

I hereby give notice that a meeting of the City Centre Advisory Panel will be held on:

Date: Monday 21 October 2024
Time: 2.00pm
Meeting Room: Tuhono, Generator Meeting Suites
Venue: Level 4, HSBC Tower, 188 Quay Street
 Auckland Central

City Centre Advisory Panel OPEN AGENDA

MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson	Mr Scott Pritchard	Independent
Deputy Chairperson	Mr Patrick Reynolds	Transport sector
Members	Dr Natalie Allen	Urban design sector
	Ms Haehaetu Barrett	Social Sector (Lifewise)
	Ms Viv Beck	Business associations (Heart of the City)
	Mayor Wayne Brown	Auckland Council
	Ms Kiri Coughlan	Tertiary education sector (University of Auckland)
	Mr George Crawford	Property sector (Property Council of NZ)
	Mr Neville Findlay	Retail sector representative
	Ms Bernie Haldane	Arts, culture and events (Auckland Arts Festival)
	Mr Jamey Holloway	Business associations (Karanga-a-hape Road Business Association)
	Mr Grant Kemble	Mana whenua (Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei representative)
	Cr Mike Lee	Waitematā and Gulf Ward Councillor, Auckland Council
	Ms Amy Malcolm	Tertiary education sector (Auckland University of Technology)
	Mr Adam Parkinson	Residents' association (City Centre Residents Group)
	Mr Antony Phillips	Residents' association (City Centre Residents Group)
	Ms Helen Robinson	Social sector (Auckland City Mission)
	Ms Genevieve Sage	Waitematā Local Board Chair, Auckland Council
	Ms Debbie Summers	Tourism and travel sector (ID Tours)
	Mr Alec Tang	Sustainability and climate change

Tam White
Senior Governance and Relationship Advisor
15 October 2024
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Note: The reports contained within this agenda are for consideration and should not be construed as Council policy unless and until adopted. Should Members require further information relating to any reports, please contact the relevant manager, Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson.

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1 Ngā Tamōtanga | Apologies

Apologies from Mayor Wayne Brown for absence on business, Bernie Haldane and Helen Robinson for absence have been received.

2 Te Whakapuaki i te Whai Pānga | Declaration of Interest

Members are reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as a member and any private or other external interest they might have.

3 Te Whakaū i ngā Āmiki | Confirmation of Minutes

That the City Centre Advisory Panel:

- a) whakaū / confirm the ordinary minutes of its meeting, held on Monday 24 June 2024, as a true and correct record.

4 Ngā Pakihi Autaia | Extraordinary Business

Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended) states:

“An item that is not on the agenda for a meeting may be dealt with at that meeting if-

- (a) The local authority by resolution so decides; and
- (b) The presiding member explains at the meeting, at a time when it is open to the public,-
 - (i) The reason why the item is not on the agenda; and
 - (ii) The reason why the discussion of the item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.”

Section 46A(7A) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended) states:

“Where an item is not on the agenda for a meeting,-

- (a) That item may be discussed at that meeting if-
 - (i) That item is a minor matter relating to the general business of the local authority; and
 - (ii) the presiding member explains at the beginning of the meeting, at a time when it is open to the public, that the item will be discussed at the meeting; but
- (b) no resolution, decision or recommendation may be made in respect of that item except to refer that item to a subsequent meeting of the local authority for further discussion.”

5 City Centre Targeted Rate Annual Report 2023/2024

To receive the City Centre Targeted Rate Annual Report 2023/2024.

Attachment: City Centre Targeted Rate Annual Report 2023/2024

6 Chair's report

To note the Chair's August 2024 memo which was circulated to the Planning and Policy Committee.

Attachment: Chair's memo of the August City Centre Advisory Panel meeting

City Centre Targeted Rate Annual Report 2023/2024

Te take mō te pūrongo Purpose of the report

1. To whiwhi / receive the City Centre Targeted Rate Annual Report 2023/2024.

Whakarāpopototanga matua Executive summary

2. The city centre targeted rate applies to commercial and residential properties in the city centre area and funds the development and revitalisation of the city centre. The targeted rate has been instrumental in enhancing the public realm in the city centre alongside other council and private sector investments. Together, these investments make the city centre a more accessible and attractive place to live, work and visit, and help contribute to positive growth of the city centre.
3. The City Centre Advisory Panel (the panel) plays an important role in providing advice on projects in the city centre, as well as advice on the spend of the city centre targeted rate.
4. Implementation of the city centre targeted rate-funded programme continues to advance the outcomes of the City Centre Masterplan 2020. In financial year 2023/2024, a majority (69 per cent) of the \$26 million spent was on streetscape/place improvements. This includes the completion of the Myers Park underpass and the final phase of Waihorotiu Queen Street. The city centre targeted rate also delivered an extensive placemaking and activation programme and supported a number of destination marketing campaigns.
5. Staff will present the key city centre targeted rate achievements from financial year 2023/2024 at the 21 October 2024 advisory panel meeting.
6. Staff updated the city centre targeted rate portfolio for financial years 2025-2031 in response to the panel's advice (resolution [CCAP/2024/13](#)), as part of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 (resolution [GB/2024/87](#)).
7. The targeted rate programme for the 2024/2025 financial year includes:
 - an enhanced programme to improve safety
 - city centre promotion and visitor attraction
 - enhanced activation and placemaking programme
 - progressing development of options for High Street
 - completion of two sections of Te Hā Noa
 - detailed designs for Emily Place, Nelson Street Laneway and Mills Lane and Swanson Street improvement projects.

Ngā tūtohunga Recommendation

That the City Centre Advisory Panel:

- a) whiwhi / receive the City Centre Targeted Rate Annual Report 2023/24.

