



AGENDA ITEM 20 BOARD NOTING PAPER	
To:	The Auckland Transport Board
From:	Simon Oddie, Priority Location Director – City Centre Lead Agency
Reviewed:	Ian Wheeler, Chief Operating Officer, Eke Panuku David Rankin, Chief Executive, Eke Panuku Dean Kimpton, Chief Executive, Auckland Transport
Date:	17 June 2025
Title:	Downtown Development Programme – Role Definition

Aronga / Purpose

1. To clarify the roles and responsibilities for the Downtown Development Programme, particularly in relation to delivery, governance, and programme sponsorship.

Te whakarāpopototanga matua / Executive summary

2. To integrate and coordinate the multiple projects in this area, the Downtown Development Programme is being established as a joint programme between Eke Panuku, Auckland Transport (AT), and Auckland Council (council).
3. The Downtown Development Programme will deliver a package of capital projects including Downtown Bus Improvements, removal of the Lower Hobson Street flyover, urban realm and streetscape upgrades, adjustments to private vehicle movements, and integration with the Downtown Carpark redevelopment.
4. It is proposed that Eke Panuku / council (through the proposed Auckland Development Office) act as the Programme Sponsor, holding strategic oversight and ensuring alignment with the City Centre Master Plan outcomes.

AT will act as the Delivery Agent, responsible for delivering the capital projects in line with agreed objectives, timeframes, and budgets.

Te horopaki / Background

5. The City Centre Master Plan provides the overarching vision and outcomes that guide urban regeneration efforts in the city centre. The City Centre Action Plan translates this vision into a cross-agency programme of work, setting priorities and providing focus for the council group's regeneration activities in response to the Masterplan. The city centre is a priority location for council's urban regeneration efforts across the region (Refer to Attachment 1).
6. To support a coordinated approach, a City Centre Executive Steering Committee (SteerCo) has been established to provide cross-agency governance and oversight. The SteerCo includes two executive level representatives from each of Eke Panuku, council, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited and AT. And as required attendance from Watercare given their continued significant investment in the city centre.
7. A memo was submitted to the Policy and Planning Committee on 8 November 2024. It provided an update on the City Centre Action Plan and the next stage of regeneration in the Downtown West precinct, after the City Rail Link is open (Refer to Attachment 2).

Future direction post City Rail Link (CRL)

8. Once the CRL opens, the next phase of council group investment and regeneration activity will shift to other parts of the city centre. This includes the Aotea Arts Quarter, Te Tōangaroa led by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, Central Wharves and Downtown West, Victoria Quarter, partnering with the universities in the Learning Quarter and the next phase of Wynyard Quarter regeneration through Te Ara Tukutuku.



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Central Waterfront and Downtown West

9. The City Centre Action Plan identifies the central waterfront as a major focus for urban regeneration following the opening of the CRL. The key opportunities lie in the redevelopment of the Downtown Carpark site, removal of the Lower Hobson Street flyover and improvements to transport connections. In alignment with the vision set out in the City Centre Master Plan, Downtown West will be transformed into a vibrant, mixed-use hub combining residential, commercial, and retail activities, with the potential to become a major destination in its own right. Realising this vision will rely on strong co-investment between the public and private sectors to create an attractive, dynamic, and high-quality public realm.
10. The City Centre Master Plan envisions a future where the Lower Hobson Street flyover is removed to unlock the latent value of this highly desirable part of the city centre and realise the full potential of the Harbour Edge Stitch. The removal of the flyover is a key enabler for transformation in this area, supporting:
 - Integration of bus layovers and priority lanes as part of the City Centre Bus Plan, improving the efficiency of transit operations;
 - Greater prioritisation of local and destination traffic, enhancing accessibility and connectivity within the city centre;
 - Creation of new, at-grade streetscape linkages that expand the public realm and support integrated development of adjacent sites;
 - Seamless, people-friendly connections between Commercial Bay and the Viaduct Harbour, enhancing the overall waterfront experience.
11. With Fanshawe Street – Customs Street – Beach Road being one of the primary bus corridors in the city centre, integration between urban development and the transport network will be critical. Progressing the Downtown Bus Improvements — part of the City Centre Bus Plan — will enhance accessibility into the downtown area and the city centre more broadly, supporting proposed investments and enabling wider growth across both Downtown West and the broader city centre.

Me mōhio koe / What you need to know

Downtown Development Programme

12. The Downtown Development Programme is being established to deliver the associated capital projects. This is a joint programme between Eke Panuku, AT, and council.
13. The programme includes the following key components:
 - **City Centre Bus Plan – Downtown Bus Improvements:** Enhancing the bus network to ensure efficient public transport operations and improve overall accessibility in the downtown area.
 - **Improved bus facilities:** New bus facilities and bus priority lanes on Lower Hobson Street, Sturdee Street, and Customs Street West (between Lower Hobson and Albert Street) to improve experience, reliability and reduce travel times.
 - **Removal of the Lower Hobson Street Flyover:** Creating better-connected, high-quality public spaces, improving public transport outcomes, and supporting broader urban regeneration goals.
 - **Urban Realm and Streetscape Enhancements:** Upgrading streetscapes to foster a vibrant, people-friendly environment and strengthen connections across the downtown area.
 - **Changes to Private Vehicle Movements:** Adjusting how private vehicles move through the area to prioritise access for local traffic, sustainable transport modes and a safer, more pedestrian-friendly environment.
 - **Integration with the Redevelopment of the Downtown Carpark Site:** Supporting the transformation of the Downtown Carpark into a thriving mixed-use destination for residential, commercial, and retail activities.



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Roles and responsibilities

14. It is proposed that Eke Panuku / council (through the proposed Auckland Development Office, name to be confirmed) act as the Programme Sponsor, holding strategic oversight and ensuring alignment with the City Centre Master Plan outcomes. AT will act as the Delivery Agent, responsible for delivering the capital projects in line with agreed objectives, timeframes and budgets.
15. In practice, this means that Eke Panuku / council will hold overall and ongoing accountability for the successful delivery of the outcomes of the Downtown Development Programme. This approach aligns with the Lead Agency model, under which Eke Panuku is responsible for the implementation of the City Centre Master Plan outcomes.
16. Under this model, other council group agencies, including AT, involved in the programme remain responsible for the delivery of their specific work programmes in support of these outcomes.

Programme Sponsor - Eke Panuku / Council

17. As the Sponsor of the Downtown Development Programme, Eke Panuku / council will be responsible for:
 - Strategic leadership and oversight
 - Programme objectives and outcomes
 - Alignment of the programme across the group. Ensuring alignment with organisational strategies and priorities.
 - Oversight of other programmes and projects within the City Centre portfolio that have material impacts on, or interdependencies with, the Downtown Development Programme.
 - Design and placemaking leadership to support the integration of movement and place outcomes.
 - Programme performance, risk management and benefits realisation.

- High-impact programme / project decisions that impact on programme outcomes and objectives.
- Endorsing any future allocation of City Centre Targeted Rate (CCTR) and/or LTP funding to support delivery of programme outcomes.
- Being the spokesperson for the regeneration programme, its outcomes and objectives and how the programme's projects and initiatives fit together – why this, why now.
- Leading programme-level communications and engagement, supporting clear, coordinated, consistent messaging and ensuring decisions and outcomes are transparently communicated back to stakeholders.
- Leading and supporting where required, engagement with political bodies, committees, and relevant advisory panels.

Delivery Agent – AT

18. AT will act as the Delivery Agent for the Downtown Development Programme, responsible for the procurement, planning, design, consenting and implementation of the programme's capital projects on behalf of the council group. Responsibilities also include the integration of transport outcomes with broader urban regeneration initiatives and the private sector led redevelopment of the Downtown Carpark.
19. As the Delivery Agent, AT's responsibilities will include:
 - Developing and delivering the capital works required to achieve the programme's objectives, including the Downtown Bus Improvements, Lower Hobson Street Flyover removal, improved facilities for busses and their passengers and associated urban realm and streetscape upgrades.
 - Work closely with the Programme Sponsor to monitor programme performance and ensure delivery remains within agreed time, cost, and quality parameters. Where significant changes or trade-offs are required, seek direction and support from the Sponsor to guide decision-making.



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- Managing procurement processes, contractor engagement, and construction delivery in line with agreed timeframes, budgets, and quality expectations.
 - Coordinating with Eke Panuku / council to ensure delivery remains aligned to the agreed programme strategy, outcomes, and regeneration objectives.
 - Identifying and managing delivery risks, and escalating significant risks, issues, or proposed mitigations to the Programme Sponsor, or their representatives, for decision-making as required.
 - Providing regular reporting on programme progress, risks, and financial status to the Programme Sponsor and relevant governance forums.
 - Working collaboratively with the Programme Sponsor representative to support communication and stakeholder engagement activities at a project level, ensuring clear and consistent messaging.
20. This delivery approach ensures that AT's expertise in infrastructure project delivery is leveraged, while Eke Panuku / council retains oversight of strategic outcomes, urban regeneration objectives, and overall programme sponsorship.

Role of the City Centre Steering Committee

21. The City Centre Steering Committee plays a key role in ensuring cross-agency alignment on the council group's joint programme of work to deliver the outcomes of the City Centre Master Plan.
22. For the Downtown Development Programme, the Programme Sponsor Rep will provide regular updates to the Steering Committee. Any significant risks, issues, or proposed changes that impact programme outcomes will be escalated by the Sponsor to the Steering Committee, ensuring a coordinated and aligned group response.

Coordinated communications, engagement and stakeholder management

23. To ensure a consistent and coordinated voice across agencies, Eke Panuku and AT have developed an integrated approach to communications and engagement. This includes shared principles, key messages, vision and narrative, tools and channels, target audiences, and processes such as issues management. Communications will be aligned across all programme and project phases.
24. Eke Panuku / council will:
- Act as the spokesperson for the regeneration programme, its outcomes and objectives.
 - Lead programme-level communications and engagement.
 - Lead or support engagement with political bodies, committees, and advisory panels as needed.
25. AT will:
- Lead day-to-day project and construction-level communications and engagement.
 - Coordinate with Eke Panuku / council to ensure alignment at programme and project levels.
 - Ensure consistency with the Sponsor on how the capital programme delivers on agreed outcomes.

Integration Agreement

26. Over the past three months Eke Panuku, with support and input from AT, has led the preparation and negotiation of a tri-party Integration Agreement for the Downtown Carpark Redevelopment (Precinct Properties Ltd, Eke Panuku and AT).
27. The prime purpose of the Integration Agreement is to govern the removal of the Lower Hobson Street flyover and associated roading works delivered by AT



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and (where possible) seek to align completion of those works with Precinct's redevelopment of the Downtown Carpark site.

- 28. The Integration Agreement seeks to protect the council Group and public's interests by specifying how the proposed development, public roading and transport works will be aligned and implemented. This includes the co-ordination of key works phasing and timing, road space management, key design interfaces and disruption mitigation
- 29. The Integration Agreement will be submitted to the Eke Panuku and AT Boards for approval at their 28 May and 24 June 2025 meetings, respectively. Delegation of authority will also be sought for execution.



Ā muri ake nei / Next steps

- 30. Eke Panuku / council work with AT to refine governance arrangements that support the successful delivery of programme outcomes.
- 31. The Programme Sponsor and Sponsor Representatives will be formally confirmed once the structure of the proposed Auckland Urban Development Office is finalised and established within council by 30 June 2025. In the interim, David Rankin will act as Programme Sponsor and Simon Oddie as Sponsor Representative.
- 32. Eke Panuku will also work with AT on the development of key programme components, including procurement documents, the programme execution plan, communications and engagement planning, programme objectives and the preparation of relevant business cases to support programme implementation.

