



Activated Laneways: Making Laneways A Place-making Experience While Maintaining Their Functionality

Definition of a Laneway

Municipal By-law/Policy

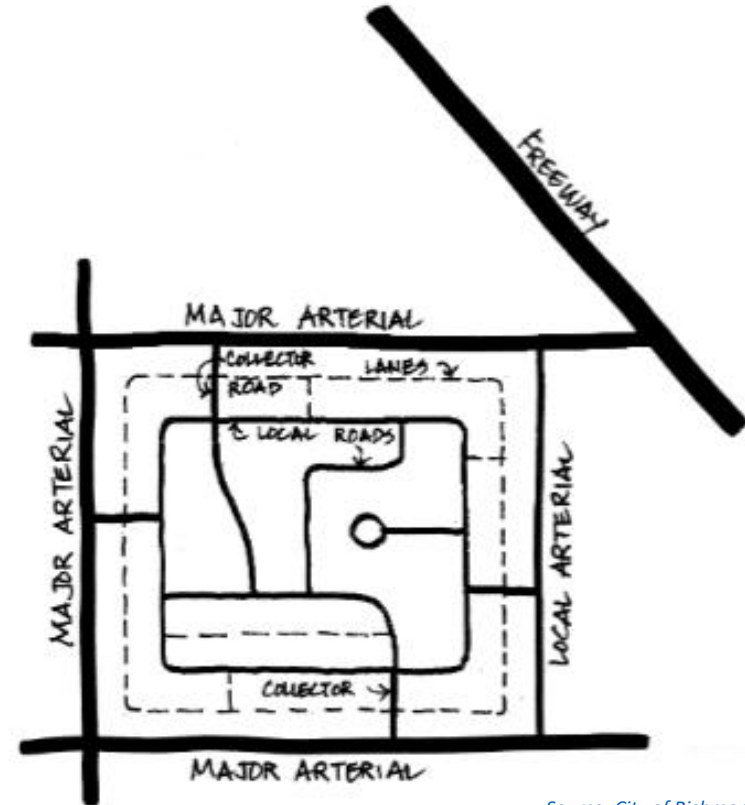
- Traditionally have been viewed as a place to simply provide vehicle and servicing access;

*“...provides access at the rear of abutting properties thereby **eliminating the need for driveways onto the fronting street.**”*

- City of Richmond

*“...a narrow street or passageway, between or behind buildings, designed, constructed and **intended to provide access to and service at the rear of places of residence or business** and owned by a government authority.”*

- City of Markham



Source: City of Richmond

Definition of Place-making

Project for Public Spaces

(<https://www.pps.org/>)

- Refers to a “**collaborative process** by which ... can **shape our public realm** in order to maximize shared value”
- Inspire people to collectively **re-imagine** and **reinvent** public spaces as the heart of every community.
- Capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential
- Results in the creation of **quality public spaces** that contribute to people's **health, happiness, and well being**.



Source: Project for Public Spaces

Why Activate Laneway?

Besides dealing with garbage and recycling pick-up and providing access to loading and parking, **can a laneway also play an important role in creating interesting place-making experiences for the public?**

Is there a happy medium we can achieve by introducing some other activities or uses at established laneways?

Commercial Laneways in Downtown Vancouver



Credit: www.safetysign.com



Credit: <http://district9.wikia.com/wiki/User:LegendFPS>

Commercial Laneways in Downtown Vancouver



- Treated as the “back of house”
- Poorly lit
- Lots of cluttering
- Not pedestrian friendly/ welcoming

The Role of a Laneway

“Back alleys, neglected courtyards, and stairways may escape our notice...yet if they are claimed, and owned, and developed, they can be harnessed to strengthen and enrich their communities.”