Horopaki Context

8. The city centre targeted rate makes a significant contribution to the transformation of Auckland's city centre and helps achieve the outcomes of the [City Centre Masterplan 2020](#). The targeted rate, paid for by city centre commercial and residential property owners, has

been in place since 2004 and helps fund the development and revitalisation of the city centre, as a place to work, live, visit and do business. It funds programmes that:

- contribute to a high-quality urban environment
 - promote the competitive advantages of the city centre as a business location
 - promote the city centre as a place for high-quality education, research and development.
9. The City Centre Advisory Panel provides advice on the investment priorities of the city centre targeted rate portfolio every three years as part of the Long-term Plan process.
10. The city centre targeted rate has been instrumental in enhancing the public realm in the city centre alongside other council and public sector investments. Together, these investments make the city centre a more accessible and attractive place to live, work and visit, and help contribute to positive growth of the city centre.
11. The investment priorities established as part of the Long-term Plan 2021-2031 for the city centre targeted rate investment portfolio is focused on the following key transformational moves from the [City Centre Masterplan 2020](#).
- **Waihorotiu / Queen Street Valley** and rapid transit-oriented development around the City Rail Link stations: Supporting development around the Te Waihorotiu and Karanga-a-Hape City Rail Link stations. This includes fostering growth near the City Rail Link stations, creating pedestrian-friendly streets, improving public spaces, and enhancing safe access. The goal is to reinforce Waihorotiu as the cultural, commercial and retail hub of Tāmaki Makaurau.
 - **City to the villages:** Enhancing development at the city fringe and improving connections to ensure safe, accessible, and enjoyable journeys to and from the city centre.
 - **Green links:** Investing in initiatives to connect green spaces and address climate change. This involves increasing planting and canopy cover in the city centre and supporting sustainable development.
 - **Public life:** Creating a vibrant, healthy, and inviting environment to attract people to the city centre.
 - **Our place in the world:** Celebrating the unique identity and culture of Tāmaki Makaurau within the city centre.
 - **Residential neighbourhoods:** Promoting residential growth, improving quality of life, and enhancing the wellbeing of city centre residents.
12. This report is to present the city centre targeted rate annual investment report for 2023/2024.

Tātaritanga me ngā tohutohu Analysis and advice

City centre targeted rate expenditure for 2023/2024

13. In financial year 2023/2024, \$26 million of city centre targeted rate was spent with a majority (69 per cent) of spend on streetscape/place improvements. A summary of 2023/2024 city centre targeted rate expenditure is shown in Figure 1 below.

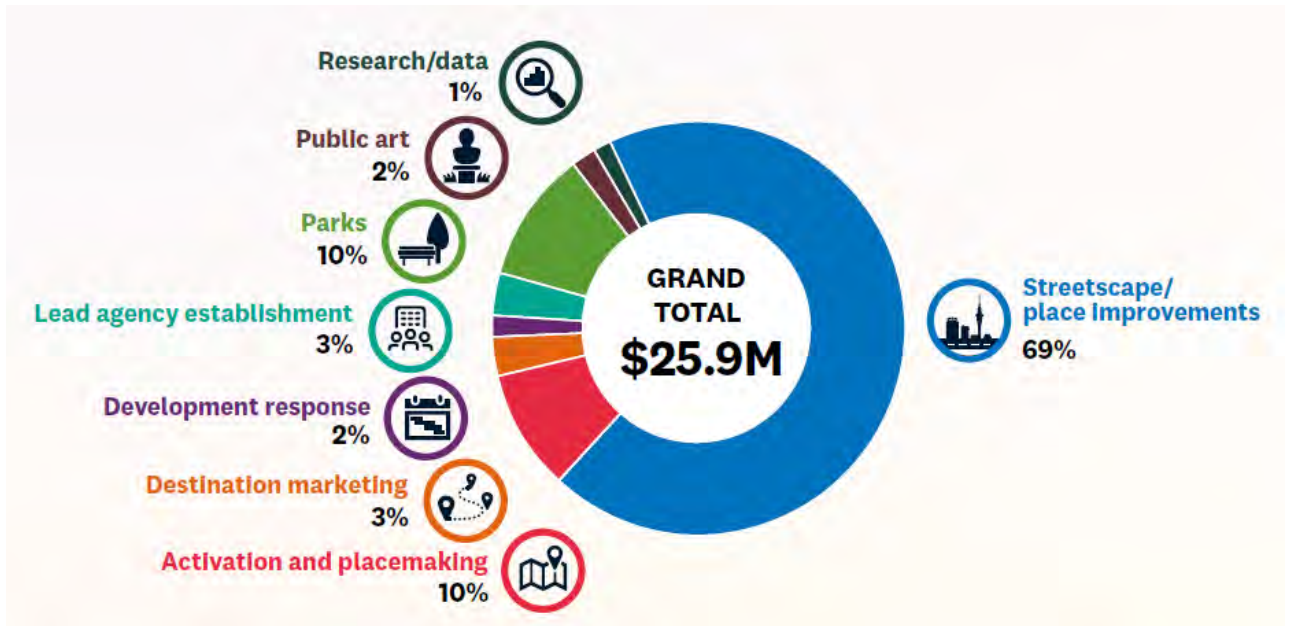


Figure 1: Summary of financial year 2023/2024 city centre targeted rate expenditure (percentage of budget spent by category).

