important to be comfortable talking about what Open Streets are, the benefits of hosting one, and your goal and vision for the day.

Some talking points and messaging that have been used previously include:

- ✓ Open Streets—inspired by the [Ciclovías of Bogotá](#)—is an opportunity that temporarily closes streets to cars and opens them back up to people!
- ✓ Open Streets are designed to encourage people to reconnect to their communities, get active, support local businesses, and play in the street.
- ✓ Anything that can be done in a park can be done right outside your doorstep: bike, walk, run, dance, play, gather, and more in the street!
- ✓ Unlike a typical street festival, the point is to enjoy the street space for what it is—free, open public space!



Promotions from Walk Bike Nashville's 2017 Open Street Nashville. These examples show exactly what is encouraged at Open Streets!

Consider the pitch you'll make to local businesses, organizations, and institutions you want to garner support or participation from. You may say, "During Open Streets, we love inviting local institutions to spend time in the communities they serve." Or provide inspiration for how potential partners could activate the street: "From storytime and arts and crafts, to a tailgate or pick-up soccer, there are many ways you can help us foster community in the street."

Prioritize Notification

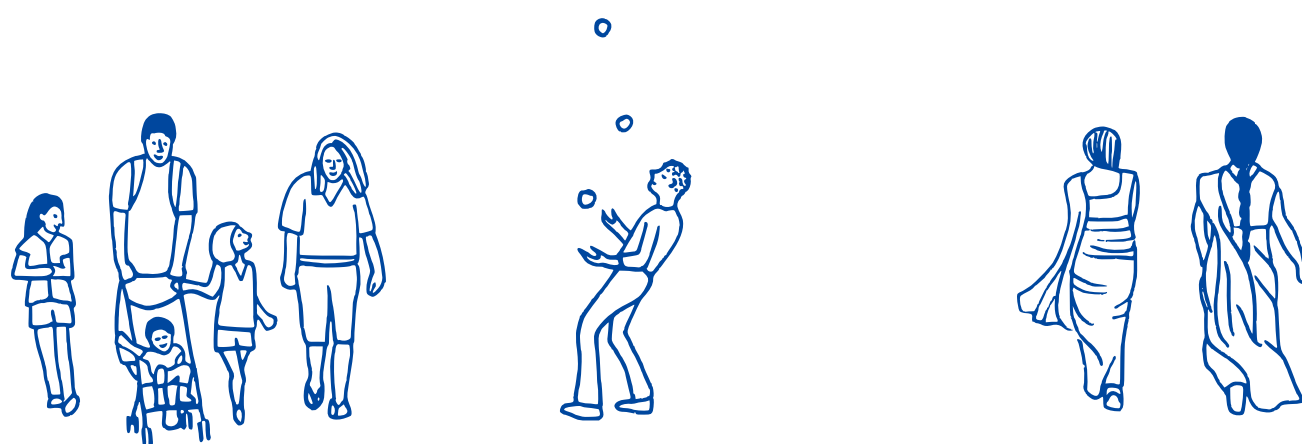
Remember to be thorough when informing your neighborhood of the Open Street. Talk about it and promote it as often as possible, and give people the space to ask questions.

The highest priority of the notification process should be those who will be most impacted by your Open Street—residents and business owners within the street closure. Contact them early and often to keep them well informed and address any concerns. The best way to notify these neighbors is by going door to door with informational flyers or invitations, or sending notifications by mail. Keep in mind, for Open Streets Festivals, community notification letters to residents within the closure are required by the permitting process. You can also attend neighborhood gatherings, community events, and recurring meetings to speak to groups of people directly. It's best practice to ensure people hear about the Open Street on multiple occasions to make sure they are well informed and to generate excitement.

If you want to reach beyond your neighborhood so more people can enjoy the event, consider promoting it online in community forums and on social media channels. With permission from managers, places like restaurants, libraries, and community centers may let you hang posters and leave flyers promoting your Open Street. Outlets like local publications and radio stations sometimes promote free community events if you ask. And there are many local event calendars that accept free submissions, too. *(Keep in mind, Neighborhood Open Streets are intended for crowds of 75 people or less, so the recommendation for promotion beyond the neighborhood is best for those hosting Open Street Festivals.)*

Action Steps: Community Engagement

- ✓ Talk to neighbors, businesses, and anyone nearby who may be impacted
- ✓ Tell them about the benefits of Open Streets, garner support, and invite them out
- ✓ Determine the best way(s) to inform your community



Addressing Concerns

Because of the nature of this event, driving on the Open Street is discouraged.

This may be a challenge for people who need to drive to or from their home during the event time. Listen to concerns that come up and work with them to find a solution. Oftentimes, they may be able to park off-site and walk to their car when they need to leave. Or you can arrange for them to be slowly and safely escorted off the closure during Open Streets.