Te whakapiringa / Attachment

Attachment #	Description
1	Presentation to 15 May ELT – Attachment 1
2	Policy and Planning Committee Memo – Attachment 2

Te pou whenua tuinga / Document ownership

Submitted by	Recommended by	Recommended by	Approved for submission
Simon Oddie Priority Location Director, Lead Agency -City Centre	Philip Lim Acting GM Strategic Development Programmes & Property	Murray Burt Director Infrastructure & Place	Dean Kimpton Chief Executive
			

01



Attachment 1

Background
and Context

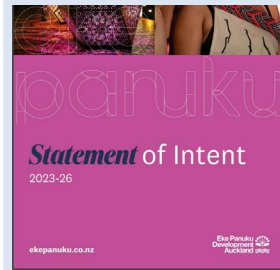
City Centre action Plan: Consolidating for action



Auckland Plan 2050



Stakeholder insights



Statements of Intent



Thriving Town Centres

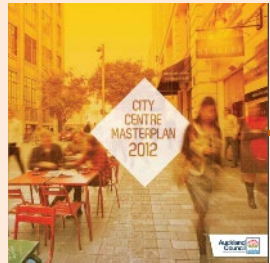


Future Connect



Destination AKL

Council and CCO strategic direction



City Centre Masterplan 2012



Waterfront Plan 2012



City Centre Masterplan 2020



- Action 1
- Action 2
- Action 3
- Action 4
- Action 5
- Action 6

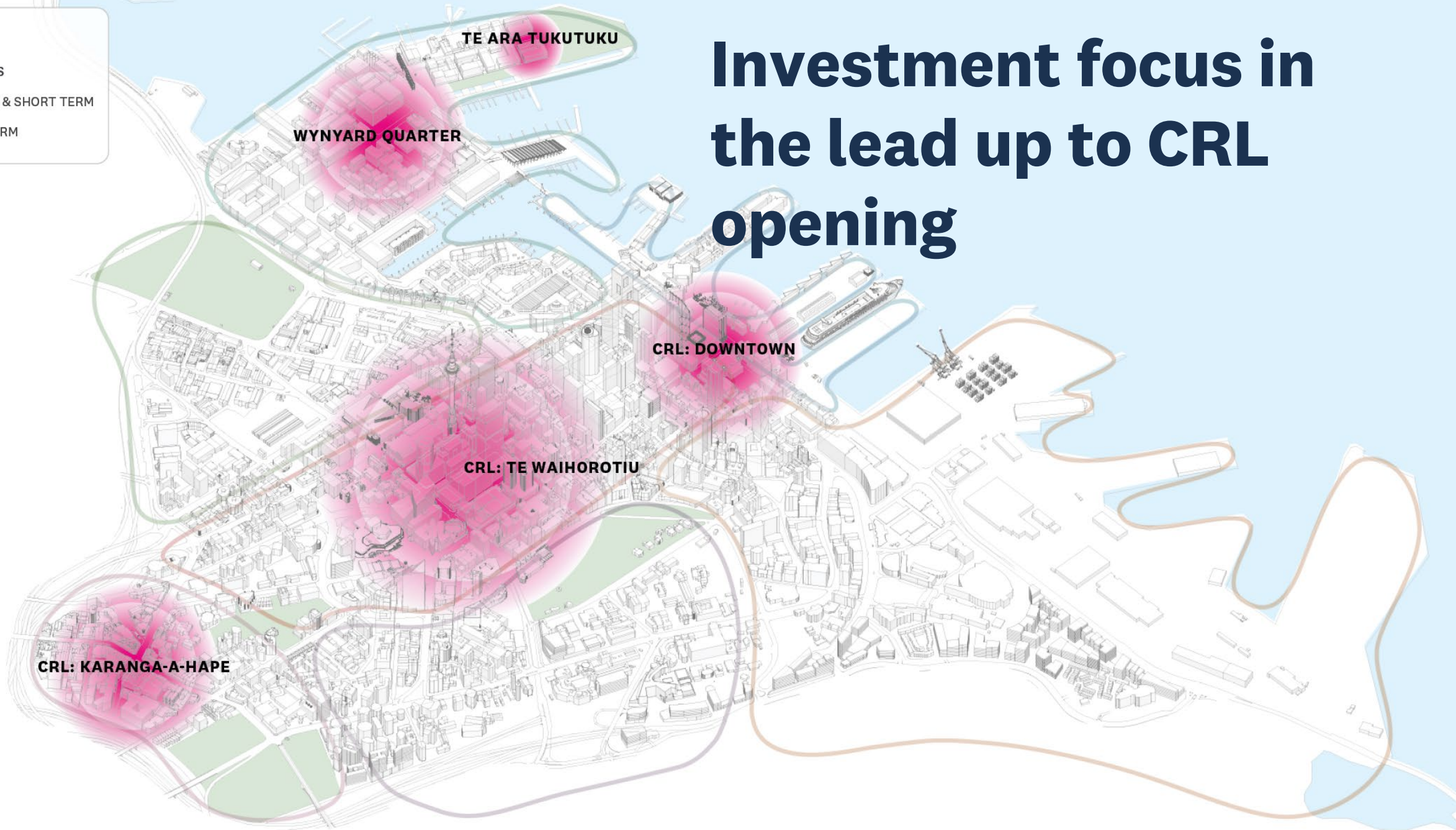
KEY

AREAS OF FOCUS

■ IMMEDIATE & SHORT TERM

■ MEDIUM TERM

Investment focus in the lead up to CRL opening



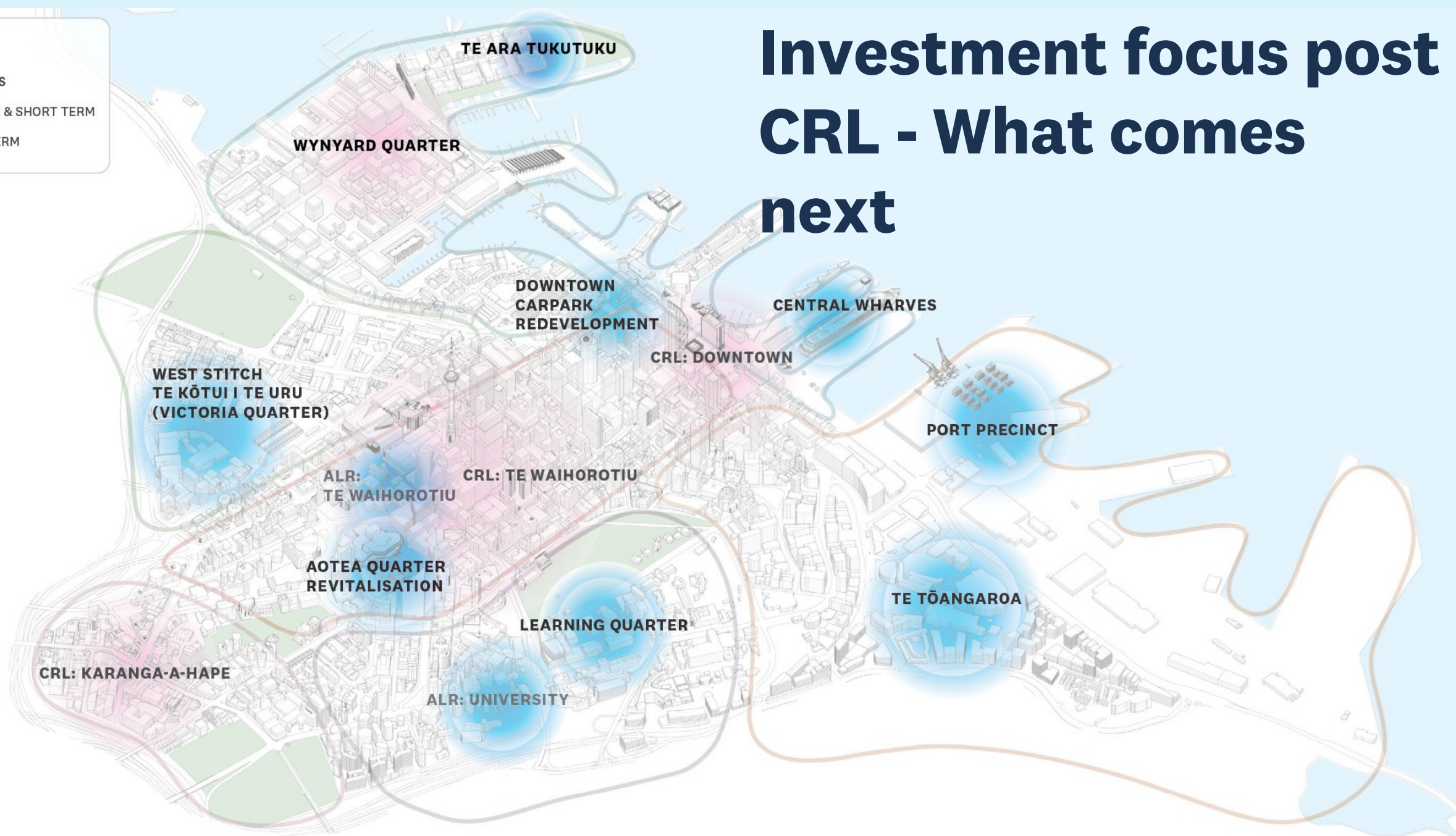
Investment focus post CRL - What comes next

KEY

AREAS OF FOCUS

IMMEDIATE & SHORT TERM

MEDIUM TERM



Delivering the City Centre Master Plan

Role of the Transport Network

- Safer and easier access to and movement around the city centre – especially for pedestrians and cyclists
- Efficient and reliable bus routes
- Freight connections to key locations e.g. the port
- More focused and direct routes for general car traffic
- Support businesses with critical loading and servicing needs
- Safe and efficient pick up/drop off
- Vibrant streetscapes and public meeting places
- Encouraging cultural activities like outdoor dining



02



Downtown Development Programme

Delivering the City Centre Master Plan

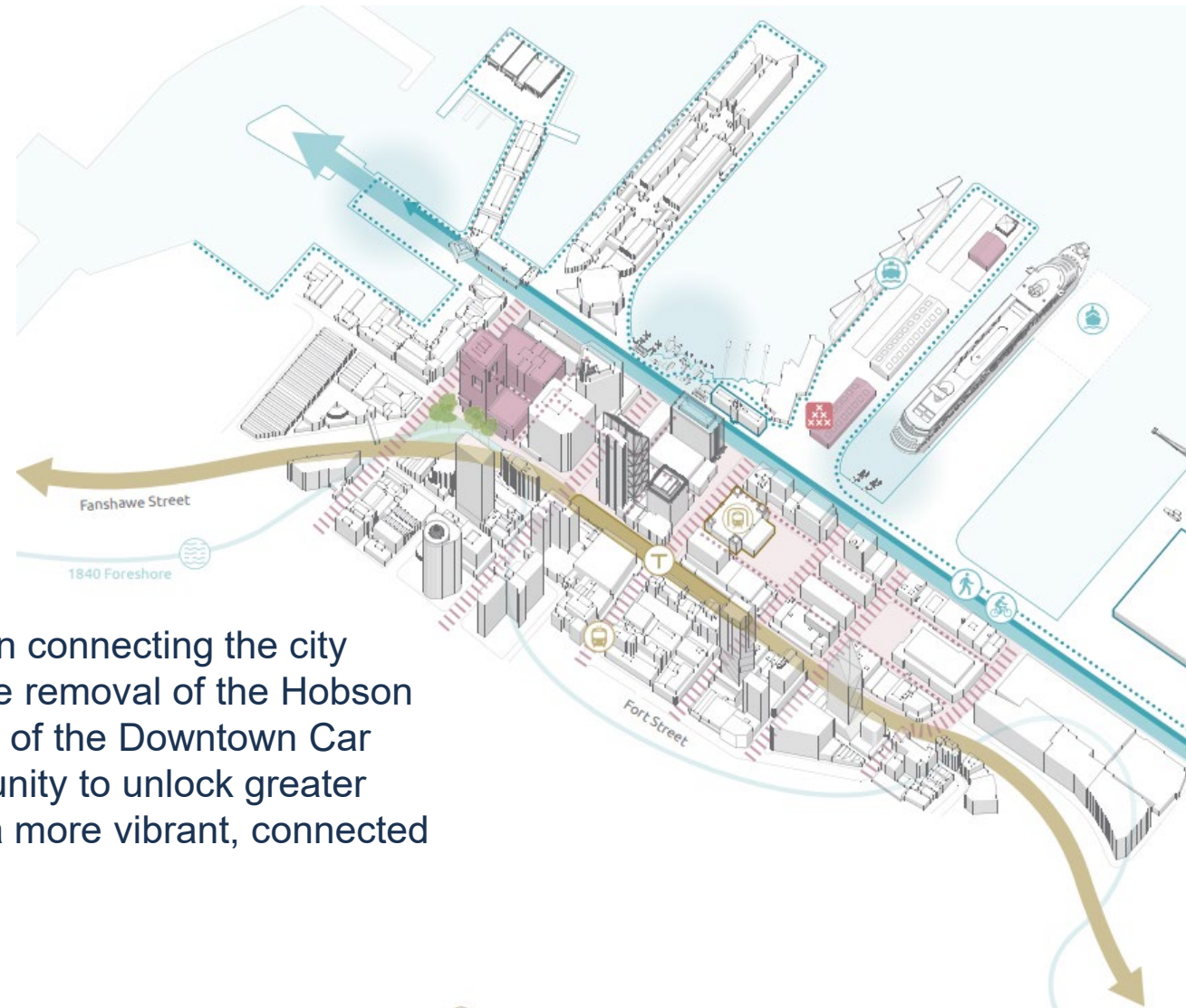
Central Waterfront and Downtown West

Transformational Moves:

