

30 June 2025

To: Chair and members - Policy and Planning Committee  
CC: Mayors Office; City Centre Executive Steering Committee; Head of Auckland Policy Office  
Auckland Council  
135 Albert Street  
AUCKLAND

Kia ora Councillor Hills and members of the Policy and Planning Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to present this chair's report as a record of the key discussions and issues from the City Centre Advisory Panel meeting on 30 June 2025.

## City Centre Student Experience

The Panel endorsed the **City Centre Student Experience Action Plan**, a collaborative initiative between Auckland University of Technology (AUT), The University of Auckland (UoA), Auckland Council, and the city centre business associations. The plan aims to strengthen Tāmaki Makaurau's position as a vibrant study destination by supporting and empowering the tertiary student community.

Key discussion points included:

- **Accessibility and affordability** – increasing student access to existing facilities, with more affordable options through targeted deals and partnerships.
- **Fit-for-purpose hubs** – creating centralised spaces where students can access core services.
- **Safety** – ensuring safe spaces for students, particularly in the evenings and at night.
- **Representation** – support for a dedicated student representative on the Panel.
- **Housing** – recognition of the ongoing need for affordable student accommodation.

## City Centre Parking Management Plan – Room to Move

The Panel reaffirmed its support for the overall vision of the City Centre Parking Management Plan and the short-term initiatives proposed. However, discussion centred on the timing and pace of change, given the current economic climate, lower foot traffic, and reduced spending.

While recognising that the city centre has an oversupply of parking, members noted a growing perception that parking and accessibility are becoming more difficult. Factors contributing to this perception include:

- Ongoing roadworks and frequent changes to the street network, making wayfinding challenging
- Reduction in loading, servicing, and pick-up/drop-off facilities due to construction activity
- Parking fines incurred by people unfamiliar with navigating the **Authorised Vehicle Only** zone on Queen Street

The Panel noted that, with the city centre not experiencing the same growth rates as in the pre-2019 period, there needs to be confidence that proposed changes remain fit for purpose in the current and future context. Members expressed strong interest in carpark utilisation data to inform future

advice to Council, alongside a clearer understanding of travel patterns and demand following the opening of the City Rail Link, before committing to any further major changes.

## City Centre Safety Plan

The Panel discussed the role of the City Centre Targeted Rate (CCTR) in delivering the **City Centre Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan**.

Key points included:

- Recognition that funding wardens was originally in response to a lack of police presence; with increased police support, the Panel questioned whether the funding mix should shift.
- Support for maintaining the balance between outreach services and security functions, with an emphasis on systemic outcomes. Recognition that achieving more in the outreach space may require additional investment.
- Importance of visibility and an ambassadorial approach as part of the wardens' role.
- Desire to understand the Police perspective on the impact of security initiatives.
- Role of the Panel in advocating to central government by leveraging data and insights.

## City Centre Targeted Rate review

The Panel discussed recent updates to the proposed extension of the City Centre Targeted Rate (CCTR) and associated investment programme through to the 2037 financial year.

A consistent theme in the Panel's advice has been the importance of attracting more people to the city centre, underpinned by a vision for a thriving, inclusive, and resilient urban heart. In this context, the Panel expressed strong support for a **more targeted and strategic use of the CCTR**—prioritising initiatives that:

- Draw people into the city centre
- Support long-term vibrancy and growth
- Enhance the everyday experience of those who live, work, and visit

The Panel reaffirmed its support for extending the CCTR and endorsed the direction of a more outcomes-focused investment approach. Staff will seek further feedback from members between meetings and refine the proposed programme ahead of the 18 August 2025 Panel meeting.

## High Street

The Panel reiterated support for the High Street improvements but emphasised that timing is critical to avoid unnecessary disruption.

- The Panel expressed a desire to be actively involved in decisions about what work happens and when.
- Members stressed the need to allow the city centre to “rest” from major disruption before starting further works.

## Karanga-a-Hape Station Precinct Improvements (Project K)

At its 5 May 2025 meeting, the Panel requested a briefing on **Project K**, noting concerns about deviations from the originally consulted plan. The Panel's working group reiterated the importance of delivering the **outcomes consulted on** and supported by stakeholders.

At the 30 June meeting, the Panel discussed updated designs and expressed strong support for the proposed approach, particularly for:

- **Mercury Lane** – Raised bollard operation to limit vehicle access to authorised local traffic only, implemented as a pilot traffic filter scheme for up to two years under a “consultation by doing” model.
- **Cross Street** – Retention of required loading spaces for local businesses; introduction of a continuous footpath via boardwalk design; additional traffic calming at Upper Queen Street; improved lighting; and reallocation of some paid parking to loading spaces.
- **East Street** – Retention of the existing bi-directional cycleway and single traffic lane; installation of physical measures to prevent vehicle use of the cycleway; and retention of the raised table pedestrian crossing linking to the new station access laneway.

The Panel welcomed the collaborative approach taken to address stakeholder concerns and looks forward to the timely delivery of these improvements in alignment with the CRL opening.

**Next meeting:** Monday 18 August, 2-5pm

Yours sincerely

Scott Pritchard  
Independent Chair  
**CITY CENTRE ADVISORY PANEL**