



Feedback Report

Victoria Street Cycleway Extension

July 2024



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Purpose of this report

This feedback report summarises feedback on the extension of Victoria Street Cycleway, received during the public consultation period from Wednesday 29 May 2024 to Sunday 16 June 2024.

The report summarises key feedback themes for consideration by Auckland Transport (AT), as it prepares for construction in September 2024.

The project

AT is extending Victoria Street Cycleway, from its current termination point at Nelson Street, to Federal Street. There it will join up with the two-way cycleway currently being constructed on Victoria Street, between Federal Street and Albert Park, as part of the streetscape upgrades associated with Te Hā Noa and the City Rail Link's Te Waihorotiu Station.

The extension of Victoria Street Cycleway is an interim solution. The Te Hā Noa project will transform Victoria Street from a multi-lane urban arterial into a tree-lined street with more space for people to walk, cycle, and spend time. Eventually, Te Hā Noa will stretch from Wai Kōkota/Victoria Park to Rangipuke/Albert Park.

Auckland Council is in the exploratory stages of planning for the next stage of Te Hā Noa on Victoria Street, between Federal Street and Hobson Street. Construction of this next stage is not expected before 2026.

The project comprises the following elements:

Cycleway

A three-metre wide, two-way cycleway with raised concrete separators is planned on the south side of Victoria Street West. It will have a similar look and feel to Nelson Street Cycleway.

Bus stops

The existing bus lanes on Victoria Street West will be removed but the bus stops will remain. Bus stops on the south side of Victoria Street West will be redesigned to accommodate the new cycleway. Existing loading zones on the northern and southern sides of Victoria Street West near the intersection with Federal Street will be returned to their previous function as bus stops.

Loading zones

On the northern side of Victoria Street West near the intersection with Hobson Street, a new P5 loading zone will replace approximately three parking spaces. This loading zone sits adjacent to the existing loading zone to be returned to its previous function as a bus stop.

Barnes Dance trials

A Barnes Dance for both pedestrians and cyclists will be trialled at the intersection of Nelson Street and Victoria Street West, and the intersection of Federal Street and Victoria Street West.

Road resurfacing

Victoria Street West will be resurfaced between Nelson Street and Hobson Street.



Figure 1: An artist's impression looking west from Hobson Street

Community engagement summary

Public consultation was undertaken from Wednesday 29 May 2024 to Sunday 16 June 2024. Activities undertaken to engage with the local and wider community aimed to create awareness of the project, its aims, and delivery timeline, and of the opportunity to provide feedback.

Who we engaged

- Waitemātā Local Board
- Heart of the City
- Local businesses
- Local residents
- Emergency services such as Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- Advocacy groups such as Bike Auckland, New Zealand Automobile Association, CCS Disability Action
- Industry bodies such as Bus and Coach Association

How we engaged

Printed material

- Letters were mailed to 616 owners of properties within the immediate area.
- Letters were hand-delivered to the building managers of apartments along the route, to reach tenants.
- Letters were hand-delivered to businesses along the route and as far as Albert Street.

Online

- A project web page was added to the AT website.
- An online survey was linked to from the AT web page.
- A project page was added to progressakl.co.nz.
- Project and consultation information was emailed to the Waitemātā Local Board and key stakeholders.
- Project and consultation information was emailed to the midtown community via Auckland Council channels.

In-person

- On Tuesday 7 May, a project representative met with Heart of the City's Head of Advocacy and Engagement.
- On Friday 31 May, businesses between Nelson Street and Federal Street were door-knocked by a project representative and a Council staff member.
- A subsequent door-knock was undertaken by the project representative on Friday 14 June, between Federal Street and Albert Street.

Community feedback

Online survey

A total of 70 people participated in the online survey. We asked participants about their relationship to the project. All submitters responded to this question, choosing one or more of the following options:

- I live locally
- I work locally
- I travel by car through the project area
- I travel by bus through the project area
- I travel by bike through the project area
- I travel on foot through the project area
- Other