- Harbour Edge Stitch
- The East and West Stitch
- Transit Oriented Development

Key Moves:

- Customs transit street
- Hobson Street Flyover removal
- Downtown Carpark redevelopment



Downtown West is a critical link in connecting the city centre to the waterfront. The future removal of the Hobson Street Flyover and redevelopment of the Downtown Car Park site present a unique opportunity to unlock greater intensity, higher-value uses, and a more vibrant, connected public realm in this prime location.

Delivering the City Centre Master Plan

City Centre Bus Plan

CURRENT SITUATION - 2021



NEW STRATEGIC APPROACH - 2028 (AM PEAK HOUR, 2 WAY)



Key enabler:

- Improves access, capacity, and reliability for the downtown area and wider city centre
- Consolidates bus services onto key corridors with dedicated bus priority
- Relocates bus layovers to strategic sites outside the congested core, freeing up valuable city centre space
- Reduces inefficient out-of-service travel

Delivering Place + Movement outcomes

Downtown Development Programme

CCBP Downtown Bus Improvements DBC

Project objectives:

Objective 1 – Improve speed and reliability of bus services along Customs Street

Objective 2 – Improve the useability and customer experience for bus users in the city centre.

Objective 3 – Minimise impact of out of service bus operations on other users.

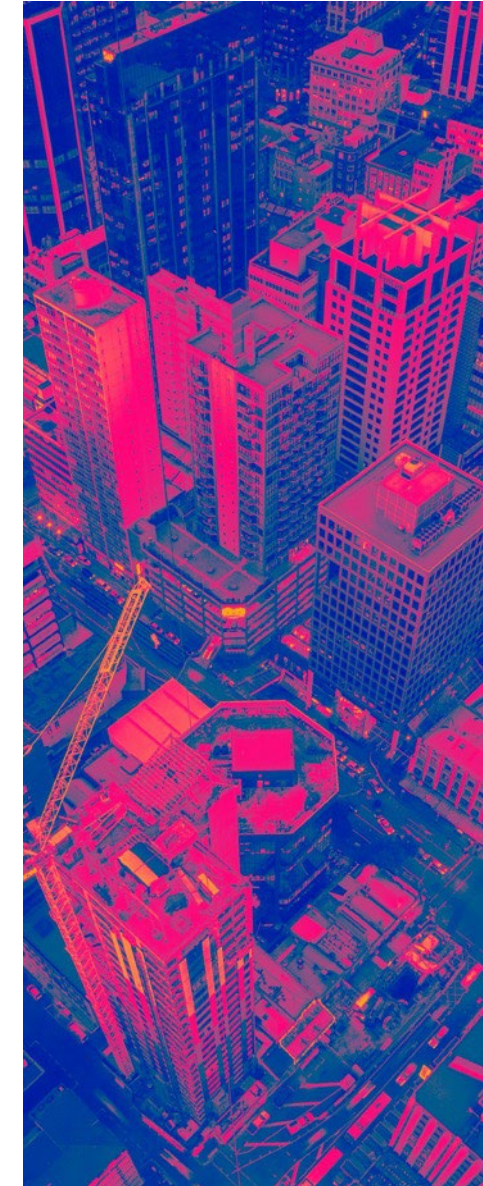
Objective 4 – Reduce operational costs of out of service buses

Objective 5 - Provide appropriate amenities to support bus driver safety.

Downtown Development Programme

Project objectives:

- **Create inviting, comfortable and functional streets and spaces** that support vibrant public life and complements the city centre's network of high-quality streets and spaces.
- **Increase the accessibility of the city centre by public transport** by improving the speed and reliability of bus services, and enhancing useability and customer experience for bus users.
- **Improve the connectivity of downtown and the waterfront** by enhancing streets for people and connections across the active modes network including cycle lanes, laneways and through site links.
- **Provide local access by car** for loading and servicing, pick up and drop off and to access car parking.
- **Deliver a cohesive urban realm** that integrates with existing and anticipates future (public and private) development, including a specific focus on Te Pūmanawa.
- **Celebrate cultural and historic heritage** by integrating and showcasing mana whenua histories and connection with the land, and improving the experience of heritage features.
- **Contribute to a thriving economy**, by improving the productivity of the transport network, and creating an environment that supports a dynamic business ecosystem including the people who work in the city centre.
- **Uplift the mauri of te taiao (natural environment)** in sustainable ways, including expanding the urban ngāhere, supporting biodiversity, and improving stormwater quality and management.
- **Work in partnership with mana whenua** to support Māori presence and life in the city centre, and inform an identity that is unique to this place.

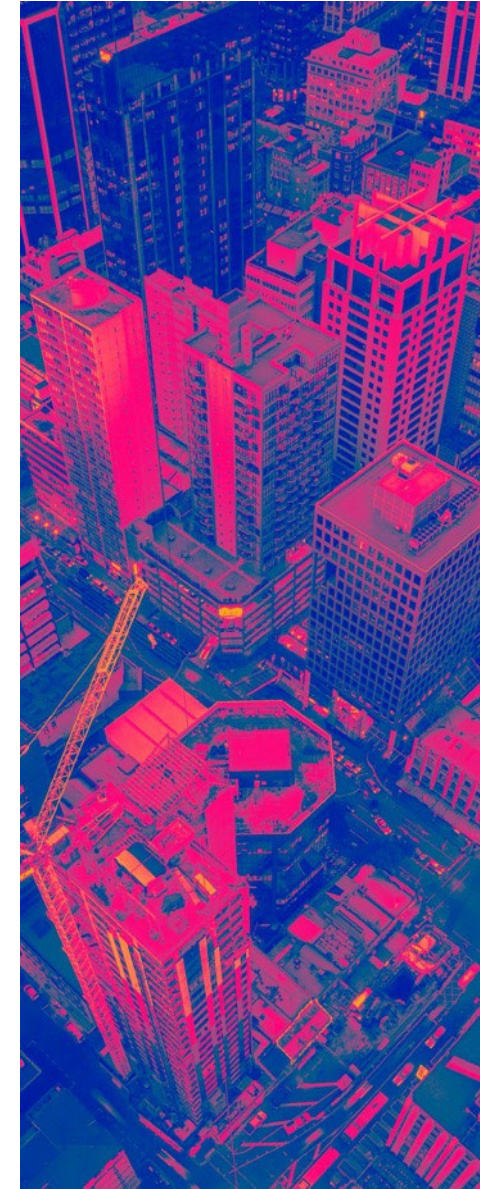


Delivering Place + Movement outcomes

Downtown Development Programme

Key programme components:

- City Centre Bus Plan – Downtown Bus Improvements
- Removal of the Lower Hobson Street Flyover
- Improved bus facilities in Downtown West
- Urban Realm and Streetscape Enhancements
- Changes to Private Vehicle Movements
- Integration with the Redevelopment of the Downtown Carpark Site



03



Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities

Downtown Development Programme

City Centre Steering Committee

- Ensure cross-agency alignment on the programme's response to the delivery of the outcomes of the City Centre Masterplan.
- Ensure significant risks, issues, or proposed changes that impact programme outcomes are coordinated and aligned across the group.

Programme Sponsor – Eke Panuku / Auckland Council

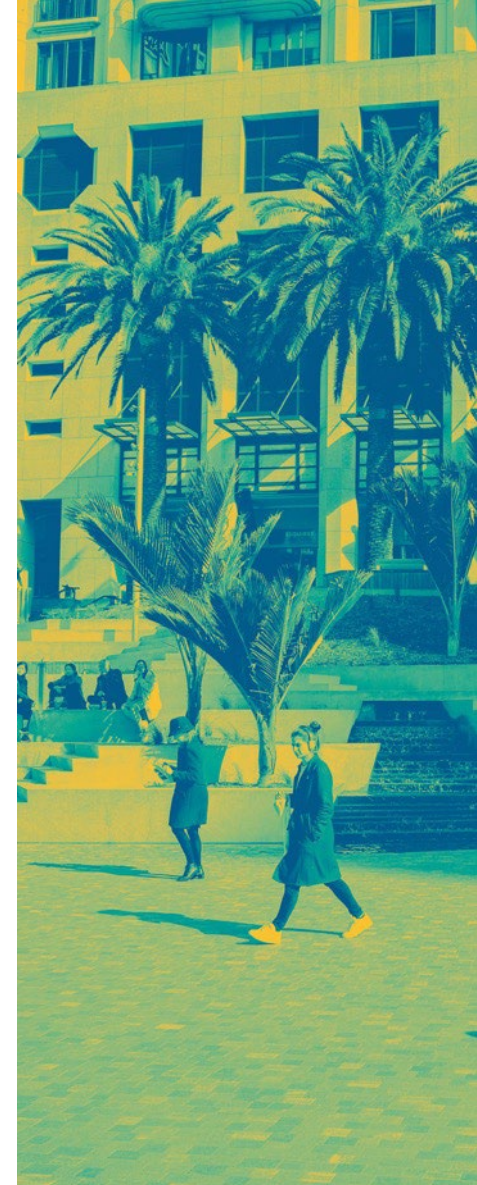
Overall accountability for the successful delivery of the outcomes of the Downtown Development Programme:

- Strategic leadership and oversight
- Programme performance and risk management
- Communications, engagement, and stakeholder management

Delivery Agent – Auckland Transport

Responsible for the procurement, planning, design, consenting and implementation of the programme's capital projects on behalf of the Council group.