City centre targeted rate achievements in 2023/2024

14. Some key highlights from financial year 2023/2024 are summarised below.
 - An extensive activation and placemaking programme including Matariki ki te Manawa (in July 2023 and June 2024), Christmas in the City Centre 2023, Lunar New Year 2024 and New Zealand Music Month 2024.
 - Supported several destination marketing campaigns and initiatives including Auckland Restaurant Month, Art Week, 'Eat It' which showcased the hospitality offering on Karangahape Road and enabling Tātaki Auckland Unlimited to deliver an improved welcome experience for cruise ship passengers and to leverage a Tourism New Zealand campaign to re-excite New Zealanders about their city centres.
 - Completion of Myers Park Underpass in December 2023 including Waimahara, an interactive Māori artwork.
 - Completion of the final phase of Wai Horotiu Queen Street (Shortland Street to Customs Street) in November 2023.
 - Construction of Te Hā Noa with opening of the northern section of Victoria Street between Albert Street and Queen Street in March 2024.
 - Continuing to support businesses to reduce the impacts of construction as part of the Midtown Regeneration Programme.
 - Completion of the concept design for Emily Place, as informed by public feedback.
 - Planning underway for Victoria Quarter.
 - Completion of a 12-week engagement process in late-2023 for the Nelson Street Laneway project.
15. A full summary of achievements is provided in the City Centre Targeted Rate Annual Report 2023/2024 to be tabled at the meeting.

Key focus areas for financial year 2024/2025

16. Staff updated the city centre targeted rate portfolio for financial years 2025-2031 in response to the panel's advice (resolution [CCAP/2024/13](#)), as part of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 (resolution [GB/2024/87](#)).

17. The targeted rate programme for the 2024/2025 financial year includes:
- enhanced programme to improve community/visitor safety, city centre promotion and visitor attraction
 - enhanced activation and placemaking programme
 - engagement and development of options for the High Street improvement project
 - completion of Te Hā Noa from Elliott Street to Queen Street and from High Street to Kitchener Street
 - completion of detailed designs for Emily Place, Nelson Street Laneway and Mills Lane and Swanson Street improvements projects
 - increase climate resilience, particularly through emissions reduction initiatives and adaptation measures.

Supporting the city centre through change

18. Auckland Council's City Centre Programmes leads programme coordination in midtown to ensure that construction is planned to minimise overall disruption.
19. Enabled by the city centre targeted rate, we continue to deliver a comprehensive development response approach to support impacted properties, residents and businesses through construction. There is a strong focus on maintaining a positive customer experience, managing construction disruption, activation, safety, and cleanliness.
20. Business support initiatives in midtown include a specialist business connector service and grants to impacted small businesses.

Review of the city centre targeted rate

21. In April 2024, the panel recommended increasing the share of targeted rate paid by residential property owners and supported a review and extension of the city centre targeted rate beyond 2031. Staff will update the panel on the engagement process for the targeted rate review in October 2024.

Tauākī whakaaweawe āhuarangi **Climate impact statement**

22. Urban intensification and city developments have highlighted climate impact and challenges to the environment. Feedback from the panel's workshops support the need to prioritise sustainability and climate change mitigation when developing the city centre.
23. The city centre targeted rate investment portfolio incorporates critical environmental and climate change measures, such as:
- sustainable procurement
 - recyclable and reusable materials
 - opportunities to improve water treatment
 - greening the environment (for example, more trees and planters)
 - monitoring and evaluation of environment measures
 - compact and low-carbon urban design.
24. Many of the projects achieved through the city centre targeted rate contribute to the goals of Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan, in particular the built environment and transport priority areas. Projects that contribute to these areas include the Wai Horotiu Queen Street project and Te Hā Noa Victoria Street that deliver safety improvements to walking, cycling and micro mobility, as well as new trees and planting.

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

25. The panel has recognised the need to continue work on a holistic and integrated approach to planning and coordination of development in the city centre across the council group.
26. The council's City Centre Programmes team maintains the city centre targeted rate portfolio as part of the wider council group planning, prioritisation and coordination work. These priorities are aligned with the City Centre Action Plan which set out the council group's priorities and programmes across the city centre to work towards achieving the vision of the City Centre Masterplan.
27. Implementation of the targeted rate portfolio will be fully integrated with the council group and other delivery partners, to ensure that construction is planned to minimise disruption, and to deliver joined-up communication and on-street engagement for customers.

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

28. Alongside other council investments, the city centre targeted rate investment has been instrumental in enhancing the streets and public spaces in the city centre for use and enjoyment by residents, workers and visitors. It has helped improve the quality and attractiveness of the urban environment and residential living, improved stormwater quality, tree cover and biodiversity.
29. The city centre targeted rate portfolio delivers on the Waitemātā Local Board Plan 2023, contributing towards the following key objectives:
 - partnering for positive community outcomes and recognising expertise
 - champion for safety, inclusion, engagement, and accessibility
 - quality city centre and urban neighbourhoods that are resilient and sustainable
 - character and heritage of our neighbourhoods is valued and conserved within our urban landscapes
 - open space networks meet the needs of our changing and growing communities.
30. The Waitemātā Local Board receives regular updates on city centre projects through memorandums, monthly workshops and quarterly reports, as well as providing feedback on project designs.

Tauākī whakaaweawe Māori Māori impact statement

31. The City Centre Masterplan 2020 sets out a vision for the city centre to have a sense of place informed by the past and looking to the future, with thriving and authentic tangata whenua identity and culture (Outcome 1: Tāmaki Makaurau - Our place in the world).
32. The city centre targeted rate-funded activation programme has delivered a range of events incorporating Māori arts and culture, notably Matariki ki te Manawa (in July 2023 and June 2024). Projects such as the Myers Pass upgrade and Te Hā Noa have also incorporated Māori designs and artwork.
33. Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei has been a member of the City Centre Advisory Panel since its inception and advises on the investment priorities of the city centre targeted rate. The proposed city centre targeted rate portfolio includes investment for Te Tōangaroa precinct.
34. Auckland Council also partners with mana whenua throughout the planning and delivery of projects. Māori outcomes delivered by the city centre targeted rate portfolio are managed at the project level, with each project responsible for delivering on their individual outcomes.