You may also run into some opposition or anger from neighbors. Share with them the goals and benefits of Open Streets, and invite them to check it out themselves on the day-of. Ultimately, Open Streets are meant to build safe and connected communities. Clearly communicating that is the best way to reach neighbors.

Post-Event Feedback

Communication shouldn't stop when the road opens back up to cars.

Receiving feedback on your Open Street after you've held it is a great way to gauge whether your neighbors enjoyed it, what can be improved, and interest in hosting another one. Consider distributing a feedback survey during and after the event, or post QR codes at the event and share survey links digitally after the event.



Tip: Try These Post Survey questions

- ✓ Name, ZIP code - tells you who they are and if they are local to your community
- ✓ Email, phone number, and/or home address - in case they would like to keep in touch or be contacted for follow-up
- ✓ "How did you hear about this Open Street? Did you feel well informed that this event was coming to your neighborhood?"
- ✓ "Was this your first time attending an Open Streets event?"
- ✓ "What did you enjoy the most about Open Streets?"
- ✓ "What improvements can be made for future Open Streets? Please share any additional questions / comments/ concerns you may have"
- ✓ "Would you like to have another Open Streets here?" or "Where would you like to see another Open Street?"



Case Study: Open Streets Festival

Open Streets Antioch Pike

Open Streets
Festival

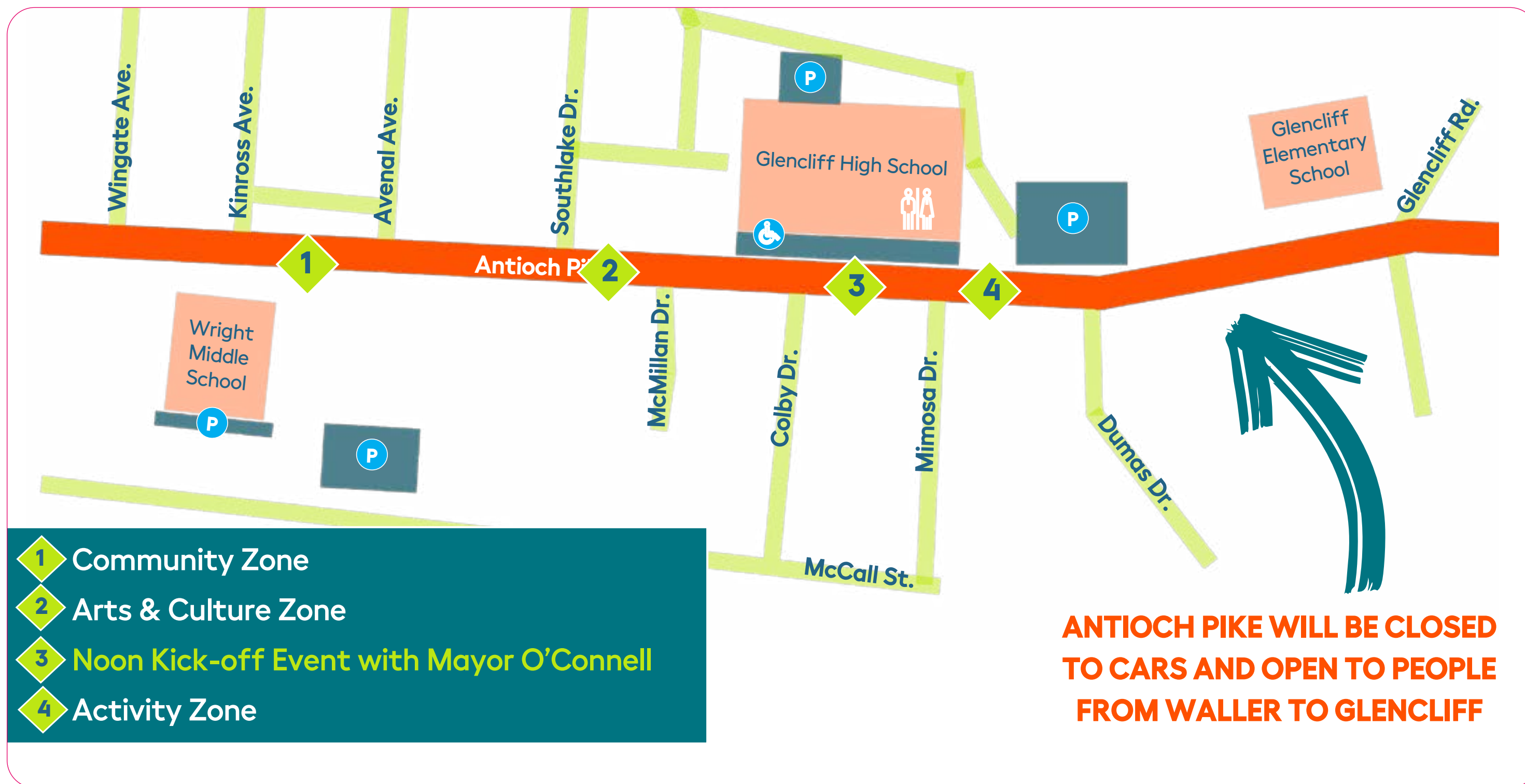
A Need for Safety: From 2019 to 2024, there were 76 crashes on Antioch Pike with many unsafe driver behaviors observed, such as drag racing, especially between Wright Middle and Glenclyff Elementary schools. Neighborhood conversations about these concerns sparked the idea to host an Open Streets Festival to temporarily reclaim Antioch Pike as a space for people. This case study offers a glimpse into the planning process for this hugely successful Open Street.





