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***EAST-WEST STITCH***

*Connecting the western  
edge of the city to the centre*



KEY

- 1 Victoria Park
- 2 Victoria Quarter
- 3 SkyCity

## VISION

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THE NORTH WESTERN  
EDGE OF THE CITY CENTRE  
AROUND VICTORIA PARK  
IS A NATURAL BASIN FACING  
THE HARBOUR AND WYNYARD  
QUARTER TO THE NORTH

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### OUR 2032 VISION IS:

- The big streets that run through the quarter (Nelson, Hobson, Cook, Victoria and Wellesley) no longer break the area into unconnected pieces. Instead, they are pleasant places to linger and to walk along. They are easy and safe for pedestrians to cross.
- Hobson and Nelson streets become attractive boulevards or 'green links' that welcome people into the city.
- Safe cycling and walking connections to Freemans Bay are enhanced.
- A new, eclectic mix of buildings within the area has a range of uses that contribute to the area's character as an attractive urban neighbourhood.
- The big blocks have better pedestrian access through them, with more walking routes running north to south.
- Victoria Quarter becomes a vibrant urban community, with housing that caters for families seeking an inner-city lifestyle as well as singles, students and couples. Some development will be mixed-use, providing work and living spaces under one roof.

**BACKGROUND**

The western edge of the city centre around Victoria Park is a natural basin facing the harbour and Wynyard Quarter to the north. On its boundary is the Nelson and Hobson Street ridge, the densest residential area in the city centre, whilst the western extent is defined by State Highway 1 and the inner suburbs of Freemans Bay, St Marys Bay and beyond.

The area was the industrial hub of early Auckland, with timber mills, brick kilns and boat builders' yards dotted along the Freemans Bay foreshore.

As a result, the area has a rich built history, including the Rob Roy and Drake taverns, the Logan Campbell Free Kindergarten and Victoria Park Market – the city's former municipal rubbish destructor.

In the last five to ten years there has been considerable developer interest in the area, with many of its sites coming to the end of their manufacturing and warehousing lives. New development has brought over 5,000 residents to apartment buildings on the Nelson and Hobson Street ridge, seen new commercial buildings spread down Victoria Street

West to Victoria Park, and a plethora of creative businesses cluster in the Sale and Drake Street area.

This has coincided with council planning initiatives delineating a future residential and mixed-use neighbourhood for part of the area known as the Victoria Quarter, which spreads from Nelson Street down to Victoria Park.

Despite this interest, the area faces significant challenges as it is edged and bisected by major traffic corridors. To the north, Fanshawe Street limits walkability between Victoria Park and Wynyard Quarter. To the east, Nelson and Hobson streets are one-way streams of traffic to and from the motorway. To the west, Cook Street has become a high-speed street off the motorway up to Nelson Street. To the south and west, there are limited walking routes across the motorway. Recent development along much of these routes has consequently failed to address the street with inactive ground level frontages (car parking, blank walls etc).

This harsh street environment has had a significant bearing on the relative underperformance of this part of the city in terms of property values, residential

appeal and general desirability. The opportunity exists to revitalise the area through investment in amenity, road redesign and creating a positive planning framework.

**OUTCOME SCORECARD**

- ✓ SO1 International Destination
- SO2 Globally Significant Centre for Business
- SO3 True Harbour City
- ✓ SO4 Welcoming Children and Families
- ✓ SO5 Culturally Rich and Creative
- ✓ SO6 Exemplar of Urban Living
- ✓ SO7 Integrated Regional Transport System
- ✓ SO8 Green City of Trees and Parks
- ✓ SO9 Walkable and Accessible City
- ✓ S10 Exceptional Environmental Performer
- ✓ S11 World-Leading Centre for Education, Research and Innovation

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THE AREA WAS THE INDUSTRIAL HUB OF EARLY AUCKLAND, WITH TIMBER MILLS, BRICK KILNS AND BOAT BUILDERS' YARDS DOTTED ALONG THE FREEMANS BAY FORESHORE.

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DOWNTOWN CAR PARK  
REDEVELOPED



## HOBSON AND NELSON STREETS - TWO -WAYING

Hobson and Nelson streets are important arterial routes that link with the motorway network and carry large volumes of traffic at peak times. They need to be developed to have the look and feel of dignified urban city streets that encourage pedestrian movement both across and along their lengths. Development along their routes will respond to this shift with buildings remodelled or redeveloped to better suit the function of the streets.

It is likely that this will involve:

- Initial reduction in the number of vehicle lanes followed by two-waying along some sections of both streets and enhanced intersections.
- Wider footpaths as part of a linear park.
- Continued space for on-street parking at certain times of the day.
- Direct access for pedestrians into new and improved developments with frontages and various amenity uses.
- Trees that can reach a significant stature being planted in the road reserve.

