

# Community Streets

## Reshaping Streets fact sheet

July 2023

Reshaping Streets is a package of regulatory changes that enables communities and Road Controlling Authorities (RCAs) to work together to modify existing streets to provide more space for people to move around using a variety of transport options.

The Reshaping Streets package of regulatory changes will be enacted as the *Land Transport Rule Street Layouts 2023*. As part of Reshaping Streets, communities will be able to apply to host Community Streets.

### What is a Community Street?

Community Streets, also known as Play Streets, makes it easier for local communities to work with councils to temporarily restrict traffic on quiet local streets so tamariki can play and communities can connect.

Reshaping Streets will make it easier for residents to apply to host these kinds of events and make the approval framework clearer for RCAs.

Residents can apply to host their event on a regular basis (e.g. once per month) for a period of up to 12 months.

### What are the benefits of a Community Street?

Enabling children's right to play, and particularly playing outside together, has enormous benefits for their health and wellbeing. Activities like Community Streets are also great for strengthening community connections. Community Streets have the following benefits:

- They can encourage communities to enjoy the outdoors and reimagine the way children can play in their neighbourhoods.
- They can increase the opportunities for play for children without suitable play facilities in their neighbourhoods, thereby increasing play equity.
- They can increase the level of community connection by encouraging communities to come together.
- They can help support an active New Zealand and support wellbeing by providing New Zealand whānau with opportunities to play.

Trials run in Tāmaki Makaurau in 2021 showed that approximately 80% of Play Streets participants were more likely to recognise their neighbours and know their names, and over half of those surveyed would be more willing to share a meal or garden produce with their neighbours. Enabling communities to get together in their streets builds community cohesion and reduces loneliness.



A local Community Street event in Lower Hutt.

## How does a Community Street work?

Residents can apply to their RCA to run a Community Street/Play Street event. This application can be for a one-off event, or to host an event on a regular basis (e.g., once per month) for a period of up to 12 months. Each event will typically last a couple of hours.

Event organisers will need to consult with neighbours as part of the application process, and if approved, the RCA must notify neighbours, emergency services and any other persons the RCA considers could be impacted, at least four weeks in advance.

In this notification, the RCA has to provide information about when the event is happening, where it will be located, what is expected of drivers (i.e., you can only enter the Community Street if you need to access a property) and whether it is reoccurring. The RCA can also state alternative routes that drivers can take if needed.

Before approving a Community Street, the RCA must consider the nature of the street. Community Streets should take place on quiet residential streets. Streets that have regular freight, public transport, emergency services, delivery services running through the area are not typically suitable for a Community Street. It's recommended that a Community Street would take place on a street where there is light traffic to fit the definition of a quiet local street, and the event should only include a small number of people (typically not exceeding 50).

RCAs may also impose conditions upon residents hosting Community Streets to ensure that safety and traffic management considerations are catered for. Approved signage can be used to indicate a Community Street, but RCAs can decide what other conditions must be met before approving a Community Street. They may wish to require the use of a traffic management plan in some instances.

Residents would be responsible for setting up the Community Street with close support from the RCA. RCAs are responsible for ensuring all conditions of the Community Street are adhered to.

A Community Street cannot be a pilot if it is organised by residents. However, an RCA may want to organise multiple Community Street events as part of a pilot. In this case, the RCA must follow the guidelines for Street Pilots.

[More information about Street Pilots.](#)

## Further guidance

Waka Kotahi published Guidelines for restricting traffic for Play Street events in 2021.

[Link to Play Streets guidelines.](#)

These Guidelines are being updated to reflect the Reshaping Streets rule changes. New guidelines are expected to be available by the time the new rules come into effect in mid-August 2023. In the meantime, RCAs can use the existing guidelines.

For more information about the Community Streets guidelines, please email [Reshaping.Streets@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Reshaping.Streets@nzta.govt.nz).



**A new Traffic Control Device (sign) for Community Streets is being gazetted as part of Reshaping Streets (the Land Transport Rule Street Layouts 2023).**

**This sign can be used when a local authority requires a Community Street sign to be used as a condition of approving the Community Street.**



This factsheet is a general guide only. It doesn't replace legal advice, and exact procedures depend on current legislation and local processes.

For more information about the Reshaping Streets package of rule changes, please email [Reshaping.Streets@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Reshaping.Streets@nzta.govt.nz).



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