

# Open or Shared Streets during the Covid-19 Pandemic: Repurposing Street Lanes for Social Distancing

Carl Eppich, AICP  
Principal Transportation Planner

- Closing streets to local traffic only
- Creating space for Walking and Biking



Problem:  
Sidewalks and  
trails rarely over  
5-feet wide

HARD to  
Physically  
Distance

#streetsforpeopleTO



Problem:  
Too many people  
and too few  
places to be  
outside to  
recreate

Opportunity...




**Dan Kennedy** 

@dankennedy\_nu



I just got back from a run in the Middlesex Fells. I have never seen it anywhere near as crowded as it was today — end to end people. We may need to rethink outdoor recreation in urban settings. [#COVID19](#)

 57 4:59 PM - Mar 21, 2020



 26 people are talking about this



Problem:  
Too many people  
and too few  
places to be  
outside to  
recreate

Opportunity...





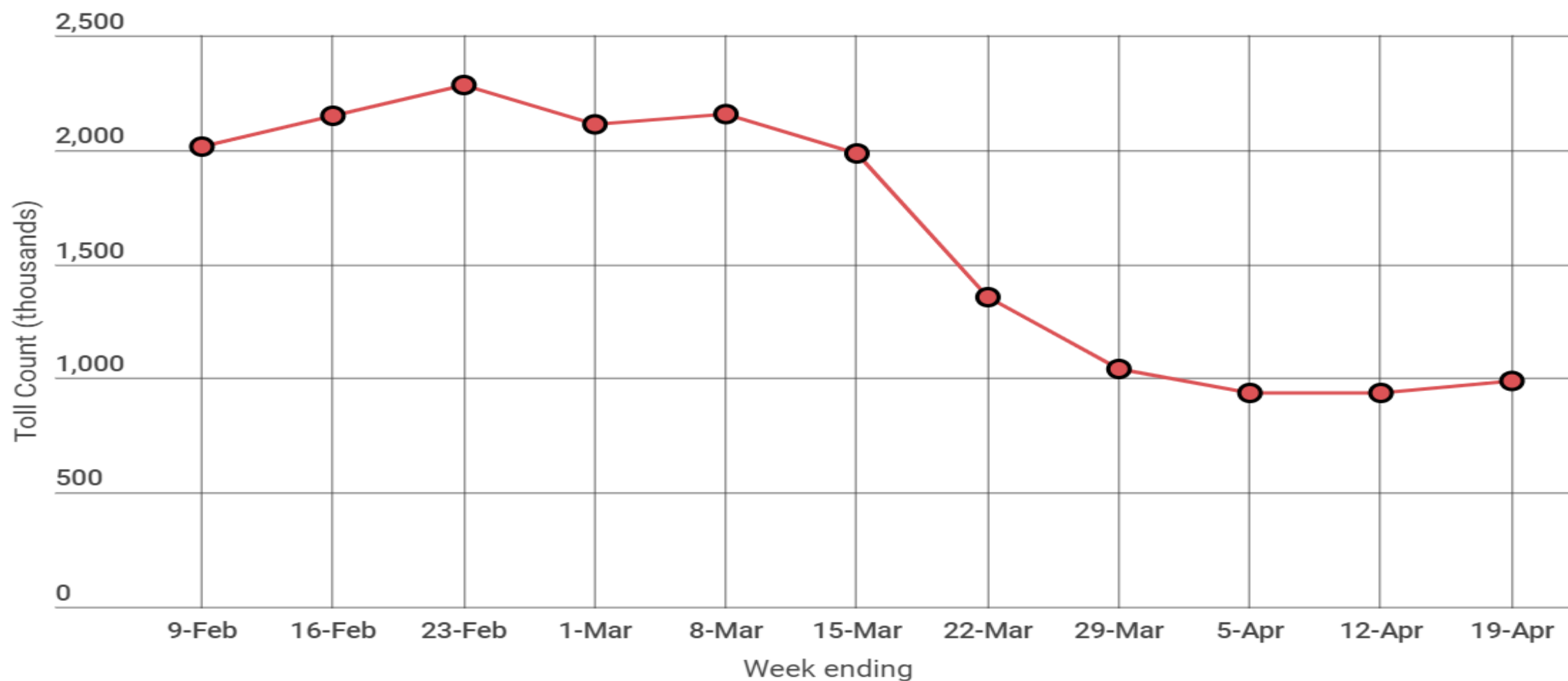
# Opportunity: Motor vehicle traffic is down 30-60%\*

