

FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES... OPINION

GUEST ESSAY

The Simplest Tool for Improving Cities Is Also Free

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By Sara Hendren

Read the full story at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/16/opinion/cities-reopening-time.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pgtype=Homepage>

“Ms. Hendren is an artist and design researcher, a professor at Olin College of Engineering and the author of “What Can a Body Do? How We Meet the Built World.”

“CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — For decades, a stretch of Memorial Drive here that runs along the Charles River has been closed to automobiles on Sundays for the warmer half of the year. In the absence of cars on a four-lane thoroughfare beside the water, all kinds of other street uses blossom: skateboards, bicycles, hoverboards, strollers, wheelchairs and walkers, people on feet and on wheels now moving slowly enough to witness the late spring goslings, the ever-present sea gulls or the rarer magic and grace of a heron feeding along the water’s edge. A towering line of stately, centenarian sycamores forms an unbroken canopy over several blocks.

“This section of Memorial Drive is formally called “Riverbend Park” during its weekend closures, but it’s not a park in any physical, structural sense. It’s an open public space transformed into a park without any construction. State park employees arrive in trucks in the morning and again in the evening at junctures in the road, placing gates, cones, and signs that cut off traffic. By dusk, the gates disappear, and traffic returns. That’s it — a park that is “found” from what’s already there.”

The rest of the story at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/16/opinion/cities-reopening-time.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pgtype=Homepage>

From CharacterTowns.org...

What a great idea that apparently has been practiced for years; like opening the fire hydrants on city streets for kids to play in the water. Using public and other spaces for different activities at different times of the day gives a **fourth dimension to space utilization**.