Case Study: Open Streets Festival

Open Streets Antioch Pike



RECAP BLOG

PHOTO GALLERY

RECAP VIDEO



Case Study: Open Streets Festival

Open Streets Antioch Pike

FEBRUARY 21

NDOT and Walk Bike Nashville connect with the Glenclyff community in South Nashville.

In a meeting with the Glenclyff Neighborhood Group, Cosecha Community Development, the Civic Design Center, and many other stakeholders, the idea to host an Open Street was offered to help promote safer streets, pilot Tactical Urbanism efforts, and bring the community together.

MARCH-AUGUST

Casual conversations continue amongst community members and **interest** in an Open Street grows.

AUGUST 8

Glenclyff stakeholders reconvene at Walk Bike Nashville's August Member Meeting and begin solidifying the plans for Open Streets Antioch Pike. Time, place, and engagement opportunities are discussed. By the end of the meeting, a **steering committee** was formed. With backing from Council Member Ginny Welsch, Open Streets Antioch Pike was shaping up to be a vibrant day filled with community.

Steering Committee Key Players:

Glenclyff Neighborhood Group President Alexa Little and Treasurer Tony Zavitsos, School Board Chair Freda Player, Cosecha Community Development's Garden Manager and Program Coordinator at Wright Middle School Catherine Lewis, Community Achieves Site Manager at Wright Middle Jennifer Dewall, and Glenclyff High School alumni Debbie Young





Case Study: Open Streets Festival

Open Streets Antioch Pike

SEPTEMBER 4

First Steering Committee Meeting

SEPTEMBER 6

Special Events Permit application submitted to begin the permitting process

SEPTEMBER 4–NOVEMBER 2

The steering committee meets bi-weekly for the two months leading up to the Open Street Festival. Between meetings, the team was inviting neighbors through online groups and in-person gatherings, like Glenclyff High School's community Trunk or Treat and Glenclyff Neighborhood Group meetings. They reached out to community partners such as local nonprofits, libraries, community and religious centers, and other interested neighbors, to join in on the Open Street festivities. This was a new concept to the area, so neighbors expressed both positive reactions and skepticism, some feeling apprehensive to close the street to cars.

OCTOBER 15–31

Through the **steering committee's final push** to bring everything together, they ensure all participating community partners have the set-up information they need, hand-deliver Community Notification Letters to neighbors, and plan the details of the kick-off program.





Case Study: Open Streets Festival

Open Streets Antioch Pike

NOVEMBER 3

Event Day: Open Streets Antioch Pike!

Approximately 1,000 people of all ages enjoyed the 1-mile Open Street on a beautiful fall day. There was music and games, local food vendors, art and neighborhood artists, and no cars as people walked their dogs, rode their bikes, talked with neighbors, and played in the street. The church on Antioch Pike, Iglesia del Nazareno Glencliff, held its services outside, with members spilling into the street later in the day. As the sun started to set, the comforting feeling of safety, fun, and community continued as neighbors lingered to spend time together and thank all the partners who joined. Neighbors shared that this was the quietest Antioch Pike had been in years as they brainstormed when they could host another Open Street. Even neighbors who were skeptical at first joined in the fun and felt the sense of safety and community.

Kick Off Event Highlights: To celebrate the start of the event, notable community leaders (including Mayor Freddie O'Connell, Council Member Ginny Welsch, and NDOT Director Diana Alarcon) and members of the steering committee gave opening remarks before Mariachi México Internacional christened the route by playing music as they paraded down the street.

