

Policy Statement on Use of Shared Zones

Living Streets Aotearoa

15th October 2015

1. This position statement relates to shared spaces/zones in city and town centres.
2. The Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004¹ defines Shared Zone as:

A **shared zone** means a length of roadway intended to be used by pedestrians and vehicles

and states:

10.2 Shared zone

(1) A driver of a vehicle entering or proceeding along or through a shared zone must give way to a pedestrian who is in the shared zone

(2) A pedestrian in a shared zone must not unduly impede the passage of any vehicle in the shared zone.

3. Shared zones are increasingly favoured by local authorities and urban designers in shopping, entertainment and tourist precincts and, in some cities, also in residential zones. Shared zones are where the road surface is at the same level as the footpath.
4. However shared zones may not be safe or improve pedestrians' urban experience unless they are well-designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable road users (children, disabled people and the frail elderly), and can eliminate the risk of vehicles dominating the road space, particularly at times when pedestrian volumes are low.
5. We believe that shared zones, utilising an existing road space, should only be implemented after consultation with stakeholders including walking and disabled people's organisations.

1 Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2004/0427/latest/whole.html#DLM303057>

6. Living Streets Aotearoa recognises that appropriately-designed shared zones may add vibrancy to the streetscape and stimulate economic activity in the zone and nearby. However, it wants to be sure that pedestrian safety and amenity are high in these zones and recommends the following:
- a) Before implementating a shared zone, road controlling authorities should first consider creating a pedestrian-only zone , particularly where there are high numbers of pedestrian users. Such a zone would prohibit access to all vehicles, including bicycles (unless riders dismount) at least during specific hours while allowing goods vehicles and other through traffic at other times.
 - b) The street environment of a shared zone must alert drivers, people on bikes and users of other wheeled devices, as well as pedestrians, that they are entering a zone where pedestrians have priority and where expectations of behaviour are different from outside the zone.
 - c) Shared zones should have a speed limit of 10kmh or lower, applying equally to all vehicles including bicycles and wheeled recreational devices.
 - d) Any shared zone must be designed to prevent domination by vehicles.
 - e) The Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 clause 10.2(2) should be amended to read 'A pedestrian in a shared zone must not wilfully unduly impede the passage of any vehicle in the shared zone.'
 - f) There should be a 2m wide “safe access route” on both sides of the zone which will at all times be kept free of all vehicles and street furniture to provide a safe route for those who are not able, or do not wish, to share with vehicles.
 - g) Shared zones should not be implemented where there is an unavoidable need for through vehicular traffic or where a car parking building is accessed via the space.
 - h) The performance of the zone should be continuously monitored to assess performance.
 - i) All road controlling authorities intending to implement a shared zone should develop a Code of Practice based on best practice (such as Auckland Transport's²), in consultation with pedestrian, disability, and cycling and motoring groups and local businesses.