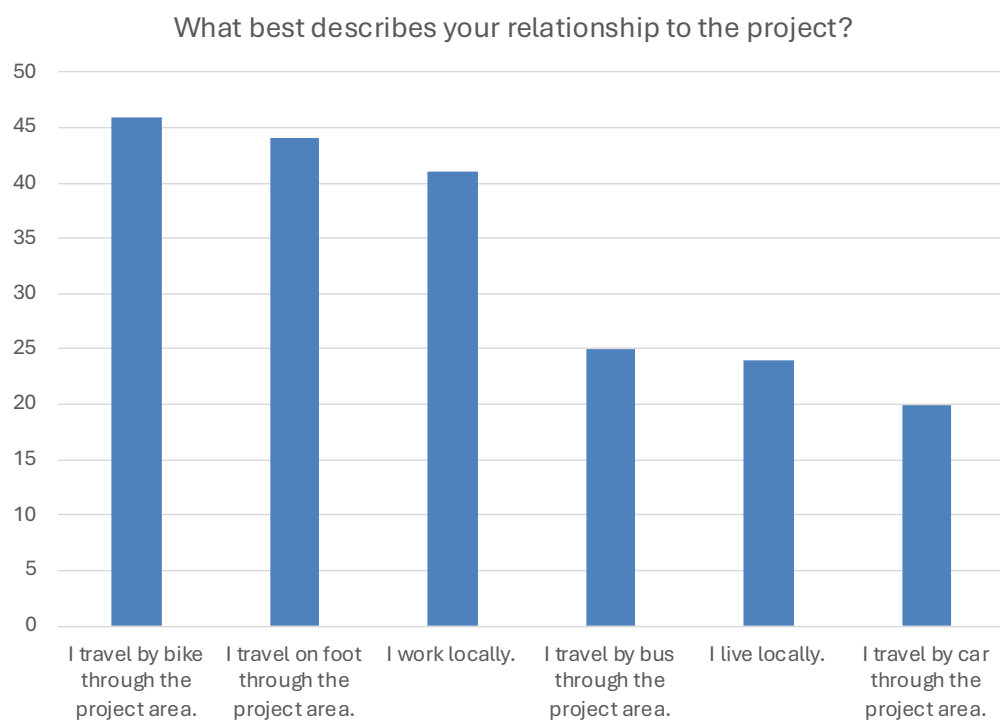


Figure 2: Survey participant's relationship to the project

Q1. As we refine the street design and prepare for construction from July 2024, is there anything you want us to know?

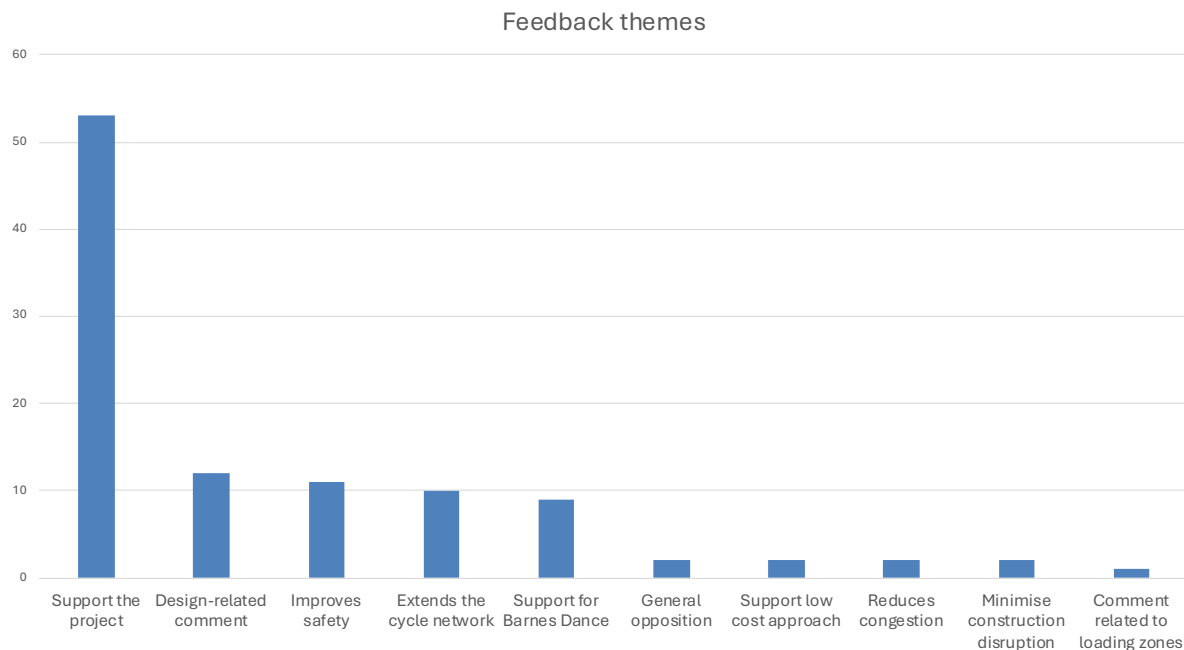


Figure 3: Q1 feedback themes

This question was answered by 67 survey participants. Of these, 53 or 79% indicated their support for the project. Two participants indicated opposition to the project, one commenting that it was a waste of money. The remaining 12 participants provided design-related comments, analysed in the section below.

