

Queen Street Access for Everyone Pilot update

File No.: CP2020/06464

Te take mō te pūrongo Purpose of the report

1. To advise the Auckland City Centre Advisory Board of planning for a pilot of Access for Everyone principles on Queen Street, in accordance with requests by the board and the Planning Committee.

Whakarāpopototanga matua Executive summary

2. The Auckland City Centre Advisory Board has previously supported the development of Access for Everyone (A4E) concept, a fundamentally new way of managing transport in the city centre.
3. The A4E concept, as part of the City Centre Masterplan, was adopted by the Planning Committee in March 2020 (Resolution PLA/2020/17). A Queen Street pilot was also requested for implementation by March 2021.
4. Auckland Transport (AT) will lead this pilot, due to the need for the pilot to maintain key transport operational requirements on Queen Street including reliable bus travel and safe crossings, with support from the Auckland Design Office, Development Programme Office, New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and AT departments.
5. The City Centre Targeted Rate Investment Portfolio has a budget of \$2,500,000 for the City Centre Business Case Development Programme (including Access for Everyone Concept Investigation). Endorsement in principle is sought from the board for an allocation of \$600,000 to part-fund the Queen Street pilot project.
6. Funding is also being sought from NZTA's new Innovating Streets contestable fund, which was recently established to encourage trials of temporary street treatments to improve walking, cycling and urban amenity.
7. The scope and objectives of the pilot are still being confirmed, but will take the current Covid-19 emergency physical distancing arrangements as the starting point. More details will be brought to the Auckland City Centre Advisory Board as the pilot progresses through the co-design process.

Ngā tūtohunga Recommendation/s

That the Auckland City Centre Advisory Board:

- a) endorse up to \$600,000 from the City Centre Business Case Development Programme (including Access for Everyone Concept Investigation) budget to part-fund the Queen Street pilot project, in conjunction with Innovating Streets investment
- b) appoint representatives to join a working group to the Queen Street pilot project
- c) note regular updates on the Queen Street will be provided.

Horopaki Context

8. In July 2019, the Auckland City Centre Advisory Board supported (resolution CEN/2019/35) a budget allocation of \$2,500,000 for City Centre Business Case Development Programme (including Access for Everyone Concept Investigation). This budget sought to develop the Access for Everyone (A4E) concept further and included the consideration of trials.

9. The A4E concept, as part of the City Centre Masterplan, was adopted by the Planning Committee in March 2020 (resolution PLA/2020/17) and at the same time a Queen Street pilot was also requested for implementation by March 2021. The pilot will build upon the recently installed physical distancing areas put in as emergency works in response to Covid-19. It is therefore likely that the pilot will have been in place for some time ahead of the March 2021 deadline.

Tātaritanga me ngā tohutohu Analysis and advice

10. After discussions with Auckland Council teams, it was agreed that AT will lead this pilot, for a number of reasons:
- AT is undertaking the overarching business case for the implementation of A4E
 - the need for the pilot to maintain key transport operational requirements on Queen Street (for example reliable bus travel, safe crossings, etc.)
 - most of the likely pilot elements (for example vehicle movement and parking restrictions) are the responsibility of AT
 - AT has existing funding arrangements with NZTA, which will be useful for upcoming funding opportunities
 - AT has project management resource available and sufficient initial budget to commence scoping work.
11. The pilot will be overseen by a steering group consisting of Auckland Design Office, Development Programme Office, NZTA and AT staff. Initial involvement has also been sought from Heart of the City, in a similar way to the recent High Street pilot.
12. Endorsement in principle is sought from the Auckland City Centre Advisory Board for pilot to be part-funded from the City Centre Targeted Rate budget item: City Centre Business Case Development Programme (Access for Everyone Concept Investigation). The expectation is that \$600,000 from the 2020/2021 allocation will be needed. This funding will support the co-design and engagement process with stakeholders, as well as contribute to the actual installation and on monitoring of treatments (albeit the form and scale of these won't be developed until the co-design process). The funding would be capped at this level.
13. Funding is also being sought from NZTA's new Innovating Streets contestable fund, which was recently established to encourage trials of temporary street treatments to improve walking, cycling and urban amenity. An application has been made for \$1 million but a decision by NZTA will not be made until June. This funding will go towards the installation of treatments.
14. The definitive scope and objectives of the pilot are still being confirmed. The pilot is expected to cover the extent of Queen Street between Mayoral Drive and Customs Street and require the retention of bus services currently diverted by City Rail Link works. The key intent is to trial ways of reducing traffic on Queen Street and improve the amenity for pedestrians, in a way that that informs future investigations into a wider implementation of the A4E concept.
15. The pilot will build upon the recently installed physical distancing areas in response to Covid-19. These were completed as emergency works, however the pilot will be transitioned in a streamlined workstream. It is expected that over time elements of the temporary treatment will be improved in various ways to respond to public feedback or business needs, including adjusting to the requirements of the emerging post-Covid-19 situation.
16. The expectation is that the pilot will result in:
- reduced traffic on Queen Street
 - improved space and amenity for pedestrians