- Integration of transport outcomes with broader urban regeneration initiatives
- Developing and delivering the capital works required to achieve the programme's objectives



Coordinated communications & engagement

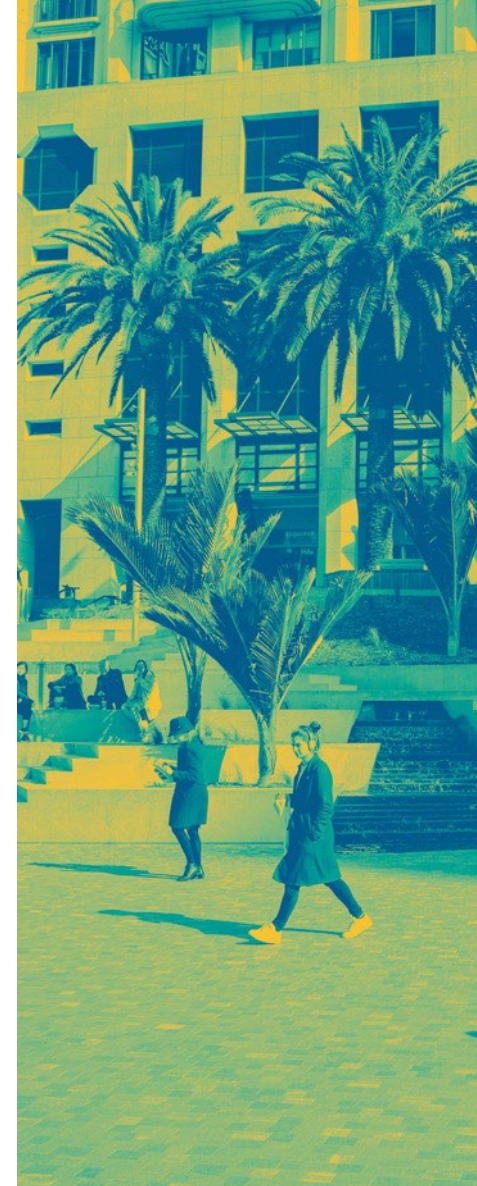
Eke Panuku and Auckland Transport are developing an integrated communications and engagement plan to guide a coordinated approach across both organisations.

Eke Panuku / Auckland Council will:

- Be the spokesperson for the regeneration programme, its outcomes and objectives
- Lead programme-level communications and engagement
- Lead and support where required, engagement with political bodies, committees, and relevant advisory panels.

Auckland Transport will:

- Lead day-to-day project and construction level communications and engagement
- Work with Eke Panuku / Auckland Council to coordinate communications at both a programme and project level
- Ensuring alignment with the Sponsor on how the capital programme is delivering on programme objectives and outcomes



Ngā mihi





Eke Panuku
Development
Auckland



Memorandum

8 November 2024

To: Policy and Planning Committee

Subject: Update on City Centre Action Plan and Downtown West precinct

From: Simon Oddie, Priority Location Director - City Centre Lead Agency,
Eke Panuku Development Auckland
Eric van Essen, Programme Director City Centre Integrated Delivery,
Auckland Transport

Contact information: Simon Oddie Simon.Oddie@ekepanuku.co.nz Eric van Essen
Eric.VanEssen@at.govt.nz

Purpose

1. The purpose of this memo is to:
 - a) update the committee on the City Centre Action Plan integrated work programmes leading up to and beyond the opening of the City Rail Link (CRL)
 - b) to provide an overview of the integrated urban realm and transport outcomes to be realised through the next stage of regeneration in the Downtown West precinct after CRL opens
 - c) to outline the next steps the project group will take to ensure actions are implemented in a joined-up and integrated way, ensuring strong co-ordination with the private sector, utility providers and wider transport network improvements.

Summary

2. The City Centre Action Plan (PEPCC/2023/167) outlines the investment priorities and co-ordinated work programme for the council group in the city centre. The short-term focus of the plan is on getting the basics right – a safe, clean and well-functioning city centre - and maintaining delivery momentum to ensure the city centre is making the most of the CRL and surrounding station neighbourhoods.
3. A significant upcoming area of investment in the city centre is the Downtown West precinct. Several transformative projects are being advanced in this area, including the City Centre Bus Plan, the redevelopment of the downtown carpark into a new mixed-use precinct, the removal of the Lower Hobson Street flyover, and subsequent streetscape upgrades. Removing the flyover offers both urban and transport benefits: it enhances the urban realm, improves safety, access, and servicing within the precinct, and is essential for the city's expanding bus network. Transport modelling has confirmed that the removal of the flyover is critical for the City Centre Bus Plan to achieve its objectives of delivering a more reliable, efficient, and customer-focused bus network.
4. Retaining the flyover would significantly limit the potential for urban and transport improvements in the city centre. It would restrict opportunities to prioritise bus movements, reduce circulation options, and hinder efforts to improve bus service reliability, resulting in increased congestion along Sturdee Street and Customs Street West. Additionally, keeping the flyover would maintain the current urban environment, which poses challenges for pedestrians, especially those accessing the Viaduct, Wynyard Quarter, and Downtown areas. It would also prevent enhancements to local access, loading, and servicing areas, restrict adjacent

development opportunities, and reduce the potential to create vibrant, people-friendly spaces in the city centre.

5. There are significant economic benefits from both public and private sector investments in the precinct, as well as from an integrated development approach. A 'make good' provision is included for the Sturdee Street public space, with any further renewals planned beyond the current Long-Term Plan (LTP) timeframe.
6. Auckland Transport (AT), in collaboration with Eke Panuku, plans to procure a multidisciplinary consultant team to initiate work on the Downtown West project. The initial phases will involve site investigations, identifying consent and planning requirements, and concept design work. This will also include detailed planning of the layout and operation of proposed bus facilities, changes to the local street network, and the eventual removal of the flyover.
7. Eke Panuku and AT will work together to negotiate and finalise a binding Integration Agreement with Precinct Properties. This agreement will ensure that project activities between the council group and the private developer are well-coordinated, minimising disruption, and reducing costs.
8. Ongoing engagement with stakeholders, including businesses, residents, and the wider community, will continue throughout the design, planning, and consenting phases for the Downtown West area. Future construction by the council group in this area will commence only once improved public transport services are operational following the opening of the CRL.

City Centre Action Plan

9. Auckland's city centre is a place where leading NZ and global businesses locate supporting over 150,000 jobs. It is a destination for events, arts and culture, home to over 38,000 residents and the location for two universities where 70,000 students learn. An update on the economic wellbeing of the city centre covering economic data and insights, coordinated investment and delivery, and the ways the council group are addressing pain points was provided in a supplementary [memo](#) to the Governing Body on 1 August 2024.
10. Auckland's city centre is undergoing a transformational change with significant public and private sector investment already underway. The council group's investment priorities and co-ordinated work programme are set out in the Auckland City Centre Action Plan that was endorsed by the Planning, Environment and Parks Committee on 30 November 2023 ([PEPCC/2023/167](#)).
11. This work aligns with the action plan through:
 - a) **Maximising the benefits of CRL** – improvements around CRL stations at Waitemata, Te Waihorotiu, Karang-a-Hape and public transport service improvements
 - b) **Getting the basics right** – clean, safe and well-functioning city centre
 - c) **Setting the city centre up for success** – planning in an integrated way for future regeneration of the city centre.

Maximising the benefits of CRL – the short-term delivery focus

12. The council group, utilities providers and private developers are working collaboratively to ensure high levels of co-ordination across parties, and a smooth transition from construction of CRL through to service operation. This work includes public transport hubs around Waitemata/Britomart, Te Waihorotiu and Karang-a-Hape stations providing improved connections for customers between rail, bus and ferry services. There are also public realm and streetscape upgrades and critical infrastructure and services upgrades. These projects include Te Hā Noa Victoria Street, Wellesley Street bus improvements and Watercare infrastructure upgrades.
13. The strong public sector commitment and investment in the CRL and surrounding precincts have instilled confidence in the private sector to invest in the city centre. This has already led to substantial private investments around the new CRL stations. Notable developments include the

Symphony Centre over Te Waihorotiu station, the refurbishment of Bledisloe House, and significant projects along Albert Street. These include a premium office and commercial development at 50 Albert Street by Mansons, a hotel and lifestyle development at 51 Albert Street by 94 Feet, a new student accommodation project by Precinct Properties at 260 Queen Street, and a revitalised mixed-use precinct with retail and commercial spaces by Stonewood Group at 280 Queen Street. These developments illustrate the ongoing unlocking of development potential and investment in the city centre, spurred by the CRL project.

14. The opening of the CRL forms a critical part of the city's network readiness approach. There will be better, faster public transport services across the whole network benefitting people and businesses in the south, west, isthmus and across Auckland. The increased access and choices that people will have when CRL becomes operational will help to take the pressure off the road networks. It will enable more people to access the city centre through several different modes.

Getting the basics right - supporting a thriving city centre

15. In addition, revitalisation efforts must equally focus on enhancing the experience of people in the city centre. This includes getting the basics right to ensure a clean, safe and well-functioning city centre. The Regulatory and Safety Committee has endorsed a comprehensive safety plan for the city centre ([RSCCC/2024/1139](#)). This has been a collaborative effort by many agencies working together to make the city a safe and welcoming place, building on work already underway to improve community confidence and enhance safety. Increasing activations and events has been another focus to support the local economy during a period of economic downturn.

Setting the city centre up for success - integrated planning and delivery for the future programme

16. Once the CRL opens, the next phase of council group investment and regeneration activity will shift to other parts of the city centre. This includes the Aotea Arts Quarter, Te Tōangaroa led by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, Central Wharves and Downtown West, Victoria Quarter, partnering with the universities in the Learning Quarter and the next phase of Wynyard Quarter regeneration through Te Ara Tukutuku.
17. This work will be phased over the subsequent decade and beyond. It will be characterised by a mix of transport and access initiatives focused primarily in the downtown area. It will involve working with key external partners to unlock the potential of different parts of the city centre and investing in transformational moves such as the Central Wharves and Te Ara Tukutuku.
18. To unlock the regeneration potential of these areas, the council group will need to make decisions around key moves and how we best utilise the limited space available within the city centre to cater for its many demands, users, operational requirements and experiential outcomes. As part of the future regeneration programme the council group will consider network readiness principles and timing work so that it is well integrated with other public utility and private sector works. The group will also consider the overall level of disruption to the city centre over the last ten years, and which projects/precincts are necessary to progress next.

Downtown West – integrated urban realm and transport outcomes

19. One of the next key moves and future areas of investment activity will be in the Downtown West precinct. There are several elements that need to work together to contribute to the successful regeneration of the area, particularly in achieving the integrated urban realm and transport outcomes envisioned through the next stage of development. These include:
 - **City Centre Bus Plan – Downtown Bus Improvements:** Enhancing the bus network to ensure efficient public transport operations and improve overall accessibility in the downtown area.
 - **Removal of Lower Hobson Street flyover:** Creating better and more open space, improving public transport outcomes and supporting the broader goals of urban regeneration.

- **Urban realm and streetscapes enhancements:** Upgrading streetscapes to enhance connections and foster a vibrant public realm that contributes to a more attractive and liveable city centre.
 - **Changes to the private vehicle movements:** Adjusting how private vehicles move through the area to prioritise access for local traffic, sustainable transport modes and a safer, more pedestrian-friendly environment.
 - **Redevelopment of the Downtown Carpark:** Transforming the downtown carpark into a thriving commercial, retail and residential hub.
20. Auckland Transport and Eke Panuku intend to move forward with the next steps to deliver on the agreed integrated urban realm and transport outcomes for the area, in line with previous decisions (refer Attachment 1).
21. It is important to note that no physical construction work by the council will begin in this area until the CRL is operational. However, design and planning efforts will continue to progress, ensuring that all projects are ready to move forward once the CRL is complete.