Of the 53 participants who indicated support for the project, 24 provided no further comment. Of the 29 participants who did provide further comment, these primarily related to the cycleway extension improving safety and extending the cycle network. Nine of the 29 indicated support for the Barnes Dance trial. Two noted the low-cost approach as a positive aspect of the project.

“Please do this, it’s much needed!”

“Fully support proposal to complete a critical missing link in the cycle network. The proposal is well balanced in providing for all modes and enhancing safety”

“Strongly support the Barnes dance trial at the Vic St/Nelson St junction as I cross it daily on foot.”

“This is a very sensible and obvious gap to fill in the cycleway network and good example of doing it better-faster-cheaper.”

“I support extending the cycleway to make it safer for cyclists.”

“Minimise disruption to businesses whilst street works occur.”

“More cycle lanes will help reduce congestion, make it more accessible to cycle, which in turn will improve people’s commute.”

“TOTALLY unnecessary for a minority of people - not in agreement - waste of money - there's been enough construction and mess in that area so stay away!”

Design-related comments

A total of 12 survey participants commented on aspects of the proposed design:

- Five commented on cycleway accessibility, legibility, or signage.
- Four raised concerns with the interaction between the cycleway and bus stop.
- Four provided comments on aspects of the cycleway design, e.g. a preference that it should be a one-way cycleway on both sides of the road.
- Other comments included concern about access provided to adjacent properties, increasing the crossing phasing time, and ensuring the cycleway can accommodate scooters.

“The lay out with the bus stop and cycle lane is however a bit dangerous as passenger will step out on the cycle lane. Please make sure there are sufficient warning signs.”

“The cycleway would be better as two single direction paths on each side of the road.”

“Please ensure that markings and bike signals make it clear for inexperienced users. The small at eye-height signals used in Project Wave are great and could be useful, particularly at the Federal St intersection where the cycleway alignment shifts across.”

“Please ensure good wayfinding goes in to help support and attract new people to Te Ha Noa and beyond.”

Q2. Have you any questions for the project team?

Questions asked by survey participants are summarised and answered below.

1. *Where else will you build interim cycleways like this to provide safe, separated cycle infrastructure?*

The aim of this project is to fill in the gap between existing cycleways and the two-way cycleway currently being constructed on Victoria Street, between Federal Street and Albert Park, as part of the streetscape upgrade associated with Te Hā Noa and the City Rail Link’s Te Waihorotiu Station

2. *A potential issue could be managing / ensuring vehicles exiting from the west of Sky Tower onto Victoria St - to make sure they don't drive partially onto the bike lane when there isn't a gap in traffic and end up blocking the bike lane. Will the exit be left turn only? Are there any measures that could be taken to reduce blocking the bike lanes?*

Drivers of vehicles exiting the Sky Tower forecourt area onto Victoria St will be required to give way to cyclists on the cycleway. AT will monitor the operation of the access post construction and can add in additional signage and judder bars if it is observed that vehicles are often blocking the cycleway.

3. *What can be done to make pedestrians more aware of bikes at crossings?*

As part of the initial rollout of this project cyclists and pedestrians will largely have separated phases to cross at intersections. During the Barnes Dance trial, cyclists and pedestrians will be able to cross in all directions at the same time. Some signage will be present to indicate that this is a trial. One of the key factors being assessed is whether cyclists, scooters and pedestrians can mix safely within the space.

4. *Will there be a Barnes Dance crossing at Victoria/Hobson St too?*

As there are no current or future cycleways proposed along Hobson Street, this project is not proposing to trial a Barnes Dance at this location.

5. *How do you make Bike riders and scooters actually use the cycle lane?*

We observe that when safe, connected cycleways are built, most cyclists prefer to use the cycleway than the road or footpath. Below is camera analysis undertaken pre and post the installation of a cycleway on Lower Hobson Street. It shows both an increase in cyclist numbers and a reduction of riding on the road and footpath.



