

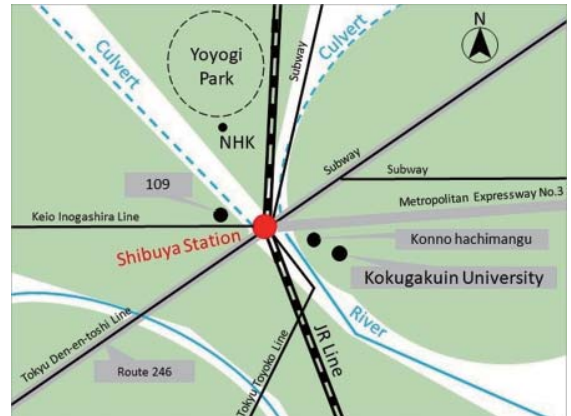
100,000 gather for Shibuya Countdown

On New Year's Eve 2017, 100,000 people gathered at Shibuya's scramble crossing to celebrate the coming of the New year. The Shibuya countdown started spontaneously a few years ago, but the police had placed restrictions on pedestrians in the area to stop them from celebrating in the streets. However, starting in 2016, Shibuya Ward worked with the local business association and Shibuya Police Station to have the roads closed to vehicles and opened to pedestrians for the celebrations. That flexibility and generosity is an enormous part of Shibuya's charm, and is what brings so many people to the neighborhood.

The map to the right shows a section of the Musashino Plateau, with numerous rivers shown with dashed and solid lines meeting in the Shibuya area. These rivers continue flowing southeast direction until they empty into Tokyo Bay. People flow towards the scramble crossing just like these rivers, with huge crowds gathering here not only for the New Year's countdown, but also for the world cup games, Halloween celebrations, and more.

Shibuya is undergoing a redevelopment project that is scheduled to be complete in 2027. Part of that plan included the construction of a high-rise named Hikarie next to Shibuya station. It is now home to major IT companies such as LINE, DeNA and KDDI who stand at the forefront of the online virtual universe. However, Shibuya is also home to many clubs hosting live music, which makes it easy for visitors to get a real-life musical experience. In other words, Shibuya brings together people from both the real and virtual worlds, and gives them the opportunity to communicate with each other. Kokugakuin University is located east-southeast of Shibuya station and it has started "Shibuya Studies program" in which students study Shibuya from various perspective. Professor Yuko Tahara of the Faculty of Economics works with Shibuya Ward and local companies to research how Shibuya should look once the redevelopment is complete. Redevelopment plans include the maintenance of the Shibuya River, and some of Professor Tahara's students have presented their own policy proposals to the mayor of Shibuya about how to make sure that pedestrian areas and parks along the river are full of life.

Shibuya is located on a small piece of land in a valley, so spaces for work, play, and life all exist side-by-side, providing a certain serendipity to Shibuya that is just a part of its charm. It's just another reason why so many gather here for New Year's countdowns, Halloween, and other events.



Dashed lines indicate culverts built over the river with streets and buildings built on top.



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専門分野は地域における人口減少や少子高齢社会に関する諸問題の研究で、最近の研究テーマは「渋谷経済」。渋谷に拠点を置くクリエイティブワーカーたちの新しいワーク・ライフスタイルに注目して研究をしている。



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