Placemaking and the Future of Cities, Project for Public Spaces

Worldwide Examples of Activated Laneways

The Lanes Brighton, United Kingdom

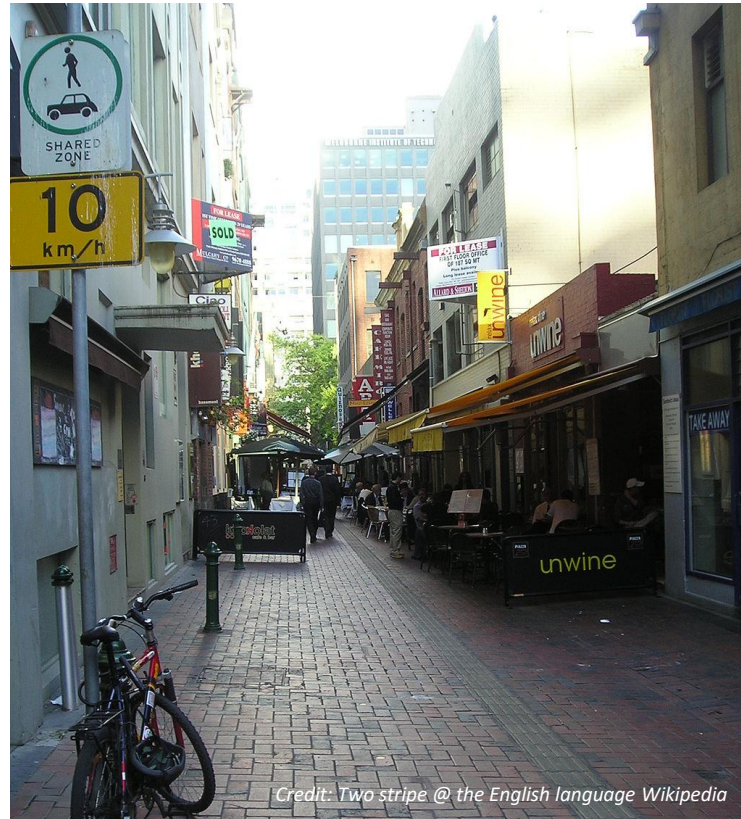
- A collection of narrow alleyways famous for their small shops
- Sections designated for pedestrian only, no vehicles between 11am and 7pm



Worldwide Examples of Activated Laneways

Hardware Lane Melbourne, Australia

- Opened in 1837, famous for numerous restaurants & cafés
- No vehicles between 11am and 11pm, occasionally features nighttime live jazz performances