*\*Depending on location, some  
cities maybe more*



newhampshire

# N.H. turnpike traffic has bottomed out



# Problem:

- Congested sidewalks
- Crowded paths
- Crowded Parks



- *sciencenews.com*
- <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/coronavirus-covid-19-why-6-feet-may-not-be-enough-social-distance>



# Problem:

- Congested sidewalks
- Crowded paths
- Crowded Parks

## Hikers Flock To Popular Trails In First Days Of N.H.'s Stay-At-Home Order

By DANIELA ALLEE • MAR 29, 2020



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The first weekend of Gov. Chris Sununu's stay-at-home order saw a surge of hikers heading to popular trails in New Hampshire.

Some officials and conservation groups say that could become a problem.

*NHPR's reporters are working around the clock to bring you the latest news on coronavirus in New Hampshire. [Click here](#)*

- NHPR- <https://www.nhpr.org/post/hikers-flock-popular-trails-first-days-nhs-stay-home-order#stream/0>



Opportunity:  
Low Traffic

Temporary  
Shared/Open  
Streets

\*

<https://usa.streetsblog.org/2020/04/16/lets-not-overthink-this-opening-streets-is-easy-says-urban-planner-mike-lydon>

/ Bike/Ped / Smart Growth

## Let's Not Overthink This: Opening Streets is Easy, Says Urban Planner Mike Lydon

By Mike Lydon | Apr 16, 2020 | 4 COMMENTS



Here's what's being done in Burlington, Vt, which has miles of streets now looking like this. Photo: Liam Griffin