Ngā ritenga ā-pūtea Financial implications

35. The city centre targeted rate forms an important part of city centre investment, complementing general rates as set out in the Long-term Plan 2024-2034. The rate can only be applied to relevant activities that benefit property owners inside the rating area.
36. The city centre targeted rate will invest approximately \$280 million of capital and operational expenditure from financial years 2024 to 2031. A key focus of investment in the near term is the enhancement of public spaces around the new City Rail Link stations, as well as ongoing investment on activation, placement and marketing to attract visitors, support local businesses and improve safety perceptions.
37. For the 2023/2024 financial year, the spend was 91 per cent expenditure against budget. Performance improved from the 2022/2023 financial year, despite some delays in construction. Last year progress was significantly affected by external factors such as major events (FIFA World Cup) and other public sector developments such as City Rail Link and Auckland Transport.
38. The updated city centre targeted rate portfolio for financial years 2025 to 2031 was approved by the Budget Committee as part of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 at their 16 May 2024 meeting (resolution [GB/2024/87](#)). The Budget Committee also agreed to adjust the city centre targeted rate according to inflation.

Ngā raru tūpono me ngā whakamaurutanga Risks and mitigations

39. The risks and mitigations are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Risks and mitigations associated with delivering the city centre targeted rate investment portfolio

Risk	Mitigation
Cost inflation in the construction markets resulting increased project costs.	Proactive measures include scope management, early procurement where appropriate, contingency planning, budget escalation provisions, and reprioritising of projects, as appropriate.
Disruption to transport operations and public transport, resulting in the reduction of service levels, reliability and congestion.	Construction staging is planned to ensure property access, service and loading will continue to be available, and public transport and traffic can continue to operate effectively.
Disruption to neighbouring businesses and residents, resulting in hardship, dissatisfaction and opposition.	Continue to improve and deliver development response programme to support businesses and residents impacted by construction.
Lack of community support and engagement for programme delivery, resulting in loss of trust and confidence in Auckland Council.	Commitment to open and frequent communication, early engagement and consultation for project planning and delivery.
Misalignment of investment, planning and delivery between council group, the government and the private sector, resulting in rework, cost increase and excessive disruptions.	Council group continuing to work collaboratively to plan and deliver.

Ngā koringa ā-muri Next steps

40. The City Centre Advisory Panel will continue to be updated on the city centre targeted rate investment portfolio 2025-2031 as it progresses.
41. Staff will update the City Centre Advisory Panel at its October 2024 meeting, on the process to advise on the future extension and changes to the city centre targeted rate for consideration by the Governing Body and for public consultation in future annual or Long-term Plan budgets.

Ngā tāpirihanga Attachments

No.	Title	Page
A	Presentation	

Ngā kaihaina Signatories

Author	Jenny Larking, Head of City Centre Programmes
Authoriser	Simon Oddie, Lead Officer

City Centre Targeted Rate Annual Report 2023/2024

City Centre Programmes, Auckland Council

City Centre Advisory Panel, 21 October 2024



CITY CENTRE TARGETED RATE (CCTR)



- Established to help fund the development and revitalisation of the city centre and aims to enhance the city centre as a place to work, live, visit and do business.
- Paid by commercial and residential property owners in city centre.



COMPLETED PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE CCTR



2013 - Fort Street



2014 - Khartoum Place



2014 - O'Connell Street



2017 - Freyberg Square



2018 - Beach Road



2020 - High Street Pilot



2020 - Albert Street Bus Interchange



2021 - Karangahape Road Enhancements



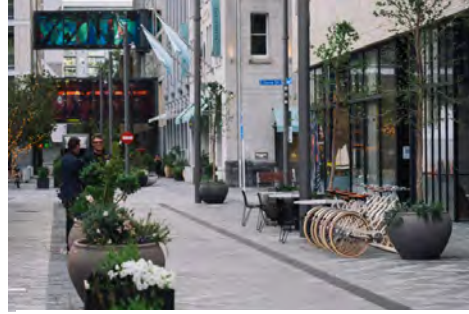
COMPLETED PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE CCTR



2020 - Albert Street (Customs Street to Wyndham Street)



2020 - Te Komititanga



2020 - Galway Street (Commerce St to Gore St)



2021 - Quay Street Enhancement



2022 - Wai Horotiu Queen Street



2022 - Federal Street (Wellesley Street to Mayoral Drive)



2023 - Galway Street (Te Komititanga to Commerce St)