Credit: Two stripe @ the English language Wikipedia

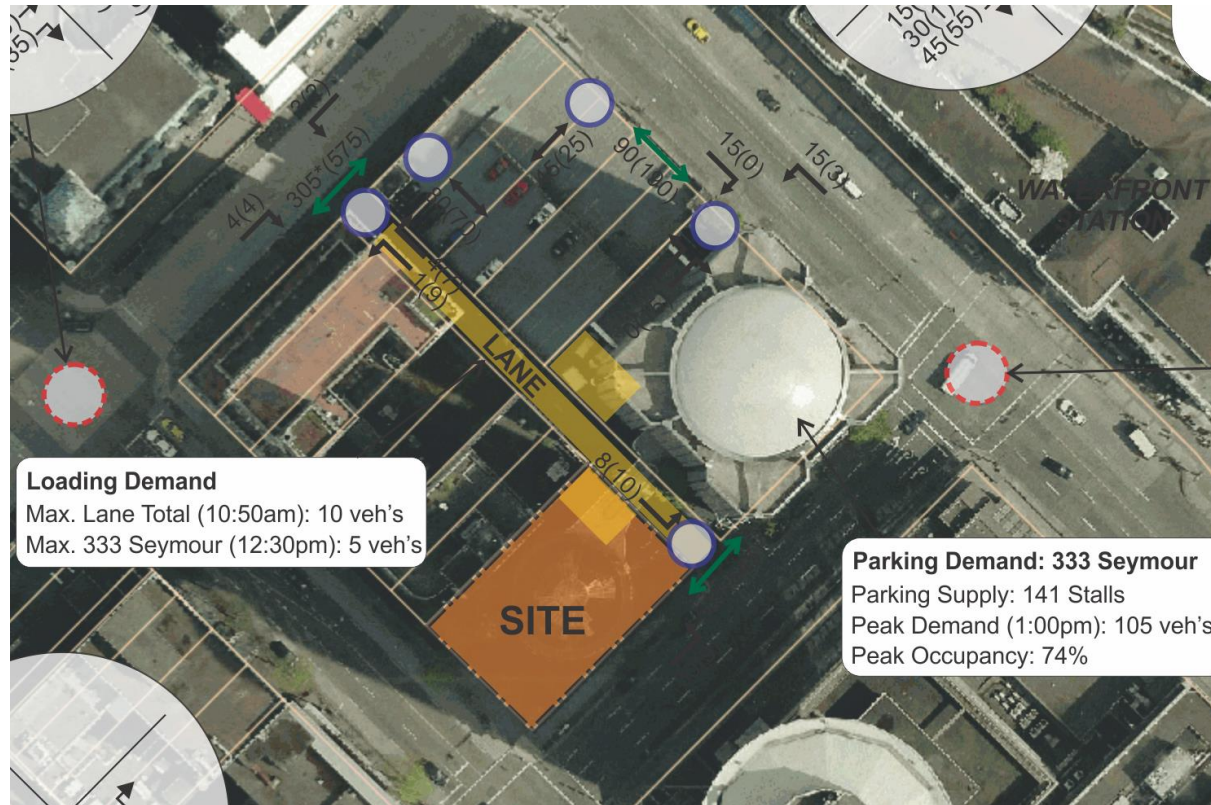


Credit: Johntorcasio @ Wikimedia Commons



Credit: Urban Melbourne Forum

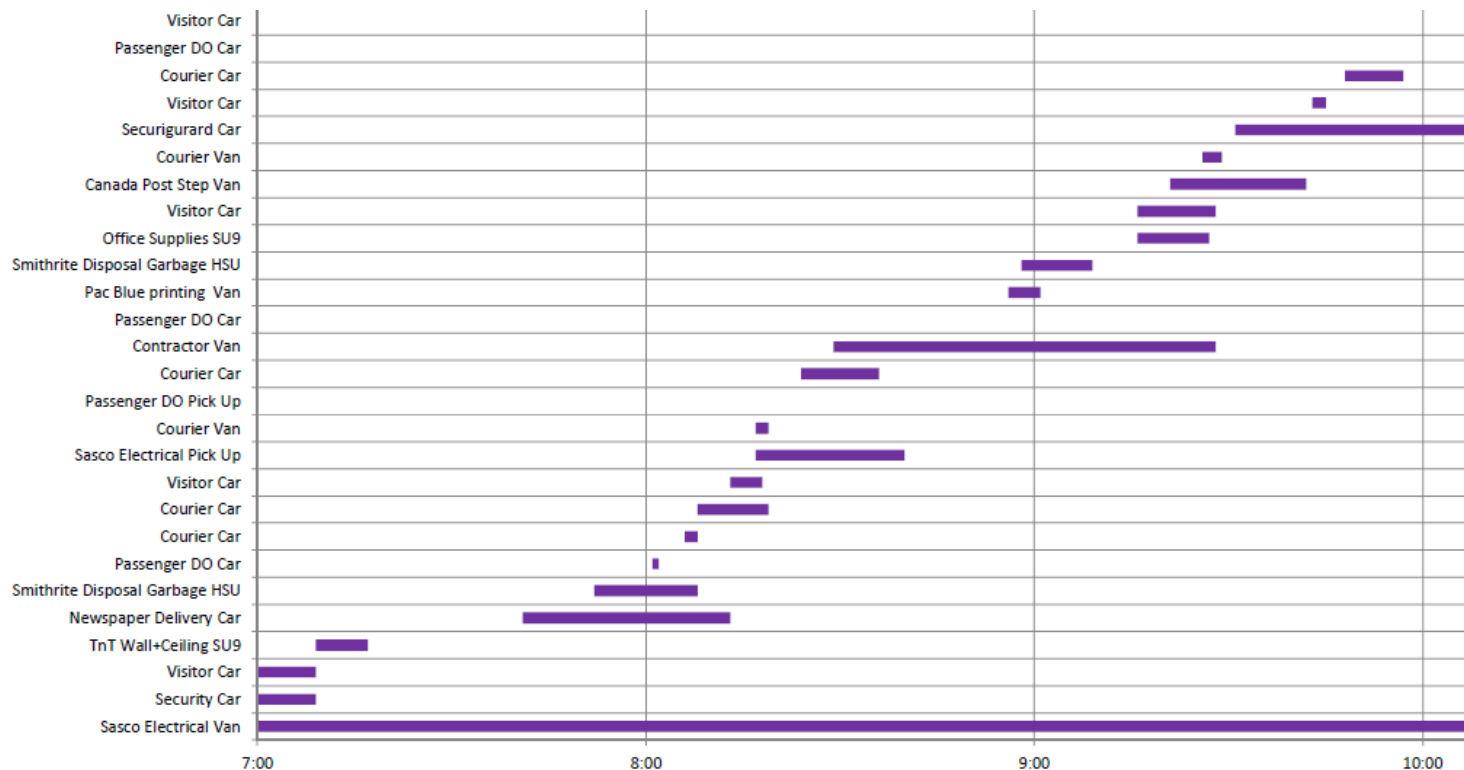
What About Vancouver?