- Continued clear view line northwards down to the harbour.
- Possible closure of the Wellington Street motorway off-ramp and an improved pedestrian cycling environment.

The redesign will have a transformational effect not only on Hobson and Nelson streets, but also on the entire western quarter of the city centre. It will improve pedestrian and cycling access from Freemans Bay, Ponsonby and further west into and out of the city centre, as well as help create a more favourable first or last impression of the city for those entering and leaving via the motorway network.

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**IT WILL IMPROVE  
ACCESS FROM  
FREEMANS BAY,  
PONSONBY AND  
FURTHER WEST INTO  
AND OUT OF THE  
CITY CENTRE**

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Implementing this transformation will be a combination of small, incremental steps and work on the major actions; for example, changes to traffic light phasing and pedestrian crossing response times will reduce pedestrian walking times in the area and could be implemented relatively quickly. It need not be expensive: narrowing of the carriageway could be achieved with very little change to the current streetscape.

Given the length of both streets, the redesigns are likely to be rolled-out progressively from north to south - from the sea to the motorway.

By prioritising the longer-term directions for these streets' transformations we can provide development certainty around the qualities of the street frontages and the outcomes sought. This is particularly important for Hobson Street in the context of proposals for a new convention centre at SkyCity (scheduled to open in 2016). In fact, this major development may act as a catalyst for the street's transformation.





EXISTING  
▶ **HOBSON STREET**



▶ **POTENTIAL**

## A PRECINCT WITH A DISTINCT MIX OF RETAIL, CAFES, RESTAURANTS AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUES WILL DEVELOP AROUND FEDERAL STREET.

It is proposed that over time, Federal Street will be developed as an intimate, high-quality pedestrian-focused route from Mayoral Drive to Fanshawe Street and the waterfront beyond. A precinct will develop around it with a distinct mix of retail, cafes, restaurants and entertainment venues. The street will become a High Street of the west, with the added convenience of ready-access to the main public transport route through the city along and below Albert Street.

A tried and tested way to achieve this, and to provide for the street's other access needs, is through a continuous shared space along the street's length, supported by fine grain uses and a built form that better fits the scale and speed of the pedestrian. SkyCity is currently exploring how its buildings can better address and animate the street and it is expected that other development along the street will respond similarly.

Federal Street will continue to connect the eastern edge of Aotea Quarter, the City Mission, Saint Matthew's, SkyCity, the District Court, Saint Patrick's Cathedral and in time, the Lower Hobson area and the Victoria Street Linear Park (see Move 6: The Green Link).

In the short-term, the focus will be on the Federal Street intersections as part of the continuous city-wide roll-out of light-phasing changes to better support pedestrian movement, safe walking routes and reductions in walking times. In addition, as opportunities arise Auckland Council will look to collaborating with businesses to develop portions of Federal Street.

# FEDERAL STREET





106 COOK STREET COUNCIL OWNED  
(REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY)

## VICTORIA QUARTER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

IT NEED NOT  
BE EXPENSIVE;  
NARROWING OF  
HOBSON AND  
NELSON STREETS'  
CARRIAGEWAYS COULD  
BE ACHIEVED WITH  
VERY LITTLE CHANGE  
TO THE CURRENT  
STREETScape.

The Victoria Quarter has considerable latent development potential. The development industry has recognised the opportunity with, for example, a recently-consented large-scale mixed-use scheme on the former Auckland City Council depot site at the corner of Sale and Wellesley Streets known as Rhubarb Lane. However, the full potential of the area will only be realised when Nelson and Hobson streets become inviting public spaces for pedestrians, and other strategic development opportunities such as Wynyard Quarter and growth around the City Rail Link stations are further advanced. Significant investment in the amenity of the area and its streets and spaces will also be important, as will greater connections under the motorway to Freemans Bay and importantly, Freemans Bay School which is set to double in size.

In time the area will emerge as a vibrant residential-led, mixed-use urban neighbourhood, referencing its industrial heritage, with a strong leaning toward compact family housing. The built-form

response is anticipated to be reasonably fine grain medium-rise development that responds to the needs of families i.e. unit titles, reasonable indoor/outdoor spaces and opportunities for safe play.

Auckland Council owns significant areas of land in the quarter. This is mainly road reserve, but also includes a 5,853m<sup>2</sup> parcel of land at 106 Cook Street on the corner of Union Street. A dramatic change is proposed for this area with a draft masterplan in place that will see residential apartments and office space centred on a new public park.

Redevelopment plans, along with longer term New Zealand Transport Agency plans to upgrade the Cook Street interchange, will require a new road layout appropriate for the new pedestrian-focused land uses. This scheme is expected to be delivered through a form of public-private partnership.

■ Potential built form