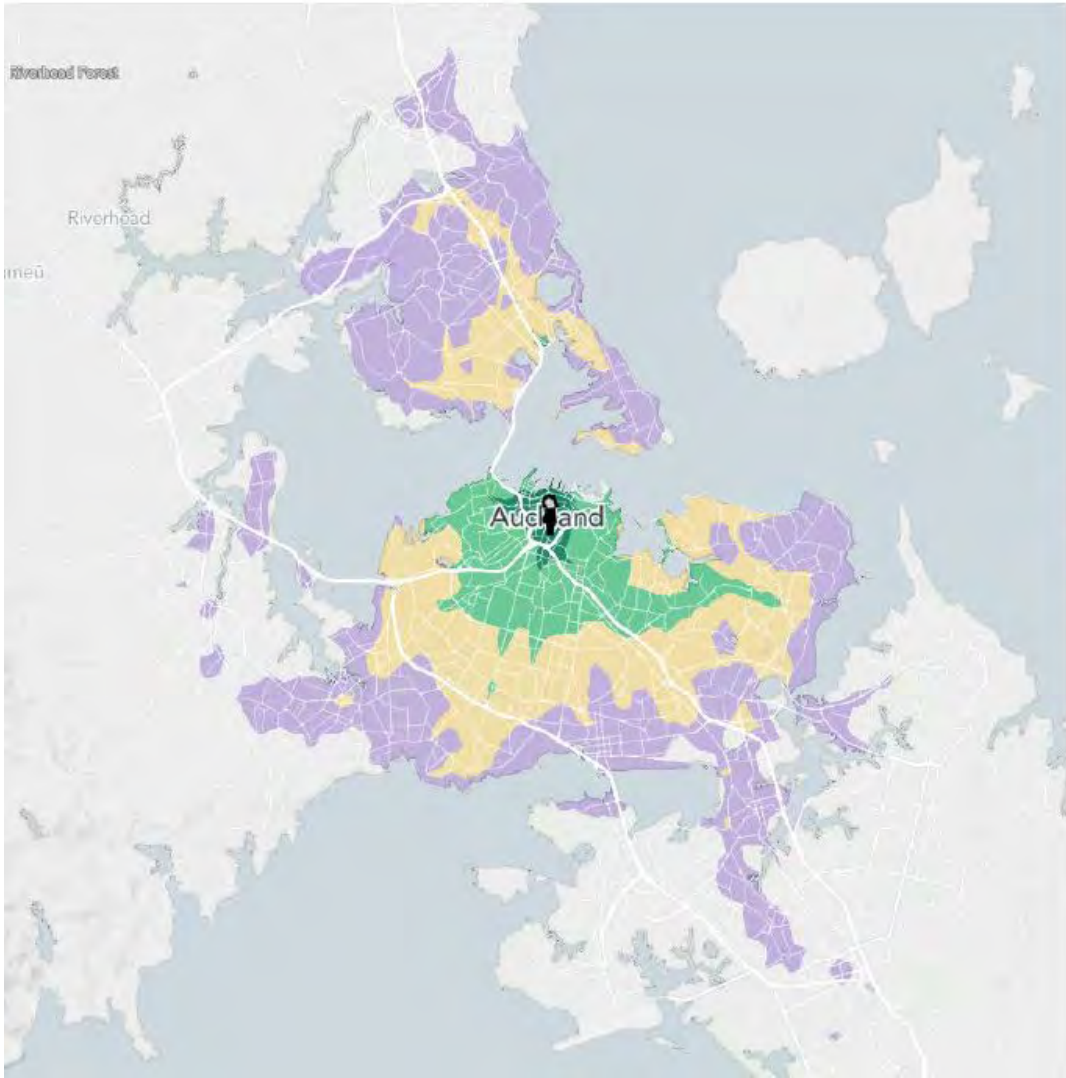


2023 - Myers Park Underpass

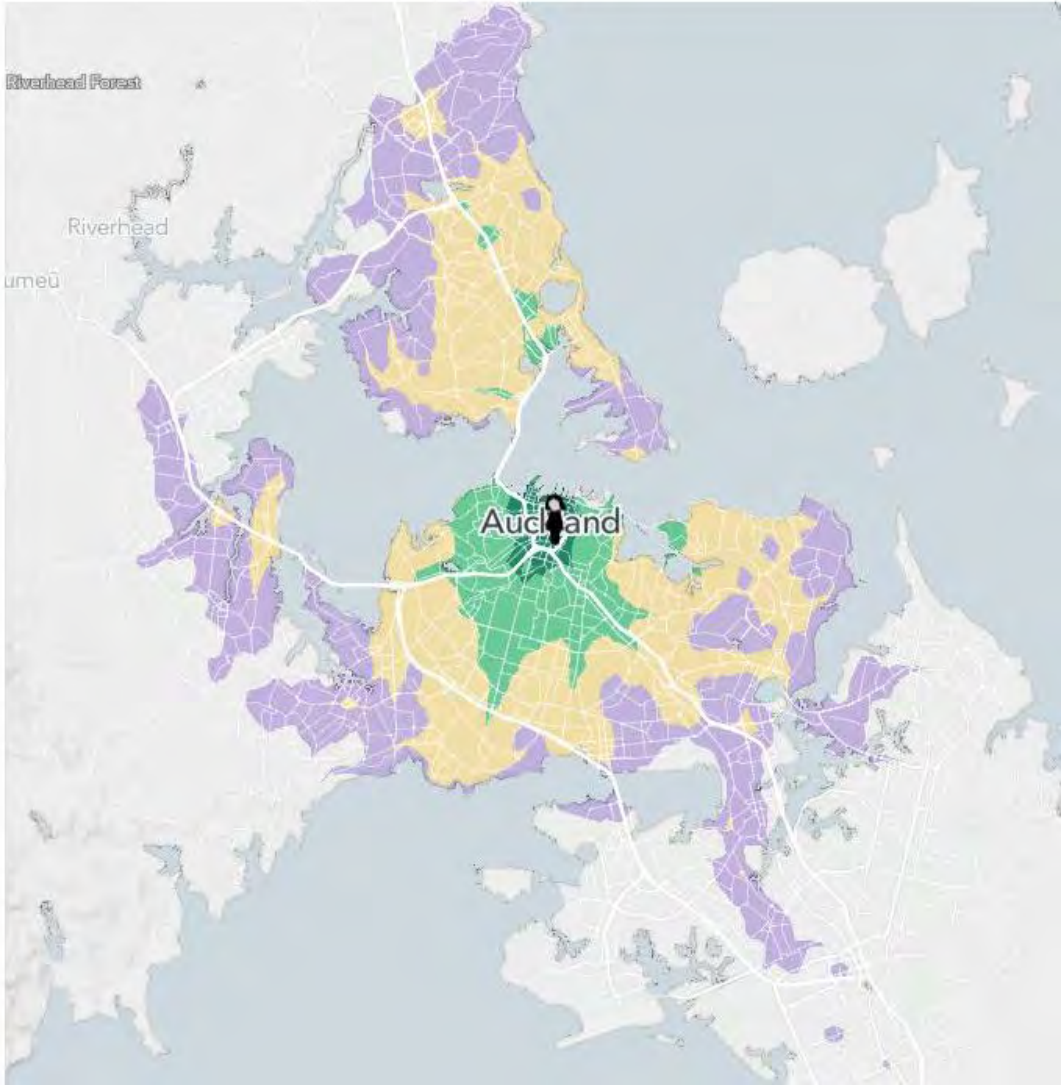


ACCESS TO THE CITY CENTRE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

2016



2024



- 15 min
- 30 min
- 45 min
- 60 min



MAJOR EVENTS

Where
Karioi

Including:

- **P!NK 2024**
- **FIFA Women's World Cup 2023**
- **World Rally Championship 2022**
- **36th America's Cup 2021**

