



Photo: Dutch Cycling Embassy



Photo: Dutch Cycling Embassy

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Closing remarks

In 2020, the COVID-19 fundamentally changed the way we look at cities, offering a unique window of opportunity to rethink, redefine, and reallocate urban streetscapes and the way they are used. Everywhere in the world, pop-up bike lanes have been implemented to provide more space for cyclists, providing a reliable means of providing physical space for exercise and maintaining mental and physical health, as well as an alternative for public transportation. However, it is of the utmost importance that these changes are thoroughly considered and carefully implemented, to avoid common mistakes and adverse effects. The big question is how to move from pop-up bike lanes and temporary solutions to permanent ingredients for successful urban transformation?

As the world's number one cycling nation, the Netherlands can assist in the necessary changes based on experiences from the past five decades. In this document, the Dutch Cycling Embassy shares a lot of the lessons we learned based on almost 50 years of trial-and-error in improving cycling conditions. By sharing it, we hope that you can avoid the error part of that equation, focusing on the solutions that work.

An overarching lesson is that we learned not to be afraid to experiment: the Dutch tried a lot of different things since the 1970s; willing to overhaul streets and overhaul them again if new solutions didn't work. In this process, we also learned that simply copy-pasting solutions from one city or locality to the other can easily result in spectacular failures. To overcome these missteps, the Dutch Cycling Embassy is more than willing to offer our help and guidance in implementing Dutch-style solutions; together with you we can see how to fit them best in your local geographical, social and cultural context. To do so, we can organize tailor-made Think-Bike Workshops® and bring experts from our public-private network to work together with you to see what solution fits best and how to implement it to gain the maximum benefits.

The global pandemic has shown us that cities around the world need more resilient, more equitable mobility—not only to weather the COVID-19 crisis, but also to prepare for the climate crisis and to provide an easily accessible answer to the deepening inequality in many urban areas across the globe. As EU Vice-President Frans Timmermans expressed, the bike has a fantastic and romantic past, but also a glorious future, and can play an important and decisive role in reshaping urban public spaces.

The Netherlands has learned first-hand that cycling is not only a very humble mode of transportation, but also a very powerful transformational tool, which makes cities more sustainable, more social, safer, wealthier, healthier, and happier places to live!

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Let's face these challenges together.



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The Dutch Cycling Embassy is a public private network for sustainable bicycle inclusive mobility. We represent the best of Dutch Cycling: knowledge, experience and experts offered by private companies, NGO's, research institutions, national and local governments.

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