

Name: Brendan

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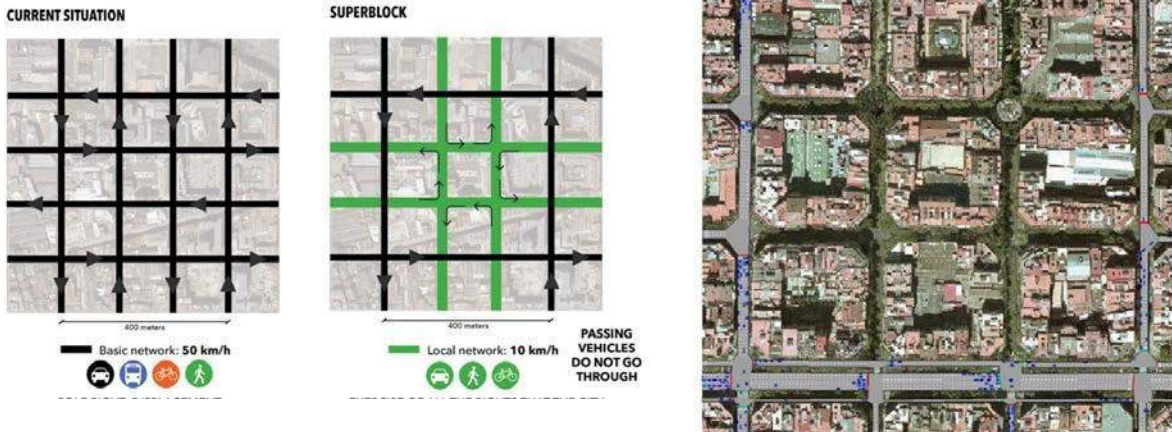
Message:

My idea about incorporating Madrid's 'Super-block' plan into Ireland's urban development.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on National Planning Framework (<http://npf.ie>)

Brendan Gilmer



Barcelona 'Superblock' plan (<http://inhabitat.com/how-barcelonas-pedestrian-friendly-superblocks-reduce-pollution-and-return-streets-to-the-people/>)

The future of urban development in Ireland as in every other modern country in the world needs to be focused on walkability. This is for 2 main reasons: first the very real prospect of it becoming too expensive and environmentally harmful to drive cars everywhere we need to go, and second that people enjoy being able to walk to all the places they need to get to. Creating these types of urban environments involve having walkable streets, mix-use buildings, and enough density to provide all of a residents needs while all being spaced out enough to be comfortable. One of the challenges with accomplishing this types of environments in Ireland is that there is a very old existing urban structure that wasn't always designed for that type of living. The two photos I have included are an example of an older European city (Madrid) that has come up with a great idea for how to deal with this same issue. The 'Superblock' idea of creating car free districts made up of multiple existing blocks forces street level development to happen on the internal edges of that grid instead just outward towards main thoroughfares. It also obviously greatly reduces car traffic and encourages people in these super blocks to walk. While Irish cities don't have to the strict grid system that Madrid has I think there is still the possibility of creating these type of car-free districts with public transit and major thorough fares happening around the outsides. This type of thinking should also be incorporated into new developments in Ireland by creating pedestrian pathways through large city blocks with shops, markets, etc... facing inwards on those pathways. It is important that these district blocks be incorporated with any public transport systems around their edges in order to fully encourage a pedestrian lifestyle.