

## **Auckland City Centre Resident's Group**

### **CCRG Feedback on the Waitematā Local Board (WLB) | Te Poari ā-Rohe o Waitematā Local Board Plan 2020**

11 August 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above plan.

The City Centre Residents' Group are very supportive of the work the WLB does to provide a quality living environment for residents in the city centre. We find ourselves in alignment with WLB on many of our stated positions, which can be found here:

<https://www.ccrg.org.nz/what-we-do>

However, more always can, and needs to be done, and to that end we have provided some additional suggestions.

#### **Outcome One: Māori Initiatives**

CCRG support the Board's stated initiatives but would like to see the Waihorotiu/Queen Street Valley A4E project mentioned as a project that Māori should be co-leading. We would also like to see greater emphasis on Te Reo for re-naming roads and streets to better reflect their historical origins rather than an uncritical celebration of colonisation.

#### **Outcome Two: Connected Communities**

Homelessness and rough sleeping in the city centre will increasingly require far more government support than has been evident over the past fifty years.

The complexities of managing a wide range of long-standing challenges, that each of the individuals impacted by homelessness is having to deal with, will require one on one support for long periods of time.

CCRG would like to see a strong statement from the WLB that this needs to be the number one priority for our incoming government.

Working with partners is expected, but our government needs to be leading this programme, not pushing it onto communities who lack the capacity to manage it.

We strongly support the Board's intentions to provide more public open space in the city centre with a focus on the needs of families and children.

Families and children must be better prioritised, whether it be from safer streets, to services that meet their needs with additional small play areas being a part of that strategy.

Safety is a key element of connected communities - physical safety is critical to ensure people can meet safely and re-occupy our streets.

Policing is a core requirement for this, but we have seen a withdrawal and absence of policing resource from the city centre.

We expect WLB to support initiatives that provide warm safe dry shelter for all, and continue their strong support for vastly improved amenities for all in the city centre.

### **Outcome Three: Quality Urban Development**

We would like to see more emphasis placed on the A4E programme, across the entire city centre, as a means of providing more public and third space for families and children **THAT IS SAFE.**

A major part of A4E is to limit vehicles movements in and particularly through and across the city centre, and one way to do that is to reclaim space for developments like play areas, grassed areas, trees, gardens and quiet spaces.

A key initiative we would encourage the WLB to support is the planning and planting of the Victoria Street Linear Park while the Albert Street/Victoria Street intersection is closed. Similarly, a pedestrian mall concept for Waihorotiu/Queen Street Valley will provide similar spaces that can be utilised for improved public amenities and healthy recreation activities.

We urge continued support for the Albert Park Tunnels repurposing and the many other opportunities that this would provide for accessibility by active modes.

CCRG would welcome a major review of the AUP/RMA rules around the use of LEF billboards in urban residential areas as these impact very negatively 24/7 and in perpetuity, on peoples living environment.

We thank the WLB again for their continued and meaningful support for the Ellen Melville Centre that is now becoming the resident hub it was designed to be.

### **Outcome Four: Green and climate resilient Waitematā**

CCRG believe that this is the most critical in Waitematā and across all of New Zealand. Covid19 has allowed us space to think about what really matters for people and it is a sustainable environment that supports good health and clean food/water.

Our priority for the city centre would initially be to capture all of the storm water that goes into the harbour.

This can be used for cleaning streets/buildings, industrial use, watering gardens, water features (except drinking fountains) ponds for bird life, etc., etc.

There is also plenty of opportunities to replant the city centre with trees, especially to replace those removed for the CRL work, shrubs, plants, and vegetable gardens. For well-established reasons, there needs to be an ambitious target to replace any trees removed in the city centre, with at least 2-4 replacement trees.

We would also like to see dozens of planned wall gardens with permanent drip watering/feeding all over the city centre.

Plants do not need to be in exclusively in green open spaces, there are hundreds of different climbing plants that only require a telephone pole and some water.

There are opportunities to collect spring water for use in the city centre rather than sending it all to stormwater and the harbour

We strongly support the creation of organic city centre urban farms, and pollinator paths, providing residents with the opportunity to grow vegetables, compost, and contribute to good sustainability, resilience, health and wellbeing outcomes, that also meet and try to exceed agreed climate emergency ambitions.

## **Outcome Five: Sustainable Transport**

The critical drivers of our current appalling air pollution in Waihorotiu/Queen Street Valley are diesel buses, ferries and cruise ships.

It is not caused by private vehicles, most of whom are relatively clean burning petrol engines,

The focus for council now needs to be on ensuring that all vehicles are electric powered with a ready supply of charging stations.

This needs to be achieved without creating additional clutter or hazards on our footpaths, and if required should be installed in the existing street parking corridor.

CCRG want to see electric buses only on Queen Street from March 2021 and from 2025 electric vehicles only permitted on the Waihorotiu/Queen Street Valley.

A bold commitment to clean air has to be made if we are to change what is currently an environment that damages people's health.

While we are not transport experts, we do think that the time has come for Auckland to start limiting traffic on our motorways and major highways. Congestion charging has always been the most successful method of managing vehicle flows.

Another easy means of achieving this is to ensure flexible work practise and quality 24/7 work/learning hubs exist in every community, so that people can travel where and when they like rather than be limited to rush hour.

This also encourages shorter and more active modes of local transport with 24/7 quality, safe public transport available during night hours.

## **Outcome Six: Prosperous Waitematā**

While Covid19 has had a very negative impact on the Waitematā area, and particularly the city centre, there is an opportunity to change our current modus operandi to a more sustainable one.

Waitematā could be the world leader in flexible working, learning and living arrangements that allow people to work, learn and play where and when they want.

This maximises utilisation of expensive infrastructure, supports sustainable transport options, improves living conditions for families and supports a stronger sense of community.

With internet shopping increasing, cities will need to be flexible in how they provide for business and resident facilities so that these can be interchanged quickly as economic conditions change.

It may be a better sustainable model to have more residents living in city centres and supporting local retail, learning and hospitality businesses with office space decentralised and working hours/spaces more flexible.

Noelene Buckland – Chair [nbuckland@xtra.co.nz](mailto:nbuckland@xtra.co.nz) 021 449 995

Adam Parkinson – Dep Chair [deputychari@ccrg.org.nz](mailto:deputychari@ccrg.org.nz) 021 766 095

CCRG -City Centre Residents' Group