What happens in commercial laneways in Downtown Vancouver?

- Access to parking for multiple buildings
- Access to off-street loading spaces
- Garbage and recycling bins staging area

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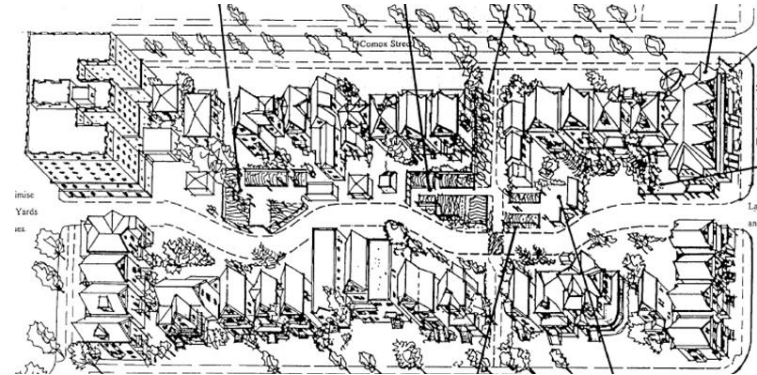
These activities occupy 4 to 6 hours
(15% to 25%) of a typical weekday.

Is there a better way to use this space?

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- Access to off-street loading spaces
- Garbage and recycling bins staging area

Special Laneways in Vancouver



Credit: Dani Alexander

Mole Hill Lane

- Located in the West End Neighbourhood in downtown
- Features a meandering laneway within a 6m Right-of-Way
- Community gardens flowing out from private properties
- Textured pavers and concrete band identify shared use.



Credit: cityfarmer.org

Special Laneways in Vancouver



#MoreAwesomeNow Laneway Activation

- Transform three alleyways in downtown Vancouver from utilitarian service corridors into bright, playful public spaces.
- #MoreAwesomeNow - partnership between:
 - City of Vancouver
 - Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA)
 - HCMA Architecture + Design
- First project (ALLEY-OOP) completed in summer 2016 with research work started 18 months in advance.

Special Laneways in Vancouver

#MoreAwesome Now Laneway Activation

These spaces are shared by people and vehicles, which continue to access the lane for service purposes.



Other Examples in Canada



Credit: <https://www.edmonton.ca>

Whyte Avenue Alley Project, Edmonton, AB



- Partnership between:
 - City of Edmonton CITYLab
 - Old Strathcona Business Association
 - Old Strathcona Foundation
- The Alley, located just west of Whyte Avenue & 104 Street, was painted in Summer 2015 as a low cost way to transform a service lane into a place where people stop and linger
- Large planters were also added at either end of the lane to block vehicular traffic

Other Examples in Canada

Toronto, Ontario

- Has over 2,400 public laneways, comprising more than 250 acres of public space
- The space is largely overlooked and underused, providing service access to adjacent properties but not much else
- **The Laneway Project** (thelanewayproject.ca), a not-for-profit social enterprise based in Toronto, have been working with various BIAs in Toronto to facilitate the activation of laneways at 8 to 10 different locations over the past few years



How to Achieve Place-making in Laneways?

Identify Existing Needs

- Document the frequency and types of vehicles that still require service access

Develop a Loading Management Plan

- Define clear procedures for delivery and waste management vehicles
- Analyze survey data to identify opportunities for scheduled closure of laneways or joint use

Establish Communication Protocols

- Identify stakeholders
- Establish response and operations protocols

How to Achieve Place-making in Laneways?



Through **proper management** and **instructions**, vehicle activities at the laneway can be coordinated so that at certain times the laneway can be closed-off to allow for other activities to occur in the area.

Examples include walk-up retail stores, quick service restaurants, wine bar with patios open out to the laneway

– **the possibilities in unlimited.**

Thank You!

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