

Filtering or restricting traffic

Reshaping Streets fact sheet

July 2023

Reshaping Streets is a package of regulatory changes that enables communities and RCAs (Road Controlling Authorities) to work together to modify existing streets to provide more space for people to move around safely 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, RCAs will have the option to filter and restrict traffic on streets within their communities.

What is filtering and restricting traffic?

Reshaping Streets enables an RCA or Waka Kotahi to filter or restrict traffic in towns and cities for any of the following reasons:

- to improve the access and mobility of any of the following:
 - pedestrians
 - cyclists
 - riders of mobility devices
 - riders of wheeled recreational devices
- to improve the operation of public transport
- to protect and promote public health and safety
- to support environmental sustainability, including reducing carbon dioxide emissions
- to create public spaces that support the wellbeing of communities.

The filtering and restricting traffic provisions in Reshaping Streets can also enable School Streets.

[More information about School Streets.](#)

Types of filters

RCAs can use either physical or regulatory filters to restrict traffic.

Physical filters are features installed on roads to control access to other parts of a road or to calm traffic. For example, bollards, planter boxes, trees, street furniture, or concrete blocks. These could physically restrict access by motor vehicles while still allowing people walking, cycling or using a mobility device to bypass them.

Regulatory filters which are devices like signs and road markings that are used to clarify which users can access a section of road and who cannot. For example, a 'one-way' street can specify that motor vehicles can only travel in one direction only, allowing more space for people using other modes of transport.

What are the benefits of filtering or restricting traffic?

RCAs are becoming increasingly interested in tools that they can use to prioritise people walking, cycling, riding devices, or taking public transport, as well as improving the overall efficiency of key routes.

Filters enable councils to restrict or limit traffic in places that are important for community life like town centres, in neighbourhoods and around schools, including to prevent streets or parts of streets from being used as thoroughfares.

These measures help make our streets safer and nicer places to be. They also increase the attractiveness of active modes of transport, which has a variety of health, economic and community benefits.



A traffic filter can help establish a contra-flow cycle lane, as pictured here on Federal Street in Auckland.

How does filtering or restricting traffic work?

Before implementing filters and restricting traffic, an RCA must notify the public and any emergency services that, in the opinion of the RCA, may be affected by the action. If the restriction is implemented via bylaw or other provision, it has to comply with the notification provisions within the bylaw and within the Local Government Act 2002.

As part of their decision-making RCAs must consider:

- Whether that roadway is a key route for general traffic or freight in the local area, a usual route for emergency vehicles, or a bus route
- The safety of alternative routes suitable for the traffic that will be affected when the prohibition or restriction is in operation
- The roads that will be affected by the action, including
- How many roads will be affected
- The type of roads (for example, residential, arterial, or feeder) that will be affected
- The usual volumes and speed of traffic on those roads.

Appropriate signage will still be required when filtering or restricting traffic.

Further Guidance

Waka Kotahi is developing guidance to support RCAs in when and how to use the filtering and restricting traffic provisions in the Reshaping Streets rule changes.

This guidance will cover the strategic and legislative context of Reshaping Streets, an understanding of why traffic should be filtered or restricted, including different potential scenarios where these could be applied, and guidance around planning, design and delivery of traffic restriction or filtering.

A growing suite of technical multi-modal guidance is also available on the Waka Kotahi website

[Multi-modal transport planning and design guidance.](#)



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



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