# Should Apple design our streets for people?

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| “Built in features designed for you to make something wonderful”, Apple.  Tech giant Apple simply takes an existing concept (computers, phones, music players) and makes it user-friendly. Their accessibility design guidelines promote the belief that everyone should have a great user experience, and that;  “Accessibility is not just about making information available to users with disabilities — it’s about making information available to everyone, regardless of their capabilities or situation. Designing with accessibility in mind means prioritizing simplicity and perceivability and examining every design decision to ensure that it doesn’t exclude users who have different abilities or interact with their devices in different ways.”  If this formula, which has worked pretty well for Apple, was applied to our public spaces and in particular our streets, would they not be more successful for people regardless of their capabilities, and be available to the widest audience?  If everyone is so interested in the latest apple device, why are we as transport planners and designers not giving people a great user experience by promoting devices that are safe, obvious and step-free? When Abbey Road was released in 1969, the zebra crossing became a star feature in the most famous images in music history. If Apple can make an iPod to make it easy to listen to the Beatles, why not take a zebra and simply raise it to make it safer to cross the street?  If devices like raised priority crossings democratise our street space, help us to create walkable neighbourhoods, enable us to live locally, improve accessibility to opportunities, and allow people to engage in their communities for their social well-being, why are we not seeing more of them?  This think piece explores the potential of raised priority crossings from a point of user experience and the barriers to installing such devices in Aotearoa New Zealand. |