

**Auckland City Centre Resident's Group**

**Meeting AGENDA 2 August 2021  
The Lounge, Ellen Melville Centre, commencing 6 p.m.**

**Present:**

**Apologies:** Adam Parkinson

**Financial Report:**

Sri to provide.

**Presentations:**

None confirmed yet.

**Decision Items:**

CCRG Vendor Opportunities/Partnering Initiatives:

As part of the City Centre Targeted Rate (CCTR) funding, Heart of the City received around \$400,000 and the K'Road Business Association around \$40,000 annually for the purposes of Destination Marketing. This is intended to promote events and similar activities that bring people into the city centre to support business activity and particularly those related to the hospitality industry.

CCRG receive no CCTR funding but, as a first step, have recently become registered as a council vendor. CCRGT now needs to present a funding proposal to council for consideration and the likely activities that might qualify would be in the activation and/or engagement space and more critically for specific residential groups or areas within the city centre. This could also include aspects related to Civil Defence and Emergency Management work which, as evidenced from the Convention Centre fire in 2019, is an area that needs a lot of work to develop 'fit for purpose' process that meets the needs of 40,000 residents.

To progress this initiative to a successful outcome, it is recommended that we establish a small working group to prepare the project brief for this work.

**Recommendation**

That the following CCRG members be appointed to the CCRG Council vendor working group.

Light Rail

The Light Rail Establishment Unit is well underway with the various engagement processes for this proposed transport system in Auckland. While consultation is what was initially expected, it is clear that the purpose of the unit is more associated with promoting the idea rather than formal consulting. As one of the unit members recently stated – "We are not here to put meat on the bones for Aucklanders to pick off".

Given these limitations, CCRG either supports the proposal as is, supports with recommended changes, supports over a specified timeframe or does not support. More details about the project are on this link - <https://www.lightrail.co.nz>. Two CCRG members did attend a recent information evening and the suggestion that light rail use W/QSV was complemented with an option to use Symonds Street. The decision as to whether Sandringham Road or Dominion Road is the better option is also under consideration.

Key considerations around transport priorities do not appear to be included in the feedback process but are likely to be the most essential decisions still to be made.

Will Light Rail deliver us the best option for public transport from the city centre to the airport or are electric buses a more rational, affordable and flexible option in today's environment?

The CRL project between, and including, Mt. Eden Station to Britomart is estimated to cost \$4.4b and provide capacity for some 54,000 PAX per hour. However, the rest of the rail network in Auckland is limited to some 30,000 PAX so perhaps our funding priority is to complete that work first in order to achieve maximum ROI from the CRL costs.

Extending the Waterview tunnel to (say) Takapuna, and re designating SH1, could result in the harbour bridge being used only for public transport, cycling and essential service/delivery traffic thus extending the life of the bridge and hugely reducing traffic through our city centre. Would that be a higher priority for funding from CCRG's perspective?

If we support Light Rail, would CCRG prefer to see Symonds Street used instead of W/QSV?

If we support Light Rail, what priority would we recommend as compared to other transport expenditure?

CCRG are inviting the Light Rail Establishment Unit, and others, to a proposed presentation evening in mid August – date yet to be confirmed.

#### **Recommendation**

That CCRG prepare the following feedback to the Light Rail Establishment Unit prior to a formal presentation to CCRG later in August.

#### City Centre Bus Plan(CCBP) /Bus Depot and Facilities/Inter Regional Bus Depot.

Auckland Transport are currently seeking feedback on their CCBP proposed for implementation sometime after 2025. More information about the proposals are available on this site - <https://at.govt.nz/about-us/news-events/auckland-transport-releases-city-centre-bus-plan>.

Feedback (Note - AT do not consider that they have any legal duty to formally consult on this issue) is open until 19 September so CCRG may wish to appoint a small team to prepare feedback for discussion at our 6 September meeting.

The concerns that the Chair and Deputy Chair have raised with AT, and at the ACCAB table, is that almost no priority is given to the environmental impact of these proposals. Why AT are proposing to INCREASE the number of buses driving around the city centre AFTER the CRL is complete raises some serious worry flags.

As is the case in all other world cities, smaller buses take people to local hubs and then deliver from hub to hub in large buses. In other words buses operate in the same hub and spoke way that trains and ferries do – hub to hub. Smaller, electric shuttles, taxi's, ride hail, micro mobility, cycling etc., then deliver around the hubs so are much more flexible and better for the environment.

The idea of trudging large double decker buses, many of which will be diesel powered for another 8-10 years, is not environmentally acceptable. Most of these buses will also need layover spaces AND facilities for drivers within an extremely confined city centre. The better option is that these facilities are provided for at the suburban end of the spokes rather than the city centre. Many buses can simply deliver people to train stations where they can find their own way to where they want to be in the city centre – after all that is why the CRL was created.

**Recommendation**

That the following members form a working group to prepare CCRG feedback on the City Centre Bus Plan.

City Centre Amenities Plan

In May 2019, ACCAB received the report on public amenities in the city centre in this link - [https://infocouncil.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/Open/2019/05/CEN\\_20190522\\_AGN\\_8347\\_AT.PDF](https://infocouncil.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/Open/2019/05/CEN_20190522_AGN_8347_AT.PDF) . Little progress appears to have been made on this other than a subsequent report suggested that there was no shortage of public toilets in the city centre.

However, AT are now looking to build toilets all over the city for their drivers use and we understand that some of these toilets are proposed to be public facilities in the city centre. A recent proposals to locate one toilet block on Lorne Street South immediately below the steps up to Mayoral Drive produced a legal challenge which resulted in the proposal being abandoned.

As public amenities it would be difficult to find a less suitable space i.e. almost impossible to find as they can't be seen/located in a dead end street used for drug dealing/was going to be built on the sloping footpath so unsuitable for disabled people/foot traffic in the area is 95% university staff and students who have access to their own facilities/would be quite unsafe for drivers at night/doors were proposed to open facing an apartment lounge just 10m away.

CCRG need to consider whether, and what, public amenities they believe are needed in the city centre and the location of these. Again, it is suggested that a working group be set up to provide input into any ACCAB decision on public amenities in the city centre.

**Recommendation**

That the following members form a CCRG working group to provide feedback on the need for, and type of, public amenities in the city centre.

St. Patricks Square Pedestrian Mall

In 1974 the former Auckland City Council designated the south, west and northern sides of St. Patricks Square as a Pedestrian Mall under s 336 of the Local Government Act 1974. On 6 April 1976 an addition to these areas was added which included all of the area on the eastern side of the Cathedral and it is this area that AT appear to have little interest in protecting for pedestrian purposes.

I have provided from CCRG files all of the relevant documentation that Cr. Lee sent to us some years ago which supports the area being a pedestrian mall. On that basis, CCRG might like to confirm their support for the entire area surrounding St. Pats Cathedral to remain with a pedestrian mall designation.

**Recommendation**

That CCRG affirms its support for all of the areas immediately surrounding St. Pats Cathedral to remain as a Pedestrian Mall and limited access via bollard be provided to those properties who are entitled to legal access.

**Discussion Items:**

Queens Wharf Eastern Side and Catherine Griffiths Art Work – O’Connell Street.

Adam Parkinson to provide a verbal update.

W/QSV update/AC Pinpoint Comms email 6/7

Robert McFarlane to provide a verbal update.

Uptown Business Association

Noelene Buckland to provide a verbal update.

**Information Items:**

Emily Place update

Adam Parkinson to provide a verbal update.

**General Business:**

**Meeting Closed:**