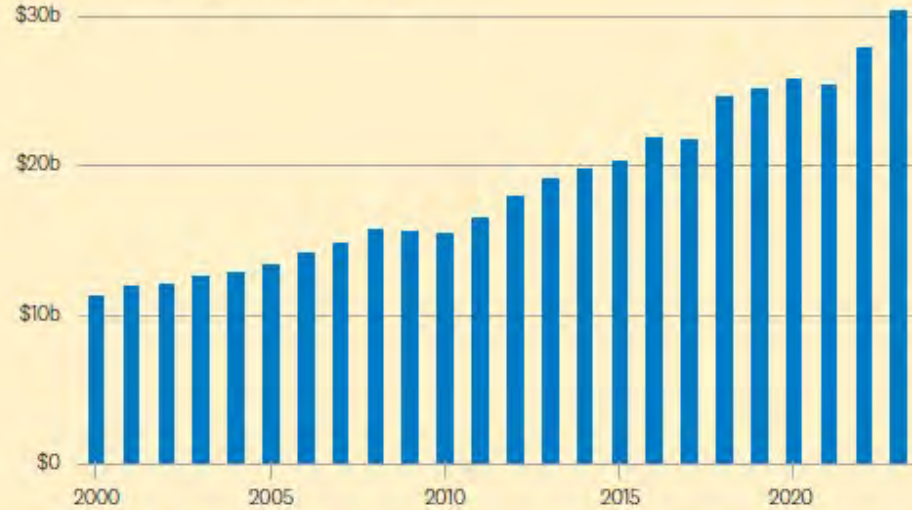
IFAN FESTIVAL
UNITY PITCH
THIS WAY

Auckland 2023
Coca-Cola

CITY CENTRE GROWTH

City centre gross domestic product

Measured in March per year, at 2023 prices



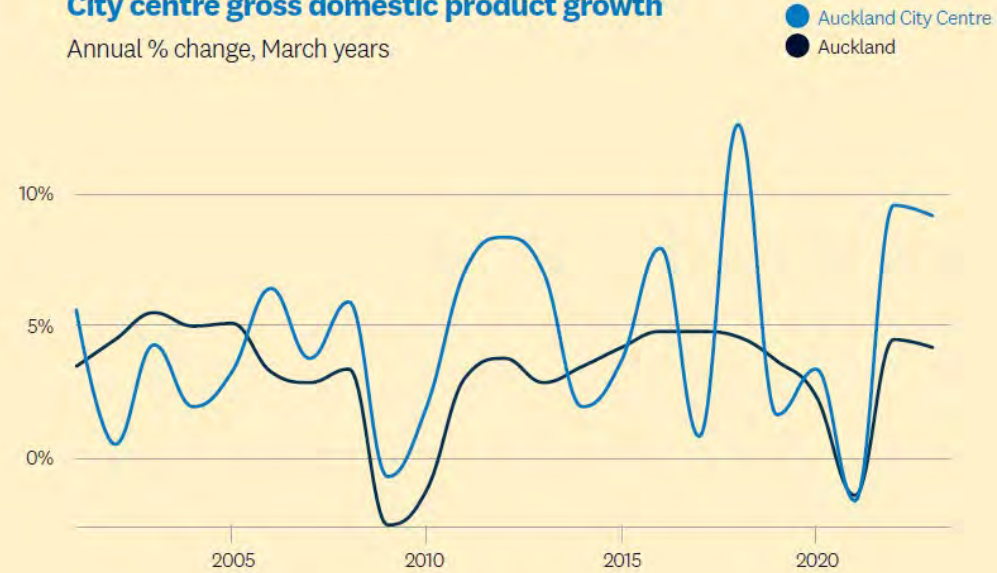
City centre residential population

Measured in June each year



City centre gross domestic product growth

Annual % change, March years

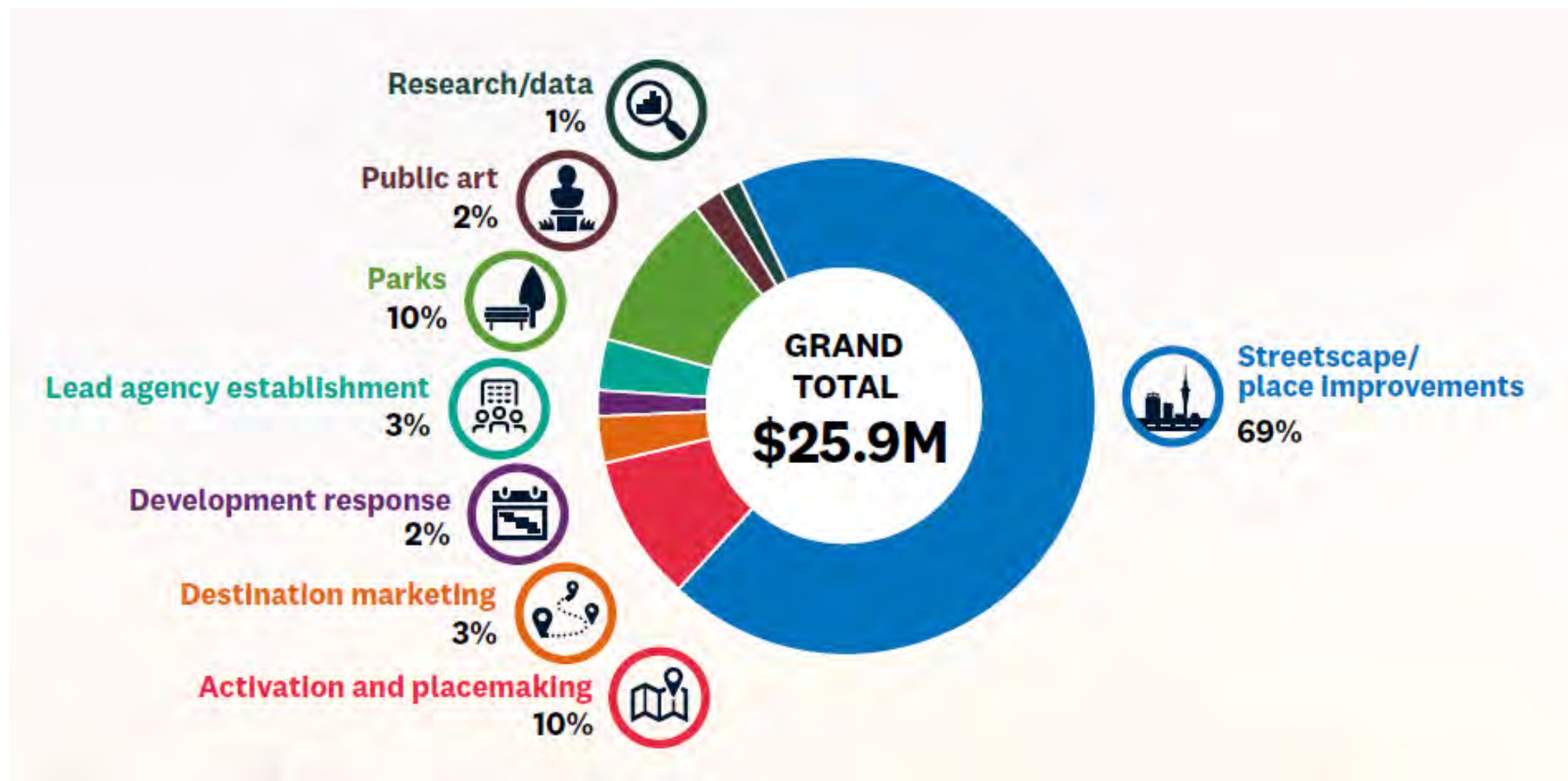


City centre businesses

Number of businesses, measured in February each year



CCTR EXPENDITURE IN 2023/2024



ACTIVATION AND EVENTS IN 2023/2024



String Symphony (photo credit: Mitchell Hancock)

OPERA IN THE STRAND



LUNAR NEW YEAR 2024



MATARIKI KI TE MANAWA



CHRISTMAS IN TE KOMITITANGA



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS 2023/2024



Myers Park Underpass (photo credit: David St George)

TE HĀ NOA VICTORIA STREET (Queen St to Elliott St)



Te Hā Noa Victoria Street (Queen St to Elliott St)

WAI HOROTIU QUEEN STREET



IN PROGRESS



Tyler Street (Te Komitanga to Commerce Street).

Artist's impression of Tyler Street



Emily Place Improvements

Artist's impression of Emily Place



IN PROGRESS



Karanga-a-Hape Station neighbourhood improvements

Artist's impression of Karanga-a-Hape Station



High Street engagement



IN PROGRESS



Nelson Street Laneway



Mills Lane & Swanson Street Improvements



DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE

- Midtown Small Business Support Programme
- Improved customer experience
- Improved wayfinding
- Focus on on-street customer experience