Figure 4: Lower Hobson Street: pre-cycleway construction

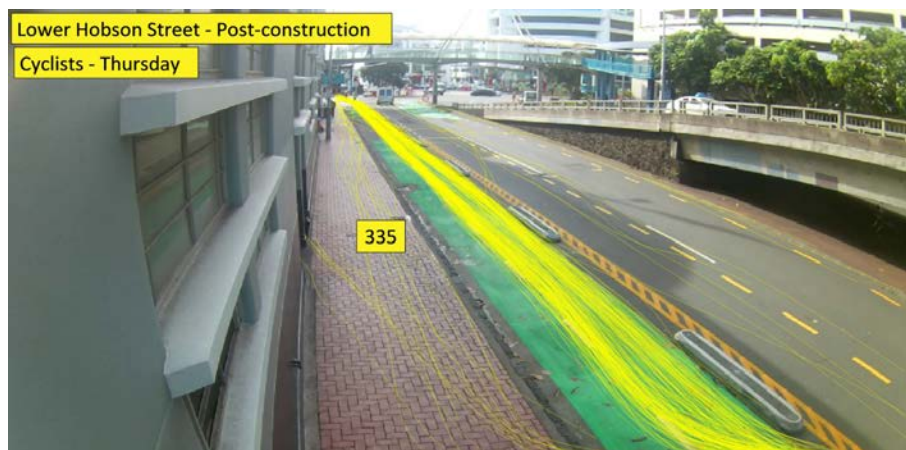


Figure 5: Lower Hobson Street: post-cycleway construction

6. *How will this temporary measure inform the design development for the remainder of Victoria St Linear Park?*

In the coming months Auckland Council will seek feedback on the design for the next stage of Te Hā Noa. There will be opportunity for users of the cycleway to provide feedback on what they like and what could be improved in the permanent design.

7. *Why are there bus stops outside both 117 and 135 Vic St?*

The bus stop at 117 will be for passenger bus routes along Victoria St, the stop at 135 will be a tourist bus layover stop

8. *What is the point of the Barnes Dance trials? To see if pedestrians and people on bikes are able to manage this safely?*

A 'shared' Barnes Dance where both pedestrians and cyclists are able to cross at the same time within a Barnes Dance phase is not currently permitted under existing traffic control rules. It is hoped that a trial of a 'shared' Barnes Dance will help to inform whether a change to the existing rules is appropriate. We want to trial how the Barnes Dance operates, including safe use by pedestrians and cyclists.

9. *Can the Federal St cycleway be made 2-way? That would make it more attractive. It gets overrun with cars, vans and SUVs plus the planters get pushed by vehicles into the cycle lane.*

Changes to Federal Street are outside the scope of this project. However, Auckland Transport is in the process of assessing what medium to long term interventions are appropriate for Federal Street. We hope to be able to seek feedback from the public within the next 18 months.

10. *How are you integrating Te Hā Noa with the City Centre Loop? Will wayfinding on Te Hā Noa link smoothly with surrounding areas for a consistent journey?*

Te Hā Noa will include wayfinding. Our project will ensure that the connection between Nelson Street Cycleway and Victoria Street Cycleway Extension is incorporated into the wayfinding for the city centre loop.

Business and residential feedback

A door-knock of local businesses and apartment buildings was undertaken on Friday 31 May and Friday 14 June. A letter introducing the project and linking to the online survey was shared.

Limited feedback was received during the door-knock. Some indicated concern at ongoing construction in the area and frustration about anti-social behaviour. Parking enforcement of the area was noted as poor by a building manager, with vehicles frequently parked in front of their driveway.

Organisation feedback

Heart of the City

Heart of the City provided the following feedback by email.

Heart of the City (HOTC) has consistently supported the transformation of the city centre. Our 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.

HOTC has concerns about what is proposed for Victoria Street between Federal Street and Nelson Street, for the reasons set out below:

Integrated planning

For many years we have stressed the importance of integrated planning, including key functionality like servicing and loading. This has been widely acknowledged and in 2021, Auckland Transport (AT) committed to develop a Midtown servicing and loading plan which has not been completed (see email attached).

There is no evidence of integrated planning in what has been proposed and furthermore, there will be a net loss of space for kerbside loading, putting additional pressure on city operations.

Data analysis & learnings

In addition, we have raised the importance of reviewing the effectiveness of projects (e.g. transport outcomes, business impacts and business growth) and ensuring learnings are taken into account.

We would like to see analysis that identifies the need to proceed with the interim cycleway connection in the timeframes proposed, particularly in light of the overall loss of functionality and lack of an integrated plan for this in the midtown area.

AT has provided a written response to Heart of the City, noting the following:

- Auckland Transport has a programme of work underway to identify loading, servicing, and pick-up/drop-off opportunities within midtown.

