

# Kia ora

## Have your say on proposed roading layout changes to Queen Street

Auckland's city centre is transforming to become a world-class place that is thoughtfully designed and reflects the changing way we use our city. Central to this transformation is creating an improved public transport network which supports a shift away from private vehicles and prioritises space for people and public transport.

To support this ongoing transformation and the construction of the City Rail Link (CRL) we are now consulting on some proposed network changes that will change the way vehicles use Queen Street.

These network changes are needed because in mid-2021 some bus routes will change as a result of the upcoming closure of the Victoria and Albert Street intersection for the CRL construction.

As part of these route changes, some buses will be returning to lower Albert Street following the completion of the CRL construction and streetscape improvements in that area. In the short-term, this will mean more buses will be using Queen Street.

We are proposing to implement bus lanes to some sections of Queen Street and to introduce some turning restrictions to maintain bus reliability for the thousands of bus passengers travelling around the city centre every day.

## Proposed network changes

The Wellesley and Albert Street intersection will reopen in mid-2021, at which time the Victoria and Albert Street intersection will close, until 2023, to allow for further CRL construction. This will result in an increased number of bus routes using Queen Street.

We are seeking feedback on creating targeted bus lanes in two sections of Queen Street to improve bus reliability for the tens of thousands of Aucklanders who take the bus into the city centre each day.

Access to loading bays and parking areas on and around Queen Street will remain, but drivers may need to use a different route to get there.

Two phases of network changes are proposed, relating to other changes that are happening in the city centre.

### Phase 1: May 2021

Construction in Lower Albert Street has now been completed which means buses servicing West Auckland can now return to that area. While upper Albert Street remains closed for CRL construction, these buses will need to use Queen Street, increasing the overall volume of buses using the street.

Proposed changes include:

- A bus lane in the northbound direction on Queen Street between Shortland Street and Customs Street. This would operate at peak times (7am – 10am and 4pm – 7pm)

There would be no traffic restrictions in the southbound lane, to ensure loading and delivery services can still occur in the area, such as guests being able to access to the two hotels on this section of Queen Street.

Other proposed changes are:

- A full-time northbound bus lane between Mayoral Drive and Wakefield Street
- Traffic restrictions at the intersection Queen Street and Mayoral Drive.
- Closing the Lorne Street exit into Wellesley Street beside Auckland City Library
- Closing the exit from Fort Street into Queen Street (in place since the COVID-19 installations)

To reliably provide for the increase in the volume of northbound buses, a new bus lane is proposed north of Mayoral Drive. Motorists would not be able to drive northbound from this point forward and would have to use Mayoral Drive to travel further into the city. For access to this section of Queen Street, vehicles can travel along Mayoral Drive East to Wakefield Street, and then turn left into Queen Street.

Although the bus lane will prevent access to the western loading bays in this section, the loading bays and mobility parking on the eastern side will remain.

At the same time as these proposals would be made, a fully electric bus fleet will be introduced to the CityLink service - the first step in creating the Zero Emissions Area (ZEA) for the city centre.

## Phase 2: July 2021

Following the reopening of the Wellesley and Albert Street intersection in mid-2021, the Victoria and Albert Street intersection will close to allow for further CRL construction.

This requires diversions to the 35 bus routes that currently use Victoria Street, and will concentrate more buses in the Wellesley Street area.

We are responding to this significant network change in a way that prioritises this section of Queen Street as a people and public transport priority area.

The following is proposed:

- Full-time bus lanes in both directions (effectively creating a bus-only section) on Queen Street between Wakefield Street and Wellesley Street

There are no loading bays or property accesses in this section, which is primarily used for serving bus passengers.

From July, with these network changes and the newly electrified CityLink service, more than 50 per cent of bus trips on Queen Street will have zero emissions.

This people and public transport priority approach is consistent with the long-term outcomes of the City Centre Masterplan and the Wai Horotiu Queen Street Valley Pilot, which seeks to reduce through-traffic and make Queen Street a place to go to, not through.

## Wai Horotiu Queen Street Valley Project

Auckland Council are making changes in Wai Horotiu Queen Street Valley as part of an Innovating Streets pilot, to make it a place to come to, not through. The changes will be designed to provide more and better-quality space for people and to prioritise Aucklanders who walk, cycle, and use public transport in the area.

Renewal of the northern end will begin in May 2021. The emergency works between Customs and Shortland Streets which were installed during COVID-19 last year to support physical distancing in Queen Street will be replaced by wide boardwalks, providing space for people to walk, sit, relax and dine in the open air.

Native planting will be established along the street and a pocket park will take shape on the corner of Queen Street and Fort Street; formerly a through-route for cars and soon to be a place for children to play.

Auckland Council will ask Aucklanders for their feedback on both the network changes and the improvements to the northern end of the street once they are in place.

Adjustments can then be made, based on people's feedback.

Queen Street is the cultural, historical, commercial, professional and retail heart of Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland. The ultimate goal is to make the area more accessible, more attractive and more prosperous, with pedestrian-friendly streets and better connections to the rest of the city centre.

### **We want to hear from you**

Aucklanders can now find out more information on the proposed network changes and provide their feedback. This includes the proposed bus lanes and associated turning restrictions.

Your feedback will help us identify any network improvements to refine what we implement on Queen Street. We want to know of site-specific issues you think would affect the proposed network changes.

For more information, visit [AT.govt.nz/haveyoursay](https://at.govt.nz/haveyoursay). Consultation will close on May 7, 2021

### **Contact Us**

If you have any concerns regarding this project don't hesitate to contact us at [engagement@at.govt.nz](mailto:engagement@at.govt.nz), and please refer to this project.