City Centre Bus Plan - Downtown Bus Improvements: Enhancing the bus network

22. The City Centre Bus Plan seeks to ensure that the city centre's bus network can continue to operate into the future and meet the needs of the city. Latest access data shows that 57% of people accessing the city centre are doing so by public transport and active transport modes, compared with 43% accessing by private vehicle. There is a need for the network to cater for the increasing trend of people travelling to and from the city centre by public transport, alongside maintaining private vehicle access. The plan has a strong benefit cost ratio of 3:1 due to its significant economic benefits.
23. Parts of the City Centre Bus Plan are already complete, such as the Lower Albert Street bus interchange, and others are underway, for example the Wellesley Street Bus Improvements project. The next phase of the City Centre Bus Plan focuses on Downtown Bus Improvements, which will create a key bus corridor along Customs St and Beach Rd, with an off-street bus layover in Quay Park.
24. A key element of the Downtown Bus Improvements is the proposed regeneration of Downtown West, which is integral to providing the capacity, network, and circulation improvements necessary to accommodate future public transport demand. Through this regeneration, there is the opportunity to create a more operationally efficient bus network and significantly enhance the customer experience by establishing a more intuitive and consolidated transport hub. Planned facilities for Downtown West include bus layovers and priority lanes, which will facilitate the removal of stops and layover spaces in other parts of downtown, such as Commerce Street. Refer to Attachment 2, which shows the current and planned city centre bus network.
25. A notable aspect of these improvements is the rerouting of Northern bus services. Rather than terminating at Lower Albert Street, these services will now continue along Fanshawe Street, Customs Street West/East, and Beach Road, ending at an off-street bus layover facility in Quay Park. This "through-running" approach will reduce the number of buses terminating in the Downtown area and decrease the need for on-street bus layover space. The initial improvements will provide bus priority lanes, enhance circulation, upgrade facilities, and ensure more reliable operations. Refer to Attachment 2, which shows one of the bus circulation options being investigated, to illustrate how the bus network could operate once the flyover is removed.
26. The Downtown West project proposes removal of the Lower Hobson Street flyover to create the space and opportunity to deliver on its urban realm outcomes, as set out in the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP). The flyover's removal is also essential for the Downtown Bus Improvements project, as set out below.

Removal of the Lower Hobson Street flyover: Unlocking public transport and urban realm benefits

27. Removing the Lower Hobson Street flyover offers numerous benefits for the Downtown West precinct. It significantly enhances the public realm, creating a more open and inviting space for residents and visitors. At the same time, it facilitates better traffic circulation and supports more frequent and efficient bus services. The removal allows for the integration of bus layovers and bus priority lanes as part of the City Centre Bus Plan, ensuring smoother and faster transit operations. Additionally, it enables greater prioritisation of local and destination traffic, improving overall accessibility and connectivity within the city centre.
28. Removal of the flyover requires a resource consent which is likely to be publicly notified.

Benefits to the City Centre Bus Plan

29. Transport modelling has confirmed that the removal of the Lower Hobson Street flyover is necessary for the City Centre Bus Plan to meet its objectives of supporting a more reliable, efficient, and customer-focused bus network. Removing the flyover will allow higher volumes of through-running Northern bus services to travel on Fanshawe Street. This change is expected to greatly reduce bus congestion, decreasing the number of buses on Sturdee Street from a forecasted 154 buses per hour to 80 buses per hour during the AM peak. Similarly, the number of buses on Customs Street West, between Lower Hobson Street and Albert Street, is projected to drop from 127 buses per hour to just 10 buses per hour during the same period.
30. The removal of the flyover also creates substantial additional space on Lower Hobson Street, which can be allocated for bus priority lanes, further enhancing bus reliability by reducing delays and ensuring smoother traffic flow. Dedicated bus priority lanes will be installed on Lower Hobson Street, Sturdee Street, and Customs Street West, between Lower Hobson and Albert Street, to improve bus reliability and reduce travel times.
31. As part of the improvements, Sturdee Street, along with sections of Customs Street West and Fanshawe Street, will be converted from one-way to two-way traffic. This change will provide more flexibility for bus circulation, allowing buses to operate more efficiently and improve overall service reliability. Buses will circulate in both directions on Sturdee and Lower Hobson Street, using available layover space on Sturdee Street for short periods when out of service before re-entering service on either Lower Albert Street or Customs Street West. One of the proposed bus circulation options, which shows how the bus network could operate following the removal of the flyover, is detailed in Attachment 2.

Benefits to the urban realm and streetscape

32. The removal of the flyover is a transformative step in revitalising the public realm in Downtown West, paving the way for a reorganisation of the streets and the creation of vibrant, people-friendly spaces. This initiative enhances connectivity, introduces a sense of openness, and significantly expands the usable public area. By eliminating the two flyovers, including the carpark exit ramp onto Fanshawe Street, nearly a quarter of the site will be opened up, allowing more sunlight to penetrate the area, improving sight lines, and enhancing wayfinding. These changes contribute to a safer, more inviting environment and make it easier to see and appreciate the heritage buildings in the area, including the Council operated Tepid Baths.
33. Attachment 3 highlights the walking connections and streetscape enhancements made possible by the removal of the flyover. These will be concentrated on Lower Hobson Street, Customs Street West, and Sturdee Street, as part of an integrated approach to transport and urban realm improvements. The proposed changes aim to create a seamless, attractive, and pedestrian-friendly environment that encourages movement and interaction. The increased footfall in turn supporting the local economy and business viability.
34. Currently, the flyover, street layout, and vehicle dominance create physical and perceptual barriers to pedestrians moving between Queen Street and the Viaduct along Customs Street West. The planned enhancements will create significantly better connections along the street to the Viaduct and adjacent waterfront neighbourhoods, complemented by high-quality internal laneways within the new mixed-use Downtown West precinct. In the future, the laneways will

connect across Lower Hobson Street through to the heart of the Viaduct Basin, an outcome that can only be fully realised with the flyover's removal.

35. Due to funding constraints, a phased approach to developing the public space on Sturdee Street is being implemented. Initially, this involves "making good" on the site by carrying out essential works such as paving, planting, and installing street furniture after the flyover is removed. This phased approach allows for the best use and design of the space to evolve over time as the area undergoes further transformation, ensuring that future developments are responsive to the changing needs of the community.

Changes to private vehicle movements – improving local access, mitigating impacts

36. In addition to improved outcomes for buses, changes to the street network will focus on enhancing circulation and access for local traffic through making the one-way sections of Sturdee and Fanshawe Street and part of Customs Street West two-way.
37. Once the flyover has been removed general traffic will be able to travel in both directions on Lower Hobson, Sturdee and Fanshawe Streets. This will improve local access to the Downtown West area and enable more options for enhancing the loading and servicing and pick-up and drop-off outcomes for the area.
38. We understand there are concerns around the impact to private vehicles of removing the flyover. Traffic using the Lower Hobson Street flyover has reduced by half since 2019. Observed effects from a temporary closure of the flyover in 2020, combined with transport modelling, strongly indicates that with the flyover removed traffic volumes can be balanced across the network with minimal impact, particularly to journey times on Quay and Customs Street.
39. The transport modelling and data confirm that the network can perform and function effectively without the flyover. Traffic data reveals that only 35% of those using the flyover travel south onto Hobson Street, with only 8% using this route to access the southern and western motorway system. The majority are travelling to destinations within the broader city. Vehicles who previously used the flyover to gain access to Fanshawe St to head west will be able to do so via a 2-way Sturdee St. To further mitigate the impacts to the limited number of vehicles who use the flyover to travel south on Hobson St to gain access to the southern and western motorway, an option is being investigated to convert a short section of Nelson Street from one-way to two-way traffic movement to allow vehicles travelling west on Sturdee Street to access Wyndham Street and Hobson Street.
40. Attachment 2 sets out:
 - The proposed street layout for Downtown West once the flyover has been removed and the option for an alternative route to Hobson Street.
 - Observed traffic data for the destination of vehicles which currently use the flyover.
 - Traffic modelling data comparing vehicle journey times along key corridors in Downtown with and without the flyover.

Consequences of retaining the flyover

41. If the Downtown West project, including the removal of the flyover, does not proceed, the planned Downtown Bus Improvements would need to be re-evaluated, potentially leading to suboptimal outcomes for bus passengers. As the number of buses entering the city centre increases to meet growing demand, the flyover would hinder efficient bus circulation, causing delays for both public transport and general traffic.
42. Keeping the flyover would restrict opportunities to prioritise bus movements, reduce circulation options, and limit the ability to improve bus service reliability. This would result in increased bus traffic along Sturdee Street and Customs Street West, contributing to further congestion.

43. The flyover's continued presence would also maintain the current urban environment, which presents significant challenges for pedestrians, especially those accessing the Viaduct, Wynyard Quarter, and Midtown areas.
44. Furthermore, retaining the flyover would prevent enhancements to local access, loading, and servicing areas, restrict adjacent development opportunities, and reduce the potential to create vibrant, people-friendly spaces in the city centre.

Downtown Carpark redevelopment

45. The redevelopment of the Downtown Carpark by Precinct Properties into a thriving commercial, retail and residential hub, which will eventually accommodate up to 7000 people, will fundamentally change this area into a new destination space. Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei is a key partner in this development, ensuring it will be uniquely Tāmaki Makaurau and uniquely inspired by Te Ao Māori. This partnership covers commercial, design and social elements of the development, with a view to achieving genuine outcomes for Māori.
46. Eke Panuku and Auckland Transport will negotiate and finalise a binding Integration Agreement with Precinct Properties. The Integration Agreement is anticipated in the Downtown Carpark redevelopment agreement, and is set to govern how the proposed development, public roading and transport works will be aligned and implemented. In particular, the agreement is expected to control key works phasing and timing, road space management, design of key interfaces and disruption mitigation.
47. In June 2021 the Planning Committee agreed to the strategic transport outcomes for the Downtown Carpark site and provision of a bus facility by removing the Lower Hobson St flyover and replacing the space underneath it with an on-street bus facility. Refer to Attachment 1 for a copy of the committee resolution.



Network readiness approach

48. The council group is committed to minimising impacts to network users and people working, living and visiting the area through the construction phase. This can in part be achieved through taking a “network readiness” approach. This means not starting significant transport network changes in a location until critical changes elsewhere in the wider network have been completed and alternative routes and transport choices are available. In this location, this means not removing the Lower Hobson Street flyover until enhancements to key public transport corridors, such as the CRL, have been completed and are operational.
49. The council group will not start physical works within the Downtown West precinct until the CRL is operational, the works on Wellesley St and Victoria Streets are complete, and the benefits of the enhancements to the public transport networks, buses and trains, are being realised. Lessons from past projects in the Downtown area and current projects in Midtown and Karanga-a-hape will inform this approach. In particular, the need to integrate the timing of public and private works and stage and sequence work to reduce the cumulative impact of construction and transport network disruption.

Funding

50. Funding was allocated to the Downtown West Precinct through the LTP 2024-2034 and the RLTP 2024-2034, under the ‘Downtown Crossover Bus Facilities’ project. Through the NLTP prioritisation process, government co-funding for the ‘Downtown Crossover Bus Facilities’ project was placed into the ‘possible’ category, meaning that it was unlikely to be receive 2024-27 NLTF funding.
51. Councillors confirmed that the RLTP local share allocation should be maintained to enable some projects to move forward, fully funded by Council. As part of the agreed Option 4C, 100% local share funding was allocated to the ‘Downtown Crossover Bus Facilities’ project in the final approved 2024-27 RLTP. This reflects the significant benefits expected from the project and the importance of delivering these benefits within the next six years.
52. The council group is planning to begin work on design and implementation planning for Downtown West, noting that work will be timed to the availability of funding within the approved 2024-27 RLTP.
53. The Sturdee Street public space is currently unfunded. It will require additional funding through a future LTP process, if it is considered a priority at that time. An allowance has been made to “make good” this space - paving, planting, furniture - as part of the package of work for the first stage.

Working with our partners and stakeholders

54. Staff from Eke Panuku and Auckland Transport workshopped the proposed urban realm and transport outcomes with the Governing Body on 3 April, the Waitematā Local Board on 9 April 2024 and the City Centre Advisory Panel on 10 and 29 April. The Waitematā Local Board resolved to receive the report at its 16 April 2024 meeting. It noted the importance of engaging with stakeholders such as Heart of the City and the City Centre Residents Group throughout the process. A site visit was held on 4 July 2024 with Waitematā Local Board members.
55. Staff have engaged directly with the Heart of the City, the City Centre Residents Group and the City Centre Advisory Panel on the proposed urban realm and transport outcomes for Downtown West. All three of these stakeholder groups have provided feedback and advice to Councillors and the Local Board. These are included in Attachment 4 to this memo.
56. There will be additional opportunities for the community to be engaged through the optioneering and design development phase to provide feedback and advice to help shape and inform the final outcomes.