- AT will regularly engage with Heart of the City as this plan is developed.
- Implementation is anticipated to align with the delivery of the Cycleway Extension project, due for completion in late 2024.
- The Cycleway Extension has been designed as a light touch, low-cost project which combines several workstreams in one project.
- The project is coordinating with several local projects, such as Te Hā Noa.
- Face-to-face engagement with the local community has been undertaken along with Auckland Council staff, to enable a joined-up approach.
- Public feedback indicates local community support for the Cycleway Extension project.
- Data AT has collected shows that when cycleways are connected cyclist numbers increase and there is reduced use of the road and footpath for riding.

City Centre Residents Group

The City Centre Residents Group provided the following feedback via the online survey.

Excellent project. Your webpage provides all the rationales which CCRG support. Connected movement networks, whether they be walking, cycling PT or driving are important. Good to see more loading zones too which are so critical for a functional city centre.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Fire and Emergency New Zealand emailed to enquire about type of cycleway separators being used. They commented:

In the event of an emergency, Fire and Emergency would likely want to traverse over these separators to get closer to buildings affected and move out of the flow of traffic where possible to minimise disruption to the community and keep our responders safe.

Some cycleway separators may be traversed carefully at low speed in such situations, but concrete separators, for example, are unable to be mounted and would cause damage to appliances. This would result in appliances blocking the left lane of traffic when responding to those buildings, such as the TVNZ building.

Design detail of the separators has been provided to Fire and Emergency New Zealand for their consideration. The project team will follow up to discuss whether the design meets the needs of Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

Bus and Coach Association

The Bus and Coach Association emailed to expressed concern about the interaction of passengers and cyclists at bus stops. They commented:

I see major Health and Safety issues here with coaches disgorging passengers into an active cycle lane. Even though it shows that pedestrians have right of way, this isn't how it works in real life. They would be better off having the cycleway cross to the opposite side of Victoria Stret and then cross back over at the intersection of Nelson and Victoria Street, taking the cyclists well away from the coach passengers.

They also questioned the permitted dwell time at bus stops:

Stops realistically require 15 mins minimum dwell time to load a large coach. There is potential for stragglers and those with mobility issues which means it's not a 5-minute process. Unloading can be much quicker, but you still get the odd passenger that forgets something and needs to get back on again to fetch it. Stop availability needs vary, but usually relate to hours of operation of destination attractions and scheduled tour party check-in check-out times from hotels.

AT is engaging with the Bus and Coach Association in regard to coach operations, but is satisfied the design proposed is safe for coach passengers and cyclists.

Next steps

Taking account of feedback, the design will be further developed for construction, expected to begin in September 2024. While feedback indicates broad support for the project, AT will continue to work its partners and stakeholders to plan for construction and improve project outcomes.

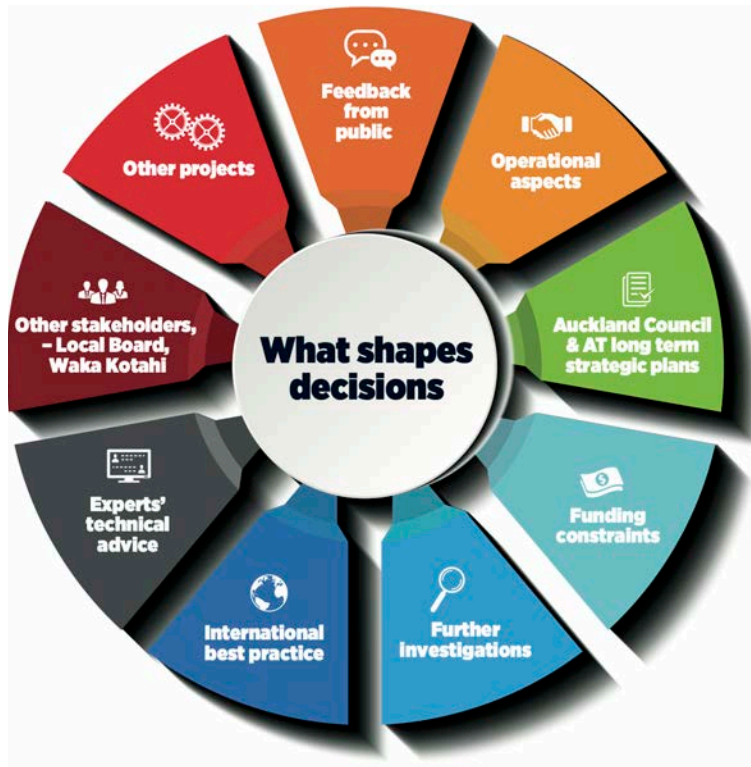


Figure 6: Many factors shape project decision-making