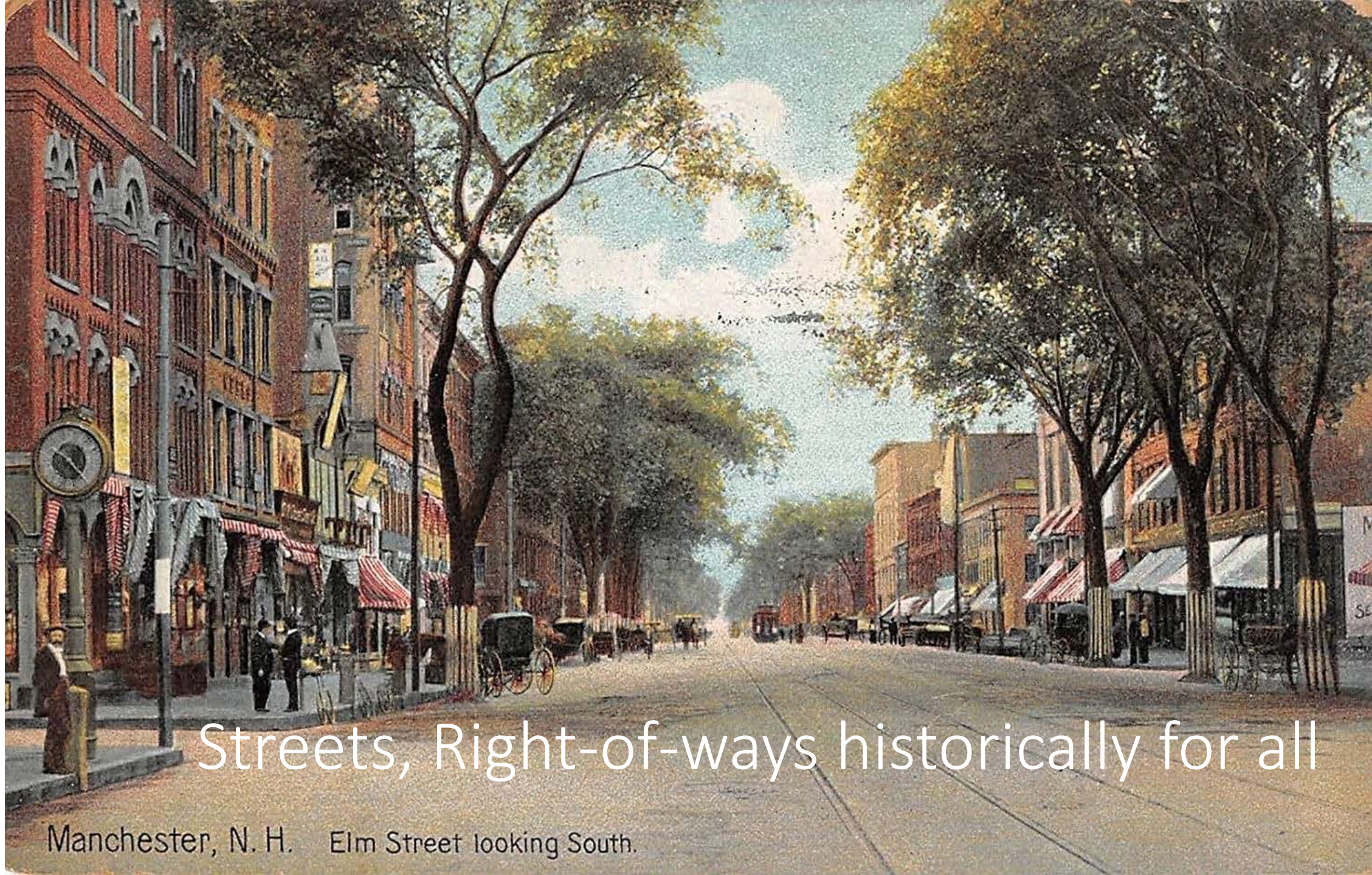


# Open Roads – Shared Streets



Beach Drive in NW Washington, DC | Photo by Anthony Le





Streets, Right-of-ways historically for all

Manchester, N. H. Elm Street looking South.



Opportunity:

Open Roads  
– Slow,  
Shared and  
Safe (NACTO)





Opportunity:

How?

Considerations

- Criteria
- Design/Data
- Implementation
- Communications  
(and  
Coordination)
- Maintenance
- Evaluation



# Street Selection Criteria

- Local streets only
- Avoid commercial areas
- No transit routes
- Signalized intersection where route crosses a collector/arterial
- Qualitative staff knowledge





# Design

- Vet recommendations for active construction, paving, access or safety issues via GIS and field inspections
- Embrace lower traffic volumes
- Develop traffic management plans
- Coordinate signage needs



# Implementation

- Utilize in-house barricades or barricade contracts
- Repurposed staff to install signage
- Phased rollout to act quickly while also giving engineers more time







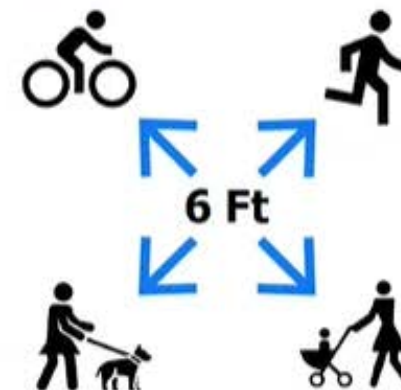
# Communication

- Not a typical Open Streets event or closure
- Physical/social distancing required
- Local access required to use extreme caution
- Be aware of vehicles



## Please maintain social distancing requirements

Help us limit the spread of COVID-19 in Denver



While using this temporary recreation space, maintain at least 6 feet between yourself and others (average length of a bicycle or dog leash). The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public in addition to other protective measures. Be mindful of vehicles and people in the shared street. Go to [Denvergov.org](https://denvergov.org) for more information



# Maintenance

- Barriers moved by residents
- Corridors with higher vehicle use require the most attention
- Daily site visits by contractor and DOTI inspectors





# Evaluation

- Existing TMC Cameras
- Short duration tube counters and manual counts
- 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue (1 of 8 streets):
  - Weekday avg: 1,000
  - Weekend avg: 1,400







James Deck



Results!





James Deck



Results!

## Resources:



- <https://nacto.org/program/covid19/>
- <https://nacto.org/covid19-rapid-response-tools-for-cities/>
- <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tjam1v0NLUWkYedla4dVOL49pyWIPlyGwRB0DOnm3Ls/edit#gid=0>
-

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- Questions? Discussion