Next steps

57. AT plan to procure a multidisciplinary consultant team to begin work on the Downtown West project in March/April 2025. The first phases of work will include site investigations, identification of consent and planning requirements and concept design work. There will also be further detailed development of the layout and operation of proposed bus facilities, changes to the local street network and removal of the flyover in due course.
58. Over the next six months Eke Panuku and AT will negotiate and finalise a binding Integration Agreement with Precinct Properties to ensure project activities between the council group and private developer are well coordinated, minimise disruption impact and reduce costs. The joint City Centre Steering Group will provide oversight to the project to ensure the work is progressed in a joined-up and careful way.
59. There will be ongoing engagement with key stakeholders and community groups, including local businesses and residents through development of the concept, resource consent/s, developed and detailed designs for the area. The integrated programme for the construction works will leverage opportunities created for the precinct as well as minimise impacts to the city centre transport network, residents and business operations.

Attachments

60. Attachment 1: Previous council committee engagement and decisions
61. Attachment 2: Transport network improvements and changes
62. Attachment 3: Streetscape and Public Realm enhancements
63. Attachment 4: Feedback from Heart of the City, City Centre Residents Group and the City Centre Advisory Panel

Attachment 1 – Previous Council Committee engagement and decisions

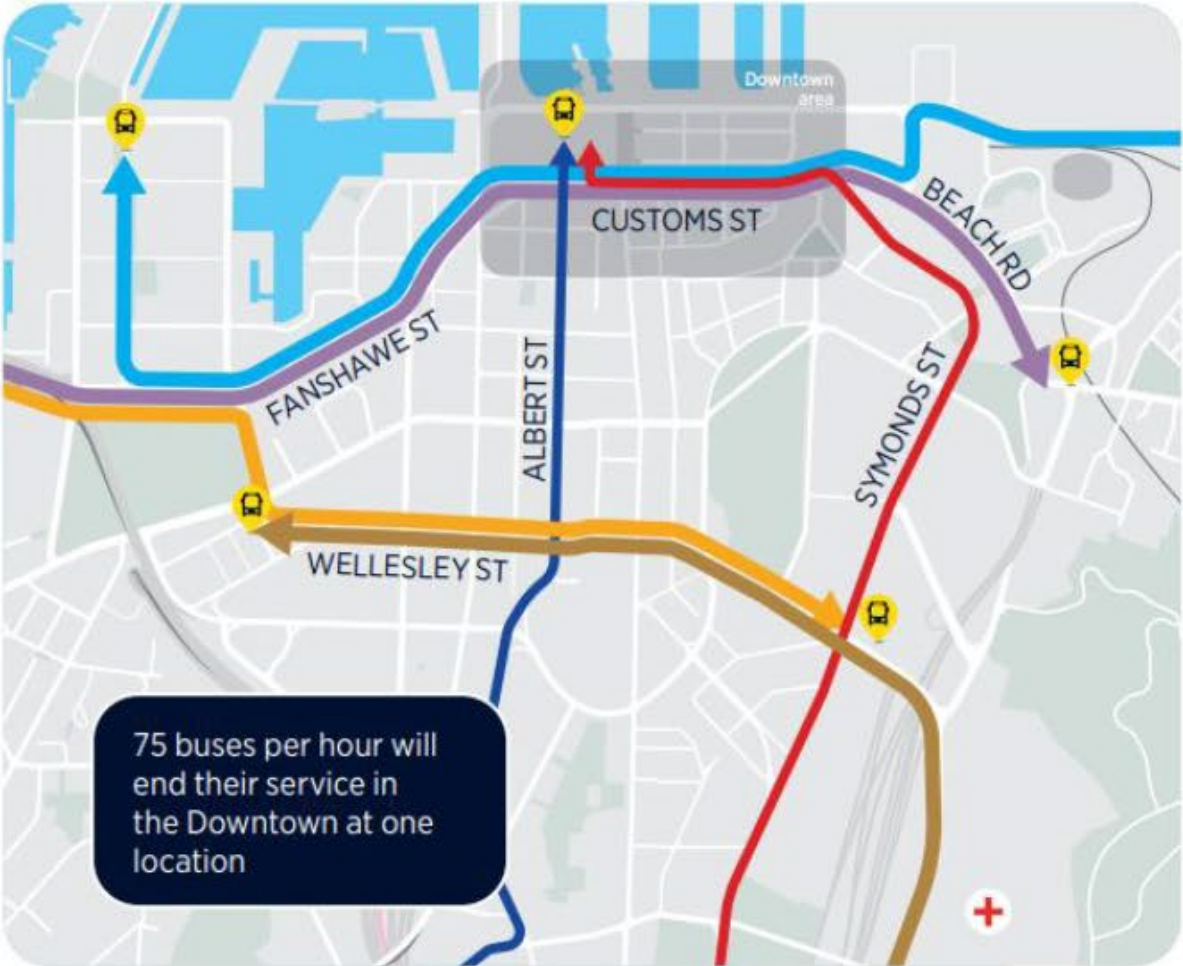
Previous Council and Board engagement and decisions		
Date	Committee	Decision / Outcome
3 Jun 2021	Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed strategic and transport outcomes for redevelopment of the downtown carpark aligned with the City Centre Masterplan. Agreed to the strategic transport outcomes for the Downtown Carpark site and provision of a bus facility by removing the Lower Hobson St Flyover and replacing the space underneath it with an on-street bus facility.
23 Nov 2023	Governing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed resolutions in order for Eke Panuku, in consultation with AT Board, to execute the development agreement for the downtown carpark. Confirmed that funding the transport and public realm outcomes to be achieved as part of the sale of the carpark will form part of the council's LTP process.
3 Apr 2024	Governing Body Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop on transport and urban realm outcomes proposed to be delivered within 'Downtown West', including removal of the Hobson Street flyover, ahead of a decision by governing body as part of the Long-term Plan 2024- 2034 process.
16 May 2024	Governing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term Plan 2024-34 proposal agreed at the 16th of May Governing Body meeting, which included funding for removal of the flyover and street, network and bus facility upgrades to Lower Hobson St, Customs St West and Sturdee St.
30 Jul 2024	AT Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for transport outcomes (including network and bus facility upgrades and removal of flyover) included in interim RLTP 2024-2034, subject to NLTP funding prioritisation and approval.
24 Oct 2024	Governing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed that Auckland Transport's capital programme for financial years 2024/2025 to 2026/2027 be updated to reflect option 4c, which included full funding for the initial stages of the Downtown Crossover Bus Facilities project.

Bus priority on four main corridors

CURRENT SITUATION - 2021



NEW STRATEGIC APPROACH - 2028 (AM PEAK HOUR, 2 WAY)



Downtown West Proposed Layout (Flyover removed)



- 1 Option being considered to convert a short section of Nelson St from one-way to two-way traffic movement to allow vehicles to access Wyndham St and Hobson St
- 2 Bus right turn lane to enable buses travelling west on Sturdee St to turn around and head east on Sturdee St
- 3 Bus layover space on both sides of Sturdee St
- 4 Intersection reconfigured which frees up more road space for a potential future Sturdee St Public Space
- 5 Existing cycleway integrated into upgrade of Lower Hobson St
- 6 Lower Hobson St Flyover removed to free up space for improved bus priority and circulation, local vehicle access, loading and servicing and the ability to create more space for people
- 7 Convert Sturdee St, a section of Customs St West and Fanshawe St between Federal St and Albert St from one-way to two-way traffic movement

OPTION 5 (Isthmus via Upper Hobson)

10 bays required for Isthmus; 11 provided
11 bays required for Northwestern; 11 provided

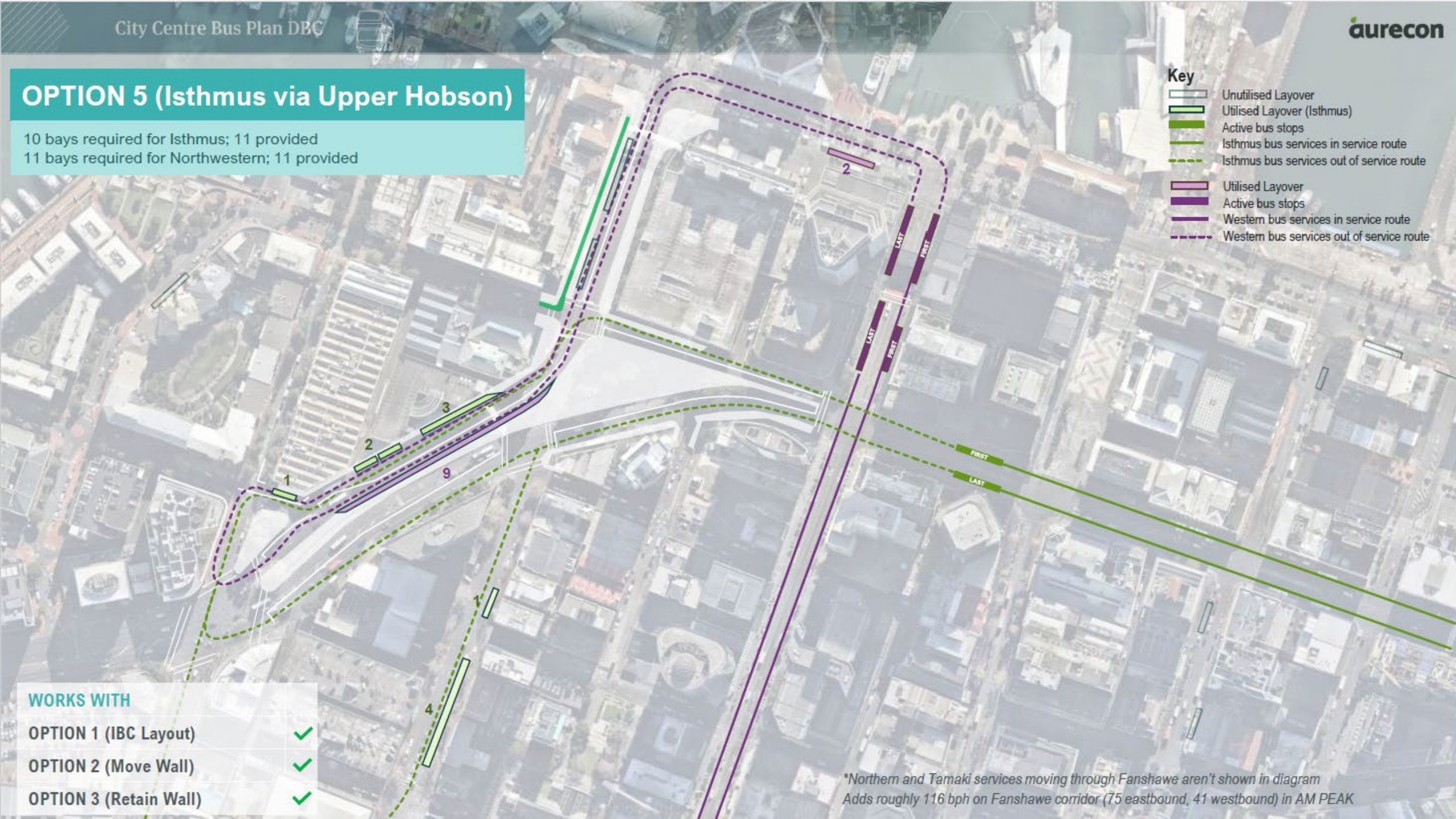
Key

- Unutilised Layover
- Utilised Layover (Isthmus)
- Active bus stops
- Isthmus bus services in service route
- Isthmus bus services out of service route
- Utilised Layover
- Active bus stops
- Western bus services in service route
- Western bus services out of service route