Event Day Timeline

10 AM	Organizers arrive
11 AM	Closure begins as vendors and partners set up
12 PM	Kick-Off program begins
12-5PM	Open Streets!
4:30 PM	Event breakdown begins
5:30PM	Street closure ends

Antioch Pike Budget (\$6000 Total)

\$3,000	Security
\$100	Printing of flyers and notification letters
\$2650	Programming Expenses (mariachi band, bounce house, arts and crafts and misc. supplies)
\$250	Photographer

NOVEMBER 13

In a **post-event debrief**, the steering committee shared their positive experiences from the day, reviewed survey responses, and looked forward to the next Open Streets Antioch Pike. **100 percent of survey respondents were interested in seeing another Open Street in the neighborhood.**

"My son and I enjoyed everything! We loved the feeling of a neighborhood block party for the community!"





Case Study: Open Streets Festival

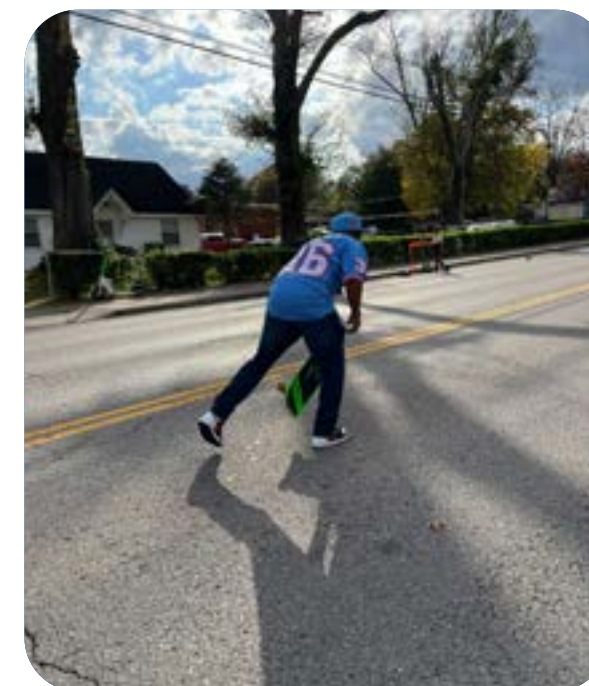
Open Streets Antioch Pike



"In a post-event debrief, the steering committee shared their positive experiences from the day, reviewed survey responses, and looked forward to the next Open Streets Antioch Pike. 100% of survey respondents were interested in seeing another Open Street in the neighborhood."



"I loved skating on the street and watching people hang out with their neighbors. There were kids running around, so so many strollers, there's so many families. Just a beautiful experience."



Conclusion

Open Streets Nashville is intended to be a day when a street is closed off to cars so the surrounding community can use the space as they like- walking, biking, gathering, anything!

With streets making up 30 percent of a city's public space, Open Streets are just one step towards a society where street space can be for people, not just cars.



Walk Bike Nashville and NDOT **want to see more neighborhoods taking advantage of Open Streets**, and we are here to offer support along the way.

If any step of the process feels daunting or questions arise, reach out and we are happy to help.

We hope that through this toolkit, even more Nashvillians will be equipped to host Open Streets in their communities—promoting safer streets, stronger neighborhoods, and Streets for People.

Reach us at openstreets@nashville.gov



Appendix: Additional Reading

Additional resources such as template checklists, surveys, and marketing materials are available online at openstreetsnashville.org/resources and nashville.gov/openstreets.

- The **Open Streets Project**, an advocacy project and collaboration between 880 Cities and Street Plans, has their own toolkit with information intended for larger, organization-run Open Streets, as well as their own database of cities and video library.
- While slightly older, the **Open Streets Guide** has plenty of research, statistics, and case studies to learn more about other Open Streets projects
- Proximity of Care's case study "**Converting streets into play spaces**" offers some insights and benefits of bringing Play Streets to a neighborhood

- The **School Streets Toolkit** by Transportation Alternatives and Open Plans offers great guidance for any teachers, administrators, or parents interested in seeing a neighborhood street by their school turned into a safe space for students to walk, learn, and play safely. *This toolkit is written for residents of New York City, so specific details do not apply to Nashville. General tips, like activation and engagement, are still relevant.*
- **1000 Play Streets Toolkit** from Play Australia offers additional insight in the benefits of hosting Play Streets, or Neighborhood Open Streets. *This initiative is based out of Australia and has a few elements specific to those communities, but the simple steps, principles, and testimonials included are relevant to any neighborhood.*

Case studies from other cities:

- **Open Streets - Tucson**
[Cyclovia Tucson!](#)
- **Play Streets - New York**
[New York City: The Birthplace of Play Streets](#)
- **School Streets - Albania**
[This Albanian City Should Inspire America to Go Big on 'School Streets'](#)
- **Slow Streets - Oakland**
[From Slow Streets to Essential Places: Lessons From Oakland](#)

