

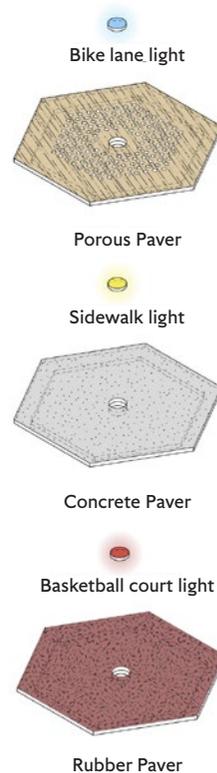


David Pike

Dynamic Street is a MODULAR SOLUTION for tomorrow's urban environment

URBAN DESIGN – CRA-Carlo Ratti Associati proposes that the future of city planning will result in the removal of a seemingly innocuous design element: the kerb. The sharp-angled step popularized in the 18th century separates the thoroughfare intended for vehicles from pedestrian walkways. But CRA, along with Alphabet's Sidewalk Labs, envisions streets as shared spaces where driverless cars integrate seamlessly into the urban environment. Facilitated by the use of reconfigurable hexagonal tiles, the Dynamic Street is a prototypical paving system that shifts functions immediately to serve the needs of its users.

Inspired by French company IFST-TAR's removable-pavement project, CRA's modular concrete tiles can be easily replaced for repair and – furthering the hack-ability of urban environments – readily accept plug-ins, from basketball hoops to bollards and bike racks. The Dynamic Street allows different



channels of traffic to operate simultaneously, always taking the same amount of space. However, CRA and Sidewalk Labs imagine street space being directed by immediate need. During rush hour, the street can accommodate commuters heading to work, while it may become a play area during the day. LED lights embedded in the tiles use colour to indicate the street's function at any given moment.

Exhibited this summer at Sidewalk Labs' experimental office in Toronto, the installation might soon be available to view on a much larger scale. Sidewalk Toronto – a revitalization project proposed for a waterfront area in Canada's largest city – is considering the inclusion of Dynamic Streets in its programme. By removing traditional kerbs designed to divide vehicles from pedestrians, cities can be organized in an entirely new way. – KG

carloratti.com
sidewalklabs.com