WORKS WITH

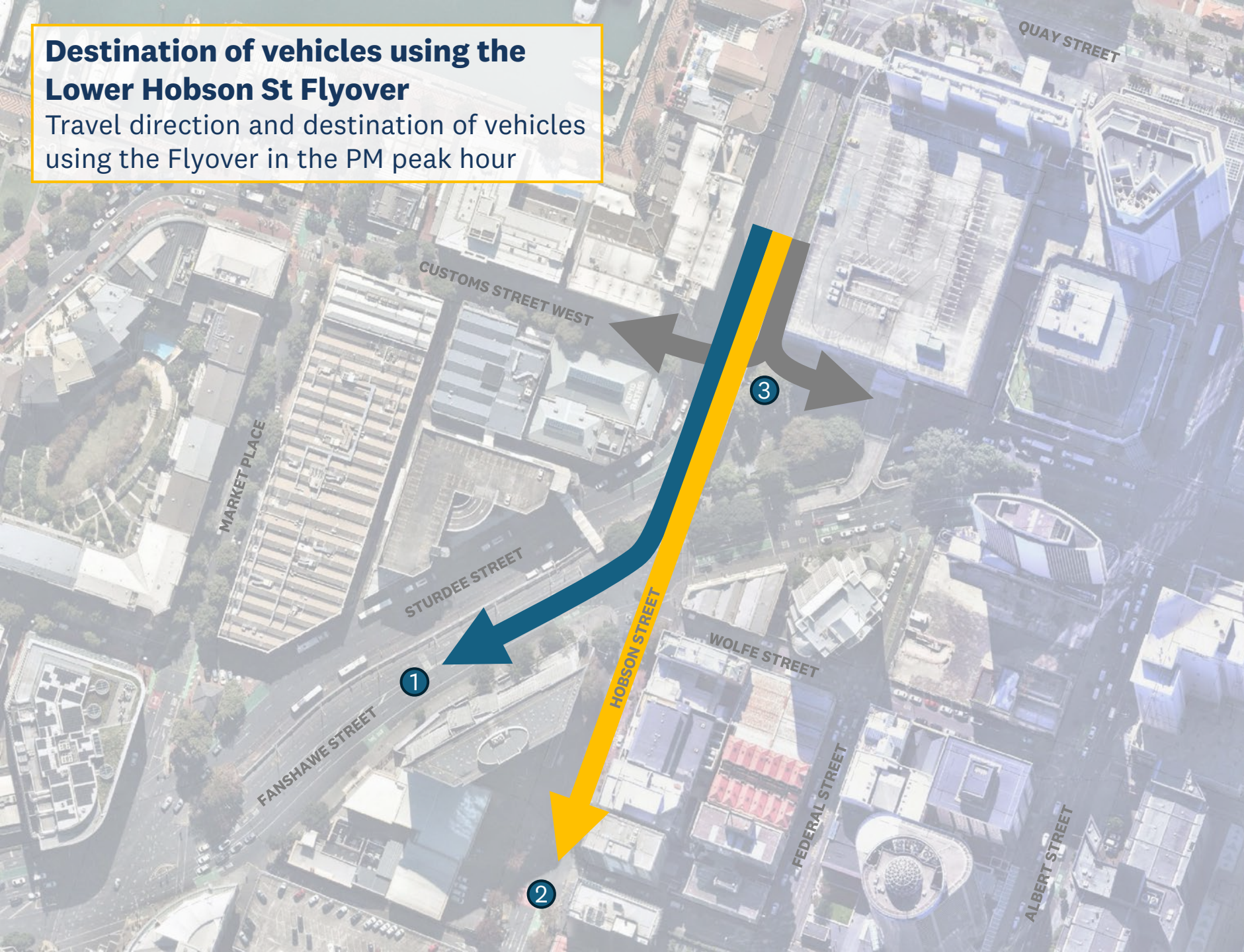
- OPTION 1 (IBC Layout)
- OPTION 2 (Move Wall)
- OPTION 3 (Retain Wall)

*Northern and Tamaki services moving through Fanshawe aren't shown in diagram
Adds roughly 116 bph on Fanshawe corridor (75 eastbound, 41 westbound) in AM PEAK



Destination of vehicles using the Lower Hobson St Flyover

Travel direction and destination of vehicles using the Flyover in the PM peak hour



Observed destination of vehicles using the Lower Hobson Street Flyover:

- ① 40% use the Flyover and travel west onto Fanshawe Street, of which
 - 21% travel to destinations within the broader City
 - 19% travel further west, joining SH1 to travel north
- ② 35% use the Flyover and travel south onto Hobson Street, of which
 - The majority travel to destinations within the broader City
 - 6% travel further south, joining SH16 to travel west
 - 2% travel further south, joining SH1 to travel south
- ③ The remaining vehicles travelling south, do so at street-level on Lower Hobson Street to access Customs St West or the Downtown Carpark

Modelled vehicle journey times in Downtown

With and without the Lower Hobson St Flyover

Note: these modelling results are based on one bus circulation option. Several more options are being developed. The final preferred bus circulation option is subject to public engagement and further assessment in 2025

	Journey time for all vehicles (PM peak)		
	With Flyover	Without Flyover	Difference
Quay St Corridor			
Nelson St to Tangihua St (eastbound)	6.8 mins <small>(via Sturdee St)</small>	6.8 mins <small>(via Sturdee St)</small>	0%
Tangihua St to Nelson St (westbound)	7.1 mins <small>(via Fanshawe St)</small>	7.4 mins <small>(via Sturdee St)</small>	+4%
Customs St Corridor			
Nelson St to Ronanye St (eastbound)	7.5 mins <small>(via Sturdee St)</small>	7.8 mins <small>(via Fanshawe St)</small>	+4%
Ronanye St to Nelson St (westbound)	7.8 mins <small>(via Fanshawe St)</small>	8.5 mins <small>(via Fanshawe St)</small>	+9%

Westbound journey time increase due to extra traffic signal time being allocated to the buses on Customs St



Westbound Journey Times

From Parnell to Ponsonby

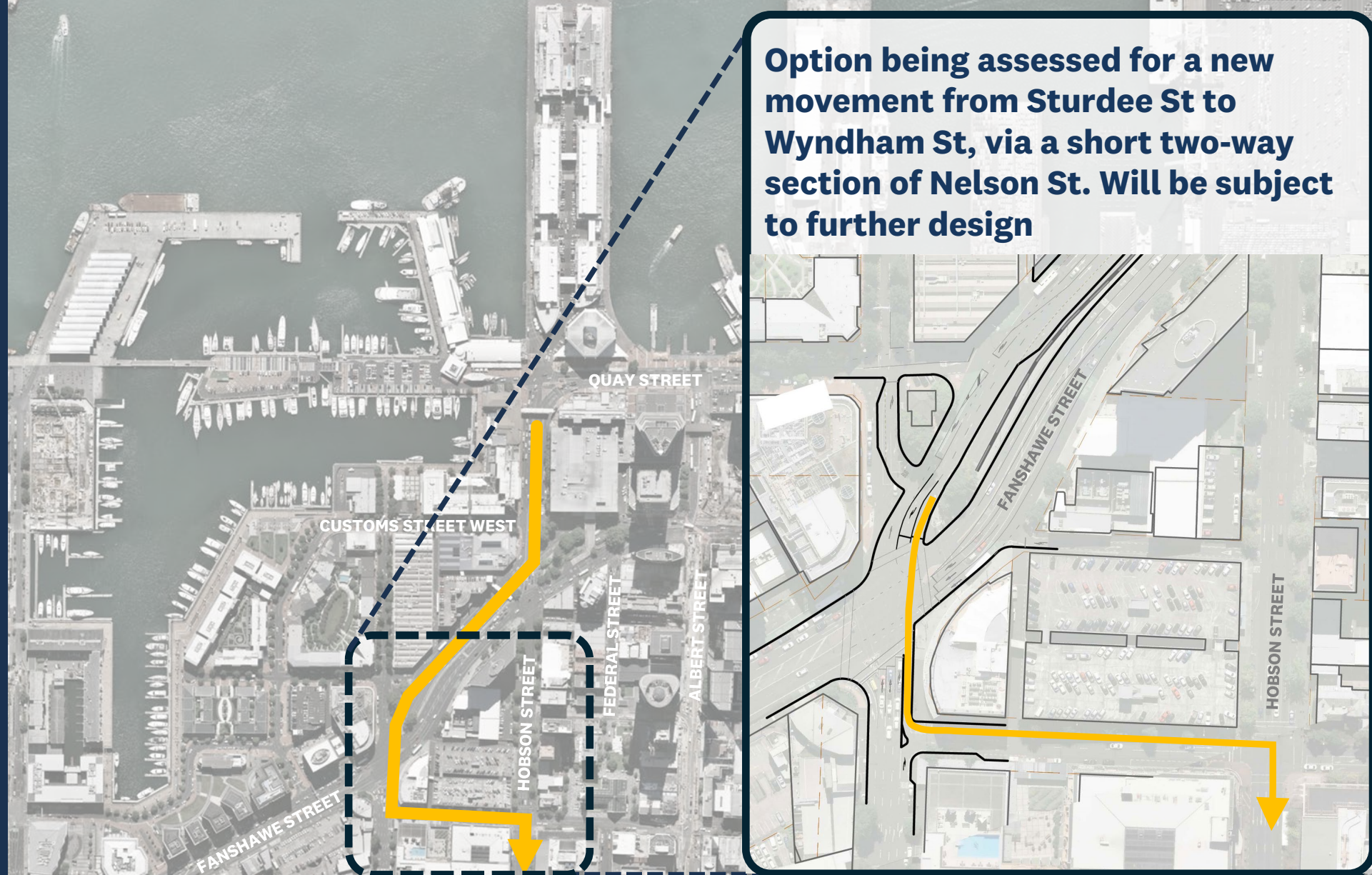
Cross-city journey times are predicted to increase by no more than 5% (less than 1 minute) as a result of removing the Lower Hobson St Flyover, introducing bus priority lanes on Customs St and making Sturdee St and Fanshawe St two-way

Route	Westbound Journey Times (PM)		
	With Flyover & no bus lanes on Customs St	Without Flyover & bus lanes on Customs St	Difference
Custom Street	15.1 mins	15.9 mins	5% (46sec)
Victoria Street	18.8 mins	19.0 mins	2% (17sec)
Mayoral Drive	18.5 mins	18.7 mins	1% (13sec)



Sturdee St and Fanshawe St changed from one-way to two-way traffic

Option being assessed for a new movement from Sturdee St to Wyndham St, via a short two-way section of Nelson St. Will be subject to further design



Enhanced walking connections and streetscape



Viaduct Basin

Market Place

Waitematā Plaza

Tepid Baths

Future public space

Te Komititanga

Lower Hobson Street

Customs Street West

Sturdee Street

Quay Street / Waterfront

Albert Street

Queen Street

-  **Enhanced walking connections**
-  **New laneway connections**
-  **Future connection enabled**
-  **Enhanced streets**
-  **Existing high-quality connections**

**Existing flyover & street layout
creates barriers to access**

**Flyover, associated
columns & shading**

**Wide, dominant
streets & associated
vehicle movements**



A connected public realm that celebrates place and history

New permeable built form with public access ways

Enhanced streets and walking connections

Future Federal Street Laneway improvements

Future public space

New midblock connection unlocked

New internal laneway

Tepid Baths heritage value celebrated

Auckland's Original Shoreline celebrated





Existing condition at Lower Hobson Street showing severance and dominance of the flyover.