- Safety



FOCUS AREAS FOR 2024/2025

- Improve community/visitor safety
- City centre promotion and visitor attraction
- Enhanced activation and placemaking programme
- Ongoing development response to support impacted community
- Engagement and development of options for the High Street improvement project
- Completion of Te Hā Noa from Elliott Street to Queen Street and from High Street to Kitchener Street
- Completion of detailed designs for Emily Place, Nelson Street Laneway and Mills Lane and Swanson Street improvements projects





City Centre Advisory Panel – Chair’s report

File No.:

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose of the report

1. To note the Chair’s memo to the Policy and Planning Committee.

Whakarāpopototanga matua

Executive summary

2. The City Centre Advisory Panel is made up of approximately 20 sector and industry representatives appointed by the Mayor at the beginning of each term.
3. As articulated in the terms of reference, the purpose of the panel is to:
 - Provide advice based on sector and industry expertise and lived experience to assist the council group in setting strategic direction and priorities, ensuring the city centre reaches its potential as a thriving, vibrant hub for all.
 - Provide civic leadership by supporting the case for change and championing the city centre, both as it is today and what it can become in the future.
 - Advocate best value for the City Centre Targeted ratepayer.
4. The chair’s memo was published in the 10 October 2024 Planning and Policy Committee [agenda](#).