- more reliable bus services
 - maintained access for business operations and users with disabilities.
17. The current expectation is that the pilot will be a co-design process with local stakeholders to come up with designs. As noted above, this will take the current Covid-19 arrangement as the starting point.
18. More details will be brought to the Auckland City Centre Advisory Board as the pilot progresses through the co-design process. A funding agreement between AT and the Development Programme Office will set out the detailed scope, timeframes and deliverables. A commitment to utilise the City Centre Targeted Rate funds will be contingent on a decision from NZTA on the allocation of Innovating Streets funding, so that a full financial understanding can be made.

Tauākī whakaaweawe āhuarangi **Climate impact statement**

19. The pilot, being based on A4E principles, is intended to help work towards a Zero Emissions Area (ZEA) in the Queen Street valley and support a move towards increased take-up of electric vehicles and active transport options. This is result in better air quality and support healthier streets.

Ngā whakaaweawe me ngā tirohanga a te rōpū Kaunihera **Council group impacts and views**

20. Both the Auckland Design Office and Development Programme Office are part of the pilot and have been involved in scoping the pilot to date with Auckland Transport. The pilot is a core plank of advancing A4E, as part of the City Centre Masterplan.

Ngā whakaaweawe ā-rohe me ngā tirohanga a te poari ā-rohe **Local impacts and local board views**

21. The Waitematā Local Board will be updated and kept informed of the pilot as it progresses, and feedback will be sought from the board in terms of design improvements or communications support.

Tauākī whakaaweawe Māori **Māori impact statement**

22. The project team plans to engage with iwi as part of the co-design process, recognising the valuable role mana whenua play in managing and developing the Queen Street (Waihorotiu) valley.

Ngā ritenga ā-pūtea **Financial implications**

23. The City Centre Targeted Rate Investment Portfolio has a budget of \$2,500,000 for the City Centre Business Case Development Programme (including Access for Everyone Concept Investigation). Endorsement in principle is sought from the Board for an allocation of \$600,000 to part-fund the Queen Street pilot project. The funding would be capped at this level.
24. If Innovating Streets funding is not secured, the project team would need to work with the board to determine how best to apply the targeted rate budget to still achieve the pilot's objectives as best we can.

Ngā raru tūpono me ngā whakamaurutanga Risks and mitigations

25. Given the complexity and high profile of Queen Street, one of the challenges is transitioning from the Covid-19 response situation. A risk register is being established and project governance will manage those risks, including the ability to escalate issues to the existing City Centre and Waterfront Executive Steering Group.

Ngā koringa ā-muri Next steps

26. Pending a decision from the Innovating Streets contestable fund, the Queen Street pilot co-design process will commence.
27. The Auckland City Centre Advisory Board and the Waitematā Local Board will receive regular updates on the Queen Street pilot.

Ngā tāpirihanga Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

Ngā kaihaina Signatories

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