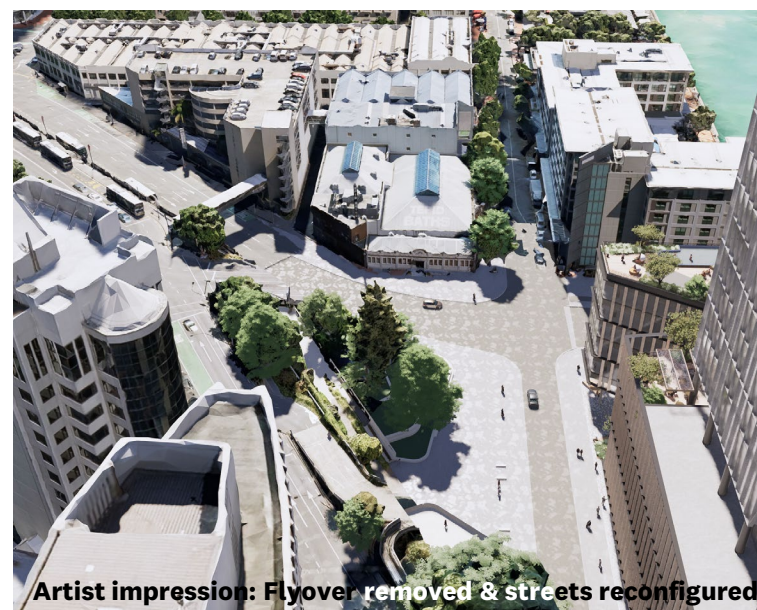
Artist impression: connection across Lower Hobson Street through to the heart of the Viaduct Basin.



Artist impression: Connection to Viaduct Basin.



Artist impression: Flyover removed & carpark site redeveloped



Artist impression: Flyover removed & streets reconfigured



Artist impression

29 April 2024

Downtown West – Urban Realm and Transport Outcomes proposal – Heart of the City (HOTC) response

Response Summary

- The Downtown West area is a longstanding move in the City Centre Master Plan. HOTC supports the opportunity for major public realm transformation in this key part of the city centre.
- HOTC also appreciates the importance of securing funding through the Long-Term Plan process.
- There has not yet been sufficient work done, information provided, and key questions answered to give HOTC the confidence to endorse the current proposal beyond supporting its inclusion in the Long-Term Plan as a place holder.
- Recognizing that project momentum is important, HOTC will engage with Eke Panuku (EP) and Auckland Transport (AT) as the current gaps in the proposal, including matters raised below, are addressed.

Background Commentary

HOTC has consistently supported the transformation of the city centre. HOTC's role is to support city centre businesses. So, whilst being supportive of the big transformational picture, our advocacy work has by need focused on operational functionality and access for the diverse users of the city centre, and minimising impacts on business.

We acknowledge the importance of effective and reliable public transport in reducing the reliance on private vehicle access. But, while future AT projections indicate significant take up of public transport over the next two decades, the same projections indicate that the number of people coming in private cars is forecast to be static, which means the city centre will still need to accommodate effective vehicle flow.

That being the case and given the lengthy period of construction proposed in this area, it is vital that the transport outcomes are managed extremely well.

EP/AT Report – HOTC's questions

Whilst we appreciate there is detailed work still to be done, we need to ensure that integrated and well-considered planning is undertaken from the outset and that the standard of transport outcomes this area requires is achieved. The aim is to avoid retro fitting solutions at some time in the future.

A high-level indication of HOTC's initial questions is outlined below.

Data Analysis & Modelling and Learnings

- We would like to see modelling that quantifies future transport needs across all modes, with transparent assumptions, and illustrates that the proposed scheme can work effectively, along with the alternatives considered.
- We would also like to see analysis of earlier transformation projects, including transport outcomes, business impacts and business growth, to ensure that learnings are taken into account.

Access

The proposal has raised a number of questions relating to the feasibility of what is proposed and while this list is not exhaustive, it illustrates areas we believe need further work:

- What is the evidence that traffic entering and leaving the city centre from the west and north (along Fanshaw Street) will flow smoothly and not create regular bottlenecks?
- The proposed 'dog leg' access to Hobson Street is a major feeder to the motorway system - what work has been done to assess the feasibility of this and the impact on traffic flow?
- What and when are the public transport improvements that will decrease reliance on private vehicles in this area?
- Has the impact of the City Rail Link on East/West traffic flow been assessed?
- There needs to be balanced consideration of access by all modes to ensure the viability and productivity of the city centre, also taking account of the night-time economy which requires safe access for workers as well as patrons. What consideration has been given to servicing and loading, pick up and drop off, emergency services, mobility access and access to parking for those who need it?
- How are tourism and other non-AT buses being factored into these plans?
- How will the bus layover, priority and circulations work in practice?
- Does the bus layover proposal on Sturdee Street, with the flyover removed, detract from the proposed eventual urban realm improvements?
- The promise is not to make changes until a 'suitable alternative' is in place. We believe more analysis and detail is required of the proposed changes, with alternatives considered and proposed.

Alignment of city centre plans

We ask that all city centre plans are considered in an integrated way and that anomalies are ironed out now. For example, there appear to be inconsistencies within AT projects about the role of Customs Street, which needs to be confirmed as part of giving stakeholders confidence in the feasibility of what is proposed.

Funding

- There is a stated risk of cost increases – how will funding shortfalls be managed to avoid impacting the timeframe for these works?
- Some of the public realm enhancements are unfunded, with no timeframe for them to be completed. To do this at a later time will create a further period of disruption in the future – this does not seem feasible?
- Given construction in the area may take 7-10 years, does the budget include allocation for business support measures?

Summary

The public realm vision benefits are clear to see in this proposal and we support funding being set aside in the Long-Term Plan as a placeholder. However, we need to see more detailed planning in order to be confident access needs will be accommodated effectively.

We ask to be involved with this work from the outset so our members can be assured that their needs will be accommodated in a balanced way and that our city centre will continue to be viable and accessible for all Aucklanders, regardless of how they travel.

Viv Beck
Chief Executive

The Auckland City Centre Residents' Group (CCRG) would like to provide this feedback to the Governing Body on the Downtown West Urban Realm, Transport & other outcomes.

The Waitematā Local Board (WLB) resolution (16 April) on this item has, as one of two clauses:

-
- b) note the importance of engaging with stakeholders such as Heart of the City, City Centre Resident's Group throughout the process.**

Within the City Centre Advisory Panel (CCAP), CCRG have been a part of the Downtown West working group, and have provided feedback to CCAP for the final endorsement.

CCRG support the 29 April Meeting CCAP endorsement.
CCRG support keeping the current funding within the current LTP.
CCRG support progressing this project through its next phase(s), where further input can be sought from stakeholders and the public.

We would like to add some statements that provide nuance and CCRG/Resident-specific comments, in a forward-thinking manner.

CCRG note that many parties, including CCRG, WLB, City Centre Advisory Panel, and the Governing Body itself have by unanimous resolutions, endorsed the City Centre Action Plan 2023, which can be seen as part of the 'living document' ambitions for the CCMP.

This project is part of the CCMP vision, and will support the several thousands of people who will occupy the new Precinct development. It will also support the ambition of increasing the city centre residential population (as per the more recently adopted City Centre Action Plan, by making it more attractive for new residential developments by providing safer, quieter, less polluted, and connected streets and street networks.

It has the real potential to encourage further residential growth and neighbourhood building.

A win-win for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

A win for the city centre.

This project makes excellent sense when considering the connection it will make to the upcoming Federal st stage three project, and any longer term changes to Hobson Street (identified as an opportunity in the CCMP) - and certainly very desirable to the 1000's of residents living on Hobson Street).

CCRG also highlight:

- That this project could deliver something similar to the undoubted success of the Quay street public space upgrades.
- The benefits of flyover removal to the remaining heritage - eg the Tepid Baths

The questions we ask are:

1. How can we maximise urban ngahere, rain gardens, and water retention in this project (rather than recreating more impermeable heat sink surfaces), and in so doing, create public places that increasing numbers of residents (and others) might like to spend time in.

2. Is Lower Hobson Street around the current flyover the best use of waterfront space for bus layovers servicing peak hour bus demand? Could some of the 6 lanes of Hobson Street, South of the Fanshawe Street intersection be used for this?

3. How can we minimise development & construction impacts with new ways of thinking and doing things? Are there ways of cooperating with nearby residents (who inevitably cop the worst of any 'afterhours' or weekend works)?

29 April 2024

His Worship Mayor Brown, Councillors and members of the Waitemata Local Board
To: Governing Body and Waitemata Local Board
Auckland Council
135 Albert Street
AUCKLAND

Your Worship, Councillors and members of the Waitemata Local Board

Downtown West urban realm and transport outcomes – City Centre Advisory Panel feedback

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our advice and feedback in support of the proposed urban realm and transport outcomes for Downtown West.

The City Centre Advisory Panel represents the business, retail, residents, universities, design, climate and sustainability, arts and culture, tourism (domestic and international), social sectors and tangata whenua of central Tāmaki Makaurau. We have interests throughout the Auckland region and New Zealand, we bring business and industry sector expertise as well as lived city centre experience.

We are committed to the success of Auckland. We are very clear that a successful Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, and indeed New Zealand as a nation, needs a strong, beating heart.

It is because of this that the City Centre Advisory Panel (the panel) supports the proposal for the delivery of key transport and streetscape outcomes in Downtown West, including removal of the flyover, street, network and bus facility upgrades in Lower Hobson St, Customs St West and Sturdee St.

The redevelopment of the Downtown Carpark site represents a significant opportunity to continue the regeneration of the central waterfront. We believe that Council and the private sector need to work in partnership to deliver on the city shaping potential this investment promises.

In particular, the panel is supportive of the removal of the flyover as the key move for unlocking the urban realm, public transport and economic benefits to this critical part of the city centre. The panel notes the importance of these works to creating a thriving residential and commercial hub, and is also supportive of the opportunity its removal provides to:

- Enhance visibility of our unique Maori heritage,
- Celebrate the original shoreline and associated history, and
- Enhance the status of the remaining heritage in the area

Noting that funding for this package of works is included within the draft LTP, the panel supports the continued prioritisation of this funding through the Long-term Plan 2024-34 process, to ensure that the desired outcomes are delivered in alignment with the development of the Downtown Carpark site.

Within the context of the Council group's constrained funding environment, the panel recognise the need to prioritise funding, and therefore support the recommendation that a decision on funding of further and important urban realm enhancements to the Sturdee Street public space be deferred to a future Long-term Plan process.

Support for this proposal is provided within the context of the following specific feedback, which the panel are requesting staff and elected representatives consider through the next phases of planning and design.

- We would like to see a strong commitment to place outcomes, in particular ensuring that bus layover impacts and transport improvements are very well considered so as not to impact the desired urban realm outcomes.
- We would like to see prioritisation of Lower Hobson Street as a green corridor, making a meaningful contribution to the city centre's urban ngahere (forest). This could require the layover space outside of Lower Hobson St to achieve these outcomes.
- Given the disruption coming from the largest private development investment ever seen in this city, the council group must ensure the proposed works, including removal of the flyover, takes place in conjunction to minimise impacts wherever possible.
- We encourage the council group to take a proactive approach to travel demand management to minimise the impact that will result from the reconfiguration of the transport network and temporary traffic management requirements, to help support the community through change. This aligns with the network readiness ethos the panel has advocated for through previous advice.
- We would like Eke Panuku to consider opportunities to accelerate the delivery of outcomes and benefits associated with the Sturdee Street public space, for instance through a targeted placemaking programme.
- We would like to better understand the benefits from a consolidated bus interchange that would be realised on other streets outside of the immediate vicinity of downtown west and across the rest of the city centre. For instance, confirmation that busses will no longer be required on Commerce and Fort St.
- We note the deficit of public amenities in the downtown area and encourage the council group to consider opportunities to provide additional public amenities as part of this suite of projects.

The panel would like to confirm its desire to participate in key milestones of the future design process to ensure best-for-city centre outcomes are achieved through the proposed works. This includes providing advice on decisions regarding the layout and operation of the proposed bus facilities, changes to the local street network and urban design opportunities.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Reynolds
Dept. Chair
CITY CENTRE ADVISORY PANEL