Horopaki

Context

5. At the 26 August advisory panel meeting, the chair introduced the intention to strengthen communication between the panel and the mayor and councillors, through a Chair’s memo to the relevant council committee after each panel meeting.
6. The key points to be included in the memo were outlined at the end of the meeting. The first Chair’s memo was circulated to panel members for feedback before being sent to the committee. This memo is included as Attachment A.

Ngā koringa ā-muri

Next steps

7. Staff will provide an update on progress against the points raised in the Chair’s memo as part of the overview report for the 21 October meeting.
8. A memo from the chair will be produced after each panel meeting, and circulated to the Policy and Planning Committee, Mayor’s Office and City Centre Executive Steering Group.

Ngā tūtohunga

Recommendation/s

That the City Centre Advisory Panel:

- a) note the Chair’s August 2024 memo to the Planning and Policy Committee.

Ngā tāpirihanga Attachments

Attachment A: Chair's memo of the August City Centre Advisory Panel meeting

Ngā kaihaina Signatories

Author	Tam White – Governance and Relationships Advisor
Authoriser	Simon Oddie – Priority Location Director – City Centre Lead Agency- Lead Officer

Auckland City Centre Advisory Panel, 26 August 2024

Chairs report to the Planning Committee

Introduction

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee for receiving this Chair's report. Going forward, I intend to submit this report following each meeting to provide greater visibility of the issues and opportunities that are most important to your city centre representatives. For further details, the workshop agenda pack can be accessed [here](#), and the panel's original priorities, as outlined in July 2023 and reinforced through the LTP process, are available [here](#).

Community Safety and Wellbeing – Good progress is being made

The panel noted the reduction in crime and improved perceptions of safety in the city centre. This has been the panel's number one priority since it was formed this term, with many members actively involved in the day-to-day response. We have seen a pleasing level of collaboration and coordination of focus to get on top of this issue and would like to highlight it as an example of what can be achieved when working in this way.

Economic Wellbeing – A Call for Action

The panel met for the first time since the June quarter results for the city centre were released. The reported spend and footfall numbers align with panel members' experiences and current media reports. There is an urgent need to attract more people back into the city centre and to mitigate factors that are discouraging visits. This aligns with our advice provided through the LTP 2024-34 process, where we advocated for increased funding for destination marketing (and committed CCTR funding to this initiative) and emphasised the importance of growing events, concerts, and reinstating visitor and overseas investment attraction initiatives.

We discussed the necessity for city centre marketing to focus on an immediate response and have requested Council teams collaborate with our two business associations to maximise our efforts in this area, particularly in the lead-up to Christmas. We urge all parts of the Auckland Council group to carefully consider any initiatives or decisions over the next 12 to 18 months that may adversely affect footfall in the city centre. This includes operational decisions that impact on the perception of access to parking, as well as the role elected officials play in championing the city centre to their constituents and the public. Your support is crucial to maintaining the vitality of the city centre during this period of high interest rates and depressed consumer spending across the economy.

Integrated Transport Plan – Need for Accelerated Progress

The panel reviewed a report from a working group that was formed to address specific transport issues. Our transport sector representative and deputy chair, Patrick Reynolds, presented the report, with several working group members contributing to the discussion. While the working group appreciated the opportunity to be involved in the development of the integrated transport plan for the city centre, there is a shared concern that progress has been too slow, and the scope and level of detail for the next stages remain unclear. Moreover, initiatives appear to be happening in isolation rather than as part of a cohesive strategy.

The panel strongly advocates for prioritising the development of a multi-modal circulation plan that addresses both immediate concerns—such as servicing, loading, and pick-up and drop-off issues—and the long-term needs of the city centre transport network to ensure access for everyone. We also

stress the importance of stakeholder support and the political courage required to make and implement these decisions.

Update on Midtown – Balancing Progress with Support for Affected Parties

The panel received an update on the ongoing programme of works in midtown. Overall, we are optimistic about the projects and the benefits they will deliver. However, we recognise the daily challenges faced by retailers in midtown during this period. We urge the Council to provide more support until these benefits are fully realised, while also acknowledging the commendable efforts of project teams to mitigate impacts with the resources available to them.

We also discussed the change in pedestrian flow patterns and noted that, even if overall foot traffic numbers have increased, areas affected by construction have not seen a rebound in footfall to the same degree as other areas. Therefore, we encourage the Council to continue its placemaking initiatives while also exploring additional opportunities to enhance the appeal of these areas, ensuring that they attract and engage visitors effectively.

Future of High Street

The panel welcomed the opportunity to provide diverse perspectives on the future development of the High Street area as part of the early stages of planning, funded through the city centre targeted rate portfolio. This proactive session, held early in the process, allowed for genuine input. There was some hesitance in the discussion about introducing significant disruptions to High Street in the short to medium term, given the current economic climate and ongoing CRL disruptions. The panel is not convinced that physical interventions are necessary at this time or whether desired outcomes can be achieved through other means. However, we support continued engagement by Council teams with stakeholders to explore all options.

Tertiary Destination of Choice

The panel received an inspiring presentation from AUT University and the University of Auckland about Auckland's potential to become the top student city in the country, outlining a roadmap to achieve this goal. The panel was unanimous in its support for initiatives to promote Auckland as a student-friendly city. We endorse the recommendations outlined in the presentation and advocate for increased support for predictable student-focused days and events that celebrate the city centre as a hub for student life. We believe that a strategic focus on events and activities designed to foster a thriving student community is crucial. Enhancing the environment for students by amplifying the events aspect and cultivating a vibrant atmosphere will help position Auckland as the destination of choice for students.

We have agreed to support this with appointments to a working group and recommend that Auckland Council appoint a direct representative to support this mahi.

Next meeting

Monday 21 October, 2-5pm